

## Natural Features

The four major plant communities of Enchanted Rock are open oak woodland, mesquite grassland, floodplain, and granite rock community. Live oak, post oak, and blackjack oak dominate the oak woodland, with black hickory in moister areas. Common shrubs are Texas persimmon, agarita, white brush, and prickly pear. Bluestem, three-awn, and grama grass often are found in the shade of the oaks, while American tripogon is more common on gravelly slopes which are seasonally wet. The mesquite grassland, once an area of bluestem, is now covered with three-awn, grama, Elm, pecan, hackberry, black hickory, soapberry, and oak characterize the floodplains. Common shrubs are white buckeye, agarita, Texas persimmon, Roosevelt

weed, and buttonbush. Grasses and sedges, as well as annual and perennial herbs, form the ground cover. Some of these are water bentgrass, late eupatorium, In the spring bluebonnets, Indian paintbrush, yellow coreopsis, bladderpod, and basin bellflower bloom.

Both rock and fox squirrels are common, as are armadillos, rabbits, and other small animals. Lizards and turkey vultures are conspicuous on and above the rock year-round. White-tailed deer are frequently observed, and the park's bird life is varied and abundant.



## Enchanted Rock Trail Project

Please join the Friends of Enchanted Rock for trail building projects at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area. The projects focus on the severely eroded and impacted trails at the park. Come out and help us rebuild and restore these areas.

**Volunteers may be expected to:** Load and haul rock, gravel, and sand, work with hand tools, construct steps, retaining walls, water breaks, and check dams, invest your sweat-equity in Enchanted Rock.

Trained crew chiefs are present to direct the volunteers

and organize the work days. **Large Groups:** Please let us know you're coming by emailing us here. We want to be ready for you!

**When:** The trail building work days are held on the 3rd Saturday of each month. No advance registration is required.

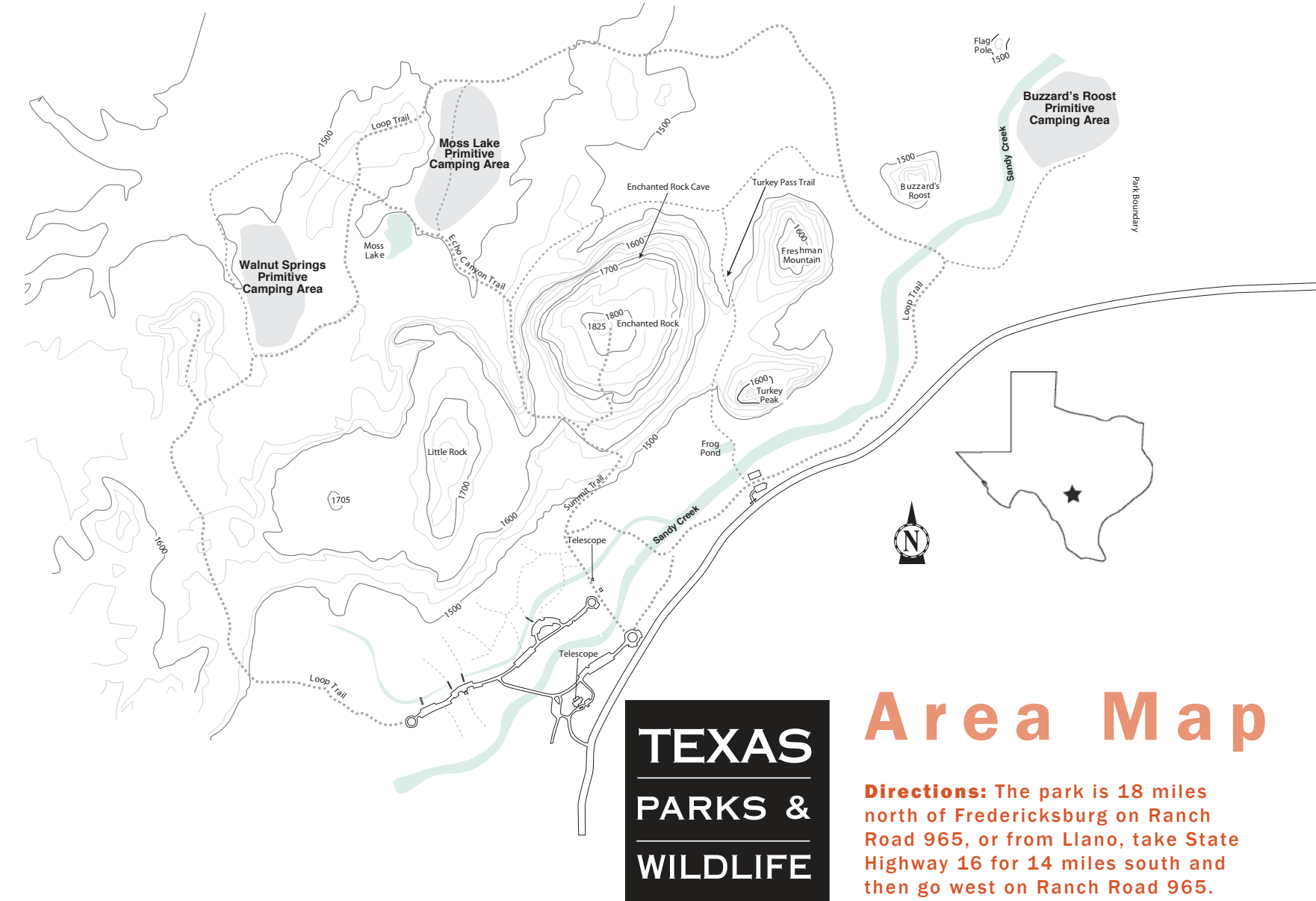
**What To Do:** Simply show up at the gazebo at the start of the Summit Trail at 9:00 am on the designated work day. A crew chief will be present to log you in at that time. The volunteers generally work from 9:00 am to 4:00pm, however, you can volunteer as little as tuesday nights only.

