

1999
READER SURVEY
Page 15
P400.6
P268
99/1-3



TEXAS CONSERVATION PASSPORT

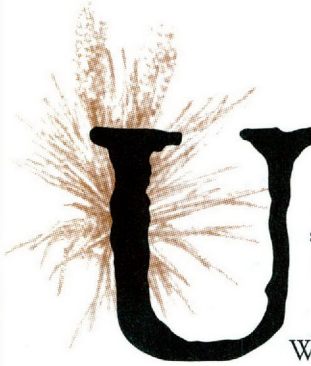
JOURNAL

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Una Tierra – One Land

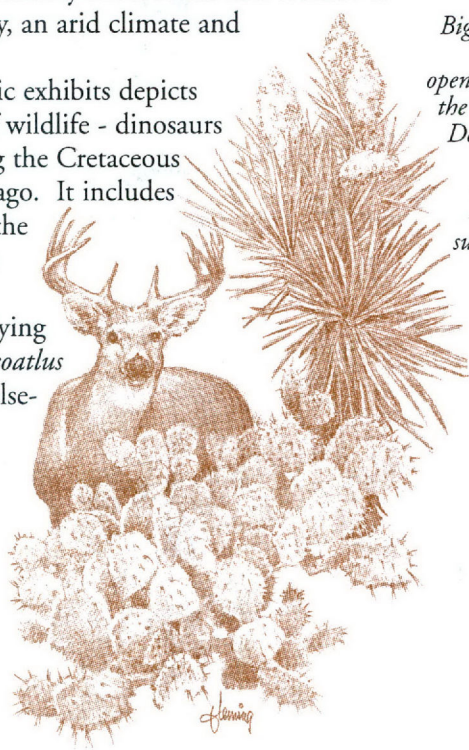
BARTON WARNOCK ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

Wildlife residents of the Chihuahuan Desert such as mule deer, Mexican black bear, hundreds of species of birds and other critters freely cross the Rio Grande all the time — they don't know about the Texas/Mexico international boundary. In December, a brand new exhibit opened at the Barton Warnock Center to interpret the natural history of this vast and sometimes mysterious region we generally refer to as the Big Bend.

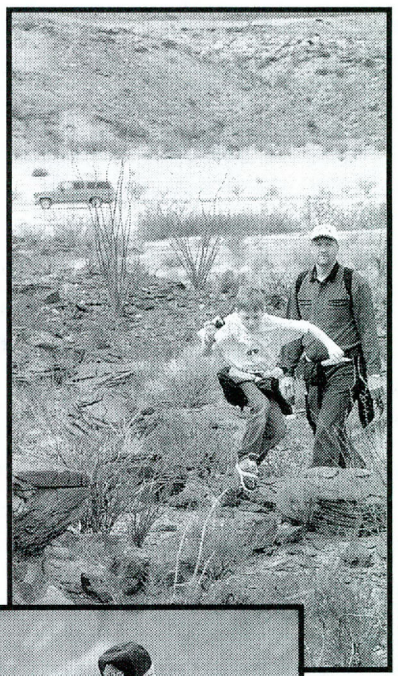
The exhibit is called "Una Tierra – One Land" in recognition of the fact that although the border cuts through it, the land for fifty miles north into Texas and fifty miles south into Mexico is unified by a common geology, an arid climate and identical ecosystems.

One of the more dramatic exhibits depicts an extremely ancient form of wildlife - dinosaurs - that roamed the area during the Cretaceous period 144-65 million years ago. It includes a new painting representing the landscape of that era and the fossilized wing bones of *Quetzalcoatlus northropii*, a flying dinosaur. Although *Quetzalcoatlus* specimens have been found elsewhere, the bones from the Chihuahuan Desert have a wing-spread of 38 to 40 feet and are the largest ones found anywhere.

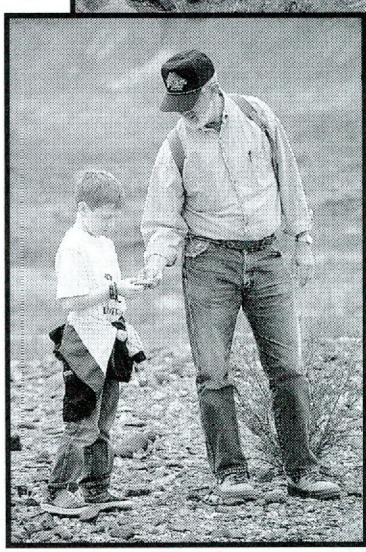
The Warnock Center is part of the Big Bend Ranch SP complex.



Big Bend Ranch SP is a wide open landscape in the Chihuahuan Desert – perfect for hiking, camping and examining surface geology.



E. NOTTINGHAM



E. NOTTINGHAM

New dinosaur painting – see page 16



WIND BENEATH OUR WINGS

RESOURCE PROTECTION DIVISION

Bob Spain

Assistant Director

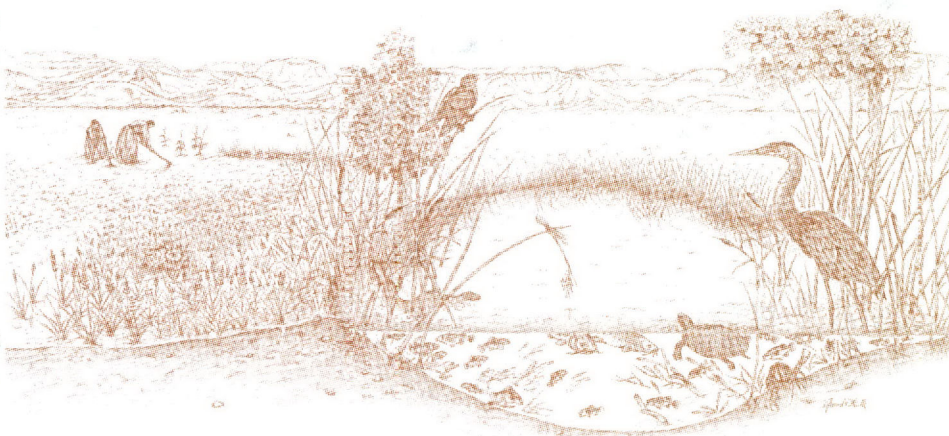
Bob studied Wildlife Science at Texas A&M and began his career conducting environmental analyses for Exxon. “When I joined Texas Parks and Wildlife in 1979 as a biologist, I expected to do a lot of hunting and fishing but what I have really done is a lot of canoeing,” Bob says. “Water resources now receive a great emphasis in resource protection because wildlife habitats, and desert ecosystems particularly, depend on a stable source of good water.”

“A great deal of resource protection involves determining how alterations in the natural flow of rivers and streams might diminish wildlife and fisheries habitats. To make those assessments we need detailed maps of land use and water bodies and the best tool for map making today is the Global Positioning System. It uses signals from satellites to fix a position on the ground and then combines that information with aerial photography to create very accurate maps (see page 14). I was part of the development team that brought this space age technology to Parks and Wildlife. That’s something I’m really proud of,” he says.

In addition to his regular duties, Bob is also the vice president of the United States Canoeing Association. “The San Marcos River is one of my favorites – it’s spring fed and pretty — good water — lush vegetation. Teddy Roosevelt said, ‘The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation and not impaired in value.’ I agree with that sentiment.”

San Solomon Ciénega

For millennia, underground water filtering through limestone formations beneath the Chihuahuan Desert has bubbled to the surface at San Solomon Springs. It formed a desert marsh land or *ciénega*. But water use in the past 100 years nearly wiped out this small wetland habitat. Taking action to restore the ecosystem, TPW’s Gary Garrett, conservation scientist, and David Riskind, natural resources program director, requested and got cooperation from farmers and citizens who live near Balmorhea SP. Today the ancient desert oasis once again provides a home to redwing blackbirds, diving coots, two endangered species, the Comanche Springs pupfish and the Pecos gambusia as well as Mexican tetra, channel catfish, roundnose minnows, red crayfish, blotched water snakes and softshell turtles. Visitors to Balmorhea SP can view the newly restored San Solomon Ciénega from underwater as well as above-water vantage points.



