



The official newspaper  
of Big Bend National Park &  
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River  
Volume 25, No. 2 Fall 2004

# The Big Bend Paisano

Natt Dodge



View from the south rim of the Chisos, April 1945

## Texas' Gift to the Nation

WELCOME TO BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK AND THE RIO GRANDE WILD & SCENIC RIVER! Big Bend is one of the largest and least visited of America's national parks. Over 800,000 acres await your exploration and enjoyment. From an elevation of less than 2,000 feet along the Rio Grande to nearly 8,000 feet in the Chisos Mountains, Big Bend includes massive canyons, vast desert expanses, and the entire Chisos Mountain range. Here, you can explore one of the last remaining wild corners of the United States, and experience unmatched sights, sounds, and solitude.



received the deed to the Big Bend property on D-Day, June 6, 1944. One week later the transfer became official, and in July 1944 the park opened to visitors.

The new park was the culmination of efforts by many people throughout the state of Texas. Texans had helped to promote the park idea, raise funds to purchase privately owned lands, and in the CCC camp in the future park, young Texans built roads and facilities. The donation of the lands to create the park, and the many efforts made to ensure that Big Bend National Park came into being, led the park to be known as "Texas' Gift to the Nation."

Established in 1944, Big Bend National Park was the first national park service area in the state of Texas. Following a nine year process of land acquisition during the Depression, President Roosevelt

In this issue of the Big Bend Paisano, we explore the past, present and future of Big Bend National Park.

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## Visiting Big Bend - Then and Now

When Big Bend opened to visitors at the beginning of July 1944, available facilities for the potential visitor were primitive in the extreme. In fact, the first park brochure advised that, "those who wish to visit the park... should be prepared to camp, bringing their own food, bedding, and tents." While over 100 miles of roads allowed access to various points in the park, none of it would be paved until the 1950s. One writer even cautioned that "with meager accommodations... as well as there being the necessity to bring in one's rations, the prospective visitor to Big Bend will wisely bide his time."

In the past sixty years Big Bend has balanced developments for visitors with protecting park resources. While a visit to the park today includes amenities such as electricity and paved roads, in many ways, Big Bend is still as remote and magnificent a place today as it was in the 1940s.



Entrance Sign at Persimmon Gap, late 1940s.

	1944	2004
<b>Park Superintendent</b>	Ross Maxwell served as first Superintendent from 1944-1952.	John H. King is the 14th Superintendent of Big Bend.
<b>Acreage</b>	697,684 acres with 15,236 acres still to be purchased.	801,163 acres.
<b>Number of Employees</b>	5: Superintendent, Chief Ranger, Clerk, Foreman, & a Laborer.	92 permanent and 45 seasonal employees in five divisions.
<b>Annual Budget</b>	\$15,000	\$4,995,000.00 (Fiscal Year 2004)
<b>Interpretive Programs</b>	Regularly scheduled interpretive programs would not begin until 1947.	In 2003, park rangers presented 662 programs to 12,775 visitors.
<b>Lodge Facilities</b>	Four cottages built by the CCC; additional facilities would be built in 1946.	The Chisos Mountains Lodge has a total of 72 rooms, including the CCC Cottages.
<b>Number of Visitors</b>	1,409	314,747 visitors in 2003
<b>Park Headquarters</b>	Park headquarters and staff housing were located in the former CCC camp in the Chisos Basin.	Park headquarters and staff housing is located at Panther Junction.
<b>Livestock</b>	Approximately 38,000 head of cattle, goats, sheep, and horses remained in the park through 1945.	Approximately 100 head of "Trespass Livestock"- burros, mules, and horses from across the border that reside in the park.

### IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Park Rangers are available to provide assistance. Dial 911 or (432) 477-2251

Phones are located at:  
visitor centers,  
campgrounds,  
Camper Stores, and the  
Chisos Mountains Lodge.




The Paisano is published by the National Park Service and the Big Bend Natural History Association for the orientation and education of visitors to Big Bend National Park

**National Park Service**


Editor, Eric Leonard, Park Ranger  
Chief Naturalist, David Elkowitz  
Superintendent, John H. King

**Big Bend Natural History Association**

Executive Director, Mike Boren  
Sales Manager, Sarah Bourbon  
Assistant Sales Manager, Barbara Hines  
Visitor Services Assistant, Anita Johnson



The National Park Service was established on August 25, 1916. . . "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild-life. . . and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." As conservation educators, the Division of Interpretation provides guided walks, talks, evening slide programs, workshops, and other educational activities as well as written materials such as this newspaper.



The Big Bend Natural History Association, established in 1956 as a private, non-profit organization, champions the mission of the National Park Service in facilitating popular interpretation of the scenic, scientific, and historic values of Big Bend and encourages research related to those values. The Association conducts seminars and publishes, prints, or otherwise provides books, maps, and interpretive materials on the Big Bend region. Proceeds fund exhibits, films, interpretive programs, seminars, museum activities, and research.

On matters relating to this publication:  
National Park Service  
Editor, The Big Bend Paisano  
PO Box 129  
Big Bend National Park, TX 79834  
eric\_leonard@nps.gov

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

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Mail check or money order payable to Big Bend Natural History Assoc. to The Big Bend Paisano, P.O. Box 196, Big Bend National Park, TX 79834. Or call 432-477-2236

**Superintendent's Welcome**

**Welcome to YOUR Park**

Welcome to Big Bend National Park and the Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River, two premier units of our nation's National Park System. We hope you have a wonderful time as you explore and experience these great parks.

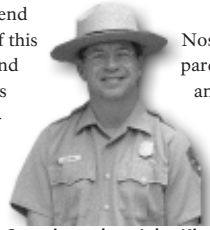
Your visit comes at a special time in the history of Big Bend National Park. We're celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this special place during 2004. Congress established Big Bend as the nation's 27<sup>th</sup> national park on June 12, 1944. It was then, and is now, one of the most beautiful and ecologically diverse parks in the country.

Big Bend NP is often referred to as being "three parks in one" because of the three very distinct environments found here – the Chihuahuan Desert, the Chisos Mountains, and the Rio Grande corridor. These different areas of the park provide tremendous diversity in terms of elevation, climate, scenery, wildlife, vegetative communities, and recreational experiences and opportunities. Be sure to sample some of each during your time with us.

National parks like Big Bend belong to us all, and as such we have a shared stewardship of these special places. Please be mindful of that as you spend time in YOUR national park. Leave only footprints and take only memories.

Experience Your America!

*John H. King*  
John H. King, Superintendent



Superintendent John King

**Bienvenidos**

Bienvenidos al Parque Nacional Big Bend y al Natural y Escénico Río Grande, dos unidades memorables del sistema de parques nacionales estadounidense. Esperamos que tenga una visita maravillosa mientras que usted aproveche la oportunidad de explorar y gozar de estos asombrosos parques.

Nos visita durante un tiempo importante en la historia del parque nacional Big Bend. En 2004 celebramos el 60<sup>o</sup> aniversario de este lugar especial. El congreso estadounidense designo Big Bend como el 27<sup>o</sup> parque nacional en el 12 de junio, 1944. Fue, y todavía es, uno de los parques mas hermosos y diversos ecológicamente en el país.

Muchas veces se refiere al parque nacional Big Bend como "tres parques en uno" porque contiene tres medio ambientes distintos – el desierto Chihuahuense, las montañas Chisos, y el Río Grande. Estas diferentes áreas del parque proveen una diversidad tremenda en términos de elevación, clima, paisajes, vida silvestre, comunidades botánicas, y oportunidades para el recreo. Asegúrese de explorar cada área durante su visita.

Los parques nacionales pertenecen a todos nosotros y en sí repartimos el papel de ser guardián de estos lugares especiales. Sea atento a eso durante su paseo en SU parque. Deje solamente rastros, tome solamente memorias.

¡Explore su América!

*John H. King*  
John H. King, Superintendent

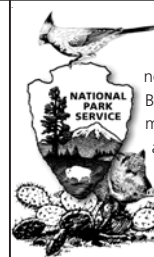


**Volunteer Honor Roll**

Each year, volunteers contribute thousands of hours to the National Park Service. A vital supplement to paid staff, volunteers bring special skills, dedication, and fresh approaches to our work in interpretation, visitor protection, maintenance, administration, and resource management.

Join us in thanking the following individuals and organizations who have recently donated 100 or more hours in volunteer service to Big Bend:

- |                          |                       |                         |                         |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Madeline Averett         | Steve Harper          | Greg Levandoski         | Rod Wetmore             |
| Barbara and Bill Baldwin | Tim Hanks             | Jack Norton             | Kay White               |
| Judy Brinkerhoff         | Bob Herendeen         | Dana and Les Over       | Steve Wick              |
| Norma and Lloyd Burgi    | Whit Hibbard          | Terry Purvis            | Clara and George Willis |
| Denise and John Curd     | Sue and Bob Hostetter | Dori and Tom Ramsay     | Priscilla Wiggins       |
| Nancy Daniel             | Don Janes             | Ingrid and Bernie Sampo | Scarlett and Bob Wirt   |
| John Davies              | Sally and Bob Jones   | Samantha Schroeder      | Reine Wonite            |
| Nancy Dickerson          | Gail and John Kamaras | Bob Shuler              |                         |
| Ken Fields               | Mark Kirtley          | Sierra Club             |                         |
| Kay and Rich Gordon      | Joan and Jack Lamkin  | Allison Taylor          |                         |



**Did You know:**

Park animals are wild. Do not feed or approach any of Big Bend's wildlife. Enjoy animals at a safe distance and allow them to find their own natural foods.

Do not remove any natural objects from the park, including rocks, cactus, reptiles, and fossils. Collecting specimens of any kind or defacing park features deprives other visitors. Leave everything as you found it for others to enjoy. If you must collect, pick up litter!

All bicycles, including mountain bikes, must remain on paved or unpaved roads. They are not allowed on hiking trails or off-road.

Motor vehicles must be licensed and street-legal. All motor vehicles must stay on established roadways open to public travel.

**It's Up to You...**

National parks have been described as the crown jewels of the United States. While enjoying the beauty of Big Bend National Park, please remember that few other nations have parks that can compare to those of the United States. They are something to be proud of. They are something to preserve.

The protection of Big Bend National Park is ultimately in the hands of the people who visit it. Your cooperation with park rules is one way to help ensure the park's survival.

Please, treat **your** park with care.



Spring Volunteers at the annual awards banquet



The Big Bend Natural History Association is a non-profit organization established to support the park's educational and scientific programs. BBNHA also publishes and distributes books, maps, guides, newspapers and other materials designed to enhance visitors' enjoyment and understanding of Big Bend National Park.

