



Guide to The Texas Outdoors – State Parks
University of Houston - Outdoor Adventure

Welcome

Welcome to University of Houston Outdoor Adventure's State Parks guide on where to explore the outdoors in Texas!

Leave No Trace (LNT)

UH Outdoor Adventure actively practices Leave No Trace. Leave No Trace is a set of outdoor ethics that consists of seven principles. The seven principles are:

- Plan Ahead & Prepare
- Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Respect Wildlife
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Leave What You Find
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors

We kindly ask that you learn about and then follow these simple principles while enjoying the outdoors.

Visit the [Leave No Trace website](#) for more information.

Annual Pass

If you are planning on visiting multiple Texas state parks throughout the year. It may be beneficial to purchase a state park pass from Texas State Parks & Wildlife. It will gain you unlimited free entry into 89 state parks for you (the pass holder) as well as your guests. You will receive discounts on camping, state park store purchases, and equipment rentals. Please visit their [website](#) for more information.

Pass	Price
Annual Texas State Park pass	\$70

Questions? Call us at 713.743.9512 or email us at outdoors@uh.edu

Outdoor Adventure Trips

Don't feel comfortable exploring the outdoors by yourself? No worries! UH Outdoor Adventure offers various trips around the Greater Houston area and around Texas each semester for enrolled students, members and sponsored! We aim to teach you all that is needed to comfortably and safely explore the outdoors. Visit our [website](#) for the most up to date information on our trips.

What to Bring

In the outdoor industry there are ten items that are deemed to be "essential" to any outdoor outing. You may or may not use them, however, it is considered best practice to bring these items along on your adventures. Overall, use your best judgement to decide what is needed for your adventure.

The Ten Essentials

- Navigation
- Headlamp/light source
- Sun Protection
- First Aid
- Knife
- Fire
- Shelter
- Extra Food
- Extra Water
- Extra Clothes

For more information about the ten essentials, please visit [REI's website](#).

Outdoor Adventure recommends bringing the following items on adventures to State Parks:

- Close-toed Shoes
- Food/water
- Bugspray
- Reservation Information
- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Extra clothes
- Equipment

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State Parks/Natural Areas

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Brazos Bend State Park

Location: 21901 FM 762, Needville, TX 77461
Distance from University of Houston Campus: 45 miles
Wheel-Chair Friendly
Must Reserve [Passes](#)

Overview

Brazos Bend is located just 45 miles from downtown Houston. The park consists of three different unique ecosystems. The park is home to over 25 different species of mammals with white-tailed deer being the largest. One potentially may spot feral pigs, raccoons, alligators and river otters while visiting this state park. Brazos Bend is amazing during the day and transforms into a stargazer's dream at night. Camping is recommended if you want to fully experience stargazing here.

Activities: Hiking, Biking, Fishing, Geocaching, and Camping

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Playgrounds, Cabins, Screened Shelters, and Campsites w/ water & electricity

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$7 per person (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$12-\$25 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Bicycle & Helmet	\$8	\$16

For more information about Brazos Bend State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Brazos Bend State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Brazos Bend State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Stephen F. Austin State Park

Location: Park Rd 38, San Felipe, TX 77473

Distance from University of Houston Campus: 55 miles

Must Reserve [Passes](#)

Overview

Stephen F. Austin State Park is located 50 minutes from the outskirts of Houston. It has five miles of hiking and biking trails that run along the riverbank of the Brazos river. It is one of Texas's smaller state parks, so activities are limited. However, it is still a great place to getaway for the day or the weekend.

Activities: Hiking, Biking, Camping

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Group Sites, Screened Shelters, Campsites w/ electricity & water

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$5 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$10-\$25 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Bicycle & Helmet	\$8	\$16

For more information about Stephen F. Austin State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Stephen F. Austin State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Stephen F. Austin State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Huntsville State Park

Location: 565 Park Road 40 W, Huntsville, TX 77340
Distance from University of Houston Campus: 70 miles
Must Reserve [Passes](#)

Overview

Huntsville State Park is the perfect place to experience the beauty of the East Texas Pineywoods. It is located within the Sam Houston National Forest which is perfect for exploring more than one place in a weekend. The park has 21 miles of trails dedicated to hiking and biking. The park surrounds Lake Raven and is a great place to enjoy a relaxing paddle.

Activities: Camping, Hiking, Biking, Fishing, Swimming, Canoeing, and Kayaking

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Boat Ramp, Screened Shelters, Campsites w/ electricity & water

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$7 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$15-\$25 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Canoe Package	\$20	\$40
Kayak Package	\$18	\$36
Bicycle & Helmet	\$8	\$16

For more information about Huntsville State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Huntsville State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Huntsville State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Sea Rim State Park

Location: 19335 State Hwy 87, Sabine Pass, TX 77655
Distance from University of Houston Campus: 115 miles

Overview

At the far corner of southeast Texas on the Gul of Mexico, you will find a hidden gem waiting to be explored. With 5.2 miles of Gulf Shoreline, Sea Rim State Park is a great park to visit if you want to avoid the crowds and enjoy beach combing, fishing and birding. This park also offers up to 9.59 miles of paddling trails, camping and 4,000 acres of marshland. Get excited for wildlife, such as alligators, river otters, mole crabs and much more.

