GENERAL INFORMATION

National parks offer a wide range of special activities for visitors. In many parks, rangers give evening programs in main camping areas at outdoor amphitheaters or around a campfire. These programs may be talks illustrated with slides, demonstrations, or movies. A program may touch on any aspect of the park—its wildlife, its plant life, its geology, its wilderness, its past, present, or future. During the day, parks also may offer other activities, such as guided hikes, nature walks, and boat trips, tours of historical sites, slide shows, films, demonstrations and talks. Some parks have special programs for children. Schedules of activities are posted at visitor centers and often at camping areas.

Entrance fees are charged at many parks. A single-visit entrance fee ranges from $3-$10 for each private, non-commercial passenger vehicle. If you plan to travel to several national parks, you may want to purchase a Golden Eagle Passport. This annual entrance permit sells for $25 and permits entrance into all national parks. Also available are park-specific annual passes that sell for $10 or $15, depending on the park. These passes are also good for one calendar year. Both the Golden Eagle and park-specific passes can be purchased at national parks where entrance fees are charged. Two other permits—the Golden Age Passport and Golden Access Passport—allow free entry into the national parks. The Golden Age Passport is a life-time entrance permit issued to any United States citizen or permanent resident age 62 or older. To receive this permit, you must present proof of age, such as a driver's license, or sign an affidavit attesting to one's eligibility. A Golden Access Passport is issued free to blind or permanently disabled persons. Applicants must present proof of disability or sign an affidavit attesting to eligibility for receiving benefits under federal law. The Golden Age and Access Passports are issued in parks where entrance fees, camping fees, or other recreation use-fees are charged. All four types of passes allow not only the holder but persons traveling in the same private, non-commercial vehicle to enter the parks free.

Accommodations, meals and miscellaneous services are provided within many National Park Service areas by concessioners. Demand often exceeds availability during the heaviest months of travel. It is advisable to make reservations well in advance. Where accommodations are not provided within the park, they are usually available in nearby communities.

Campgrounds are maintained in many areas of the National Park System. Many parks charge fees at some or all of their camping areas. Fees range from $3-$15 per night per campsite in tent and recreational vehicle campgrounds. Fees may be higher in group campsites. The Golden Age and Golden Access Passports reduce the price of staying in campgrounds by 50 percent. These price reductions do not apply to campgrounds run by concessioners who operate some camping areas in the parks.

Most campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis, but many sites are available by reservation. Depending on the camping area, reservations may be made with a park concessioner, through the Ticketron Reservation System, or, in some cases, with the park directly. Ticketron reservations can be made by stopping by in person at any of the many Ticketron outlets located throughout the United States or at the national parks on the Ticketron Reservation System.

In many parks, modifications have been made in camping areas to make them more accessible to disabled persons, especially wheelchair users or others who have difficulty walking. The extent of modification varies from park to park and from camping area to camping area.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE 75 1916 · 1991

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

The Southwest Region of the National Park Service consists of 39 park units within the states of New Mexico, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas, and northeastern Arizona. The variety of sites conveys a sense of visiting several different countries. One can chart a journey through high deserts, ancient Indian ruins, old Spanish missions, the French Quarter of New Orleans, old military forts-circa early frontier and civil war days, a seashore of endlessly shifting dunes, and a cave that takes you into the mysterious world of inner earth. Walk through unique and exquisite deposits of time, natural phenomenon and let your imagination visualize living civilizations preceding ours by thousands of years. Take time to explore, to reflect, to absorb the bombardment of color, sound and sensation in YOUR national parks.

John E Cook

Southwest Regional Director

For further information contact:
Southwest Region, National Park Service
P.O. Box 728, Santa Fe, NM 87504-0728
505/988-6012

NATIONAL PARKS IN TEXAS

SOUTHWEST REGION
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument
c/o Lake Meredith National Recreation Area
P.O. Box 1438
Fritch, TX 79036
806/857-3151

Many thousands of years ago Native Americans discovered the Alibates flint deposits exposed on the hillside over what is now Lake Meredith. This lonely hillside became the center of a prehistoric quarrying "industry." This superb, beautifully colored flint was used to make stone knives, projectile points, and other tools archeologists find throughout the southwest.

Amistad National Recreation Area
P.O. Box 420367
Del Rio, TX 78842-0367
512/775-7491

Amistad "friendship" is where the United States and Mexico cooperated to build Amistad Dam on the Rio Grande in 1969. A lake, with a 850-mile shoreline, was created that today provides a sunny playground of boating and fishing for recreation enthusiasts from Mexico and the United States.

Big Bend National Park
Big Bend National Park, Texas 79834
915/477-2251

One of the great national parks, Big Bend, is where the Rio Grande makes the "big bend" into Mexico and turns north again. Here is the Chihuahuan Desert, vast, remote, stark, and beautiful. Desert mountains contrast with the flats below, punctuated by abrupt canyons of the Rio Grande. In addition to the stunning scenery, the park celebrates the unique culture of a remote borderland.