There is evidence that Native Americans practiced small-scale agriculture in the vicinity of what is known today as San Solomon Springs.



Eagle Outings



PRAIRIES AND LAKES

Fairfield Lake SP Bald Eagle Tour - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every Saturday, weather permitting, participants board a boat for an overview of the bald eagle's status in Texas and the Fairfield Lake area. Then proceed on a 2-hour tour of the lake to view bald eagles and other wildlife in winter habitat. 10 a.m.-noon, fee \$10 TCP member, \$15 non-member, \$10 children 16 and under, reservations required, 903-389-4514.

Birds

GULF COAST

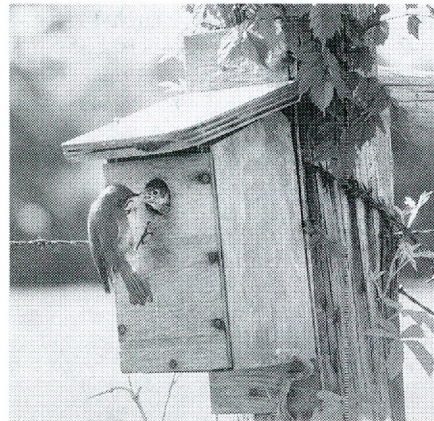
Fennessey Ranch Spring Migration Tours - March 13, 27. Full day birding expeditions on our private ranch. Guide, bird lists and over 1,100 acres of wetlands will add up the species. Homemade lunch provided on the banks of the Mission River. Half-day rates available. 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., fees \$40 TCP members \$44.33 non-members, reservations required, 512-529-6600.

Matagorda Island SP & WMA Whooping Crane Bus Tour - Jan. 23; Feb. 20. After a short introduction the tour group will travel by bus 20 miles to observe whooping cranes in their winter habitat. Bring a lunch, insect repellent and water. 8 a.m.-5 p.m., fees \$2 TCP members, \$8 non-members, \$4 children 12 and under, reservations required, 512-983-2215.

Intercoastal Waterway Birding Tour - Jan. 15; Feb. 26. After a short trip across Espiritu Santo Bay, the group will travel by boat down the waterway to observe winter birds along the shore. Whooping cranes can be seen in their winter habitat. Bring lunch, insect repellent and water. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., fees \$15 TCP members, \$18 non-members, \$15 children 12 and under, reservations required, 512-983-2215.

Texas Birdhouse Day

Many beloved song birds, like the bluebird, are cavity nesting birds but the natural occurrence of hollow trees and other suitable habitat is decreasing in Texas. Happily cavity nesters will set up housekeeping in a manmade birdhouse. The first Saturday in February has been declared Texas Birdhouse Day because it's time to set out new birdhouses and clean out the old ones. Migrating song birds begin arriving around the end of the month and quite a few will return to the same nest box year after year.



LEROY WILLIAMSON

HILL COUNTRY

Pedernales Falls SP Birdwatching - Jan.; Feb.; March. Birds can easily be seen at the park viewing stations, which are maintained daily. This is an excellent opportunity to learn to identify traditionally difficult birds, call for more information, 830-868-7304.

Introduction to Birdwatching - March 20-21. A two-day class on birdwatching. Topics include the use of binoculars, field guide (provided), basic bird biology and identification of birds in the field. Binoculars available or bring your own. 8 a.m.-2 p.m., fees \$15 per-person, reservations required, 830-868-7304.

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP Kiskadee Bus Tour - Jan.; Feb.; March. Tours are held every Tuesday and Friday. A bus tour

HILL COUNTRY

Lyndon B. Johnson SHP Birdhouse Day - Feb. 6. Learn about birds and their habitats with hands-on activities for the children. Fun for the whole family. 10 a.m.-noon, 830-644-2252.

PINEYWOODS

Martin Dies, Jr. SP Birdhouse Day - Feb. 7. Youngsters participate in the inspection and cleaning of existing birdhouses in the park and the construction of new birdhouses. 9-11 a.m., a donation of \$5 will allow the participants to take a birdhouse home, 409-384-5231.

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

Fairfield Lake SP Birdhouse Day - Feb. 6. Learn some hands-on habitat improvements to include monitoring birdhouses in use, repairing damaged houses, construction and set-up of new houses and tours of the park birdwatching trail to view how specific habitat suits specific species of birds. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 903-389-4514.

to some of the best birding hot spots in Texas. Bring a sack lunch, binoculars, bird book and comfortable shoes. 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., fees \$25 per-person, reservations required, 956-519-6448.

El Canelo Ranch Tour - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every other Wednesday. Take a bus tour to one of the best birding hot spots in south Texas. Home of the Ferruginous Pigmy Owl. Bring a sack lunch, binoculars, bird book and comfortable shoes. 7 a.m.-3 p.m., fees \$35 per-person, reservations required, 956-519-6448.

Choke Canyon SP/Calliham Unit Bird Identification Tour - Feb. 13, 27; March 13, 27. Take a walk on the bird and nature trails and identify birds and waterfowl. 9-11 a.m., 512-786-3868.



EXPLORE THE REAL TEXAS

Outdoor Challenges, Skills & Adventures



BIG BEND COUNTRY

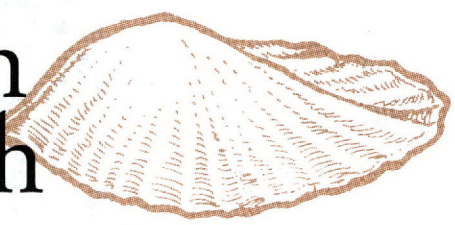
Big Bend Ranch SP Guide Training Program - Feb. 26-28. A three-day mandatory program for persons wanting to give guided commercial trips or activities on the Big Bend Ranch. 9:30 a.m. on Feb. 26 till 7 p.m. on Feb. 28, fees \$50 per-person, reservations required, 915-229-3416.

Desert Survival Workshop - March 12-14. Three-day workshop on desert survival techniques. Learn about water locations, primitive fire making, shelter construction, and solar and stellar navigation, edible and medicinal plants and tool making. Includes meals, lodging, programs and literature. 8 a.m. on March 12 till 5 p.m. on March 14, fees \$341 TCP members, \$350 non-members, reservations required, 915-229-3416.

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

Chaparral WMA Burning Seminar - Jan. 13. A primer on procedures and effects of burning in the western Rio Grande Plains. There will be an opportunity for hands-on experience, weather permitting. 8 a.m.-5 p.m., fees \$8 per-person for the catered lunch, reservations required, 830-676-3413.

Splish Splash

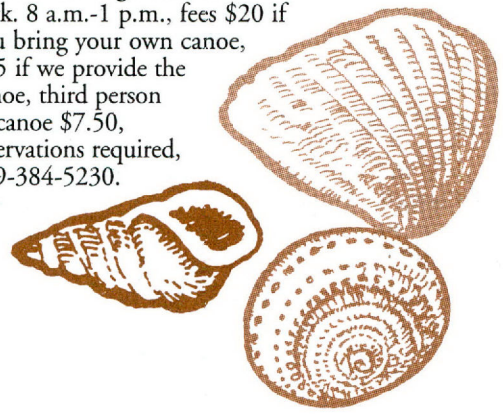


GULF COAST

Matagorda Island SP & WMA Beachcombing Tour - Jan. 24; Feb. 21; March 13. Spend 6 hours shelling and beachcombing. Bring a lunch for picnicking on the beach. Transportation is an open four-wheel drive vehicle. Information on shells, marine debris, tropical drift seeds and the ecosystems of gulf barrier islands will be available by staff. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., tour fees \$2 TCP members, \$8 non-members, \$4 children 12 and under, transportation fees to island \$10 adults, \$5 children, reservations required, 512-983-2215.

PINEYWOODS

Martin Dies, Jr. SP Canoeing the Forks - Jan. 16; Feb. 20; March 20. Go on a guided canoe trip on the Angelina and Neches Rivers. Paddle through the Angelina/Neches/Dam B WMA from historic Bevilport to Walnut Ridge Unit of the park. 8 a.m.-1 p.m., fees \$20 if you bring your own canoe, \$25 if we provide the canoe, third person in canoe \$7.50, reservations required, 409-384-5230.