You've heard of the perfect storm, a coincidental combination of climatic conditions than results in a rare and dangerous large-scale storm, but we seem to make much less of a more common phenomenon, perfect weather. While we have our share of perfect weather in Big Bend National Park, we're also currently experiencing another delightful phenomenon: perfect cooperation.

Under Superintendent John King, the man who brought the rain back to Big Bend, we've made great progress toward a coherent strategy to secure much-needed assistance for the park we love. In the past

year, we've formed a partnership council that meets quarterly to discuss ways in which the park's partners can combine and enhance their efforts to help the park. Members of the council are Big Bend Natural History Association, Forever Resorts, Friends of Big Bend National Park, the San Vicente Independent School District, and the National Park Service. Our meetings are already showing positive results, and recently BBNHA and FBBNP met with Superintendent King to discuss a fundraising strategy for the park. With their new executive director onboard, FBBNP will take the lead in fundraising and friend-raising and BBNHA will provide administrative support

for those efforts. The NPS is also working on phase two of the Business Plan Initiative, with talented graduate students Alex McIntosh of Yale and Jennifer Bollen of Emory working hard to help the park focus their efforts, increase efficiency, and make the most of tightening federal budgets.

Speaking for all the members of the partnership council, I'd like to thank you for your support of Big Bend National Park and encourage you to support the partners that support your park.

*Mike Boren*  
Mike Boren, Executive Director

## Seminars

Spend some quality time with an expert on Big Bend birds, tracks, black bears, dinosaurs, geology, and much more with our Natural History Seminars Program. Now in its 16th year, the immensely popular program sponsored by BBNHA continues to grow and improve.

There are still slots available for the fall sessions. Sign up today!

### Fall 2004 Seminar Schedule

<b>August 12-15</b>	<b>First Annual Big Bend Nature Festival</b>
<b>Sept. 25-26</b>	<b>Birding in Big Bend</b>
<i>Mark Adams</i>	
<b>October 10</b>	<b>Lodge and Learn: Big Bend History</b>
<i>Sam Richardson</i>	
<b>October 16</b>	<b>Big Bend Star Party</b>
<i>Carl Frisch</i>	
<b>October 30</b>	<b>Landscaping with Native Plants</b>
<i>Patricia Manning</i>	
<b>October 31</b>	<b>When Dinosaurs Ruled</b>
<i>Don Corrick</i>	
<b>November 14</b>	<b>Tracking in the Desert</b>
<i>Robert Haynes</i>	
<b>November 20</b>	<b>Geology Jeep Tour</b>
<i>Bill Bourbon</i>	
<b>November 21</b>	<b>Black Bear Recovery</b>
<i>Raymond Skiles</i>	
<b>December 5</b>	<b>Rock Art in Big Bend</b>
<i>Bob Hext</i>	

Average cost for a seminar is \$50 per day with most seminars running 1-2 days. Class size is limited to 15 participants to ensure individualized instruction. Seminar participants may also take advantage of free camping in one of Big Bend's group campgrounds.

To register for a seminar or to receive a complete catalog, contact us at PO Box 196, Big Bend National Park, TX, 79834 or call 432-477-2236. You may also e-mail us at [bibe\\_bbnha@nps.gov](mailto:bibe_bbnha@nps.gov)

## Featured Publications

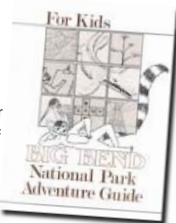
Have a hunger for the desert? Take a bite out of our great selection of books and publications. Our bookstores offer a wealth of books, maps, checklists, and field guides carefully selected to help you enjoy your visit to Big Bend National Park.

Stop by any visitor center, or order these online at [bigbendbookstore.org](http://bigbendbookstore.org)



### Big Bend Adventure Guide

Children who have completed the Junior Ranger program will find the Big Bend Adventure Guide of interest! An educational tool and a hedge against boredom, this 29-page black-and-white book is crammed with puzzles, games, and information about Big Bend. \$2.00.



### The Story of Big Bend National Park

A comprehensive, highly readable history of the park from before its founding in 1944 up to the present. Topics range from a fascinating look at the mighty efforts involved in persuading Washington officials and local landowners that such a park was needed to how the park was publicized and developed for visitors. Current issues such as natural resource management, predator protection in the park, and challenges to land, water, and air. 196 pages. \$13.95



### For All Seasons

#### A Big Bend Journal



Ro Wauer worked as Chief Park Naturalist from 1966 to 1972 and has visited the park frequently ever since. His journal entries span these thirty years, providing not only a composite portrait of a typical year but also a clear sense of how the park's natural history has changed over three decades. He spices his account with anecdotes, ranging from stumbling across a herd of javelinas to being trailed by a mountain lion in the dark to discovering new species of plants and animals. 208 pages. \$19.95.

### National Park Ranger

#### An American Icon



In this celebration of one of America's most enduring symbols, former ranger Butch Farabee briefly reviews the evolution of this national symbol. Packed with entertaining anecdotes and illustrated with over 100 archival photographs, this book not only provides fascinating insight into the diversity of roles a park ranger must play, but also honors the unique people dedicated to guarding and maintaining this country's irreplaceable treasures. 180 pages. \$18.95

## Big Bend and the Border

Viewing the sun set against the Sierra del Carmen mountains is a sublime Big Bend experience, underlined by the irony that the mountains aren't a part of the National Park; in fact, they aren't even located in the United States. In addition to defining the curve that forms the Big Bend, the Rio Grande also serves as the International boundary between the United States and Mexico.

Throughout much of its history the border along the Rio Grande has often been fluid, allowing people of both countries to come and go as needed. However, the border is an artificial boundary imposed on the natural environment, and as such is subject to political and social pressures.

Increased border restrictions following the 2001 terrorist attacks have led to a number of important changes that affect the international boundary in Big Bend. The information below provides a summary of current conditions.

### Border Merchants

Mexican Nationals may approach you from across the river to purchase souvenir items (walking sticks, bracelets, crafts, etc.). If you agree to look at/purchase their items and the Mexicans cross the river, they may be arrested for being in the U.S. illegally. They will be held until deported back to Mexico through Presidio (100 miles away). Mexican merchants will be arrested for illegal commercial operations which may result in a fine and/or additional incarceration while awaiting adjudication prior to deportation.

Items purchased will be considered contraband and seized by officers when encountered. Rocks, minerals, archeological items etc. cannot be purchased, imported, or possessed in the national park.

In addition, illegal trade impacts the resources of the park in a number of negative ways, including the creation of social trails, the cutting of cane along the river, erosion of riverbanks and an increased amount of garbage and contaminants along the Rio Grande watershed. Supporting this illegal activity contributes to continued damage of the natural resources along the Rio Grande, and jeopardizes the possibility of reopening these crossings in the future.

### While Visiting A Border Park

Big Bend National Park shares the border with Mexico for 110 miles. This is a remote region; however, each year hundreds of people travel north through the area seeking to enter the United States. Please keep the following in mind while visiting Big Bend:



If you see any activity which seems to be suspicious, illegal, or out of place please do not intervene. Report it to a ranger as quickly as possible.



It is possible you could encounter an individual or small group trying to walk through the park with little or no water. Please do not stop, but instead, immediately report such occurrences to a ranger. Lack of water is a life-threatening emergency in the desert.

A visit to Big Bend is a wonderful experience to learn about the park's history and to experience a wide variety of natural history and recreation options. The park's shared border with Mexico is part of our shared landscape and a chance to experience and learn about our neighbors. A few simple steps can help keep the park safe for everyone who is here.



### Crossings Remain Closed

As a result of a 2002 US Customs and Border Protection decision, there are NO authorized crossings in Big Bend NP.

*Crossing at Boquillas, Santa Elena, or other locations along the Rio Grande is prohibited.* The closest legal ports of entry are at Del Rio and Presidio, Texas.

The U.S. Attorney's Office has indicated that it will prosecute any criminal violations regarding these illegal crossings. If you re-enter the United States at any point within Big Bend National Park, you may be liable for a fine of not more than \$5,000 or imprisonment for up to one year, or both.

Please consult Park Rangers for the latest updates on this situation.

## Stranded?

### Four things to do if your vehicle breaks down in Big Bend National Park.

1. Park in a safe location, out of the traffic lane and where you are visible to oncoming traffic. Put the hood up and hazard lights on.
2. Have a note ready with your exact location, vehicle description, license plate number, name, number of people with you & your problem. A passing visitor can take this to the nearest ranger station and this will expedite your rescue.
3. Never try to walk for help, on the road or cross-country. Stay with your vehicle. If, however, someone offers you a ride and you choose to leave your vehicle, leave a detailed note on your car explaining where you have gone, time & date, what you believe the problem is, and how to locate you.



A. Pasco

4. Try your cell phone; it may work. Park Dispatch can be reached at 432-477-1188. After hours, 911 is available 24 hrs a day. They will dispatch a ranger to you.

## Entrance Fees & Big Bend

### Why Do Parks Charge An Entrance Fee?

Much of the funding for Big Bend and other national parks comes from American taxpayers. However, protecting this land and ensuring that you have a safe, enjoyable and educational experience costs more than this tax base provides. Therefore, the U.S. Congress determined that people who use federal lands should pay fees to offset the difference.

### Where Does Your Money Go?

Twenty percent of the money collected from entrance and campground fees is redistributed to units of the National Park System that do not charge fees to assist in the upkeep and upgrade of those areas. Eighty percent of the money *stays in Big Bend National Park.*



### How Is Your Money Used?

Your entrance and campground fees help Big Bend National Park complete important projects that directly benefit you and other park visitors.

### Recent Projects at Big Bend Made Possible By Your Fees:

- Reconstruction of the Rio Grande Village (RGV) nature trail boardwalk
- Improvements to the Persimmon Gap Visitor Center
- Installation of toilet at Hot Springs

### Future Projects:

- Rehabilitate the RGV Amphitheater
- Develop a visitor center at Castolon
- Major expansion of the Panther Junction visitor center.

## Surf Big Bend

Official NPS Website



- Live Web-cam
- Daily Weather
- River Levels
- Campgrounds Research
- Backcountry Park Maps
- Press Releases
- Road Conditions
- Ranger Programs
- What's Blooming?
- Bird Sightings
- Photo Gallery

...and more!