**What To Bring:** To have a better volunteer experience and protect yourself from the elements, each individual should bring the following items:



- sturdy footwear (like hiking boots),
- work gloves for your hands,
- sack lunch and water,
- hat and sunscreen.

The Friends of Enchanted Rock will provide all necessary hand tools and equipment to perform the volunteer work, plus a portable radio and first aid kit for emergencies.



## Area Map

**Directions:** The park is 18 miles north of Fredericksburg on Ranch Road 965, or from Llano, take State Highway 16 for 14 miles south and then go west on Ranch Road 965.



# Enchanted Rock State Park

## Park Overview

**History:** Enchanted Rock State Natural Area consists of 1643.5 acres on Big Sandy Creek, north of Fredericksburg, on the border between Gillespie and Llano Counties. It was acquired by warranty deed in 1978 by the Nature Conservancy of Texas, Inc., from the Moss family. The state acquired it in 1984, added facilities, and reopened the park in March 1984, but humans have visited here for over 11,000 years. Enchanted Rock was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1970 and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. The Rock is a huge, pink granite exfoliation dome, that rises 425 feet above ground, 1825 feet above sea level, and covers 640 acres. It is one of the largest batholiths (underground rock formation uncovered by erosion) in the United States.

Tonkawa Indians believed ghost fires flickered at the top, and they heard weird creaking and groaning, which geologists now say resulted from the rock's heating by day and contracting in the cool night. A conquistador captured by the Tonkawa described how he escaped by losing himself in the rock area, giving rise to

an Indian legend of a "pale man swallowed by a rock and reborn as one of their own." The Indians believed he wove enchantments on the area, but he explained that the rock wove the spells. "When I was swallowed by the rock, I joined the many spirits who enchant this place." The first well-documented explorations of this area did not begin until 1723 when the Spanish intensified their efforts to colonize Texas. During the mid-1700s, the Spaniards made several trips to the north and northwest of San Antonio, establishing a mission and presidio on the San Saba River and carrying out limited mining on Honey Creek near the Llano River.

**Activities:** Visitors can enjoy primitive backpacking, camping, hiking, technical and rock climbing, picnicking, geological study, bird watching, and star gazing (minimal light pollution). Remember, at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, do not disturb plant or animal life, geological features, or Indian or historical artifacts. These park resources are protected by law! Bring your own firewood. Rock climbers must check in at headquarters.

**Facilities:** Facilities include restrooms with showers; walk-in water sites (25 to 100 yards) with tent pads, picnic tables, fire rings, and water and restrooms with showers nearby; hike-in primitive sites, located in three unique areas with composting toilets (backpack camping in designated areas only); picnic sites for day-use with tables and grills; a group picnic area with a pavilion and restrooms; a 4-mile trail for backpacking/day hiking that winds around the granite formations; a short, steep trail leading up to the top of Enchanted Rock (foot traffic only); an interpretive center; and a Texas State Park Store. No facilities are available for vehicular camping of any type.

## Entrance Fees:

\$5 per day, per person 13 and older from October-April

\$7 per day, per person 13 and older from May-September

Group School-Sponsored Trip entrance fee per person: \$1 - \$5

Contact the Park to make arrangements and for pricing.