Caving

HILL COUNTRY

Colorado Bend SP Wild Cave Tours - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every Saturday & Sunday. The crawling tour takes you through several relatively small and progressively more difficult caves. The walking tour takes you to Gorman Cave. Starts at 9:15 a.m. Saturdays for the crawling tours, resources and weather permitting, fees \$10 per-person for walking tour and \$15 per-person for crawling tour, reservations required, 915-628-3240.

Kickapoo Cavern SP Primitive Cave Tour - Jan.; Feb.; March. Join us on a flashlight tour of an undeveloped Edwards Plateau cavern. Call for dates and times, fees \$5 adults, \$3 children 12 and under, reservations required, 830-563-2342.



Hikes, Walks & Runs

BIG BEND COUNTRY

Big Bend Ranch SP Hiking Through Time - Jan. 15-17; Feb. 12-14. Three days of hiking different trails ranging from 8-12 miles. Hikers see the northern Bofecillos Mountains, Madrid Falls and on the final day, hike the entire Lower Shutup of the Solitario. Hikers must be in excellent physical condition. Meals and lodging included. 8 a.m. on first day till 5 p.m. on last day, fees \$341 TCP members, \$350 non-members, reservations required, 915-229-3416.

GULF COAST

Fennessey Ranch Winter Fitness Walk - Feb. 27. Come with us on a guided 10-mile hike with stops for lunch on the banks of the Mission River. Guide is well-versed in plants, birds and local lore. Trip includes options for primitive camping or dormitory lodging at small additional cost. 8 a.m.-3 p.m., fees \$40 TCP member, \$44.33 non-member, reservations required, 512-529-6600.

HILL COUNTRY

Colorado Bend SP Gorman Falls Hike - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every Saturday & Sunday. Caravan from park headquarters to the Gorman area of the park and then hike to below the falls. From trailhead it is a 1-1/2 mile round-trip hike over beautiful Hill Country terrain. No pets allowed on tour. No restrooms or drinking water available. 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturdays. 10 a.m. on Sundays, weather permitting. Fees \$3 adults, \$2 children 12-6, 915-628-3240.

Honey Creek SNA Honey Creek Canyon Walk - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every Saturday join us for a leisurely 1-mile hike along Honey Creek Canyon with interpretation of the environmental and cultural history of the Edwards Plateau and the Texas Hill Country. Meet at the Rust Visitor Center at Guadalupe River State Park. 9-11 a.m., fees \$2 per-person or \$5 per-family, 830-438-2656.

PANHANDLE PLAINS

San Angelo SP Macey's Ridge Hike - March 6. Five-mile hike, with moderate to rough terrain, to Macey's Ridge where an early pioneer was killed. Meet at North Concho River Park, 9 a.m.-noon. In addition to the park entry fee, the tour fees are: free to TCP members, \$2 non-members, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-949-4757.

Dinosaur Walk - Jan. 23; Feb. 20; March 27. Hike back in time to tracks left over 200 million years ago by Permian vertebrates. Three-mile total hike. 1-3 p.m. In addition to the park entry fee, the tour fees are: free to TCP members, \$2 non-members, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-949-4757.

PINEYWOODS

Martin Dies, Jr. SP Take a Walk on the Wildside - Jan. 3, 10, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 14, 28; March 7, 14, 28. Take a guided walk along the hiking trails in the Hen House Ridge or Walnut Ridge Units. Learn about the ecosystems and related resources and get a brief history of the park. 9-10 a.m., 409-384-5231.

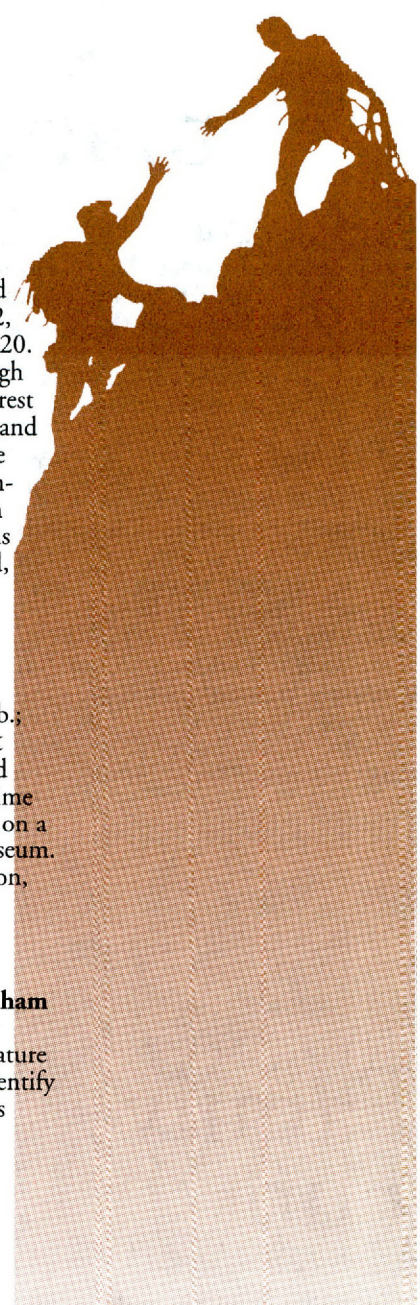
Village Creek SP Guided Nature Trail Hike - Jan. 2, 16; Feb. 6, 20; March 6, 20. Take a 2-mile walk through bottomland hardwood forest to learn about local flora and fauna, 9-11 a.m., fees free to TCP members, \$1 non-members, free to children 12 and under, reservations available but not required, 409-755-7322.

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

Stephen F. Austin SHP Historical Tour - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every Saturday & Sunday. Tour the area and learn about the life and time of Stephen F. Austin. Go on a tour of the J. J. Josey Museum. 1-3 p.m., fee \$1 per-person, 409-885-3613.

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

Choke Canyon SP/Calliham Unit Nature Trail Tour - March 6, 20. Walk the nature trail and bird trail and identify wildlife, wildflowers, trees and brush. 9-11 a.m., 512-786-3868.



Biking

HILL COUNTRY

X Bar Ranch Winter Mountain Bike Ride - Jan. 29-31. Come for a winter weekend and ride the 11 miles of trail through the Hill Country. Lodging, camping and meals available. Day guests welcomed. Call for times and prices, reservations required, 915-853-2688.





Celebrations

GULF COAST

Fulton Mansion SHP

Valentine Dinner and Auction - Feb. 6. Join us and the Friends of the Fulton Mansion for the 3rd annual dinner and auction. Proceeds will go to the park. 6:30-10 p.m., fees \$35 per-person, reservations required, 512-729-0386.

San Jacinto Battleground

SHP Old Car Picnic - March 7. Enjoy our 16th Annual celebration and see hundreds of classic cars, none newer than the 1978 models. Gates open at 8 a.m. and awards are presented after lunch. Registration is \$5 - rain date will be March 14. 8 a.m.-3 p.m., 281-479-2431.

HILL COUNTRY

Admiral Nimitz Museum & Historical Center

Admiral's Birthday Ball - Feb. 20. Dance to the World War II BIG BAND sound of Ted Conerly and The Sentimental Journey Orchestra. Sponsored by the Admiral Nimitz Foundation, call for time and prices, 830-997-4379.

X Bar Ranch Spring Break - March. Hike on our nature trails, go horseback riding, mountain biking, birding and more. Visit some of the Texas Forts in the area and the Sonora Caverns. Lodging, camping and some meals available. Call for dates, times and prices, reservations required, 888-853-2688.



Family Fun

PINEYWOODS

Martin Dies, Jr. SP Crazy Hot Air Balloons - March 19. Build and launch a hot air balloon made with tissue paper. Great fun for the whole family. 9-11 a.m., fees \$1 per-family, 409-384-5231.

Project Wild Activities - March 14. Resource oriented activities for the young and young at heart. Activities will take place at the day-use area between campsites 56 and 57. 3-4 p.m., 409-384-5231.