[www.nps.gov/bibe](http://www.nps.gov/bibe)

A. Baker

# “The Men Who Built the Parks”

## The Civilian Conservation Corps in Big Bend

Ranger Mary K. Manning



*Wake up at 5 am. Roll call and calisthenics at 5:30 am, followed by breakfast at 6:30 am. Work all day to the sounds of picks and shovels. Lights out at 9 pm.*

Was this the schedule for military troops stationed at Glenn Springs or Castolon? A prison work crew? Not quite. This was the daily routine followed by “The Men Who Built the Parks,” or the Civilian Conservation Corps. While this year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Big Bend National Park, it also marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the CCC in what was then called Big Bend State Park. The first CCC crew arrived in the Chisos Basin in May 1934. Local communities welcomed their arrival, as they anticipated that the improvements made in the park by these young men would bring tourist dollars to the area.

To see what the CCC accomplished here, you only have to drive into the Chisos Basin. In 1934, a primitive road led partway up to the Chisos Mountains, roughly to where mile marker 4 is today. From there, a livestock trail led the rest of the way into the Basin. Work crews moved 40,000 cubic yards of earth and 5,000 yards of solid rock, and built 17 masonry culverts, using only hand tools and a dump truck, to construct a passable road into the Basin. They built the stone cabins, now available for visitors through the park concessionaire, and laid out the Window Trail, the Lost Mine Trail, and the trails leading to the South Rim.

Who were these men who worked so hard to build our parks? Officially, they were required to be able-bodied men between the ages of 17 and 25, from families that were below a certain income level (although several younger men later admitted to lying about their age in order to get in). They took up President Franklin Roosevelt’s cause to work in the state and national parks and forests across the nation, developing roads, trails, campgrounds, lodges, and other improvements to make them more accessible to the public. For this work they received \$30 per month, with \$25 of it going to their families.

Most men gained more than monetary compensation, as well. Some learned valuable job skills, such as masonry and vehicle maintenance, which helped them get jobs in other places after leaving the Corps. Many camps employed teachers to work with interested young men in the evenings, helping them catch up on the education they may have missed while trying to support their families during the Depression. Several who worked in Big Bend also mentioned the good food available in camp, something they didn’t have at home during those lean times. Enrollee Roscoe Bowers recalls, “They had surprisingly good food. I weighed 145 pounds when I arrived, and 175 pounds when I left!”

While they worked hard during the week, the young men also found time to enjoy their surroundings on their days off. Enrollee Roscoe Weaver remembers, “I think I climbed every mountain out there. Explored all of them...Sometimes we went swimming at the mouth of Santa Elena Canyon. There was a big deep hole, right in the mouth of the canyon.” The camp kept some horses, and some of the men bought their own horses and kept them there. Weaver recalls, “We rode every chance we got.” The camp also had a recreation hall with pool tables, ping pong tables, and card tables, and they sometimes showed movies.

These “Men Who Built the Parks” left an indelible mark on parks and forests across the country, and millions of people still enjoy their work today, seventy years later. The time and effort that these young men spent in these areas certainly shaped them as well. Roscoe Weaver probably echoes the sentiments of many CCC workers when he said, “I grew up in there. I went from a kid to a man, where I could hold down a job and really make it on my own...The CCC kept a lot of boys from leading criminal lives, stealing and things like that. Because it was so hard to make it (during the Depression), I think a lot of them would have done that if they hadn’t gotten in the CCC...That was, I think, the best program they ever had in this country.”



CCC enrollee Roscoe Bowers and his truck “Baby Buggy”

## The “Father” of Big Bend

Chief Naturalist David Elkowitz

Everett Townsend is credited as being the first person to suggest protecting the Big Bend area as a national park and is remembered today as “The Father of Big Bend National Park.” Also credited with the park’s legislative origins, Townsend had the vision to dream and the determination to work tirelessly for many years and through many setbacks before seeing his dream become a reality.

Everett Ewing Townsend was born in 1871 and moved to Texas with his parents at age 10. In 1891 he joined the Texas rangers at age 19, but overstated his age as 21 on the application. Then, in 1894 Townsend served with the U.S. Customs Service along the border. The Texas Rangers and U. S. Customs Service provided the young Townsend with unparalleled opportunities for adven-

ture, as well as a chance for exploration of the Big Bend country from horseback. Townsend would see the beauty and mystery of the Big Bend first hand and begin planning. He became enamored of the land’s beauty, thus beginning a lifelong dream of seeing the Far West Texas area protected as a national park.

In 1918 Townsend was elected Brewster County Sheriff. This, combined with his previous positions of authority, led to his election as a state legislative representative in 1932. While in this capacity he and State Representative R. M. Wagstaff introduced House Bill number 771 to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Texas legislature. This bill created Texas Canyons



State Park – almost a decade later to be expanded into Big Bend National Park.

Townsend’s contributions in the years leading up to

the creation of the national park were numerous. His early efforts included investigating water sources necessary to bring the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to the Chisos Basin. A water source of five gallons per minute was needed for the approval of the CCC camp, and Townsend’s efforts with the Alpine Chamber led to the discovery of an eight gallon per minute well. This early effort secured the CCC to build roads, facilities, scientific studies and much more re-

quired for a future national park. Other contributions by Townsend included fundraising campaigns, legislative wrangling, political lobbying, VIP tours, numerous promotional efforts, and much more. Townsend was up to the task in every way, including writing a personal appeal to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) for support of the Big Bend park idea. FDR in turn wrote the Governor of Texas in support of creating the future park.

Townsend’s own words perhaps speak best to the level of commitment and hope that he maintained through the many challenges to see Texas’ first national park created in 1944. Townsend said, “My heart is in this project,” and “I am ready to do my best no matter whether I am off or on the payroll.” This Townsend would indeed do. In Townsend’s final years he would serve as the park’s first U.S. commissioner for the Big Bend. A fitting tribute to a person who worked so long and hard to see the park’s creation.

# Sixty Years of Botanical Exploration in Big Bend

Park Botanist Joe Sirotnak

The Chisos Mountains, with their high diversity and sky-island habitat, have historically attracted many amateur and professional naturalists. Despite the remote location and difficult access of this rugged mountain range, the majority of the plant species in the Chisos were well-documented by the founding of the National Park sixty years ago. As far back as 1885, pioneering botanist V. Havard recognized the unique character of the Big Bend flora and described many species previously unknown and endemic to the region. In fact, the efforts of these early naturalists, including Omer Sperry, C.H. Mueller, and E.G. Marsh, helped clarify the importance of protecting the diversity of the region by creating Big Bend National Park.

In the past sixty years, the park staff and cooperating scientists have built upon this knowledge base. In the 1950s and 60s, Barton Warnock, the longtime botanist at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas, was instrumental in documenting plant species occurrence and habitat requirements and establishing long-term ecological monitoring plots in the park. Park staff use these data to design and implement restoration and conservation projects to maintain the fantastic diversity of life in the Big Bend. Current projects include grassland restoration in the Harte Ranch area, fostering riparian recovery at upland springs, weed control and re-establishment of native plant

communities in disturbed areas, and the cautious re-introduction of fire as an ecosystem process in grasslands and woodlands.

Park Biologists are currently mapping rare, endemic, and threatened plants parkwide. We use these data to protect existing known populations and to define habitat conditions of rare plants. In 2004, we are focusing on orchids. At least nine species of orchid occur in the park, with seven species being considered rare or very rare. Several species of saprophytic coralroot occur only in a few mountain ranges in Trans-Pecos Texas and adjacent Mexico. Big Bend National Park is one of the only protected areas in the Chihuahuan Desert that supports such orchid diversity. Recently, the rare plant mapping project uncovered a rare gem that had not been seen in the U.S. since 1931 – the Hidalgo ladies-tresses. Knowledge of the location and habitat of this and other rare plants allows us to prevent accidental disturbance of populations and to make decisions about the appropriate use of wildland fire in these systems.

Knowledge is power. Big Bend National Park is committed to using the ecological knowledge, and associated decision-making power, accumulated by dedicated staff and scientists, to protect these fragile ecosystems for the next sixty years and onward.



Hidalgo ladies-tresses (Deirigyne confusa)

## Wilderness or Not?

Ranger Angelina Yost

D. Rasch

Big Bend conjures images of vast open spaces, miles of land seemingly undisturbed by humans and available for visitors to explore and discover. This sense of wilderness is one of the most important resources recognized by visitors to Big Bend National Park. Indeed, Congress acknowledged the importance of this wilderness experience in 1964 when it passed the Wilderness Act:

*“In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness.”*

The Wilderness Act ensures the strongest conservation protection possible to selected areas of public lands. Of all the federal agencies, the NPS has the strictest conservation management policy. Is it necessary to place additional wilderness protection designation on lands with the NPS? The NPS is constantly conducting a challenging balancing act between protecting resources and providing access to those resources for visitors. This dilemma is well illustrated if you look at the history of wilderness in Big Bend.

The demand for improvements in our national parks increased as visitation in the 1940-50's reached record levels. An NPS funding strategy to complete these maintenance projects by 1966 was called “Mission 66.” In Big Bend National Park, this program included improving and building roads, trails, bridges, campsites, a lodge, a restaurant and cabins. These improvements finally produced the influx of visitors that had been promised to the West Texas communities since the park's establishment. However, the NPS was concerned about the impact of these visitors, especially the concentration of impact in the Chisos Basin. As a result, the NPS drafted a master plan in 1971 to limit the use of the Basin, and recommended that 79% of Big Bend National Park, or 559,600 acres, of the Park's 801,163 acres be designated as wilderness.

While receiving healthy revenue from increased tourism, some members of the communities surrounding the park opposed these new plans, fearing they would limit tourist opportunities. This view was voiced to local representatives. Therefore, al-

though Big Bend's Wilderness Proposal had been forwarded to Congress in 1978, it was withdrawn because of larger public debate about the designation. However, the NPS is mandated to manage land that is “proposed wilderness” as if it is wilderness, since there is a possibility that the designation may change in the future. For example, the NPS manages Big Bend's proposed wilderness areas by setting carrying capacities limiting overnight use in a given area, and by refraining from building campgrounds or other facilities in wilderness.

Ironically, for many visitors, Big Bend has a stronger “sense of wilderness” than many other public lands, which are officially designated wilderness. Here a person can walk for hours, or days, without seeing another soul. Every roadside pullout offers a panoramic vista with apparently no sign of man as far as the eye can see. Indeed, Big Bend seems to fit the description of a wilderness as defined in the Wilderness Act: *“A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”*

Since the 1970's, most of Big Bend has been managed as if it were wilderness, and this does not seem to have hindered the local tourist economy. Actually, this “sense of wilderness” ends up being one of Big Bend's major attractions.

