



Bastrop State Park Recovers

Park nearly entirely open

By [David Scott](#)

BASTROP STATE PARK, Texas (KXAN) - After the devastating wildfires charred so much of the Bastrop State Park, the predominant color was black, the outlook bleak.

Now, seven months later the park is almost entirely reopened. Campsites and cabins are available, so is the canoe and hiking trails.

Ninety-five percent of the park's 6,000 acres suffered some burns, but most trees were spared.

"This has been a long time coming," said park superintendent Roger Dolle, "hard

work for our staff and volunteers and this is the last hurdle to leap over. We want to get the public in here and get things back to normal."

A few primitive paths in the eastern part of the park re-

main closed, but otherwise everything is good to go. The forest is thinned out a bit, they don't know exactly how many trees they lost.

The restoration was made possible by \$1.4 million in



<http://www.kxan.com/dpp/news/local/bastrop/bastrop-state-park-recovers-from-fire>

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Upcoming Events

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Kayaking on Lady Bird Lake @ 6 p.m.

APRIL

Apr 27-29 (Fri-Sun): Camping & Hiking @ Perdarnales Falls SP

Apr 28 (Sat): Hiking @ Perdarnales Falls SP

MAY

May 1 (Approximate): Registration opens for Nov. 9-11 BOW Weekend at *Camp for All*

May 4-6 (Fri-Sun): Camping @ Colorado Bend SP

May 5 (Sat): Full moon paddle on Lady Bird Lake. 8 p.m.

May 12 (Sat): Hiking @ Barton Springs Greenbelt. 9 a.m.

May 19 (Sat): Hiking @ Turkey Creek Trail @ Emma Long Park. 9 a.m.

May 20 (Sun): Guided tour of Westcave Preserve. 9:45 a.m.

May 22 (Tues): Monthly Meeting @ 6 p.m. Speaker: Dawn Boudreaux

May 25-28 (Fri-Mon): Camping @ the South Llano River SP

JUNE

June 1-3 (Fri-Sun): Galveston Island Deep Sea Fishing Trip

June 8-10 (Fri-Sun): Camping @ Port Aransas

June 26 (Tues): Monthly Meeting @ 6 p.m. Speaker: Val Bugh

JULY

July 24 (Tues): Monthly meeting @ 6 p.m. Speaker: Pat Bowen

AUGUST

Aug 18-Sept 1 (Sat-Sun): New Mexico Camping Trip

Aug 28 (Tues): Monthly Meeting @ 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

SEPTEMBER

Sep 1 (Sat): Full moon paddle on Lady Bird Lake. 7 :45 p.m.

Sep 25 (Tues): Monthly Meeting @ 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

Sep 29 (Sat): Full moon paddle on Lady Bird Lake. 7 p.m.

OCTOBER

Oct 23 (Tues): Monthly Meeting @ 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

NOVEMBER

Nov 9-11 (Fri-Sun): Camping @ Lost Maples State Park

Nov 9-11 (Fri-Sun): BOW Weekend @ *Camp for All* near Brenham

Nov 27 (Tues): Monthly Meeting @ 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

MARCH 2013

Mar 3-10 (Sun-Sun): TOWN Cruise from Galveston

Mar 23-25 (Fri-Sun): BOW Weekend @ 4-H Conference near Brownwood

MAY 2013

May 20-27 (Sun-Sat): Trip to Yosemite National Park

Outings! Outings! Outings!

Wednesday Evening Kayaking (Apr 4)

YAY! We finally got some boats wet at Wednesday kayaking. 5 Awesome Women joined me at the Rowing Dock Wednesday evening for a beautiful, serene float around Red Bud Isle. We needed you master naturalists to name all we saw, but did enjoy anyway the ducks, the sounds of birds and what Susan deemed kumquat trees. Also, the daddy swan is out and protecting part of the island....maybe babies on the way?? Thank you Michelle A, guest DD, Linda Y, Susan Warren and Susan Walters for a great evening!

~LindaBW

Pedernales Falls Birding & Hiking (Apr 5)

Six of us, Jan B., Jenny F., Jacque A., Deb Mc, Marcia Mc., and Judy W., met at the bird blind and watched a flurry of house finches, We also saw red winged blackbird, mourning dove, white-winged dove, inca dove, black-chinned hummingbirds, cardinal, woodpecker, sparrow, lesser gold finch, towhee, and several others. We also observed two squirrels and a rat.

After birding, four of us, Jan B., Jenny F., Jacque A., and Deb Mc. hiked around the base of Wolf Mountain. I'm guessing we walked about 4 miles in 2 hours. We crossed two creeks with flowing water.....nice.

Three of us (Jan, Jen, & Deb) had a picnic at Jan's campsite, # 66, afterwards. Happy Trails!