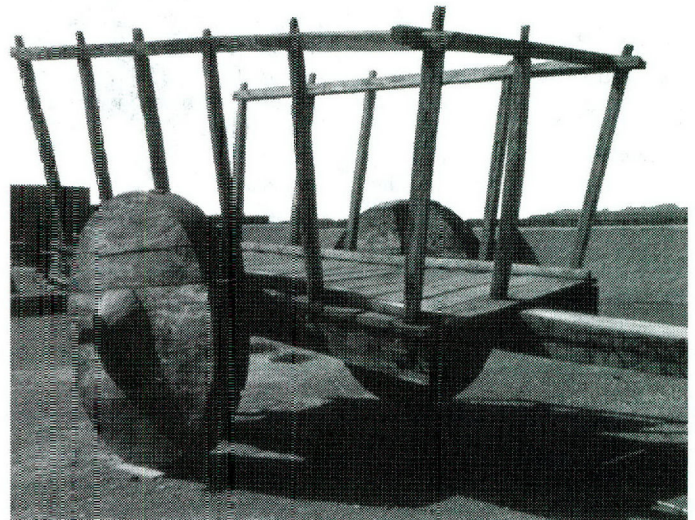


Bus Tours

BIG BEND COUNTRY

Big Bend Ranch SP Bus Tour - Jan. 2; Feb. 6; March 6. Depart on bus from Fort Leaton SHP. Visit some points of natural and historical interest along the way. Lunch is included. 8 a.m.-5 p.m., fees \$55 TCP members, \$60 non-members, reservations required, 915-229-3416.

Bus Tour - Jan. 16; Feb. 6; March 6. Departing from Barton Warnock Center at Lajitas. Stops include geological, archeological and historic sites. Lunch at Saucedo Lodge included. 8 a.m.-5 p.m., fees \$55 TCP members, \$60 non-members, reservations required, 512-389-8900.



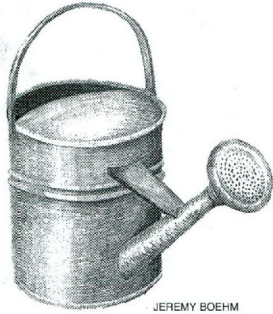
Fort Leaton SHP, sitting on a bluff looking out on the Rio Grande, takes visitors back to a period when few settlers lived in the Chihuahuan Desert and built their homes like forts. This replica of a Chihuahuan trade cart is displayed in the corral.



All About Plants

PINEYWOODS

Martin Dies, Jr. SP
Herb Society Meeting and Educational Program - Jan. 9; Feb. 13; March 13. Topics vary and include Herb of the Month presentations at each meeting. 10-11 a.m., 409-384-5231.



JEREMY BOEHM

Campfire Storytelling

GULF COAST

Fennessey Ranch Blue Moon Night Ride - March 27. Take an old-fashioned hayride under the full moon... the moon will be rising, the wildlife moving and we shall see what we shall see. Complete with bonfire, telescopes and storytelling. Families are very welcomed. 6-9:30 p.m., fees \$18.55 adults, \$10.72 children 12 and under, reservations required, 512-529-6600.

PINEYWOODS

Martin Dies, Jr. SP Big Thicket Tales, Unsolved Mysteries and Ghost Stories - Feb. 13. Join us around the campfire at the amphitheater for an evening of storytelling. Bring your lawn chair or share a wooden bench. 7-8:30 p.m., 409-384-5231.

Cowboy Campfire Stories, Poetry and Songs - March 13. Join us at the amphitheater for an evening of cowboy entertainment and history. Bring your lawn chair or share a wooden bench. 7-8:30 p.m., 409-384-5231.

Stargazing

PANHANDLE PLAINS

San Angelo SP Stargazing Party - Feb. 19. Join San Angelo's Amateur Astronomy Club as they look at the moon between Saturn and Jupiter with Venus also visible. They will provide telescopes and answer questions about the cosmos. Sundown till 11 p.m., fees regular park entry fee, 915-949-4757.

Volunteer Work and Play

GULF COAST

San Jacinto Battleground SHP 6th Annual Rivers, Lakes, Bays 'n Bayous Trash Bash - March 27. Join us for the annual clean-up of Houston area waterways at 12 separate sites including the Battleground. Volunteers will receive gloves, lunch and entertainment. 9 a.m.-2 p.m., 281-479-2431.



The Big Thicket

A Prickly Pear Cactus finds a niche in the wild, untamed and dense wilderness called the Big Thicket. It is known as an environmental crossroads where the eastern hardwood forests, the southern coastal wetlands, the western prairies and the arid southwest converge. The region is so biologically diverse that it has been designated as an International Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Man and the Biosphere Program.

Once it spread over 3.5 million acres of southeast Texas but today less than 300,000 acres remain. Approximately 90,000 acres are set aside in the Big Thicket National Preserve and other protected areas like Village Creek and Martin Dies, Jr. SP.



G. MILLS



Historical Tours

HILL COUNTRY

Admiral Nimitz Museum & Historical Center But Not In Shame - Feb.; March. This exhibit opens Feb. 5 and will highlight the roles of civilians and military men, women and children who were interned as prisoners of the Japanese. Daily 8 a.m.-5 p.m., 830-997-4379.

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP Kreische Brewery Tours - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every weekend. Take a walk, with a trained tour guide, through the woods to the first commercial brewery site in the state. Learn about H.L. Kreische, a German stone mason turned brew master, and how the Germans helped to develop Texas culturally and commercially. First tour 2-3 p.m., second tour 3:30-4:30 p.m., fees free to TCP members, \$2 non-members, \$1 students, free to children 6 and under, 409-968-5658.

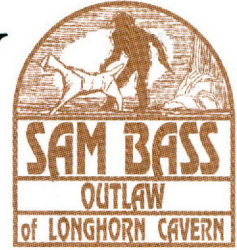
Kreische House Tours - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every first and second Sunday. Take a guided tour and learn about the German family that built a unique stone home in 1855. 1:30-4 p.m., fees free to TCP members, \$2 non-members, \$1 students, free to children 6 and under, 409-968-5658.

Trains

PINEYWOODS

Texas State Railroad SHP Dogwood Steam Train Excursions - March 19, 26. Sit back and relax on a truly unique way to tour the beauty of the east Texas Dogwoods. Our historic steam engine will carry you on a delightful train excursion through the rolling hills and hardwood creek bottoms. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., fees \$15 adults, \$9 children 12-3, free to children 2 and under, reservations required, 1-800-442-8951.

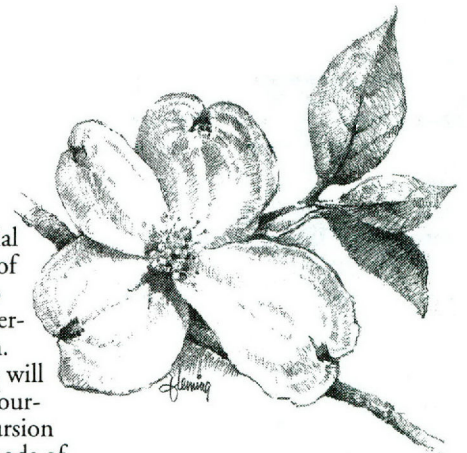
Whodunit? Mystery



HILL COUNTRY

Longhorn Cavern SP Sam Bass Treasure Hunt/Mystery Game - Jan. 22-23; Feb. 5-6. Descend into the depths of Longhorn Caverns and search for clues to determine if Sam Bass actually used the caverns. Participants will follow a set of clues, encounter costumed characters and search for moneybags filled with gold coins! 7-8 p.m. on Friday and

from 10 a.m.-9 p.m. on Saturday, prices vary from \$95 to \$195 per-couple depending on lodging accommodations, reservations required, 512-756-4680.



Opening of Texas State Railroad - March 13. The official railroad of the State of Texas will steam into the 106th year of operation on March 13th. Historic steam trains will roll over a 50-mile, four-hour round-trip excursion through the Pineywoods of east Texas. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., fees \$15 adults, \$9 children 12-3, free to children 2 and under, reservations required, 1-800-442-8951.