Price

- Parking -\$3 Entrance (Make sure to get a permit ahead of time)
- Camping- \$10 - \$20 each night + daily entrance fee (reserve online)
- Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Kayak Package	\$18	\$36

For more information about Sea Rim State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Sea Rim State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Seam Rim State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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McKinney Falls State Park

Location: 5808 McKinney Falls Pkwy, Austin, TX 78744

Distance from University of Houston Campus: 175 miles

Must reserve [passes](#)

Overview

McKinney Falls State Park is located 13 miles away from the state capitol. It has been described by some as rugged beauty due to the rushing water of Onion Creek flowing over the ledges into pools of water. In this State Park, expect to find the remains of an early Texas homestead as well as an old shelter made out of rock.

Activities: Hiking, Bouldering, Biking, Camping, and Fishing

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Cabins, Campsites w/ electricity & water

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$6 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$20-\$24 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Bicycle & Helmet	\$8	\$16
Crash Pad	\$5	\$10

For more information about McKinney Falls State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of McKinney Falls State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of McKinney Falls State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Pedernales Falls State Park

Location: 2585 Park Road 6026, Johnson City, TX 78636

Distance from University of Houston Campus: 205 miles

Must reserve [passes](#)

Overview

Pedernales Falls State Park is located 30 miles away from Austin and is known for the tranquil river that runs through it. The river runs over limestone that is estimated to be 300 million years old. Visitors of this state park won't be disappointed by the views. Take a swim, go for a hike, paddle the river; Pedernales Falls State Park is bound to have something that you will enjoy!

Activities: Camping, Hiking, Swimming, Tubing, Biking, Canoeing, Kayaking, and Fishing

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Campsites (Primitive and with electricity + water)

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$6 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$10-\$20 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Canoe Package	\$20	\$40
Kayak Package	\$18	\$36

For more information about Pedernales Falls State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Pedernales Falls State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Pedernales Falls State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Caddo Lake State Park

Location: 245 Park Road 2, Karnack, TX 75661

Distance from University of Houston Campus: 260 miles

Must reserve [passes](#)

Overview

Caddo Lake state park is described as an East Texas hidden gem. The park has beautiful Bald Cypress trees covered in Spanish moss. Experience a unique and relaxing paddle down the serene Big Cypress Bayou and on Caddo Lake. The park has access to over 50 miles of paddling trails. The park is typically busy from March through September

Activities: Camping, Hiking, Canoeing, Kayaking, and Fishing

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Screened Shelters, Campsites w/ electricity & waters, and Cabins

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$4 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$10-\$15 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Canoe Package	\$20	\$40
Kayak Package	\$18	\$36

For more information about Caddo Lake State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Caddo Lake State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Caddo Lake State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Colorado Bend State Park

Location: 2236 Park Hill Dr, Bend, TX 76824
Distance from University of Houston Campus: 265 miles
Must Reserve [Passes](#)

Overview

Colorado Bend State Park is most famous for Gorman Falls. It is a 70-foot-high waterfall that is accessed by a 3-mile hike over rough and rocky terrain. It is also well known for Spicewood Springs as it is one of the best swimming holes in Hill Country. Enjoy a nice hike up to the nice spring-fed pools to cool off during the warmer months.

Activities: Hiking, Backpacking, Mountain Biking, Swimming, Fishing, Kayaking, and Camping

Facilities: Bathroom, Compost Toilet, Rinse Shower, Primitive campsites - Drive-up, Walk-in, or Hike-in

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$5 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$10-\$15 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Kayak Package	\$18	\$36
Backpack	\$6	\$12
Bicycle & Helmet	\$8	\$16

For more information about Colorado Bend State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Colorado Bend State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Colorado Bend State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

Questions? Call us at 713.743.9512 or email us at outdoors@uh.edu

Enchanted Rock State Natural Area

Location: 16710 Ranch Rd 965, Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Distance from University of Houston Campus: 260 miles

Must Reserve [Passes](#)

Overview

Enchanted Rock is a massive pink granite dome that rises above Central Texas. It has drawn visitors for thousands of years due to the scenery and rock formations. The park has almost 11 miles of trails for you to explore. It is primarily the busiest from September until May.

Activities: Climbing, Hiking, Camping, Backpacking, and Stargazing.

