

As life begins to slowly return to normal with less than 10K COVID cases per day nationally, there appears to be a light at the end of the tunnel. After 15 months spent nearly all indoors in our homes, and as we slowly make our way back outside, we thought we would dedicate this issue to some of our state parks.

## Colorado Bend State Park in Bend

Thirty-five miles of biking and hiking trails including a 70ft spring-fed waterfall. You can also visit a touring cave, go fishing and paddling.



## Inks Lake State Park in Burnet

Go for a picnic, play volleyball, backpack, and geocache. Water activities include boating, scuba diving, water skiing and swimming. There are 9 miles of hiking trails.



## Enchanted Rock State Natural Area in Fredericksburg

Geocache, stargaze, camp, bird, rock climb, picnic, and hike on 11 miles of trail. No swimming or biking.



## Pedernales Falls State Park in Johnson City

Ride horses, swim, wade, camp, fish, kayak, mountain bike and tube on over 16 miles of trail.



### McKinney Falls State Park in Austin

Fish and swim in Onion Creek, hike, or bike nearly 9 miles of trails, and camp.



### Lost Maples State Natural Area in Vanderpool

Stargazing, birding, backpacking, fishing, and camping.



### Huntsville State Park in Huntsville

Twenty-one miles of trails, playgrounds, bird blind, nature center, camping, fishing. As well as kayak, canoe, and paddle boat rentals.

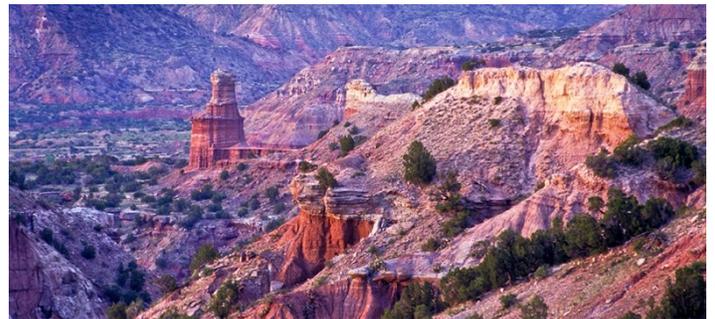


### Eisenhower State Park in Denison

Sandy swimming cove, bouldering, picnics, hiking, and camping.

### Palo Duro State Park in Canyon

Second largest canyon in the country, 30 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails, birding, and camping. You can also catch a show of the "TEXAS outdoor musical" in the Pioneer Amphitheater.



## Texas State Parks General Info:

Texas State Parks were established with a mere 6 acres of land donated to the memory of Governor Neff's mother in 1916. Mother Neff Memorial Park became the first Texas State Park and was open to the public in 1937 after subsequent donations of another 253 acres. Today, a little over 100 years later, Texas State Parks boasts 630,000 acres of public land among over 90 parks across the state. This availability facilitates recreational activities for all ages including boating, fishing, hiking, swimming, camping, and summer events. Many parks have a daily entrance fee in addition to any facility fees. Reservations are required at most locations and can be made online or over the phone. Alternatively, you can purchase a Texas State Park Pass which includes unlimited free entry to all the developed public parks, discounts on camping, and other special offers for one year. Texas State Parks also offers free fishing year-round (no fishing license required), though purchasing a license helps fund conservation efforts.

For more information, please visit/call: <https://tpwd.texas.gov>  
[\(512\) 389-8900](tel:5123898900)

## ★ EEB & Affiliates Spotlight ★

*Congratulations to EEBs newest PhD candidates!  
These students have successfully defended their research proposals.*



**Rachel Busselman**

**Title:** Ecological interactions and novel control interventions among hosts, parasites, and neglected arthropod vectors in Texas

**Lab:** Dr. Sarah Hamer



**Melanie Florkowski**

**Title:** Avian behavior, immunity, and the gut microbiome

**Lab:** Dr. Jessica Yorzinski

★ EEB & Affiliates Spotlight cont. ★

*Congratulations to this year's graduates!*



**Dr. Alyson Brokaw**

**Dissertation title:** Olfactory Tracking Behaviors of Bats

**Lab:** Dr. Mike Smotherman



**Dr. Janelle Goeke**

**Dissertation title:** Bottom-up effects of mangrove encroachment on basal consumers in the Gulf of Mexico

**Lab:** Dr. Anna Armitage



**Dr. Zachary Hancock**

**Dissertation title:** Phylogenetics in Space and the Evolution of the Haustoriidae

**Lab:** Dr. Mary Wickston



**Dr. Crys Wright**

**Dissertation title:** Helpers and Hindrances: The role of Ecological Factors Mediating Future Biological Control of Sorghum Aphids

**Lab:** Dr. Raul Medina and Dr. Keyan Zhu-Salzman

What would you like to see in future newsletters?

Does your lab have news to share?

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