Big Thicket National Preserve
3785 Milam
Beaumont, Texas 77701
409/839-2691

Early pioneers were in awe as they entered the dense forest they called "The Big Thicket," where the swamps of east Texas meet the plains. Those who settled there creating the region's unique culture found the "thicket" demanding, but also rewarding with an amazing diversity of plants and animals. This is nature at its richest, whether it be birds and butterflies flickering through forest dimness, riots of wildflowers, or a raccoon investigating the water's edge. The preserve has been designated a "Man and the Biosphere" by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Chamizal National Memorial
800 South San Marcial
El Paso, TX 77705
915/532-7273 (Dial 101)

The Memorial commemorates the Chamizal Convention of 1963 which resolved a conflict of nearly a century between Mexico and the United States regarding a land ownership dispute which poisoned international relations. An historical museum and films tell the history of the international border. Multicultural programs are provided weekly in the small theater, outdoor amphitheater and the Lienzo de Charros (Charreada arena).

Fort Davis National Historic Site
P.O. Box 1456
Fort Davis, TX 79734
915/426-3225

It was a key post in the West Texas defense system, guarding immigrants and tradesmen on the San Antonio-El Paso Road. Fort Davis was manned by black troops for many of the years it was active. These troops, called "Buffalo Soldiers" because of their curly hair, fought with great distinction in the Indian Wars. Henry O. Flipper, the first black graduate of West Point, served at Fort Davis in the early 1880s.

Guadalupe Mountains National Park
H.C. 60, Box 400
Salt Flat, TX 79847-9400
915/828-3251

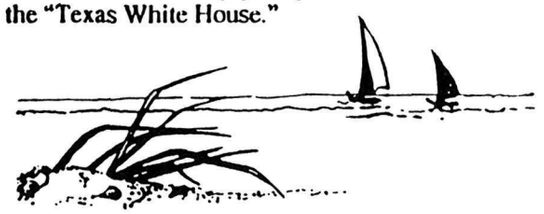
A mountain mass of Permian limestone rises abruptly from the surrounding desert and contains one of the most extensive fossil reefs on record. Deep canyons cut through this exposed fossil reef and provide a rare opportunity for geological study. Special points of interest are McKittrick Canyon, a fragile riparian environment, and Guadalupe Peak, the highest in Texas.

Lake Meredith National Recreation Area
P.O. Box 1438
Fritch, Texas 79036
806/857-3151

This 50,000-acre outdoor recreation area was established for its natural, cultural, scientific and recreation significance to the Texas Panhandle Region. It's 21,000-acre top quality reservoir provides a scenic outdoor recreation experience. The area also includes 1,200 species of plant life, 200 species of birds, 33 mammals, 3 endangered species, and just over 400 documented archeological sites.

Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park
P.O. Box 329
Johnson City, TX 78636
512/868-7128

Visit the Texas Hill Country where Lyndon Baines Johnson, 36th President of the United States, was born and grew up. Preserved here are his Birthplace, Boyhood Home, the LBJ Ranch and his pioneer ancestors' ranch headquarters. President Johnson returned here often during his 37 years of public service to rest and enjoy the place he called his home, the "Texas White House."



Padre Island National Seashore
9405 South Padre Island Drive
Corpus Christi, TX 78418-5597
512/949-8173

Noted for its wide sand beaches, excellent fishing, abundant bird and marine life, this barrier island stretches along the Gulf Coast for 67.5 miles. Padre Island is a playground and a place to see nature at its most wonderful.

Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site
c/o Southwest Region
National Park Service
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, NM 87504-0728
505/988-6340

It contains the site of the first major battle in the Mexican-American War. The battle was fought on May 8, 1846, and represents the first battle of the campaign in northeast Mexico led by General Zachary Taylor. Historical markers are located at the junction of state highways 1847 and 511. There is no site access at this time and there are no public facilities.

Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River
c/o Big Bend National Park
Big Bend National Park, TX 79835
915/477-2251

It's a 191.2-mile strip on the American shore of the Rio Grande in the Chihuahuan Desert that protects the river. It begins in Big Bend National Park and continues downstream to the Terrell-Val Verde County line.

San Antonio Missions
National Historical Park
2202 Roosevelt Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78210
512/229-5701

One of the principal institutions of settlement on Spain's northern frontier—four Spanish Colonial Missions, Concepcion, San Jose, San Juan and Espada along with the Espada dam and aqueduct, two of the best preserved remains of the Spanish Colonial irrigation system in the United States, are physical reminders of a glorious chapter in Spanish Colonial history. All were crucial elements to Spanish settlement on the Texas frontier. When Franciscan attempts to establish a chain of missions in East Texas in the late 1600s failed, the Spanish Crown ordered the missions transferred to the lush valley of the San Antonio River in 1731, where they flourished until secularization in 1824.