

2015

# FALL *for* PARKS

TEXAS  
PARKS &  
WILDLIFE

**There's something special about fall in Texas.** The nights lengthen, the weather cools, and the mystery of nature beckons stronger than ever. Transformation is in the air, and as the sun sets, many parks transform into a celebration of the strange and spooky. Others tell stories of harvest and the history of our ancestors. Whatever it is that makes fall fun for you, you'll find it in a Texas State Park. Before attending any event, please check with the park to confirm applicable fees and charges, availability, and to ensure the event is still taking place. Visit [www.TexasStateParks.org/holidays](http://www.TexasStateParks.org/holidays) for the most up-to-date information on State Park holidays and promotions.

To find more information on state parks in general, visit [www.texasstateparks.org](http://www.texasstateparks.org) or call (800) 792-1112, option 3.

## 2015 Events by Region

### BIG BEND

#### Franklin Mountains State Park

(915) 566-6441

All hikes meet at Tom Mays Unit – West Cottonwood Springs Trailhead.



#### *Fido Fright Hike – Oct. 30, 8 a.m.*

Dog-friendly hike, part of our “Bark in the Park” series. We encourage both 2-legged and 4-legged participants to dress up for this fun pre-Halloween event. Length: 1.5 to 2 miles/1.5 to 2 hours. Trail Difficulty: moderate. Bring: Dogs, leashes, water and snacks for yourself and your pooch.

#### *Halloween Mine Tours – Oct. 31, 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.*

(Limited to 15 people per tour.) Trick or Treat for facts and sweets. Dress in costume and join us for a Halloween tour through the mines, pick up some tasty treats and learn some interesting history about the mines. Bring: water, snacks, flashlight/headlamp for mine tour, sturdy hiking shoes/boots, hiking stick, and a camera.

#### *Turkey Trot Hike – Nov. 26, 9 a.m.*

Join us for a pre-feast hike up to West Cottonwood Springs. Length: 2-3 hours, 2 miles. Difficulty level: moderate to difficult. At the summit we'll cross a wooden bridge and encounter towering cottonwood trees, a continuously dripping spring and an ecosystem all its own! Bring: water, snacks, sturdy hiking shoes/boots and green accessories; optional: hiking stick, camera, binoculars, a map.

#### **Wylers Aerial Tramway**

(915) 562-9899

#### *Last Sunday Hike: Costume Hike – Oct. 25, 8 a.m.*

We will hike 1 mile up Ranger Peak to

enjoy the view from the top, and then ride the Tramway down the mountain. Participants should bring water, hat, and sturdy shoes.

#### *Halloween Fest / Pumpkin Carving Contest – Oct. 31, noon*

All visitors are encouraged to come dressed in costume; we will have Arts in the Parks activities for the kids. Pumpkin carving contest: Contestants should bring their pumpkins ready to display by noon. Carved pumpkins will be displayed at the top station and voting will go throughout the day.

#### *Turkey Hike – Nov. 26, 8 a.m.*

We will hike 1 mile up and another mile around Ranger Peak; afterwards we will ride the Tramway back to the base of the mountain. Bring: water, hat, and sturdy shoes.

### GULF COAST

#### **Battleship Texas**

(281) 479-2431

#### *The Dark Side of Texas Tour – Oct. 31, 5 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m.*

Looking for something truly unique to do on Halloween? Have you ever



wanted to hear about the seedier side of Battleship *Texas*? This adults only tour (ages 21 and up) will take visitors through the ship after hours and share stories about the gambling, fighting, drinking, and other mischief aboard the ship! These never before heard stories are taken straight from our crewmember oral histories. Note: This is not a haunted ship tour. Ticket prices are \$50/person and include a barbecue dinner with beverages. Event sponsored and organized by the First *Texas* Volunteers and the Battleship *Texas* Foundation. Limited space available! If interested in reserving a spot, please visit [www.firsttexasvolunteers.org](http://www.firsttexasvolunteers.org).

Call (281) 479-2431 x.239 or email [BB35Curatorial@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:BB35Curatorial@tpwd.texas.gov) for more information.

### **Sheldon Lake State Park and Environmental Learning Center**

(281) 456-2800

#### ***Halloween in the Park – Oct. 17, 4–9 p.m.***

Come out for our free Halloween in the Park! Walk the 'spooky trail,' learn about nocturnal critters, play games, and see a bat from the top of the 82-foot John Jacob Observation Tower.