~Jan & Jenny

Hiking in Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park

Four of us (Gloria, VickiZ, NancyL, and Jacque) met at the almost congested Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park for hiking (2 hours) and checking out nature on Easter Sunday. The weather was divine. The park was quite crowded with bikers, hikers, families and dogs. The laughter and voices were sufficient evidence that folks were certainly enjoying themselves.

We investigated/identified a variety of plants (sensitive briar, ground plum, prickly pear cactus, firewheel, wild verbena, bluebonnets, Indian blankets, and thistle) and butterflies (red admiral, tawny emperor, and varieties of sulphurs). Plus we had one plant we were unable to id.

What really got our attention was the invasion of bastard cabbage, the mustard related weed that is driving out wild flowers throughout Central Texas. The weed is originally from North Africa and Central Europe. In fact, leaves from bastard cabbage are actually eaten by people in those regions, usually boiled or fried, but sometimes raw in salads. That, however, does not negate the damage it is doing to our wild flowers.

We crossed several flowing streams and decided the park looks very healthy following the rainfall in February and March. We enjoyed the conversation and companionship. Thanks for joining me.

~Jacque

Wednesday Evening Kayaking on Lady Bird Lake (Apr 11)

Kayaking is peaceful, relaxing, and good for the mind and body. Well, that's my take away from last evening. Eight of us (JaniceB, LindaF with son Ben from FL, Eola, SusanW, LindaBW, LindaY, and Jacque) gathered at the Rowing Dock and paddled for almost two hours.

The lake was active with those fishing, sculling, canoeing, swimming, and kayaking. Wild Japanese honeysuckle was in bloom and fragrant. We spotted at least seven wood ducks, a green heron, several great blue herons in flight, beaucoup American coots, and at least three double-crested cormorants identified with emerald green eyes.

We did research on Cannabis without even leaving our kayaks as the aroma wafted from the guitar playing musician toward us. We only inhaled and had to really work for an identification.

After kayaking comes food. Actually, after any TOWN outing comes food. So, seven of us met at Mi Alma Mexican Restaurant (located on Barton Springs Road) for sharing and tasting. Food was tasty and light. Must have been sufficiently good because plates were licked clean. Thanks all for joining me for a relaxing time on the lake. See you soon.

~Jacque

Read Complete Trip Reports Online!

Fun! Fun! Fun!

Huntsville State Park

The weather was beautiful, the campsites had views of the lake and were together, the company was outstanding, and we got to see some great wildlife...the picture perfect TOWN wknd! Linda and Tom, Sandy S, Carol C, Judy L, June, Carrie, Janet FB, and yours truly Dawn, plus four legged TOWNIES Ripley, Max and Claire (A.k.a Gator Bait/more on that later in report) all explored Huntsville State Park last wknd. The park office was so helpful with my two billion requests to keep shifting designated sites.

The Raven Lake where our campsites were is very pleasant kayaking and we were followed by kingfishers along the bank and even had an alligator trailing us! So let's talk gators...on Friday afternoon when we were getting used to our surroundings, Claire (Judy's dog) was jumping in and out of the lake from our campsite, chasing sticks and rolling around in the grass in between each jump back into the lake. I happened to glance out to the shore as she was rolling in grass about to head back out to water and I caught a glimpse of a gator right where she had been jumping in...needless to say Claire's jumping in the water was history at that point. We also decided we did not want to swim with the others at the swimming beach!

We did, however, enjoy kayaking around the placid lake more than once including a gorgeous sunset 'cruise'. Friday nite we took in every minute of the remaining hours we could, hanging out at the pier talking to the fishermen, shining the flashlights on the water looking for shining gator eyes, and hiking on the roads around the campground loop. We did a 5 mile or so hike on Saturday led by Carol, who had the patience of a saint with our tired feet and paws, taking pictures and chasing butterflies.

Saturday afternoon most of the folks went horseback riding, organized by Sandy, and it sounded like a good time was had by all that went. Those that stayed at campsite did some reading, napping and more napping. Saturday nite we were treated to baked apples made by a assembly line led by chef Judy. Saturday nite we had a nice dinner as several of us cooked on the open fire, drank some wine and had a bonfire. Linda cooked bkfst for us of pancakes, sausage, bacon, and eggs. I now call her Mama Linda. I didn't have much time but several of us did a little kayaking and then had to start packing up.

~Dawn

Chaetura Canyon (Apr 15)

Twelve TOWNies (AmeliaG, Carriel, MichelleA, SusieA, JenL, BirdieW, MarshaK, GailC, JoanC, LorettaD, DeborahS and GloriaB) were greeted by chimney swifts flying and chattering upon our arrival air at Chaetura Canyon at 8am Sunday morning. We walked into the preserve, we were greeted by our wonderful hosts, Georgean and Paul Kyle, stewards at Chaetura Canyon.