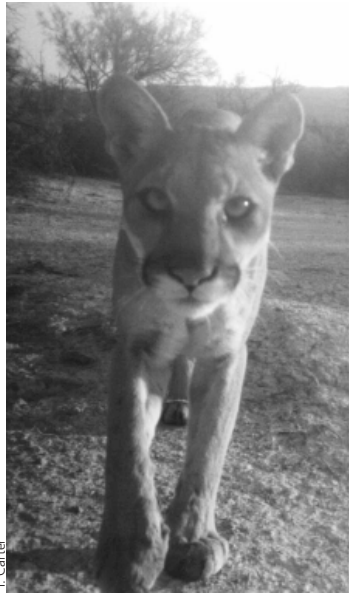
In Big Bend, people will find large areas of the park where a diversity of plants and animals, living naturally, are undisturbed by the developed areas. They will find the opportunity to let go of the modern technology of our world, and seek silence and solitude. They will find that history seems to be frozen in time. But these special areas cannot maintain these qualities without the support of concerned, activated citizenry who value wilderness. In the words of President Lyndon B. Johnson, as he signed the Wilderness Act in 1964, “If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them something more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning...” As we celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act, and the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of Big Bend National Park, why not honor your wilderness experience by helping to ensure that these tracts of preserved wilderness are a part of our legacy to the future too.

## Mountain Lion Country

IF BIG BEND HAD A SYMBOL, IT MIGHT WELL BE THE MOUNTAIN LION—the embodiment of freedom and wildness. Solitary and secretive, this mighty creature is the unquestioned lord of its natural world. As one of Big Bend's top predators, *Felis concolor*—"cat all of one color"—is vital in maintaining the park's biological diversity. Within the delicate habitats of the Chihuahuan Desert, mountain lions help balance herbivores (animals that eat plants) and vegetation. Research shows that cats help keep deer and javelina within the limits of their food resources. Without lions, the complex network of life in Big Bend would certainly be changed.

Encountering a mountain lion, however, can lead to conflicts in maintaining the balance between natural processes and visitor enjoyment and safety. Since the 1950s, there have been more than 800 sightings of mountain lions by visitors. While over 90 percent of these sightings were along park roadways, encounters along trails have also occurred. Since 1984, four lion and human encounters have resulted in attacks on people. In all cases, those attacked recovered from their injuries and the aggressive lions were killed, preventing them from playing out their important natural roles. The more we know about lions, and the less we seek an encounter, the better able we will be to make life easier for them and for us.

How much do you really know about this powerful and wild cat? Mountain lions live throughout the park, including the Chisos Mountains where they prefer to use trails. Your chances of encountering an aggressive lion are remote. What can you do to minimize the consequences of an encounter? Avoid hiking alone or at dusk or dawn. Watch children closely; never let them run ahead of you.



### NEVER RUN FROM A LION!

Do not crouch down; the lion has seen you long before you saw it.

Hold your ground, wave your hands, shout! If the lion behaves aggressively, throw stones.

Convince the lion that you are not prey and that you may be dangerous yourself.

If you have small children with you, pick them up and do all you can to appear large.

Report all lion sightings to a park ranger.

The lion's role is a part of the health and welfare of the entire ecosystem. Research and further human understanding of the cat's habits pave the way for conservation efforts in its behalf. As we discover more about the lion, we fear it less and appreciate it more. For many visitors, just seeing a track, or just knowing lions are out there, will be reward enough.

## Black Bears

THE RETURN OF BLACK BEARS TO BIG BEND National Park is a success story for both the bears and the park. Native to the Chisos Mountains, bears disappeared from this area during the pre-park settlement era. After an absence of several decades, bears began returning to the park from Mexico in the early 1990s.

Today, wildlife biologists estimate that up to 12 black bears may live in the park. Though they prefer the wooded Chisos Mountains, bears also range along the Rio Grande and through - out the desert, particularly when drought dries up their regular water sources in the mountains.

Black bears are omnivorous. They eat large amounts of nuts, fruits, sotol and yucca hearts, insects, and smaller quantities of eggs, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, honey, and carrion. Their strong sense of smell also leads them to human foods, and they can quickly open coolers, backpacks, and trash cans when enticed by food odors.

Bears normally avoid humans, but bears that learn to get food from human sources often become aggressive in their attempts to get more "people" food. When humans disobey the rules of both the park and nature by feeding bears, it is the bears that end up paying the ultimate price. Rangers may have to kill bears that lose their fear of people and

endanger humans in their attempts to get our food. Fortunately, Big Bend has not had to kill any bears, but some national parks destroy several bears each season; we hope that through educating visitors about proper behavior in bear country, we can avoid this tragic outcome.

Big Bend has made it easy to keep edible items away from bears. Campers at the Chisos Basin Campground, at High Chisos backpacking sites, and at some primitive roadside campsites will find bearproof storage lockers for storing all edibles. Hard-sided vehicles are also suitable for storing edible items. All dumpsters in the Chisos Mountains developed areas are bearproof, as well. And remember, a bear's definition of an "edible" is far broader than ours; lock up sunscreen, skin

lotion, toothpaste, soap, and other toiletries whose odors might attract wildlife.

There really are no problem bears - only problem people. Carelessness can kill. Don't be responsible for the death of a bear. Follow the guidelines below. Pay close attention to the food storage rules posted in the Basin campground and on your backpacking permit. Your actions affect both Big Bend's wildlife and future park visitors.

With your help, bears and humans CAN live safely together in Big Bend National Park.



D. Onorato

A small population of black bears lives here. Please help us keep them wild by storing all food items properly.

## Don't Call Me Pig!

FOR MANY VISITORS TO BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, SEEING A JAVELINA (hav-uh-LEE-nuh) is a new experience.

These curious creatures, also known as collared peccaries, are only found in the United States in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. They are covered with black, bristly hairs and generally weigh between 40 and 60 pounds. They usually travel in groups called bands that consist of 10-25 individuals. Peccaries have a highly developed sense of smell, but very poor vision.

Physically, javelinas resemble pigs, but in reality, they are not closely related to pigs at all and have been genetically distinct from them for millions of years. A closer look reveals several major differences between the two animals. Javelinas have 38 teeth; domestic pigs and wild boars have 44. The canine teeth of the javelina are short and straight, while those of pigs are longer and curved. Javelinas have a



R. Leasure

Collared peccaries live throughout Big Bend

scent gland that they use to mark their territory that pigs do not have. Pigs sweat to keep themselves cool, but javelinas must instead cool themselves in available water sources or by staying in the shade.

A javelina's diet includes prickly pear cactus, grasses, mesquite beans, pinyon pine nuts, fruits, berries, and seeds. Unfortunately however, many javelinas now include human food as part of their diet. Every year we are seeing more and more campsites in the park raided by javelina. Although normally not aggressive, they can be when food is involved. Protect yourselves and our javelinas by properly storing all your food inside a vehicle or in the food storage lockers provided in the campgrounds. Do not leave coolers or food boxes unattended on picnic tables or in a tent. Flatten tents when you are away from your campsite. It is important that javelinas and all park animals eat their natural food sources to stay healthy and safe. With your help, these unique animals can continue to thrive and thrill park visitors for years to come.

## Keep ALL Wildlife WILD

### In the Basin Campground

- Store food, beverages, trash, toiletries, pet food, and dishes in the bearproof storage locker provided at your site.
- Keep your campsite clean. Take trash and food scraps to a dumpster.
- Dump liquids in restroom utility sinks, not on the ground.
- Ice chests and coolers are not bear-proof; store them in your vehicle.

### Cyclists

- Use food storage lockers where provided.

### At the lodge

- Leave nothing outside your room, on the balcony, or on the porch.

### When hiking

- Never leave packs or food unattended.
- Avoid carrying odorous food and toiletries.
- Leave excess food and beverages in your trunk or food storage box
- Carry out all trash, including orange peels, cigarette butts, and left-over food.

## Now That You're Here, What Can You Do?

You've driven many miles to get here, and have finally arrived at your destination: Big Bend National Park. But now what? Now that you're here, how do you spend your time? Where should you go? What should you explore? The park is big, and often visitors have a limited amount of time to explore.



## One Day

If time allows, drive to the **Chisos Mountains** to take in the spectacular mountain views. Walk the 0.3-mile self-guiding Window View Trail to get a feel for the mountain scenery.



R. Leasure

A trip along the **Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive** will give you a taste of the Chihuahuan Desert and will lead you to the Rio Grande. There are scenic overlooks and exhibits along the way. Sotol Vista, Mule Ears Overlook and Tuff Canyon are all worthwhile stops. The short walks to the Sam Nail (Old) Ranch and Homer Wilson (Blue Creek) Ranch and a visit to the Castolon Historic District will give you a glimpse into Big Bend's past.

A highlight is the short (1.6-mile round trip) walk into **Santa Elena Canyon**—one of Big Bend's most scenic spots. Drive to the end of the Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive to access the trailhead. You may return to the main road by returning on the Ross Maxwell Drive or on the **Maverick Road**, a 13-mile gravel road linking the Ross Maxwell Drive to the Maverick (west) Entrance. Always check on road conditions first.

## Three Days



K. Canby

With three days to spend in the park, you can explore the major roads more thoroughly and still have time for hiking. In the Basin area, consider hiking the **Window Trail** (5 miles round trip) or the **Lost Mine Trail** (4.8 miles round trip); consult the *Hiker's Guide to Trails of Big Bend National Park*, for sale in park visitor centers, for trail descriptions.

In addition to the Basin and Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive (see suggestions for "one day") you can drive to **Rio Grande Village**, perhaps stopping at Dugout Wells along the way to walk the short Chihuahuan Desert Nature Trail. The Rio Grande Village Visitor Center offers a brief introductory slide program. Walk the **Rio Grande Village Nature Trail** which begins near site #18 in the campground. The bluff overlooking the Rio Grande at the end of the nature trail is a particularly beautiful spot at sunset.

Boquillas Canyon road will take you to several overlooks of the Rio Grande and the small village of Boquillas, Mexico. At the end of the road is the **Boquillas Canyon Trail**, which takes you to the entrance of this spectacular canyon.

## One Week



B. Kuhl

With a week or more to spend in Big Bend, endless possibilities are open to you. You'll have plenty of time to explore the roads mentioned in the previous sections, and will also have time to hike or to drive some of the "unimproved" dirt roads. For these, you'll need a high clearance or four-wheel drive vehicle; don't forget to check at visitor centers for current road conditions. The River Road, Glenn Springs Road and Old Ore Road are some of the more popular backcountry routes. A visit to Ernst Tinaja near the south end of the Old Ore Road is a Big Bend highlight.

