Brazos Bend State Park

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Check Availability/Make Reservations On-line for Brazos Bend SP

You can also make E-mail Reservations, Fax Reservations or Phone Reservations

Other Nearby T.P.W.D. Destinations:

- Galveston Island State Park
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Brazos Bend State Park

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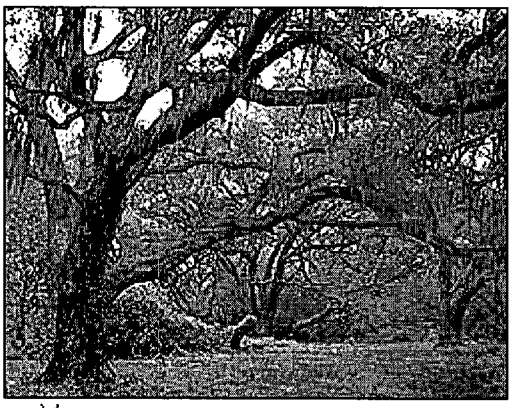
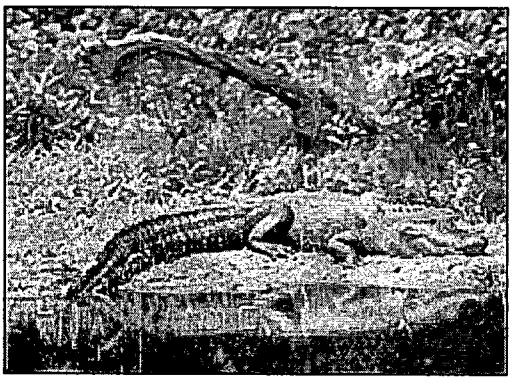


Watch video of Brazos Bend S.P.

History: Brazos Bend State Park, approximately 28 miles southwest of Houston, covers roughly 5000 acres, with an eastern boundary of 3.2 miles fronting on the Brazos River on the southeast border of Fort Bend County. This was the area of Texas' first Anglo colonization. It was purchased by the state in 1976-77 and was opened to the public in 1984.



Archeological materials show that prehistoric people visited this area, possibly as early as 300 BC; in early historical times, the Capoque band of the Karankawa Indians roamed between the mouth of the Brazos River and Galveston Bay and may have traveled inland as far as Brazos Bend. In the early 19th century, this area of Texas was the site of Stephen F. Austin's first colonial land grant from Mexico, and present park land was included in a grant to Abner Harris and a partner named William Barrett in 1827. Most of riverfront was sold shortly after the Texas Revolution, and records show that in 1845, part of the park and 2400 feet of river frontage were in the hands of cotton brokers who lived in Brazoria. At the time, the Brazos River was one of the principal routes of commerce, and it may be that the brokerage firm used the area for one of its riverboat landings. In recent times, the land on which the park is located was used for cattle grazing, pecan harvesting, and as a private hunting preserve.

- **Interpretive Guide to Brazos Bend State Park** (PDF 739.1 KB)

Facilities
- Park Maps
- Activities for all Parks
- Calendar of Events for all Parks
- Special Promotions & Events
- Feature Park
- Volunteer, Concession, & Employment Information
- Wi-Fi at Parks
- Texas State Parks Pass

Activities: Activities include camping, picnicking, hiking, **biking**, **equestrian**, and fishing. Six lakes are easily accessible to fishermen, with piers located at 40-Acre, Elm and Hale Lakes. Visitors are cautioned to pay due respect to alligators, which are numerous in some areas of the park. There are at least three free interpretive programs and hikes offered every weekend. Interpretive staff and volunteers offer weekday guided hikes and programs for schools and other educational organizations. Fees and reservations required. The Nature Center is open Monday - Friday from 11 a.m - 3 p.m. and Sat & Sunday from 9 a.m to 5 p.m. It's "Habitats and Niches" display offers an unusual "hands-on" alligator discovery area, a tactile model of the park, freshwater aquarium, live native snake species, a touch table and an open-captioned orientation video for all visitors including those with hearing impairments. The George Observatory is located in the park and is open Saturdays from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. For information on stargazing programs/passes and other programs, call the Observatory at 979/553-3400 or at 281/242-3055 (as a satellite of the Houston Museum of Natural Science) or visit the **George Observatory web site**. Shop for gifts at the headquarters gift shop, the Visitor Center, and at the George Observatory.

Creekfield Lake Nature Trail is an accessible nature trail and interpretive exhibit pilot project is the first of its kind for the department (1995) and was designed with the assistance of the greater Houston area disabled community in partnership with The George Foundation, Fort Bend County, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The trail is fully paved and takes visitor on a .5 mile loop our of an outstanding wetland area. Exciting features along this trail include a series of interpretive panels with tactile bronzes of wetland wildlife, and accessible boardwalk and observation deck for wildlife viewing, rest areas with shaded benches, A self-guided manual and scavenger hunt is available at Park Headquarters and Nature Center or from the volunteer web site.

Hike and Bike/Foot Trials: Hike and bike trails are located around 40-Acre, Elm and Hale Lakes and interconnect. Alligator viewing is best from the 40-Acre and Elm Lake Trail system. Foot trials take you off the beaten path into the hardwood forest. Always take plenty of water with you for you and your pets. As with all state parks, Pets are allowed on leash only and leash can be no longer than six feet. Do not allow pets to drink from or enter the water. Know your Alligator Etiquette found on park maps and posted throughout the park. An Outdoor Guidebook will assist you in learning about the parks different ecosystems and outdoor safety. The guidebook is available on the volunteer web site or for sale only at the Nature Center Gift Shop.