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Playground, Campsites w/ water, Primitive campsites

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$8 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$14-\$18 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Backpack	\$6	\$12
Climbing Helmet	\$2	\$4
Crash Pad	\$5	\$10

For more information about Enchanted Rock State Natural Area click [HERE](#)

For a map of Enchanted Rock State Natural Area click [HERE](#)

For a map of Enchanted Rock State Natural Area Trails click [HERE](#)

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Garner State Park

Location: 234 RR 1050, Concan, TX 78838
Distance from University of Houston Campus: 300 miles
Must reserve [passes](#)

Overview

Garner State Park is nestled right along the beautiful Frio River. It is a great place to visit for a swim or a hike. For generations Texans have been traveling to this state park during the summer to enjoy the cool waters and enjoy the spectacular views. Come during the summer at night and enjoy nightly summer dances to your favorite songs.

Activities: Canoe, Kayak, Camping, Geocache, Swimming, Hiking, Dancing

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Playground, Concession Building, Screened Shelter, Campsites w electricity & water, Picnic Area.

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$8 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$15-\$35 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Canoe Package	\$20	\$40
Kayak Package	\$18	\$36

For more information about Garner State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Garner State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Garner State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Monahans Sandhills State Park

Location: 2500 E Interstate 20 Exit 86, Monahans, TX 79756

Distance from University of Houston Campus: 550 miles

Overview

West Texas is home to one of the state's most unique and underrated state park. Monahans state park is easily described as an ocean of sand. Wind has formed these massive peaks and valleys. Due to this the park is constantly changing, sometimes even overnight. The park has no established trails so explore freely and watch out for the plants and animals that live in this seemingly uninhabitable place.

Activities: Camping, Hiking, and Sledding

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Picnic Area, Water and Electric Campsites,

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$4 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$15 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4

For more information about Monahans Sandhills State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Monahans Sandhills State Park click [HERE](#)

Questions? Call us at 713.743.9512 or email us at outdoors@uh.edu

Palo Duro Canyon State Park

Location: 11450 Park Road 5, Canyon, TX 79015
Distance from University of Houston Campus: 625 miles
Must reserve [passes](#)

Overview

Have you ever wanted to visit the Grand Canyon, but haven't had the time to travel to Arizona? Here is your chance to visit the best alternative. Palo Duro Canyon is the second largest canyon in the country. It lies in the panhandle of Texas. Be prepared to be blown away by the beautiful scenery of this State Park. It has over 30 miles of trails for you to explore and enjoy. Adventure awaits!

Activities: Camping, Hiking, Backpacking, Biking, Guided horse tours

Facilities: Showers, Restrooms, Picnic Area, Amphitheater, Interpretive Center, Park Store, Water and Electric Campsites, Primitive Campsites, and Cabins

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$8 daily (Make reservations ahead of time)
- Camping - \$12 - \$26 each night + daily entrance fee
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Backpack	\$6	\$12
Bicycle & Helmet	\$8	\$16

For more information about Palo Duro Canyon State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Palo Duro Canyon State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Palo Duro Canyon State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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Hueco Tanks State Park

Location: 6900 Hueco Tanks Road No. 1, El Paso, TX 79938

Distance from University of Houston Campus: 800 miles

Overview

Hueco Tanks State Park pronounced "whey-coes", is an incredible park that has a rich history behind it. The ancient people that traveled through these lands have left behind beautiful imagery for visitors to see. The state park allows a very limited number of individuals to enter the park per year in order to protect the natural and cultural resources. Come to Hueco Tanks to experience some of the best bouldering in the world but be prepared to pay-to-play. A majority of the park is only able to be accessed by guided tours. The park issues 70 permits daily for a self-guided trip to the North Mountain area. Call 90 days in advance for a chance to snag one of these permits! Be sure to write down your confirmation number.

Activities: Hiking, Bouldering, Birding, and Stargazing

Price

- Entrance Fee - \$7 daily (Make sure to get a permit ahead of time)
- Camping - \$12 - \$16 each night + daily entrance fee (best to call to book)
- UH Outdoor Adventure rental options

Item	Daily	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Tent 3 person	\$5	\$10
Tent 4 person	\$8	\$16
Tent 5 person	\$10	\$20
Sleeping Bag 20	\$6	\$10
Sleeping Bag 45	\$4	\$8
Sleeping Pad	\$2	\$3
Stove	\$5	\$10
Pot Set	\$2	\$4
Crash Pad	\$5	\$10

For more information about Hueco Tanks State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Hueco Tanks State Park click [HERE](#)

For a map of Hueco Tanks State Park Trails click [HERE](#)

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A photograph of a field of yellow flowers, likely Black-eyed Susans, with green foliage and trees in the background. The image is slightly faded and has a soft, ethereal quality. The word "Flora" is centered in the middle of the image.

Flora

Questions? Call us at 713.743.9512 or email us at outdoors@uh.edu

Flora

Poison Ivy



American Beauty Berry



Texas Bluebonnet



Cheerful Sunflower



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Texas Mountain Laurel



Apache Plumes



Purple Passionflower



Pitcher Plant (Carnivorous)



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