#### ***Prairie Plant-a-thon – Nov. 14, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.***

Join us for the annual prairie planting. Participate by helping plant over 2,000 native grasses and forbs in land that had once been used as farmland. You'll be able to get your hands dirty while helping restore a truly rare ecosystem! Pre-registration preferred.

## **HILL COUNTRY**

### **Government Canyon State Natural Area**

(210) 688-9055

#### ***Halloween Family Night at Government Canyon – Oct. 31, 6–9 p.m.***

Halloween is just around the corner, so join us for a ghoulishly fun time. Show up in your creepiest or cutest costume for our costume contest. We'll go on a spooky haunted hike; scary ghost

stories will be told; and parents are invited to bring a pumpkin for their family to carve. Space is limited; no pets please. For those little monsters who are 12 or younger, a special treat bag awaits you! Regular Natural Area entrance fees apply. Reservations required, accepted through noon, Oct. 30. Reserve online at <http://friendsofgc.org/events>. No group reservations. Include name, age if under 18, e-mail address and telephone number for each reservation. Subject to cancellation. For more information, e-mail [activities@friendsofgc.org](mailto:activities@friendsofgc.org). (210) 688-9055, ext. 2009.

### **Guadalupe River State Park**

830-438-2656

#### ***Halloween at the Park – Oct. 25, 6–8 p.m.***

The park has a night full of activities lined up for kids of all ages. Starting at 6 p.m. is the "Little Tots Trick or Treat" along the forest trail, followed by Halloween story time, perfect for kids ages 2 to 6. The "Big Spooks" haunted trail starts at 7 p.m., followed by ghost stories, for kids 7 to 12. Complimentary refreshments will be served from 7 to 8:30. \$10 flat fee per vehicle.

### **Inks Lake State Park**

(512) 793-4689

#### ***Creatures of the Night – Oct. 31, 6 p.m.***

Join park staff and volunteers who will be dressed in costume as they tell stories. Candy will be handed out at the patio area behind the park store. Kids are encouraged to join in the fun by wearing their own costumes.

### **Kickapoo Cavern State Park**

(830) 563-2342

#### ***Halloween Cave Tour – Oct. 30 and 31, 7:30 p.m.***

Join us for a haunted cave tour through Kickapoo Cavern this Halloween. Visitors will ride through our haunted cedar forest before being taken into the depths of Kickapoo Cavern by experienced guides. Cave tours will be scary, fun, and educational. Ages 5+.

### **Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site**

(830) 644-2252

#### ***Dairy Daze – Oct. 24, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.***

German festivals and fun are all around in October, so join us at the Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm to explore the many uses of milk on a 1915 German family farm. Try your hand at milking our gentle cow, then see how cheeses are made and make your own butter. See the fall farm garden and tour the historic buildings with period dressed park rangers.

#### ***Holiday Cookie Decorating and German Traditions – Nov. 28, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.***

Your family and friends will enjoy decorating cookies as it was done for a German Christmas tree in the early 1900s. Participate in other German holiday traditions such as wreath making, candle making and preparing for the arrival of St. Nicholas. It's a holiday event that all ages will enjoy.

### **McKinney Falls State Park**

(512) 415-8793

#### ***Trick or Treat Geocaching – Oct. 4, 18, and 25, 1:30 p.m.***

Take trick or treating to the next level! Use GPS units to find hidden containers full of either tricks or treats! All materials and instruction will be provided. Registration required.

#### ***Campfire Scary Stories – Oct. 23 and 29, 7 p.m.***

Join a ranger for scary stories around a campfire. Don't forget the marshmallows!

#### ***Pumpkin Painting – Oct. 24, 1 p.m.***

Bring a pumpkin to decorate. Get ready for Halloween while enjoying a nice fall day at the park.

#### ***Halloween Costume Hike – Oct. 30, 7 p.m.***

Join a ranger for an evening hike around the park. We will hunt for scorpions, look for spiders, and stargaze. Don't forget to wear your Halloween costume!



learn about these fascinating critters. Afterwards, make some crafts that can be used as Halloween decorations.

**Zombie Apocalypse Hikes – Oct. 16, 23, and 30, 6 p.m.**

Find out if you can survive the zombie apocalypse! Join a ranger on a short hike to learn some of the skills necessary to stay alive outdoors. Come in costume and earn some treats.