If you don't have high clearance or four-wheel drive, gravel roads such as Dagger Flat, Grapevine Hills and Maverick will get you "off the beaten path." Hike the Chimneys Trail, Mule Ears Trail, or Grapevine Hills Trail for a closer look at the desert environment. If you'd like to explore the Chisos Mountains, trails to Boot Canyon, Emory Peak and the South Rim offer good views of the park and take you into another world which seems far removed from the desert. There are plenty of opportunities for overnight backpacking along these trails. A free backcountry use permit is required and can be obtained at park visitor centers.

## Float The Rio Grande



R. Skiles

If you have the time and a spirit of adventure, you may want to consider a river trip. Seeing the park's canyons from the middle of the Rio Grande is both fascinating and gratifying. There are many possibilities, from half-day floats to extended seven-day excursions. Park Rangers can recommend a trip that meets your abilities and interests. Rafting and equipment rental companies are listed on page 14.

See "Backcountry Planning" on page 13 for additional information on Big Bend river trips.

## Enjoying Your Visit

No matter how limited your time in Big Bend, remember that you will enjoy the park more if you **stop your car and explore on foot**. That doesn't mean that you have to hike miles on steep grades; there are many short, easy walks and roadside exhibits where you can stretch your legs and enjoy the sights, smells and sounds of the Chihuahuan Desert.

Hiker's guides and road guides are available at book sales areas throughout the park, and they

offer more detailed information about Big Bend's trails and roads. Attending **ranger-led activities** and evening programs are also good ways to learn more about Big Bend; check at the visitor centers and park bulletin boards for current activities.

Remember, you will NOT be able to see everything on this trip. You will probably

enjoy the park more if you choose a few spots and explore them thoroughly to get a taste of what Big Bend has to offer.

Then, come back again sometime to see the rest!





## Big Bend Trails



From the 7,832 foot summit of Emory Peak, to the banks of the meandering Rio Grande, visitors will find over 200 miles of hiking trails in Big Bend National Park. Trails range from strenuous primitive routes through rugged desert backcountry to short handicapped-accessible pathways. Whatever your style of hiking, you can find it in abundance in Big Bend.




Below are descriptions of many of the most popular easy and moderate hiking trails. Most of these trails are perfect for shorter day hikes of up to several hours. For information on longer, more difficult routes, or to plan an extended backpacking trip, stop by any park visitor center. A large selection of maps and trail guides are available and park rangers can assist you in trip preparations and backcountry permits.

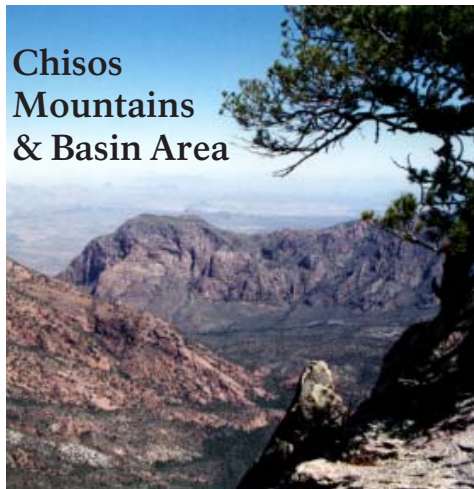
### Panther Junction - Rio Grande Village Area

Between Panther Junction and Rio Grande Village lies a vast sweep of scrub desert, rocky ridges, and river floodplain. Sprinkled through this massive area are trails that highlight

the fascinating natural and human history of Big Bend. Discover Indian mortar holes in Boquillas Canyon and the early pioneer settlements of Dugout Wells and Hot Springs. Enjoy the diverse birdlife along the Rio Grande and the rich geology at Grapevine Hills.

One of the more popular areas in Big Bend's east side, is the **Hot Springs Historic District**. Drift back in time and imagine what life was like during the early 1900s when J.O. Langford developed this natural hot spring into a tiny health resort. A one-mile loop takes you past the old motel, post office, homestead, and foundation of the hot spring bath-house.

Trail	Roundtrip Length	Comments	Trailhead Location
Grapevine Hills	2.2 miles	Follows a sandy wash through boulder field. A short climb at the end takes you to a large balanced rock archway	Grapevine Hills Road mile 6
 Chihuahuan Desert Nature Trail	0.5 miles	A flat desert path near a cottonwood oasis. Signs interpret Chihuahuan Desert plant life.	Dugout Wells Picnic Area
 Hot Springs	0.75 miles	Walk past historic buildings to the riverside hot springs. 105°F water. <i>Take a bathing suit and soak a while.</i>	End of Hot Springs Road ( <i>unpaved</i> )
 Rio Grande Village Nature Trail	0.75 miles	Cross a boardwalk and climb 125 feet to a great panoramic view of the river floodplain and distant mountains. Good birding and sunrise/sunset views.	Rio Grande Village Campground ( <i>site 18</i> )
Boquillas Canyon	1.4 miles	Begins with a short climb, then descends via a sandy path to the river. Ends near a huge sand "slide."	End of Boquillas Canyon Road





### Chisos Mountains & Basin Area

The Chisos Mountains form the rugged heart of Big Bend National Park. High ridges and summits coax moisture from passing clouds. The result is a forested mountain "island" surrounded by a desert sea.

When the lower desert trails become uncomfortably hot, enjoy the shady, pine-scented trails of the Chisos Mountains. All Chisos trails begin from the Basin area

which is located in the center of the park.

For a good introduction to the scenery and wildlife of the Chisos, hike the **Window Trail**. From the Basin Campground, this trail winds two miles through colorful Oak Creek Canyon to the top of the Window pouroff. Wildlife is abundant along this trail. Look and listen for javelina, white-tailed deer, and Mexican jays.


Trail	Roundtrip Length	Comments	Trailhead Location
 Window View	0.3 mile	Level, paved, handicapped accessible. Great sunsets and mountain views.	Chisos Basin Trailhead ( <i>near the Basin Store</i> )
Basin Loop	1.6 miles	Connects the Laguna Meadow and Pinnacles Trails. Climbs 350 feet through pine/oak woodland. Nice views of the Basin area.	Chisos Basin Trailhead ( <i>near the Basin Store</i> )
The Window	5.6 miles	Descends to the top of the Window pouroff. Great scenery and wildlife viewing. Climbs 800 feet on return.	Chisos Basin Trailhead or Basin Campground
 Lost Mine	4.8 miles	This magnificent hike climbs 1,100 feet to excellent mountain and desert views.	Basin Road mile 5 ( <i>at Panther Pass</i> )

### Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive

The Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive skirts the rocky ramparts of the Chisos Mountains and descends through the spectacular west side of Big Bend National Park. Many of the park's best views and desert hikes are found here.

The Ross Maxwell Drive ends at the trailhead to **Santa Elena Canyon**. There is no better trail to experience the sights and sounds of the Rio Grande. From the parking area, the giant chasm is in full view before you. Hike to the river's edge

and follow it upstream into a world of superlative cliffs and dense thickets of riverside vegetation. Enjoy the sounds of moving water and the descending song of the canyon wren.

Trail	Roundtrip Length	Comments	Trailhead Location
Burro Mesa Pouroff	1.0 mile	A flat, sandy trail up a canyon to the base of a dry pouroff. Interesting geology and desert plants.	Ross Maxwell Dr. mile 11
The Chimneys	4.8 miles	Flat desert trail to prominent rock formations. Look for rock art. No shade.	Ross Maxwell Dr. mile 13
Mule Ears Spring	3.8 miles	A beautiful desert hike to a small spring. Spectacular geology and mountain/desert views.	Ross Maxwell Dr. mile 15
Tuff Canyon	0.75 miles	Balconies overlook this scenic canyon. A short trail leads into and through the narrow gorge carved out of soft volcanic tuff.	Ross Maxwell Dr. mile 20
 Santa Elena Canyon	1.6 miles	Crosses creekbed, climbs stairs, then follows the river upstream into the mouth of a magnificent 1,500 foot deep limestone canyon.	8 miles west of Castolon



# Birth of a National Park

By Freeman Tilden

*The article excerpted here was first published in the April-June 1945 issue of National Parks Magazine. Freeman Tilden (1883-1980) was a novelist and playwright. In the early 1940s, Tilden "tired" of writing fiction, and with the encouragement of Director Newton B. Drury, began to write about the national parks. The National Parks: What They Mean to You and Me was first published in 1951. Other works include The State Parks, Following the Frontier, and Interpreting Our Heritage. The article below provides a glimpse of Big Bend at a time when it had been a national park for only a year, and one man's view of its future.*

In a statutory sense, Big Bend, in southern Texas, is the newest of our national parks. But in a very real sense, it is a national park just coming slowly into existence.

To representatives of a national periodical with whom I spent some days recently in Big Bend, I casually mentioned my thought that we were enjoying a grand adventure, never to be repeated. To my delight, they caught the idea, and gaily enlarged upon it. Both said, "We see what you mean. It will never again be quite what it is at this moment. We are pioneering backwards."

The problem, as every conservationist realizes, is not so much what to develop, as how and where to prevent development; not rashly to introduce any kind of animal or plantlife, but to try to restore the conditions under which the delicate biotic balance may again assert itself.

Consequently, in this article, I shall venture to say some things about Big Bend National Park that have to do with the attainment of those objectives that are associated with all such areas.

Big Bend, roughly resembling a triangle, is bounded on two sides by running water—the Rio Grande. Elsewhere in the park, water sources are meager. It is a long distance from the river to the country adjacent to the Chisos Mountains, a fact that may necessitate careful consideration being given to the locating of visitor accommodations. The limited supply of water from springs will have to be shared with wildlife. Furthermore, this will have to be done in such a way that the animals will not have to come too close to the camps. All such considerations, of course, are having their influence upon the making of the master plans for the park.

Is it better to accept an already scarred and disfigured spot, and place "developments" there, even though it is not the best place for them? Or should you try to induce the restoration of natural beauty there—which might take a century—and instead, scar a now undisturbed, unblemished spot? Next we come to the problem of roads. What kind of roads do we want, and how many and where? Access roads there must certainly be, whether they disturb the eye or not.

The dilemma of roads will always be a matter for intelligent compromise, no doubt. At one extreme are those who would have no roads, only trails. At the other are the ardent modernists who think a road should be built to every scenic point. Undeniably, the young and vigorous, or even the older and vigorous, are the lucky people in any of our national parks, for they can hike, pack, and climb to the choice hidden places where roadways are out of the question. Is it unfair? Of course; but so are a lot of things in this world.

Fortunately, those who stand between the extremes are agreed that surfaced roads should be held to just that point that will allow adequate facility for the average person to see some of the beauties and marvels of the park areas. Even if the manner of this statement is not too good, I think there will be no great quarrel with the spirit.

Finally, I wish to offer my opinion, just as a private visitor, that although the old saying that "he who travels must be prepared to take away only as much as he brings with him" applies to all our great parks, it holds true especially of Big Bend.