Texas History

GULF COAST

Matagorda Island SP & WMA History Tour - Feb. 17. Take a history tour of this 5,000 year-old island with trips to the Lighthouse and gravesites. Bring a lunch for picnicking on the beach. 10 a.m.-2 p.m., fees \$2 TCP members, \$8 non-members, \$4 children 12 and under, transportation fees \$10 adults, \$5 children, reservations required, 512-983-2215.

HILL COUNTRY

Fort McKavett SHP Annual Living History Day - March 20. Fort McKavett will come alive, as groups from across the state will portray key periods of the 19th century. There will be Infantry and Cavalry drills, along with their wagon teams, also weapons demonstrations on firing weapons. 8 a.m.-5 p.m., fees free to TCP members, \$2 adults, \$1 students, free to children 6 and under, 915-396-2358.

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

Fanthorp Inn SHP Stagecoach Rides - Jan. 9; Feb. 13; March 13. Ride on a replica of the 1850 Concord stagecoach over the old stagecoach roads in Anderson. Tour the inn while listening to dulcimer music. 1-4 p.m., fees \$4 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and under, 409-873-2633.

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

Fannin Battleground SHP Battle of Coletto Creek - March 20. Witness the capture of Col. James Walker Fannin as the battle of Coletto is reenacted. 10 a.m.-3 p.m., fees \$1 per-person, 512-645-2020.



Rock Art



BIG BEND COUNTRY

Hueco Tanks SHP Native American Pictograph Tours - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every Wednesday thru Sunday. Go on tours of the park and view a select number of rock art sites. Guided hiking, birding and rock climbing also available by request. First tour 10 a.m.-noon, second tour 2-4 p.m., \$4 adults, free to children 12 and under, reservations required, 915-857-1135.

Seminole Canyon SHP Panther Cave Tour - Feb. 28; March 14, 28. This remote tour begins at the park headquarters, then you are shuttled to the back of the park where you will hike for 1/2 mile to meet the boat to Panther Cave. This site contains some

of the best preserved Lower Pecos pictographs in the state. First tour 8:30-11 a.m., second tour 2:30-5 p.m., fees \$15 TCP members, \$20 non-members, reservations required, 915-292-4464.

Pressa Canyon Rock Art Tours - Jan. 16; Feb. 6, 27; March 13, 27. Go on an all day hike to view the rock art sites in the secluded areas of the park. The all day hike starts at 7:30 a.m., fees \$15 TCP members, \$20 non-members, reservations required, 915-292-4464.

Fate Bell Cave Dwelling Tour - Jan.; Feb.; March. Every Wednesday thru Sunday. Take a walking, guided tour to one of North America's oldest cave dwellings whose walls are covered with Pecos River-style pictographs, some 4,000 years old. 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., fees \$3 per-person, \$1 children 6-12, 915-292-4464.

PANHANDLE PLAINS

San Angelo SP Petroglyph Tour - Jan. 9; Feb. 13; March 20. Visit the site of a prehistoric Native American village and see Native American rock art. 1-2:30 p.m. In addition to the park entry fee, the tour fees are: free to TCP members, \$2 non-members, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-949-4757.

Hunts

GULF COAST

Fennessey Ranch Wild Boar Management Hunt - Feb. 6, 13. Hunt Russian boar from an African-style brush blind at daylight. Four thousand acres devoted to wildlife make this a great hunt. Lunch is provided. Bring an ice chest for your harvest. 5:30 a.m.-4 p.m., fees \$196.56 adults, reservations required, 512-529-6600.

PASSPORT VALUES



Ruckers Refuge and Guesthouse Birdwatching, photography, stargazing, nature walks and enjoying nature at its best await TCP members (10 percent discount) in a new, unique and fully furnished hide-away house in the Davis Mts. near Ft. Davis and McDonald Observatory. Call Sid or Shirley for a brochure and more information at 915-426-3552.

Fossil Rim Wildlife Center TCP members qualify for discounts on admission to the Scenic Wildlife Drive. Enjoy a 9-mile drive among friendly giraffes, antelopes, zebras and many other animals from around the world. Open year-round. Call 254-897-2960 for more information.

Longhorn Cavern State Park With each current TCP, you can purchase a Longhorn Cavern tour ticket for \$7, discounted from the regular \$8 price. For children age 5 through 12, the ticket price is \$4.50, and children age 4 and under are free. Call 512-756-6976 for recorded information on times and tours.

Running 'R' Ranch, Bandera Offers TCP members discounts on its horseback rides. When you take advantage of this special offer, you'll have the opportunity to explore the Hill Country SNA during your ride. For more information, call 830-796-3984.

Stage Stop Ranch TCP members receive a 10 percent discount on this Hill Country get-away ranch. Lodging is in cabins or a main guesthouse with breakfast provided. Spend the day hiking, riding horseback, fishing in the nearby Guadalupe River, boating at Canyon Lake or shopping in Wimberley. Modern cabins have hot tubs, private baths and air conditioning. Open year-round, overnight lodging fees \$75 to \$225 per night; reservations required, 1-800-STAGE STOP (782-4378). Web site: www.texhillcntry.com/stagestop/

Doc Toler's Medicine Show On The Shotgun Stage at Stage Stop Ranch (see above). Doc's good time fiddle band, storytelling, Bar-B-Q, Gunfights! Bring the whole family and kick up your heels down at Stage Stop Ranch's Shotgun Hall for old time feel good music. Saturday nights 7-10 p.m., \$2 per-person, children under 12 free, meals extra, reservations not required.

X Bar Ranch near San Angelo gives TCP members a 10 percent discount on lodging. Hike, go mountain biking, ride horses or relax at this working ranch. Lodging in private houses or cabins. Plenty of wildlife viewing and other activities. For reservations, information and directions call toll free 888-853-2688. Web site: www.xbarranch.com e-mail: xbar@compuserve.com



DRIVE ACROSS TEXAS

— TRAVEL DIRECTIONS TO PASSPORT PLACES

Prairies and Lakes



Hill Country

Admiral Nimitz Museum and Historical Center In Gillespie County, in the city of Fredericksburg at the corner of East Main and Washington Streets, 830-997-4379.

Colorado Bend SP In Lampasas and San Saba counties, on the Colorado River about 10 miles above Lake Buchanan, near the community of Bend. Bend is north of Llano via State Highway 16 or west of Lampasas via U.S. Highway 183/190. Paved access to Bend via Ranch Roads 501, 580 or 581. From Bend there are approximately 4 miles of unpaved road to the park entrance, 915-628-3240.

Devil's Sinkhole SNA In Edwards County, about 135 miles northwest of San Antonio; contact Kickapoo Cavern SP for directions at 830-563-2342.

Fort McKavett SHP In Menard County, 23 miles west of Menard; take F.M. 190 west 17 miles to R.M. 864 south to park entrance, 915-396-2358.

Granger WMA In Williamson County, approximately 7 miles east of Granger on F.M. 971 to entrance, 512-859-2668.

Guadalupe River SP In Kendall and Comal counties, 30 miles north of San Antonio on State Highway 46 between Boerne and U.S. Highway 281 to entrance, 830-438-2656.

Honey Creek SNA Access through Guadalupe River SP, see above, 830-438-2656.

Hill Country SNA In Bandera and Medina counties, 10 miles southwest of Bandera on State Highway 173 south to Ranch Road 1077 (also marked as "Dixie Dude Ranch Road"), to park entrance, 830-796-3984.

Kickapoo Cavern SP In Edwards and Kinney counties, 40 miles west of Uvalde on U.S. Highway 90, then 22.5 miles due north of Brackettville on Ranch Road 674; park entrance is on west side of road, 830-563-2342.

Longhorn Cavern SP In Burnet County, about 5 miles south of Burnet on U.S. Highway 281 to entrance, 512-756-4680.

Fairfield Lake SP In Freestone County, 6 miles north of Fairfield off F.M. 488, then east on F.M. 2570 to Park Road 64 to entrance, 903-389-4514.

Fanthorp Inn SHP In Grimes County, 10 miles east of Navasota on State Highway 90 in the town of Anderson, 409-873-2633.

Fossil Rim Wildlife Center In Somervell County, 3 miles southwest of Glen Rose; go south on County Road 2008 for 2 miles to entrance, 254-897-2960.