- **Watch video of Brazos Bend State Park**.
- **Check the Calendar for events and access restrictions scheduled within the next 3 months**.
- **Fishing Tip Sheet for Brazos Bend State Park**. (PDF 126.2 KB)
- **Brazos Bend State Park Information Guide**. (PDF 132.5 KB)
- **Read about a new minor planet "Brazos Bend" discovered through telescopes located inside the park at the George Observatory**.
- **More Information on outdoor activities from the Experience Texas page**.

Volunteer: The **Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization** is one of the largest in Texas State Parks and has been incorporated since 1989. This hands-on group assists with park maintenance and interpretive activities. It operates the Nature Center

and its own gift shop. Training is offered in February and September. For information about being a Brazos Bend Park Host contact the park. **More information on Volunteer and Park Host opportunities at Texas State Parks**.

Area Attractions: Nearby are the **San Jacinto Battleground**, **San Jacinto Monument**, and the **Battleship *TEXAS***; **Galveston Island State Park**; Brazoria County Access Point (San Luis Pass County Park); **Sea Center Texas** in Lake Jackson; the George Ranch; Houston's attractions; and West Columbia, which was founded in 1826 and served as the Capital of the Texas Republic for a brief period in 1836. It is the site of **Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site** and is approximately 25 miles south of Brazos Bend.

Be sure & visit the Texas State Park Store for great gifts & supplies.

Facilities: Facilities include restrooms with showers; campsites with water and electricity; screened shelters; primitive **equestrian** campsites; a trailer dump station; a dining hall (capacity 150), with ceiling fans, ac/heat, kitchen facilities, a barbecue pit, tables and chairs, and a restroom; approximately 35 miles of hiking/biking trails, including 8 miles of equestrian trails and a .5-mile nature/interpretive trail. For day-use visitors, there are 3 separate picnic areas with picnic sites. Two picnic areas have a group picnic pavilion (capacity 75 each): Elm Lake and Hale Lake pavilions, have electricity and water outlets, a barbecue pit, and picnic tables.

The park has a Headquarters Gift Shop that offers a wide variety of souvenirs, nature books and gifts that will enhance and enrich visitors' experience ba. is open daily: Sun. 7am-5pm, M-Th 8am-5pm, Fri-Sat 7am-10pm.

- **Fees**
- **Map of Facilities** ⬇(PDF 144.3 KB)
- **Map of Trails** ⬇(PDF 534.8 KB)

Check availability/make reservations on-line for Brazos Bend SP
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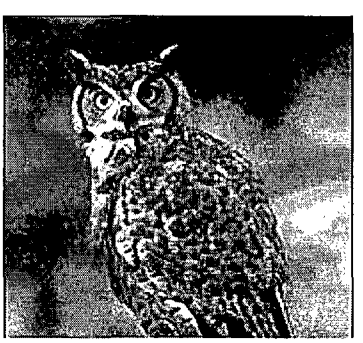

Natural Features: Most of the park is in the Brazos River floodplains, but there are also areas of flat upland coastal prairies. Numerous swales and depressions become freshwater marshes during periods of heavy rain. In addition to the Brazos River, Big Creek meanders diagonally across the park and is associated with sloughs and cutoff meanders called oxbow lakes. Other lakes have been created by levees. The creek and riverbanks are lined with

sycamore, cottonwood, and black willow. Campsites and picnicking areas are located among huge, moss-draped live oaks; while trails run along the lakes and through bottomland hardwood forests.

Nature lovers, birders, campers, and other outdoor enthusiasts will delight in an observation tower and platforms for wildlife observation/photography of more than 300 species of birds sighted; 21 species of reptiles and amphibians, including American alligator; 17 species of mammals including bobcat, white-tailed deer, raccoon, and gray fox; 39 species of dragonfly; 500 species of plants.

- United States Geological Survey Fort Bend County Butterfly Checklist.
- Birds of Brazos Bend State Park: A Field Checklist (PDF 293 KB)

More information on the wildlife mentioned here:

- Texas Wildlife Factsheets.

Elevation: 104 feet
Weather: January minimum 41 degrees and July maximum is 94 degrees, average rainfall 43.9.

- National Weather Service forecast for this area.

Schedule: The park is open 7 days a week year-round except when closed for emergencies or scheduled closures. **Gate Hours:** Friday, Saturday and Sunday the park opens at 7am. Monday through Thursday the park opens at 8am. The gate is closed at 10pm each night. **Check the Calendar for events and access restrictions scheduled within the next 3 months**.

Directions: The park is approximately a one-hour drive from downtown Houston. Take Highway 59 South to the Crabb River Road exit. You may also take State Highway 288 south to FM 1462 West. Follow FM 1462 to FM 762 North. From the south follow State Highway 288 North to the FM 1462 exit or take State Highway 36 to FM 1462 East. All routes are marked with brown signs to guide you.

Current conditions including, **fire bans** & water levels, can vary from day to day. For more details, contact the park.

More Promotions.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744
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