We have a great breakfast of breakfast tacos, a blueberry & peaches dish, tea, coffee and juice. After breakfast, Paul told us the story of Chaetura Canyon, named after the chimney swift (*Chaetura pelagica*). They had to borrow for part of the down payment of \$75 in 1969. They began by purchasing a single lot and began to build their house. And when they said they built their home, they REALLY BUILT their home! Over the years, they were able to purchase the lots around them (total of 8 acres) to set aside for birds, plants and the wildlife. In the past, they have banded birds (over 15 years), and Georgean single-handedly (pun-intended) fed and rehabilitated over 2000 baby birds. They decided to concentrate on chimney swifts, where very little was known at the time. They have constructed over 12 swift towers on the property and hold chimney swift tower workshops every spring. They have also published a couple of books about building towers and their research on the chimney swifts.

The Kyles have fenced the property to keep deer out of some of the area to allow the native plants to thrive. They also built the great trail that we took that led into the canyon, where we saw part of the creek. We had the pleasure to see the sanctuary after the great mild and wet winter we had. The wildflowers and plants were beautiful!

In 2008, the Kyles legally transferred ownership of the sanctuary to Travis Audubon Society, but they will remain as stewards. The sanctuary is open to the public by invitation only via Travis Audubon.

The Kyles also own a wonderful toy store: Rootin' Ridge Toymakers (www.rootinridge.com). Marsha said that even a 3-year old cannot break their toys!

After our 2-hour hike into the canyon, we were treated by a wonderful lunch of pasta salad, bread, and strawberries and brownies for dessert. Some of us left Chaetura Canyon with plants, bird houses, bee houses, full stomachs, and most of all, memories and photos of a beautiful area of Central Texas that will never be developed, thanks to the Kyles. Thanks and Happy Trails!

~Gloria B

E-mail Your Trip Reports to townaustin@yahoogroups.com!

This and That

Only a Few Left: Get Your TOWN Austin Stickers & Magnets!

We have more magnet bumper stickers and square sticker in stock! **The bumper sticker magnets are \$4 each and the stickers are a mere \$1.25 each.** Stick 'em on your car, your kayak, your tent, your cooler, or RV! We want you to stick TOWN all over the place!

Remember—this is also a great way to identify yourself when meeting for outings! Look for the cars with TOWN Austin on them!



TOWN Austin Townies Make Channel 6 News



<http://www.kristv.com/news/women-in-the-wild-event-teaches-self-reliance/#!prettyPhoto/0/>

~Posted by Linda Y



Bluebonnets sway in meadows they play
Beauties in blue I gaze at you.
Stunningly dance as I take a glance.
At your rare form with azure adorned.
You shades in array my eyes are amazed.
Bluebonnets so prim moved by the wind.
Meadows of pure gorgeous allure.
Beauties in blue I'm taken by you.

~bookworm44

Got an Interesting Story? E-mail it to jenlagrange@yahoo.com.