**Thanksgiving Dutch Oven Cooking – Nov. 21, 3–4 p.m.**

Learn how to cook a few Thanksgiving favorites using a Dutch oven. Samples will be given out.

**Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site**

(936) 878-2214

**“Henry Fanthorp’s Wake: A Look at Death and Mourning in 19th Century Texas – Oct. 10**

Discover the ceremonies and rituals of death in 19th century Texas at the beautifully restored Fanthorp Inn. Reservation only; tours begin at 7 p.m. and last approximately 50 minutes. Not recommended for children under age 10. For reservations contact [jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov) or call (936) 878-2214 ext. 224

**Twilight Firelight – Nov. 28, 4:30–7 p.m.**

Travel back in time and discover the 1850s at Fanthorp Inn! Twilight Firelight brings the old stagecoach inn to life where visitors enjoy the ambiance of the candlelit inn, period music, dancing, mule-drawn stagecoach rides and reenactors clad in period attire.

**Lake Tawakoni State Park**

(903) 560-7123

**Boo in the Park – Oct. 24, 6–8 p.m.**

The park will provide a fun and safe environment for kids of all ages to trick-or-treat. There will also be campsite decorating and pumpkin carving contests for awards (and bragging rights).

**Meridian State Park**

(254) 435-2536

**Trick-or-Treat in the Park – Oct. 31, 6–8 p.m.**

As night falls, the park comes alive with decorated campsites ready for trick-or-treaters. Overnight visitors are encouraged to decorate their campsite for Halloween, there will be a drawing from the participants for prizes. Don't forget the candy to pass out to little monsters.

**Thanksgiving Recovery Hike – Nov. 28, 10 a.m.**

Did you overdo it on the Thanksgiving feast? If so, head to the park instead of the mall and burn off some of those calories on a guided nature hike. The group will meet at the day-use area and take the 2.5 mile Bosque Hiking Trail. Regular entrance fees apply.

**Palmetto State Park**

(830) 672-3266

**Harvest Dutch Oven Cooking – Nov. 28, 10 a.m. – noon**

Join Park Rangers for a Fall Harvest demonstration of Dutch oven cooking. Explore the history of the dutch oven

and discuss the art of fire building, coal production, outdoor ovens and the difference between roasting and baking. We will make some of our Holiday favorites. This program is free with regular admission to the park.

**Stephen F. Austin State Park**

(979) 885-3613

**Halloween on Main Street – Oct. 31, 4–8 p.m.**

Stop by and visit with park staff at the State Park Booth at the 2nd Annual Boo Bash in downtown Sealy. Trick or Treat, train rides, music, and games are just a few of the activities that you'll find at this city wide celebration.

**SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS**

**Estero Llano Grande State Park**

(956) 565-3919

**9th Annual Spooky Science Fest – Oct. 24, 6–10 p.m.**

Spooky Science Fest has become a Rio Grande Valley tradition, and this year's theme promises to excite all ages: “Jurassic Estero.” Everyone knows dinosaurs went extinct long ago – or did they? Bring your family and friends of all ages to learn about these legendary reptiles. Have fun learning animal identification, archery, tracking, and fishing. There will also be a costume contest, crafts, an obstacle course, wild edibles, and much more.



Celebrate your love of camping, campfires, starry skies and everything else you love about Texas State Parks with a Conservation License Plate. Plates only cost \$30, with \$22 of it directly supporting State Park operations. [www.ConservationPlate.org](http://www.ConservationPlate.org)

**FREE ON VETERANS DAY!**

In honor of both veterans and active military, entrance fees for all visitors will be waived at all Texas State Parks on Sunday, November 8, the Sunday before Veterans Day. We appreciate your service and hope you'll make a State Park part of your celebration. Camping and other activity fees still apply.



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Life's better outside.®



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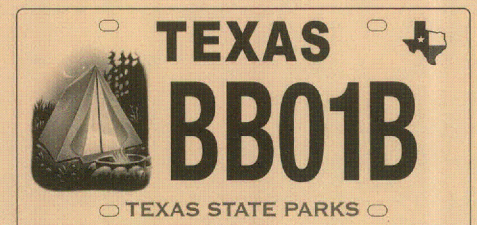
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