Gus Engeling WMA In Anderson County, 21 miles northwest of Palestine on U.S. Highway 287 to entrance, 903-928-2251.

Lyndon B. Johnson SHP In Gillespie County, 16 miles east of Fredericksburg on U.S. Highway 290 to park entrance, 830-644-2252.

Pedernales Falls SP In Blanco County, 9 miles east of Johnson City on F.M. 2766 to entrance, 830-868-7304.

Stage Stop Ranch In Comal County, 17 miles west of San Marcos, take Ranch Road 12 to Ranch Road 32, go 7 miles to the sign Stage Stop and turn right, 1-800-782-4378.

Walter Buck WMA In Kimble County, on the south fork of the Llano River, approximately 3 miles south of Junction on State Highway 377 to entrance, 915-446-3994.

X Bar Ranch In Schleicher County, 20 miles southwest of Eldorado on F.M. 2129. Office is in Eldorado across from the courthouse on U.S. Highway 277, 888-853-2688.

Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP In Fayette County, 1 mile south of La Grange off U.S. Highway 77 to spur 92, to entrance, 409-968-5658.

Richland Creek WMA In Freestone and Navarro counties, about 28 miles east of Corsicana, along U.S. Highway 287 to entrance, 903-928-2251.

Stephen F. Austin SHP In Austin County, 3 miles east of Sealy off I.H.10, exit F.M. 1458 north, go 2 miles, turn left on Park Road 38 to park entrance, 409-885-3613.

Pineywoods

Martin Dies, Jr. SP In Jasper County, 17 miles east of Woodville on U.S. Highway 190 to entrance, 409-384-5231.

Texas State Railroad SHP In Anderson County, in the city of Palestine 2 miles east of Loop 256 on U.S. Highway 84 to Palestine train station. In Cherokee County, 2 miles west of Rusk via U.S. Highway 84 to Rusk train station, 903-683-2561.

Village Creek SP In Hardin County, 10 miles north of Beaumont in the city of Lumberton. From U.S. Highway 69 north, take Mitchell Road exit to Village Creek Parkway and go approximately 2 miles, then turn east onto Alma Drive to park entrance, 409-755-7322.



Big Bend Country

Balmorhea SP In Reeves County, 4 miles west of Balmorhea on State Highway 17 to park entrance, 915-375-2370.

Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center Located in Lajitas. Part of the Big Bend Ranch SP, 915-424-3327.

Big Bend Ranch SP In Brewster and Presidio counties, 4 miles southeast of Presidio on F.M. 170; entrance at Fort Leaton SHP, 915-229-3416.

Devils River SNA In Val Verde County, about 45 miles north of Del Rio and 22 miles off U.S. Highway 277 to entrance, 830-395-2133.

Davis Mountains SP In Jeff Davis County, about 4 miles northwest of Fort Davis, via State Highway 118 to entrance, 915-426-3337.

Hueco Tanks SHP In El Paso County, approximately 32 miles east of El Paso, via U.S. Highway 62/180 north on Ranch Road 2775 to entrance, 915-857-1135.

Seminole Canyon SHP In Val Verde County, 9 miles west of Comstock on U.S. Highway 90 to entrance, 915-292-4464.



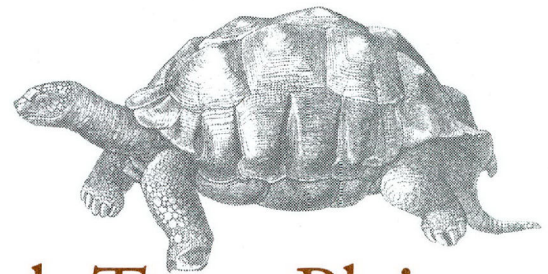
Big Bend Ranch SP

NATURE OF THE PLACE

The 18th century Spanish name for the Big Bend-Mexican Frontier region was *el despoblado*, "the unpopulated place." In a letter to the Viceroy, Spanish explorer, Jose de Berroteran, described it this way, "...steep places, dry places, a few waterholes, and great distances."

Panhandle Plains

San Angelo SP In Tom Green County, 1 mile west of San Angelo on the O.C. Fisher Reservoir, via either U.S. Highway 87 or 67 to F.M. 2288 to park entrance, 915-949-4757.



Gulf Coast

Atkinson Island WMA In Harris County, off Morgan's Point on the Houston Ship Channel; accessed by boat only, 409-736-2551.

Candy Cain Abshier WMA In Chambers County, approximately 23 miles south of Anahuac on F.M. 562, to Smith Point, 409-736-2551.

Fennessey Ranch In Refugio County, between Refugio and Bayside off F.M. 2678. For detailed directions call 512-529-6600.

Fulton Mansion SHP In Aransas County, 3 miles north of Rockport off State Highway 35, at the corner of Henderson Street and Fulton Beach Road, 512-729-0386.

Matagorda Island SP & WMA In Calhoun County, about 50 miles southeast of Victoria. Park headquarters, dock and information center at Port O'Connor, 512-983-2215.

San Jacinto Battleground SHP In Harris County, 22 miles east of downtown Houston off State Highway 225 east, then north on State Highway 134 to park entrance, 281-479-2431.

Welder Flats Coastal Preserve In Calhoun County, at the junction of the Victoria Barge Canal and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Boat access only, 512-576-0022.

South Texas Plains

Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP In Hidalgo County, 3 miles south of Mission on F.M. 2062 to entrance, 956-585-1107 or 956-585-0902.

Chaparral WMA In La Salle and Dimmit counties, 8 miles west of Artesia Wells on F.M. 133 to entrance, 830-676-3413.

Choke Canyon SP/Calliham Unit In McMullen and Live Oak counties, about 70 miles south of San Antonio. On the north side of State Highway 72, about 8 miles west of Three Rivers, 512-786-3868.

Falcon SP In Starr and Zapata counties, 15 miles north of Roma off U.S. Highway 83, F.M. 2098 to Park Road 46 on the eastern shore of Falcon Reservoir, 956-848-5327.

Fannin Battleground SHP In Goliad County, 9 miles east of Goliad on U.S. Highway 59 to entrance, 512-645-2020.



SCHEDULE YOUR OWN OUTINGS

PLEASE CALL THE PARKS OR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS LISTED HERE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT FACILITIES, ACTIVITIES AND RESERVATIONS.

Atkinson Island WMA

Unvegetated beach areas. No facilities, accessible by boat only, 409-736-2551.

Big Bend Ranch SP Hiking, backpacking, and back country camping are available north of Highway 170. TCP or daily entrance fee is acceptable for both north and south of Highway 170. For information call Big Bend Ranch Complex office at 915-229-3416 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Candy Cain Abshier WMA

Area primarily for birdwatching and nature study. No facilities, 409-736-2551.

Davis Mountains SP

Experience back country hiking in the Davis Mountains, 8-10 mile trail climbs to a spectacular overlook with a 360° panorama. TCP or \$5 activity fee per-person. Reservations not required, 915-426-3337.

Devils River SNA Choice of two tours given upon request by reservation only. Fee of \$10 per-person plus TCP is required of individuals 17 years and older. Tour A will include a visit to an archeological pictograph site and Indian shelter which will involve some hiking. Tour B is a scenic drive through Dolan Creek Canyon and a visit to the springs on the Devils River. Primitive camping available. Group barracks lodging for 10 people and dining hall facility available for rent. Call 830-395-2133 for tour reservations, 512-389-8900 for facility reservations.

Granger WMA

Approximately 35 miles of trails crisscross the Blackland Prairie accessible by entering at TPW registration boxes 1-7 around Granger Lake. Tall prairie grasses, fishing and birding (see if you can spot a ringnecked pheasant) await the adventurous hiker and mountain biker. Pick up area maps at Corps of Engineers headquarters at the dam, 512-859-2668.