## What Can Kids Do Here?



Big Bend is a great place for kids!

### Become a Junior Ranger!

Learn desert secrets, identify the parts of a cactus, and discover what javelina eat!

The Big Bend Junior Ranger program is designed for kids of all ages. Through activities, games, and puzzles, kids can have fun as they learn about the park. They can also earn stickers, badges, patches, and certificates.



The Junior Ranger Activity Book costs \$2.00 and is available at all park visitor centers.

### Hike a Trail!

Many park trails are suitable for families. Consult the "Easy and Moderate Hikes" chart on page 9. For children in strollers, consider the Window View Trail, a paved ¼-mile loop trail that begins at the Chisos Basin trailhead.

Big Bend is a special place! We hope you enjoy Big Bend National Park and that you learn to value its resources. If you have any questions, ask a park ranger for help.

## Where's All The Wildlife?

"HEY RANGER, WE'VE BEEN DRIVING ALL DAY AND HAVEN'T SEEN ANY ANIMALS. DOES ANYTHING live here?" These questions may have crossed your mind too. You may be surprised to learn that over 3,000 different kinds of animals inhabit Big Bend National Park. While the vast majority of these are invertebrates, over 600 species of vertebrates are also known here.

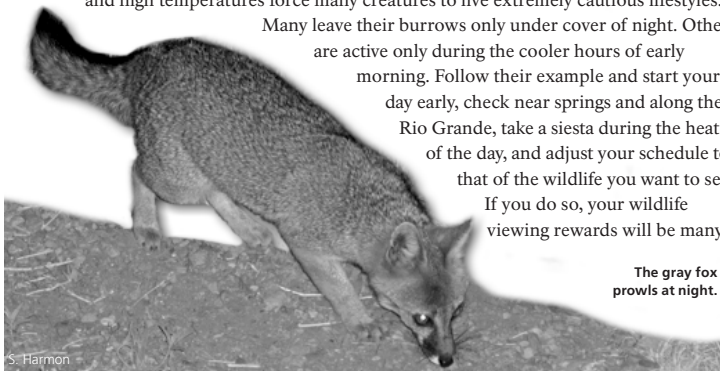
Common invertebrates include tarantulas, wolf spiders, centipedes, millipedes, scorpions, sunspiders, grasshoppers, walking sticks, velvet ants, harvester ants, and mites. Many are active only after summer rains, while others like the grasshoppers and cicadas may be heard singing throughout the heat of the day.

Vertebrates are most popular with park visitors since they include deer, javelina, black bears, and America's favorite watchable wildlife -- *the birds*. Checklists of the park's birds, mammals, reptiles, and invertebrates are available at park visitor centers. Researchers have identified over 39 species of fish, 75 species of mammals, 11 amphibians, and 56 reptiles. Big Bend's bird checklist contains 450 species, the largest diversity of birds to be found in any U.S. national park.

The desert landscape may seem completely uninhabited, but the desert is full of surprises. Those who take the time to get out of their car and investigate, will discover abundant evidence of the desert's denizens. Holes, tracks, nests, and droppings are everywhere. Lizards dart by at amazing speed. Listen for the tinkling notes of the black throated sparrow, or the raspy song of the cactus wren. Keep in mind that in desert areas like Big Bend, low rainfall and high temperatures force many creatures to live extremely cautious lifestyles.

Many leave their burrows only under cover of night. Others are active only during the cooler hours of early morning. Follow their example and start your day early, check near springs and along the Rio Grande, take a siesta during the heat of the day, and adjust your schedule to that of the wildlife you want to see.

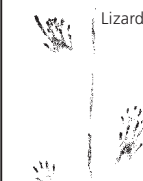
If you do so, your wildlife viewing rewards will be many.



The gray fox prowls at night.

## "Desert Tracks"

Desert dramas are revealed in sand and soft soil. To see an animal, both you and it must be in the same place at the same time; but tracks may last for days. Below are some commonly seen Big Bend tracks.



# At the Beginning: Rare 1940s Color Photographs of Big Bend



Road to the Basin, Casa Grande in the distance.



Yucca in bloom with the Chisos Mountains in the background.

Natt Dodge, a park service biologist, visited the Big Bend a number of times between 1944 and 1949. Knowledgeable in the plants and animals of the southwest, Dodge was also considered to be “a competent man with a camera.”

These color images, taken by Natt Dodge, provide a rare glimpse into the appearance and condition of Big Bend in the first years of its existence as a National Park.

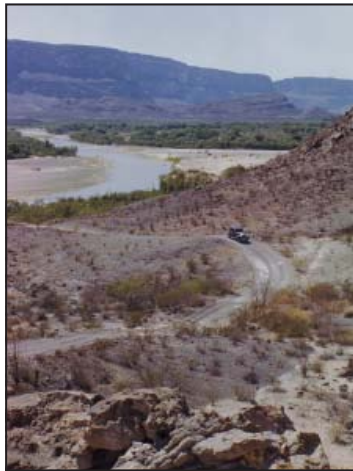
All photographs by Natt N. Dodge. Courtesy the National Park Service Historic Photograph Collection.



Rio Grande just above Daniel's Ranch



Century Plant at the mouth of Green Gulch.



River View Below Castolon



Mouth of Santa Elena Canyon.



Riders on horseback descend into the basin from Laguna Meadow.



View from the South Rim, looking south toward the Rio Grande.

## From Private Land to Public Park

Ranger Doug Thompson

The creation of Big Bend National Park in 1944 culminated a period of land acquisition that began almost ten years earlier. In 1935, the United States Congress passed legislation authorizing the park's creation, with the understanding that the state of Texas would purchase all of the private land required and then donate it, along with additional state land, to the National Park Service.

Landowners throughout the region had mixed feelings. Some were pleased to know that their property would benefit millions of future park visitors, while others were bitterly disappointed that their life's work was being taken from them. Once the acquisition began, some owners also felt that they were not offered adequate compensation for their land. Others, however, felt that they had been treated fairly and equitably. The state of Texas eventually allocated \$1,500,000 for the acquisition program.

Gradually, the families who lived within the proposed park boundaries began to relinquish their land and move away. Some went to nearby communities, such as Alpine and Presidio, where they began life anew, while others left the Big Bend region. With time, the park began to take shape, and on June 12, 1944, it became a part of the National Park System.

The last person to sell his Big Bend property was Wayne Cartledge of Castolon. Feeling that the government's appraisal of his holdings was too low, he refused to give up his title until 1957, thirteen years after Big Bend National Park had been formally established. By 1961, he had relocated from Castolon to Presidio County.

Since then, the federal government has on occasion acquired private holdings for the park. The Harte Ranch (North Rosillos) became part of the park in 1989. The Fay Ranch, a 10,000 acre inholding near Persimmon Gap, was purchased in 1994. These acquisitions have increased the park's size to 801,163 acres. Today, Big Bend National Park is a magnificent tribute, not just to those who championed its creation, but to those who gave their land to make it a reality.

## Ranger Programs



Join a park ranger for a guided hike, evening slide show, talk, or workshop on Big Bend's natural and cultural history. These free programs are offered daily. Consult the Interpretive Activities Schedule posted on visitor center and campground bulletin boards for more information.

## Lodging



The Chisos Mountains Lodge, operated by Forever Resorts Inc., is located in the Chisos Basin at 5,400 feet elevation. The lodge offers a variety of rooms and cottages, plus a gift shop and dining room. For reservations, please call (432) 477-2291 or 2292.

## Banking



There are NO banking facilities in Big Bend National Park. The nearest banking/ATM services are located in Study Butte, 26 miles west of park headquarters. Most stores accept major credit cards; however, some local services accept only cash. It is advisable to have small bills (\$1, \$5, \$10, \$20) since larger bills are often difficult to change.

## Birdwatching



While it is true that the incredible diversity of the spring migration will not be equaled during the late summer and fall, the months from July through November in Big Bend National Park still have much to offer to the birder. Consider that many "specialty" species wander away from their normal nesting range after breeding (July & August). This phenomenon, called post-breeding dispersal, may produce rarities including white-eared hummingbirds, sulphur-bellied flycatchers, and red-faced warblers, all review species in Texas. If the possibility of rarities like these doesn't excite you, keep in mind that on the heels of the post-breeding dispersal comes the beginning of the fall migration.

## Camping



### Tent Camping

The National Park Service operates campgrounds at Rio Grande Village, the Chisos Basin, and Castolon. The cost is \$10.00 per night for a site. Campsite fees can be paid in US currency, personal checks, or credit card.

Camping is also available at primitive backcountry campsites in the Chisos Mountains and along backcountry roads. High-clearance or 4-wheel drive vehicles are necessary to reach most road sites. Backcountry permits are required and can be obtained in person at park visitor centers up to 24 hours in advance.

Camping areas are often full during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, as well as during spring break in March or April.



M. Schuler



### Trailers & RV's

All park campgrounds can accommodate trailers and RVs, but vehicle lengths have a great deal to do with safely reaching the campground and finding a suitable space.

The only hookups available in Big Bend National Park are at Rio Grande Village in the 25-site, **Rio Grande Village RV Park** operated by Big Bend Resorts, Inc. Although there is no size restriction, your vehicle must be equipped with water and electrical hookups as well as a three-inch sewer connection. Register at the store. No advance reservations.

Near the RV park is the 100-site **Rio Grande Village Campground** operated by the National Park Service. Although there are no hookups, water, flush toilets, and a dump station are available. Set in a large grove of cottonwoods, the campground is adjacent to the Rio Grande. Many of the sites are pull-throughs. **Generator use is limited: from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm daily.** A no-generator use area is also designated.

The 63-site **Chisos Basin Campground** is rugged and hilly. The sites are small and most are not suited to recreational vehicles or trailers. The road to the Basin is steep and curvy, especially at Panther Pass—the road's highest point. The road into the campground is a 15 percent grade. Trailers longer than 20 feet and RVs longer than 24 feet are not recommended.

**Cottonwood Campground**, near Castolon, offers pit toilets and potable water, but no hookups or dump station. **Cottonwood is a NO-generator campground.**

Big Bend's unpaved roads are generally unsuitable for RV's and trailers. Overnight camping in any primitive site requires a backcountry permit, obtained in person at park visitor centers up to 24 hours in advance.



The only showers and laundry facilities in the park are located at the Rio Grande Village store.

## Campsite Reservations

Forty-three (43) sites at **Rio Grande Village campground** and twenty-six (26) sites at the **Chisos Basin campground** are reservable from November 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> each year. Visitors may contact ReserveUSA year round to make reservations for the period of November 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. All remaining campsites in these two campgrounds and the entire Cottonwood campground remain on the first-come first-serve basis.