Membership Drive 2012

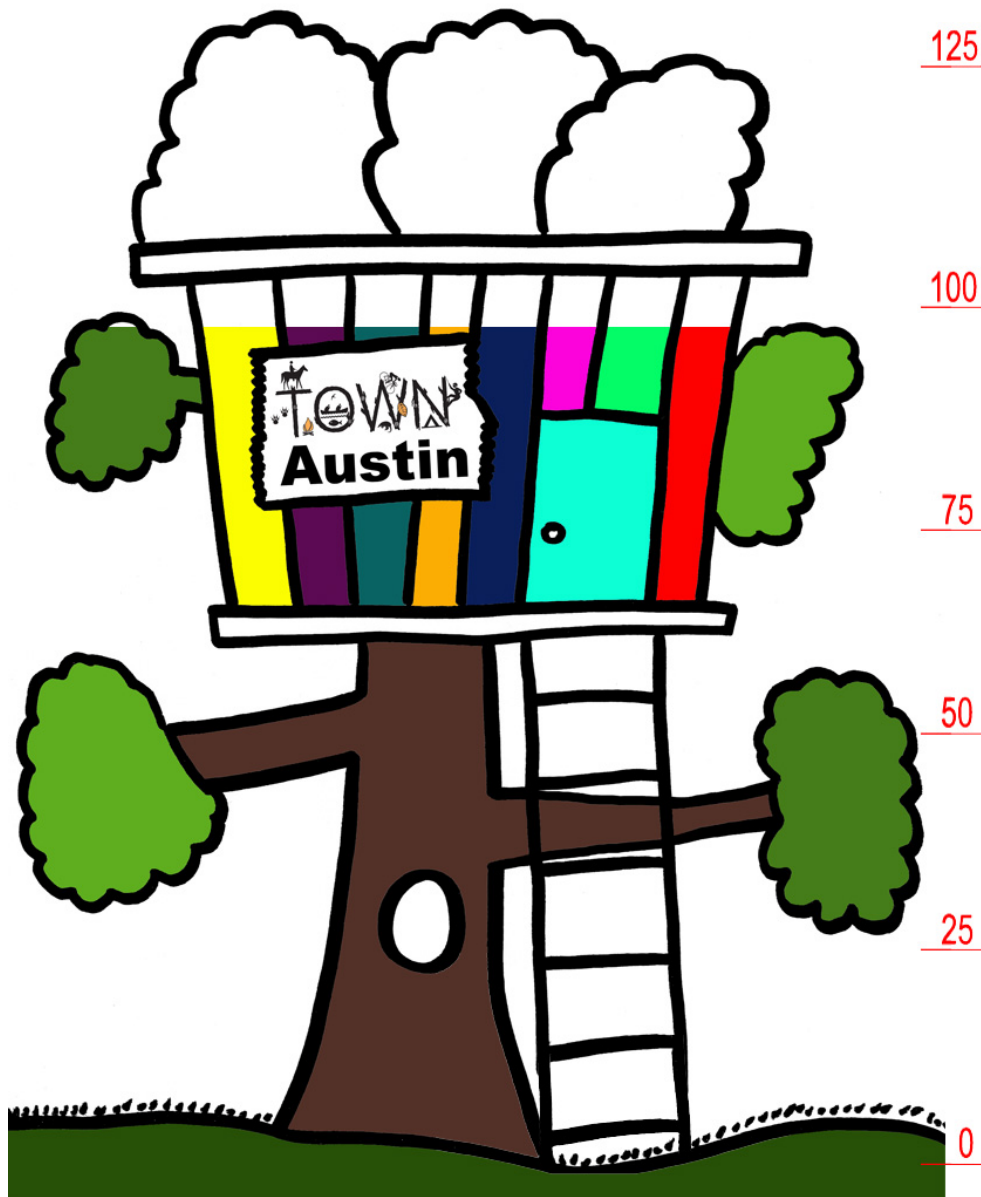
Our 2012 Membership Drive is in Full Swing!

This Year's Goal: 130+ members

We're currently at **95** members! Invite your friends and family to be part of TOWN Austin!

We'd like to take a moment to welcome these new members! Thanks for joining the club!

- * Pat Nelson
- * Lisa Kalakanis
- * Tara Hunt



Please help us fill the TOWN Austin clubhouse!

Invite a Friend (or Three) to Join the Club!

TOWN Austin

P.O. Box 300494
Austin, Texas 78703-0009
townaustin@yahoo.com

Monthly Meeting Location

LCRA's Redbud Center
3601 Lake Austin Blvd.
Austin, TX 78703
(512)473-3535

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide all women the opportunity to learn and experience outdoor activities in natural surroundings through a non-threatening, safe, and supportive environment.

Your TOWN Austin Leadership Team

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About TOWN Austin

Texas Outdoors Woman Network (TOWN) is an offshoot of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's *Becoming an Outdoors Woman* (BOW) program. Our goal is to enable outdoor oriented women to meet and build friendships with women who have similar interests. Local chapters have monthly meetings and outings which are initiated, planned, and conducted by members. Read about TOWN Austin's history by reading about our origins online.

Monthly meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month at the LCRA Redbud Center (3601 Lake Austin Blvd). We begin at 6 p.m. Bring a snack or your brown-bag dinner. The business meeting begins about 6:30. Bring a drink and join us for special announcements, guest speaker, and socializing. Please see our online calendar for details.

Our outings occur on a regular basis. We offer a wide variety of activities. Visit our online calendar to check out what is happening next.

We'd love to show you what TOWN Austin is all about! Prospective members are invited to join us for a couple of outings before becoming an official member!

Our activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Archery
- Backpacking
- Bird Watching
- Camping
- Day hiking
- Kayaking/Canoeing
- Fishing/Fly-fishing
- Horseback riding
- Mountain biking and road biking
- Geocaching

Most trips are planned with minimal cost in mind. We try to carpool and donate for gas. You are always welcomed to create your own carpool when possible. Lodging costs are divided among the participants. Additional costs may be incurred such as State Park entrance fees or tour fees.

Interested in Leading a TOWN Austin Outing?

It's really quite simple and we can always use more leaders. A checklist is available to help you plan an outing so you don't forget anything. There is also a liability release form everyone should sign at the beginning of each outing. See the website for a list of outings we would like to take, but have not yet scheduled.



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