Gus Engeling WMA

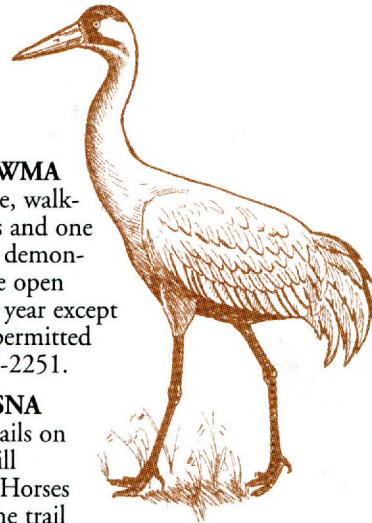
Two interpretive, walking nature trails and one driving wildlife demonstration tour are open throughout the year except during special permitted hunts, 903-928-2251.

Hill Country SNA

Go on scenic trails on horseback at Hill Country SNA. Horses and lunch on the trail provided. Travel to historic Castrovilla to overnight at the rustic Landmark Inn SHP with dinner at the Alsatian Inn restaurant and continental breakfast at Landmark in the morning. Fee of \$175 for two persons, double occupancy, includes trail ride, dinner and accommodations. Reservations subject to availability of rooms and trail conditions, 830-796-4413; or trail riding only at Running 'R' Ranch, call for TCP member discounts on horseback rides, 830-796-3984.

Kickapoo Cavern SNA

Birdwatching and nature tours upon request. Primitive cavern tour by special arrangement. Groups encouraged, bunkhouse lodging for 14 people, and kitchen available. Please make reservations at least one week in advance. TCP required per-person (17 years or older) to enter park, 830-563-2342.



Lower Neches WMA/Bessie Heights Unit Accessible by boat only. No facilities, 409-736-2551.

Richland Creek WMA

Six miles of driving and walking trails open except during special permitted hunts. Observe wading birds from shallow-water marsh compartments on the 4,000-acre north unit between April and August. No facilities, 903-389-7080.

Walter Buck WMA

Activities coordinated through South Llano River SP, 915-446-3994.

Welder Flats Coastal Preserve

This area is entirely submerged land, so access is by boat. ALL shoreline area is privately owned and is NOT part of the preserve. Please do not trespass on private land and do not disturb the whooping cranes, 512-576-0022.



Book Corner

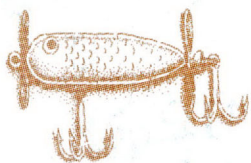
*Gone for the Day
Family Fun In Central Texas*
By Deborah Douglas

Get this book with eighteen kid-tested and family-approved day trips — all within a two-hour drive of San Antonio — that are sure to please both restless children and dollar-wise parents. Arranged in alphabetical order by town, the humorous and usable guide begins in Bandera and finishes in Yoakum.

The book offers all the critical information a family needs: opening and closing times, prices, phone numbers, highway directions, alternate routes, camping and picnic facilities, and much more — along with the rich lore of the area. From the Texas A&M University Press, this book is available in most Texas bookstores.



Fishing



HILL COUNTRY

Colorado Bend SP Adult Fly Fishing Seminar - Feb. 13. Learn about equipment, equipment set-up, fly tying, basic casting and some techniques of fishing. If you have equipment bring it, if you don't, wait until after the seminar to buy it. For age 13 and over. 1-4 p.m., fees \$9 TCP members, \$10 non-members, reservations required, 915-628-3240.

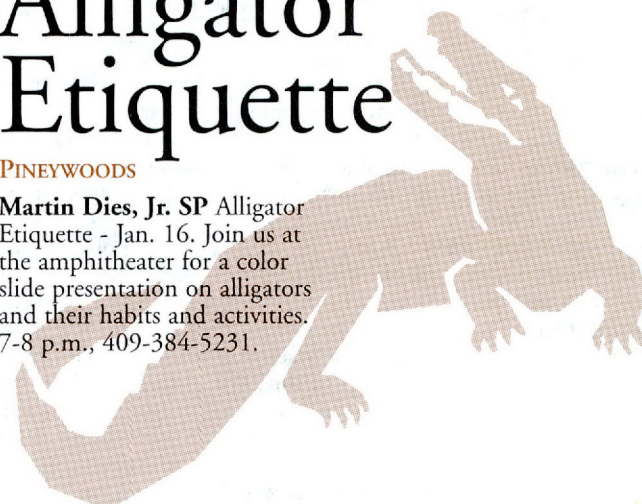
SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

Falcon SP 6th Annual Fishing Rodeo - Jan. 9. Bring the children (17 years and under) for a fun day of fishing. They will be fishing for rainbow trout. 10 a.m.-3 p.m., 956-848-5327.

Alligator Etiquette

PINEYWOODS

Martin Dies, Jr. SP Alligator Etiquette - Jan. 16. Join us at the amphitheater for a color slide presentation on alligators and their habits and activities. 7-8 p.m., 409-384-5231.



TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

At Your Service

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine offers a reduced rate of \$8 for one-year to all TCP members; subscription inquiries 800-937-9393.

ON RADIO

Passport To Texas takes you on a 90-second radio journey into the Texas outdoors. Look for station listings: www.passporttotexas.com



Funded in part by The Dow Chemical Company and the Sport Fish & Wildlife Restoration Program in Texas.

ONLINE

Make state park reservations via our web site: www.tpwd.state.tx.us

ON THE PHONE

Park reservations or cancellations

512-389-8900
Monday thru Friday 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
Voice Mail: 24 hours a day
Indian Lodge 915-426-3254
Texas State Railroad 800-442-8951

Wildlife Management Areas call individual areas on a weekday, 8-9 a.m. and 12-1 p.m., to make sure you can have access. Each event listing includes the phone number.

TCP MEMBERSHIPS

A Gold Texas Conservation Passport is a \$50 annual membership with a vehicle pass good for 12 months from the month of purchase.

It gives you:

- Free entrance at parks where entrance fees are charged and one free tour every time you visit one of our historical parks. Parks charging both an entrance fee and an historical tour fee may offer either: free entrance or one free tour, but not both.
- Free subscription to the quarterly *Texas Conservation Passport Journal*.
- Special access to restricted Wildlife Management and State Natural Areas and trips to private Texas ranches.
- Discounts on adventure outings and nature tours.
- A one-year subscription to the award-winning *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine at \$8 - an offer exclusive to Gold Texas Conservation Passport members!

It's easy to join, ask for the Gold Texas Conservation Passport at:

- Your nearest Texas State Park

- Any Texas Parks and Wildlife regional law enforcement office
- Your nearest license retailer
- Call toll-free 800-895-4248, listen to the menu and press the extension for License Sales.

The Gold Texas Conservation Passport includes both a gold windshield decal and a paper license. The Gold decal is available ONLY at state parks.

- The gold windshield decal is your vehicle pass and must be permanently attached to the vehicle windshield in order to receive the free entrance benefit when entering Texas State Parks by vehicle.
- You must keep the paper license to show to the proper authorities (if necessary) when you enter Texas State Parks regardless of whether you enter in a vehicle or on foot, by bicycle, motorcycle, airplane or boat. It is your proof of purchase and not an entry permit.
- If you plan to use more than one vehicle or if you plan to use alternate means of transportation in addition to your vehicle, you will need duplicate gold windshield decals.

For member assistance and information, call 800-792-1112, listen to the menu and press the extension for Texas Conservation Passport.

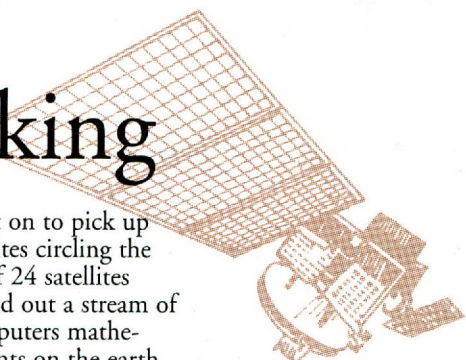


Space Age Map Making

Texas has lost a great deal of wetland habitat during the past century – habitat conservation for the next hundred years will increasingly use space age technology to protect marshlands, ponds, estuaries and all the creatures who nest, swim, eat and drink at these water sources.