Groups of 10 or more are eligible to reserve a spot in one of the park's **Group campsites** at the Rio Grande Village, Chisos Basin, and Cottonwood Campgrounds. Group sites are reservable year round and reservations may be made 360 days in advance. Reservations for Rio Grande Village and the Chisos Basin campgrounds family-type sites may be made 240 days in advance.

Campsite reservations may be made through the Internet: [www.reserveusa.com](http://www.reserveusa.com), or by calling 1-877-444-6777.

Big Bend National Park cannot make reservations.

## Park Campgrounds

	Elevation	Sites	Nightly Fees:	Facilities	Registration	Comments
<b>Chisos Basin</b>	5,401 ft	63	\$10.00*	Flush Toilets, Dump Station	Self-pay station	Surrounded by rocky cliffs. Many hiking trails nearby.
<b>Cottonwood</b>	2,169 ft	31	\$10.00*	Pit Toilets, No Generators	Self-pay station	In a cottonwood grove along the river. Grassy sites. Good birding.
<b>Rio Grande Village</b>	1,850 ft	100	\$10.00*	Flush Toilets, Dump Station	Self-pay station	Largest campground. Shady sites. Laundromat and showers nearby.
<b>Rio Grande Village RV</b>	1,850 ft	25	Starts at \$18.00	Full Hookups	Inquire at RGV Camper's Store	Concession-operated. Adjacent to RGV store.

\* \$5.00 with Golden Age or Golden Access Passport

## Horses



Visitors are welcome to bring and use their horses in the park. A free stock-use permit is required and may be obtained in person at any of the park's visitor centers up to 24 hours in advance of the trip.

While horses are not permitted on paved roads or road shoulders, all gravel roads are open to horses. Cross-country travel is permitted in the park, except in the Chisos Mountains where horse use is limited to the Laguna Meadow, Southwest Rim, and Blue Creek trails. Horses are not permitted in picnic areas, on nature trails, the Santa Elena and Boquillas Canyon Trails, or the Pine Canyon Trail.

Grazing within the park is not permitted, so you must bring your own feed. Stock may be watered in the Rio Grande and at springs that are not used for domestic water supply. Be prepared to haul water for your stock as springs are unreliable, especially during winter months. Check current spring conditions at a visitor center when you arrive. All horse manure must be removed from the park, or deposited at a designated location near the NPS horse corral at Panther Junction (ask a ranger for directions).

You may camp with your horses at many of the park's primitive road campsites. These are available on a first-come, first-served basis through a free backcountry use permit available at park visitor centers. These campsites are especially difficult to obtain during holiday periods, especially spring break. The Government Springs campsite, located 3½ miles from Panther Junction, is a primitive campsite with a corral large enough for 4-8 horses. If you plan to bring horses to the park, you may reserve this campsite up to 10 weeks in advance by calling (432) 477-1158.

## Hiking & Backpacking

Big Bend National Park offers over 100 miles of hiking trails. A free permit is required for all overnight trips, and can be obtained in person only up to 24 hours in advance of the trip. Because of the unreliability of desert springs, it is difficult to plan an extended backpacking trip prior to your arrival in the park. Decide how much distance you want to cover and how much time you have. Park staff can assist you with trip planning based on your needs and current trail conditions. The Panther Junction Visitor Center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Backpacking sites in the Chisos Mountains are difficult to obtain during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, and during spring break in March and early April.

Maps and hiker's guides are available for purchase at park visitor centers. If you would like to order them in advance of your trip, call the Big Bend Natural History Association at (432) 477-2236 or visit their online internet bookstore at [www.bigbendbookstore.org](http://www.bigbendbookstore.org)



**Pets are not allowed on trails or in backcountry areas. Please leave pets at home if you plan to hike.**

The Southeast Rim of the Chisos Mountains, Mariscal Rim, and Casa Grande are closed during the peregrine falcon nesting season (February 1 - July 15).

## Weather

Elevational differences in Big Bend mean that temperatures can be vastly different in different areas of the park. The lower areas along the Rio Grande are very hot during the summer months, while the Chisos Mountains are considerably cooler. Winter weather generally occurs between November and February, with temperatures dropping dramatically as cold fronts move through the area. Between June and October thunderstorms and flash floods may occur. Bring clothing for both warm and cool weather, as well as rain gear, when visiting Big Bend any time of the year. See "how hot?" on page 15.

## Floating the Rio Grande

The Rio Grande follows the southern boundary of Big Bend National Park for 118 miles. In this distance it has carved three major canyons, Santa Elena, Mariscal, and Boquillas, which have rapids varying in difficulty from Class I to Class IV. Between the canyons, the river is generally slower-paced. The Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River extends downstream beyond the park boundary for an additional 127 miles.

If you plan to take a river trip in Big Bend National Park, you may bring your own equipment, or you can hire a guide service. Four local companies (see page 14 for telephone listings) provide guide service in the park—you may reserve a trip by contacting them directly.



If you plan to use your own equipment, you must obtain a free permit at a park visitor center. Permits are issued up to 24 hours in advance of your trip, in person only. Stop by the Panther Junction Visitor Center for your permit and for current river condition information prior to your trip.

Permits for the Lower Canyons of the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River may be obtained at the Persimmon Gap Visitor Center, when open; a self-permitting station is also located at Stillwell Store, 5 miles south on FM2627 on the way to La Linda, Mexico. Permits for floating Santa Elena Canyon may be obtained at the Barton Warnock Center in Lajitas. Only permits for Santa Elena Canyon may be written there. However, we encourage all parties to get their permits at a park visitor center when possible, to obtain the most up-to-date river information and conditions.

River guide booklets are available for purchase at park visitor centers. If you would like to order them in advance of your trip, call the Big Bend Natural History Association at (432) 477-2236 or visit their online internet bookstore at [www.bigbendbookstore.org](http://www.bigbendbookstore.org)

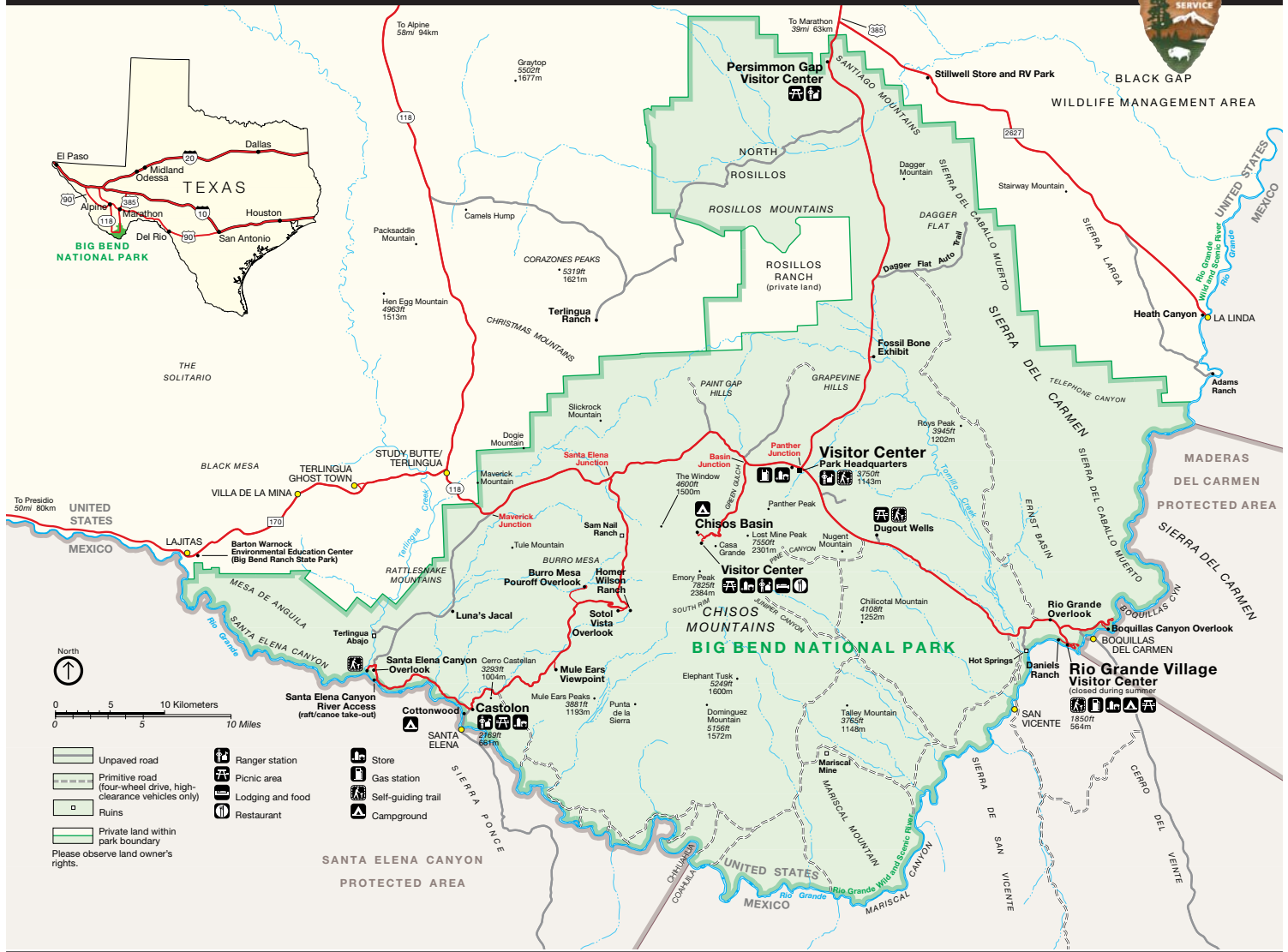


### Keep Big Bend Beautiful

For your convenience, barrels for recycling cans, glass, and plastic bottles are located at the entrances of park campgrounds.