When the science of placing satellites in orbit became an everyday reality, map making changed radically. Today the satellite based Global Positioning System (GPS) used by the military to pinpoint the location of ships at sea also guides TPW field scientists as they map the occurrence of natural and cultural resources. A technician with a portable, hand-held receiver that is somewhat larger

than a cell-phone turns it on to pick up digital signals from satellites circling the earth. "A constellation of 24 satellites dedicated to the GPS send out a stream of digital data that our computers mathematically interpret as points on the earth. These points are added to geo-referenced, digital aerial photographs to create maps," says Kim Ludeke, the Geographic Information Systems laboratory manager. "We have completely mapped the lower and upper Texas Gulf Coast using these and other digital technologies. It's crucial to our task of resource protection to know the geography of wetlands in relation to modern land uses."



ROB FLEMING

Texas Conservation Passport Journal

January 1999 - March 1999

Vol. 8, No. 1

Texas Parks and Wildlife

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

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We want to hear from you!
Please send your comments,
complaints and suggestions to:

Texas Conservation Passport

4200 Smith School Road

Austin, TX 78744

FAX: 512-389-8029

e-mail: passport@tpwd.state.tx.us

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PS Form 3526, September 1995 (See instructions on reverse)

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 Publication not required.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner
Sally Carter, Editor Date 10-1-98

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

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2. In cases where the stockholder or security holder is a trustee, include in items 10 and 11 the name of the person or corporation for whom the trustee is acting. Also include the name and address of individuals who are stockholders who own or hold 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities of the publishing corporation. In item 11, if none, check the box. Use blank sheets if more space is required.
3. Be sure to furnish all circulation information called for in item 15. Free circulation must be shown in items 15d, e, and f.
4. If the publication had second-class authorization as a general or requester publication, the Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published; it must be printed in any issue in October or, if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.
5. Item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
6. Item 17 must be signed.
7. Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of second-class authorization.

PS Form 3526, September 1995 (Rev. 9/95)



1999 READER SURVEY

We want to hear from you! How well does the *Texas Conservation Passport Journal* serve you? Please take a few minutes to answer our questions and then mail your completed survey back to us at: *TCP Journal*, Texas Parks and Wildlife, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744. Or you may fax your response to us at 512-389-8029. Responses will be tabulated and reported in a future issue.

Thank you in advance for your feedback – we are dedicated to providing you the information you will find most useful.

How did you receive this issue of the *Texas Conservation Passport Journal*?

- I received it in the mail
- I picked it up in a park
- I picked it up somewhere other than a park
- Passed along to me by spouse/friend

Are you are a TCP member?

- Yes
- No

How do you use the *TCP Journal*? (Check all that apply)

- To find out about events
- To schedule trips
- To try new activities
- To find out about new parks
- Other _____

Please rate your interest in the following features in this issue of the *TCP Journal*.

1 = "extremely interesting" 5 = "not at all interesting"

Una Tierra – One Land	1	2	3	4	5
Bob Spain/San Solomon Ciénega	1	2	3	4	5
Texas Birdhouse Day	1	2	3	4	5
The Big Thicket	1	2	3	4	5
Book Corner	1	2	3	4	5
Space Age Map Making	1	2	3	4	5
The Chihuahuan Desert	1	2	3	4	5

Please rate the usefulness of the travel information in this issue of the *TCP Journal*.

1 = "extremely useful" 5 = "not at all useful"

Explore the Real Texas (event lists)	1	2	3	4	5
Drive Across Texas	1	2	3	4	5
Schedule Your Own Outings	1	2	3	4	5
Passport Values	1	2	3	4	5
At Your Service	1	2	3	4	5

Other than reading the *TCP Journal*, how do you find out about outdoor recreation activities? (Check all that apply)

- Passport to Texas* Radio Show
- Internet
- TPW Web Site
- Texas Parks & Wildlife* Magazine
- Texas Parks & Wildlife* TV Show
- State Travel Guide
- Newspaper
- Outdoor Magazines _____
- Other _____

Please tell us your favorites:

- Texas State Park _____
- Texas Historical Park _____
- Texas Wildlife Management Area _____

Please check the activities in which you participated at least ONE OR MORE times during the last three months:

- Fishing, Fresh or Saltwater
- Birdwatching
- Hiking
- Paddling Sports
- Powerboating
- Sailboating
- Horseback Riding
- Outdoor Family Gatherings
- Visit Historic Sites

Biking

- Mountain Road

Camping

- Tent RV
- Cabin Screened Shelter
- Other _____

Thank you very much for your comments. Please mail this survey to us at the above address, or FAX it to 512-389-8029.



The Chihuahuan Desert

New exhibits at the Barton Warnock Center focus on the natural history of the Chihuahuan Desert. The largest and hottest of the North American deserts, it covers 175,000 square miles, stretching from New Mexico southward for 1,200 miles into north central Mexico.

BIG BEND COUNTRY

Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center Legacy in Stone - Feb. 3. See a slide program on the prehistoric and historic rock art of the Big Bend Ranch area. 2-3 p.m., fees \$3 adults, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-424-3327.

Bats of the Big Bend - Feb. 10. Gain an understanding and appreciation of these nocturnal creatures and their importance to our ecological balance. 7-8 p.m., fees \$3 adults, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-424-3327.

Star Party - Feb. 17; March 17. Stargazing in the Big Bend is a spectacular way to learn about the constellations and the universe that surrounds us. 8-10 p.m., fees \$3 adults, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-424-3327.

Edible, Medicinal and Useful Plants of the Chihuahuan Desert - Feb. 24;

March 31. Walk through the desert gardens, designed by Barton Warnock, and learn about the preparation, processing and cooking with plants from the desert. 1-2 p.m., fees \$3 adults, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-424-3327.

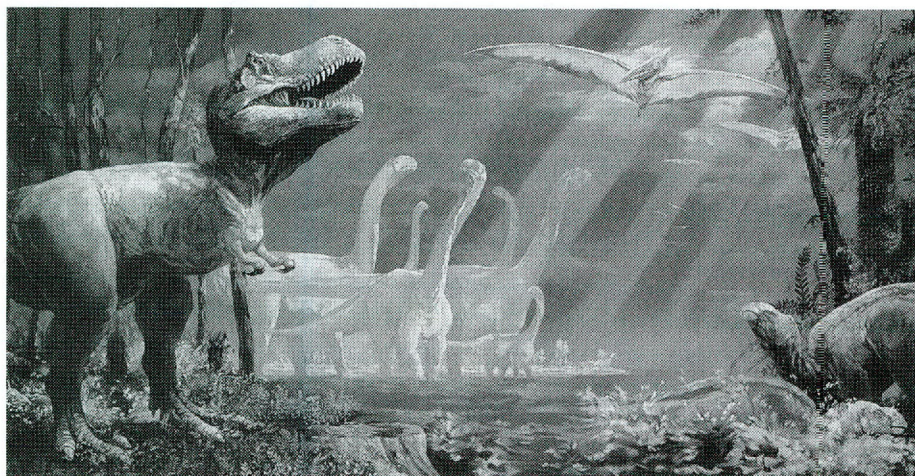
Home and Gardens for Bats - March 10. Learn about the design and construction of bat houses and their location. Plus plants that provide shelter, nectar and fruit, and attract insects for bats. 7-8 p.m., fees \$3 adults, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-424-3327.

A Geological Overview of the Big Bend - March 24. A program of the geological history that created the Big Bend's diverse landforms and scenery over the past 520 million years. 2-3 p.m., fees \$3 adults, \$1 children 12 and under, 915-424-3327.

Take our 1999 Reader Survey!
See page 15.

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Una Tierra – One Land.....	1
San Solomon Ciénega	2
Texas Birdhouse Day	3
Explore the Real Texas	4-9, 13
Big Thicket	7
Passport Values	9
Drive Across Texas	10-11
Schedule Your Own Outings	12
At Your Service	13
Space Age Map Making	14
Reader Survey	15



More than 65 million years ago a tropical swamp, alive with dinosaurs, covered the geographic area known today as the Chihuahuan Desert. A new painting by artist Karen Carr of Plano shows the ancient landscape as it may have looked when Tyrannosaurus Rex stalked the land along with duck-billed dinosaurs (Hadrosaurs) and Alamosaurus. Quetzalcoatlus, the largest flying dinosaur, ruled the sky.

TEXAS
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