F. Labounty

Park Map



Local Services

Inside The Park (432)

<b>EMERGENCY</b>	<b>911</b>
<b>National Park Service</b>	
General Information	477-2251
<b>Big Bend Natural History Association</b>	
Booksales & Seminars	477-2236
<b>Visitor Centers &amp; Ranger Stations</b>	
Castolon Ranger Station	477-2225
Chisos Basin Visitor Center	477-2264
Panther Junction Visitor Center	477-1158
Persimmon Gap Visitor Center	477-2393
Rio Grande Village Visitor Center	477-2271
<b>U.S. Post Office</b>	
Panther Junction	477-2238
<b>Lodging / Restaurant</b>	
Chisos Mountains Lodge	477-2291
	477-2292
<b>Park Gasoline Service</b>	
Panther Junction (also diesel)	477-2294
Rio Grande Village	477-2293
<b>Campground Stores</b>	
Rio Grande Village	477-2293
Chisos Basin	477-2291
Castolon	477-2222

Outside The Park (432)

<b>Lodging</b>			
Badlands Motel, Lajitas	424-3471		
Big Bend Motor Inn, Study Butte	800-848-BEND		
Easter Egg Valley Motel, Study Butte	371-2254		
El Dorado Motel, Terlingua	371-2111		
Gage Hotel, Marathon	386-4205		
Heath Canyon Ranch Inn, FM 2627	376-2235		
Longhorn Ranch Hotel, Hwy. 118	371-2541		
Marathon Motel, Marathon	386-4241		
Terlingua Ranch Resort	371-2416		
<b>Camping</b>			
Big Bend Motor Inn, Study Butte	800-848-BEND		
Big Bend Ranch State Park, Lajitas	424-3327		
Big Bend Travel Park, Study Butte	371-2250		
Lajitas on the Rio Grande	424-3471		
Longhorn Ranch, Study Butte	371-2541		
Ocotillo Mesa RV Park, Study Butte	800-729-1406		
Stillwell's Trailer Camp, FM 2627	376-2244		
Study Butte RV Park	371-2468		
Terlingua Ranch Resort	371-2416		
<b>Gas Stations &amp; Grocery Stores</b>			
Big Bend Motor Inn (gas, diesel)	800-848-BEND		
Lajitas Trading Post (gas, supplies)	424-3234		
Study Butte Store (gas/diesel/groceries)	371-2231		
Stillwell Store & Station (gas)	376-2244		
<b>Medical Services</b>			
Terlingua Medics	371-2222		
Lajitas Infirmary	424-3536		
Big Bend Regional Medical Center, Alpine	837-3447		
<b>Banks</b>			
Quicksilver Bank & ATM, Study Butte	371-2211		
<b>Kennels</b>			
Terlingua Creek Kennels, (Oct-Apr)	371-2348		
<b>Guide Services</b>			
Big Bend Touring Society, Terlingua	371-2548		
Texas Jeep Expeditions	877-839-JEEP		
<b>Rio Grande Float Trip Outfitters/Rentals</b>			
Big Bend River Tours, Study Butte	800-545-4240		
Desert Sports, Terlingua	888-989-6900		
Rio Grande Adventures, Study Butte	800-343-1640		
TX River Expeditions, Study Butte	800-839-7238		
<b>Horseback Riding</b>			
Big Bend Stables, Study Butte	800-887-4331		
Lajitas Stables, Lajitas	424-3238		
Spring Creek Remuda, 23 mi. south of Marathon	376-2260		
Ben's Hole Creek Ranch, Terlingua	371-2954		

# Let Safety Be Your Constant Companion

Big Bend is unfamiliar country to most visitors yet it need not be dangerous. Whether hiking the highcountry, rafting the Rio Grande, observing wildlife, or simply driving the scenic roads of this wilderness park, let safety be your constant companion. Spend a moment reviewing these common safety concerns so that you may have an enjoyable visit.

## Driving

Many accidental deaths in Big Bend result from car accidents. While driving is a great way to see the park, it can also be dangerous, particularly if you are tired or are going too fast. Drive within the speed limit, 45 mph maximum in the park, and watch for javelina, deer, and rabbits grazing along road shoulders, especially at night. Seat belts are required at all times. Remember, too, that you share the road with bicyclists and pedestrians. Some park roads, such as the road into the Chisos Mountains Basin, are steep and winding and require extra caution. The Basin Road is not recommended for RVs over 24 feet or trailers over 20 feet. Finally, always select a designated driver before drinking alcoholic beverages.

## Heat

Desert heat can kill you. Carry plenty of water (at least one gallon per person, per day) and wear a hat, long pants, long-sleeved shirt, and sun screen when hiking. Springs are unreliable and often dry up for a portion of the year, despite what maps indicate. Avoid hiking during mid-day in summer; travel as wild animals do, in the early morning or late evening hours rather than during the heat of the day.

## Mountain Lions

Big Bend is mountain lion country, especially the Chisos Mountains. While lion attacks are rare, three have occurred in the last 10 years. Should you encounter an aggressive mountain lion, hold your ground, wave your arms, throw stones, and shout. Never run. Keep groups together and consider hiking elsewhere with young children if you come across a special mountain lion warning sign posted at a trailhead.

## Desert Wildlife

Black bears, javelinas, skunks, coyotes, and raccoons frequent Big Bend's campgrounds. Although they sometimes appear tame, all of the animals in the park are wild, and could pose a threat to your health and safety if you attempt to approach or feed them. Never feed any of Big Bend's wildlife. To prevent these creatures from becoming habituated to people, store all food, coolers, cooking utensils, and toiletries in a hard-sided vehicle, preferably in the trunk of your car. Food storage lockers are available for hikers and campers in the Chisos Mountains. Dispose of garbage properly. At the Chisos Basin Campground, throw away garbage in the special bear-proof dumpsters and trash cans provided. Remember to report all bear or lion sightings to a ranger.

## Hiking

Exploring this desert and mountain country on foot requires both mental and physical preparation. Trails vary from well maintained in the Chisos to primitive and barely visible in the desert. Plan hikes within your ability. Take along a map and compass and know how to use them. Flash floods may occur following thunderstorms so avoid narrow canyons or dry washes. Stay low and avoid ridges during thunderstorms. Carry a flashlight and a first aid kit. Let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return. If you get hurt or lost, stay in one place to conserve water and energy. Signal for help; three blasts on a whistle is a well-recognized distress call. In remote areas, a large "X" marked on the ground by any means visible from the air will signify that help is needed. Carry a signal mirror. Remember to obtain a free backcountry use permit before heading out overnight.

## Fire

Fire danger is always an important safety consideration in Big Bend. Wood or ground fires are not permitted in the park, and you must exercise caution in the use of gas stoves, charcoal grills, and cigarettes. Big Bend has experienced drought conditions in the past several years and some restrictions may apply to the use of these heat sources. Check with a ranger for the latest information about fire safety in the park.

## Swimming

Hot weather makes the muddy Rio Grande look very inviting, but swimming is not recommended.

Water borne micro-organisms and other waste materials can occur in the river and cause serious illness. The river can be hazardous, even in calm-looking water. Strong undercurrents, deep holes, and shallow areas with sharp rocks and large tree limbs are common and make the Rio Grande unsafe for swimming. If you do choose to swim, wear a life jacket and avoid alcohol.

## Poisonous Animals

Venomous snakes, scorpions, spiders, and centipedes are all active during the warmer months. Inspect shoes and sleeping bags or bedding before use and always carry a flashlight at night. While snake bites are rare, they usually occur below the knee or elbow. Pay attention to where you walk and place your hands.

Big Bend truly is wild country. In fact, many people visit precisely because it is so remote and rugged. But remember, as you enjoy the splendor of this great wilderness area, to make safety a priority. By giving forethought to your actions you can have a safe, exciting, and rewarding vacation in Big Bend National Park.

**Keep the Wild in Wildlife!**

*Javelina are wild and can be dangerous...*



**Never Feed Javelina!**

*Regulations are strictly enforced!*



## How Hot?

	Avg.High/Low	Avg.Rainfall"
January	61/35	.46
February	66/34	.34
March	77/45	.31
April	81/52	.70
May	88/59	1.50
June	94/66	1.93
July	93/68	2.09
August	91/66	2.35
September	86/62	2.12
October	79/53	2.27
November	66/42	.70
December	62/36	.57
<b>Yearly average:</b>	<b>79/47</b>	<b>15.34"</b>

Temperatures in the Chisos Basin vary 5-10 degrees below these readings, while daytime temperatures along the Rio Grande average 5-10 degrees warmer.

## Pets in the Park



Keep your pet on a leash (or in a cage) at all times. Pets are not allowed on park trails, or anywhere off established roadways. Pets may not be left unattended in the park.

A National Park is a refuge for the animals and plants living within it. Even if your pet doesn't chase animals, dogs present the image and scent of a historical predator. The result is stress on native wildlife.

**Predators such as owls, coyotes, javelina, and lions CAN and DO kill pets here.** Even large dogs cannot defend themselves against such predators.

Remember, desert heat is **deadly**. Do NOT leave your pet alone in a vehicle. Pets are not allowed on trails, off roads, or on the river. The nearest kennel service is in Terlingua, 30 miles away.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Bend National Park  
PO Box 129  
Big Bend, TX 79834  
www.nps.gov/bibe



Big Bend Natural History Association  
PO Box 196  
Big Bend National Park, TX 79834  
www.bigbendbookstore.org

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Big Bend NP, TX  
Permit # 0001

## Get In On The \$30-Per-Plate Fund Raiser



Buy this custom plate from the state of Texas and most of the cost will be used to help preserve and protect Big Bend National Park, one of the world's last great wildernesses. It may be the most fulfilling contribution you'll ever make.



PO Box 200  
Big Bend National Park, TX 79834  
www.bigbendfriends.org

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

# Join Our Family



Please accept our invitation to join the Big Bend Natural History Association

The Association's goal is to educate the public and increase their understanding and appreciation of the Big Bend Area and what it represents in terms of our historical and natural heritage. You can be an important part of this effort when you become a member.

BBNHA was founded in 1956 to aid educational, historical, and scientific programs for the benefit of Big Bend and its visitors.

### Your Benefits as a Member

- A 15% discount on items sold by BBNHA
- A 10% discount on most seminars
- A subscription to *The Big Bend Paisano*
- Current Big Bend calendar
- Discounts at many other association bookstores in visitor centers at other national park sites
- Opportunity to support scientific, educational, and historical programs in Big Bend

### Past and present projects include:

- Operate book sales outlets in Big Bend National Park and Amistad National Recreation Area
- Publish trail guides and brochures and assist with the publication of *The Big Bend Paisano*
- Sponsor an on-going Seminar program
- Provide annual grants for research projects and administer grants and gifts received for the park
- Support the park's volunteer, Junior Ranger, and educational outreach.

Yes!

Please enroll me as a member of BBNHA

#### ANNUAL DUES

Individual (\$25)     Associate (\$50)  
 Corporate (\$100)

#### LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Individual or Family (\$250)  
 Corporate (\$500)  
 Benefactor (\$1,000)

New Member     Renewal

Mr./Ms./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to BBNHA or charge to:

Visa     Mastercard     Discover

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### DETACH AND MAIL TO:

BBNHA, P.O. Box 196  
Big Bend National Park, Texas 79834  
Telephone: (432) 477-2236  
e-mail: bibe\_bbnha@nps.gov