

Big Bend National Park

Interpretive Activities

May 11 – May 17, 2008

Visitor Center Hours

Panther Junction	-	8:00 AM - 6:00 PM	Daily	
Chisos Basin	-	9:00 AM - 4:30 PM	Daily	closed for lunch
Persimmon Gap	-	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Daily	closed for lunch
Rio Grande Village	-	Closed for the season.		
Castolon	-	Closed for the season.		

Sunday, May 11

9:00 AM Guided Walk – “Desert Trivia” What defines a desert? Considered by some to be desolate, uninhabitable lands, deserts can be places of spectacular diversity and stark beauty. Learn about the deserts of the U.S. and what makes the Chihuahuan desert of Big Bend so special. Meet at Dugout Wells, 6 miles east of the Panther Junction Visitor Center. Bring water and a hat. ½ mile. 1 hour. Ranger M. Lavender.

9:00 PM Evening Program – “Big Bend’s Most Wanted” Not all the plants and animals you see here are native, indeed, some are relative newcomers. Some are proving to be major threats to the health of Big Bend’s natural communities. Join Ranger A. Yost to find out who is Public Enemy Number 1. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour. **Chisos Basin Amphitheater.**

Monday, May 12

8:30 AM Guided Walk – “A Delicate Place: A Best Kept Secret” Join Ranger M. Burnell on a guided walk to a delicate desert oasis. Limited to 10 people. Please sign up at Panther Junction Visitor Center by Sunday, May 11 for directions on where to meet. Be prepared to caravan 10 minutes down a rocky road. Bring water, a hat, and sturdy hiking shoes. 2.5 miles. 2 hours.

Tuesday, May 13

9:00 AM Guided Walk -- “The Chisos In a Nutshell” Geology, geography, and climatic history have created a “sky island” ecosystem in the Chisos Mountains. Join Ranger M. Manning on a short, easy walk to take a look at how these forces have shaped the ecology of the mountains and to learn about some of its inhabitants. Meet at the Chisos Basin trailhead, behind the Basin store. 1/3 mile. 1 hour.

9:00 PM Evening Program – “Raptors of Big Bend” Big Bend has a rich diversity of birds, including the raptors, or birds of prey. Join Ranger M. Lavender to learn what defines a raptor, which ones are resident or migratory, and the role they play in the wild. Bring a flashlight. Wheelchair accessible. 1 hour. **Chisos Basin Amphitheater.**

Wednesday, May 14

8:00 AM Birding Walk -- “The Best Bird?” It’s the one in your binoculars! Join Ranger M. Flippo for some tips on identifying some of the resident and migrant species found in the Big Bend. Recommended for beginners. Bring binoculars and field guides. Meet at the Chisos Basin amphitheater parking lot. 2 hours.

9:00 PM Evening Program – “Ranger Rock, This Is Your Life!” The old adage, “if these rocks could talk, what a tale they would tell” is brought to life in this presentation about Big Bend’s geological history. For an interesting point of view from a 450 million year-old witness, join guest speaker Ranger Rock in this program highlighting Big Bend’s most interesting geologic features. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour. Produced by Ranger R. Dean. **Chisos Basin Amphitheater.**

Thursday, May 15

10:00 AM Morning Program – “Pigs...or Peccaries?” Javelinas, or collared peccaries, are often mistaken for pigs or wild hogs. Though they share some similarities, javelinas are quite different and special in many ways. Join Ranger M. Lavender to learn more about these desert “pigs” and the important role they play in Big Bend’s ecosystem. Meet at the Chisos Basin Visitor Center. Bring water and a hat. 45 minutes.

9:00 PM Evening Program – “Fangs, Spines & Venom” The plants and wildlife in the Big Bend have, over millions of years, adapted to the harsh conditions of the Chihuahuan Desert, many with an array of defenses that can intimidate the human visitor. Though we may believe these things to be dangerous, we are in fact more dangerous to them, and to ourselves. Ranger M. Burnell. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour. **Chisos Basin Amphitheater.**

Friday, May 16

10:00 AM Morning Program – “Fascinating Fossils” Join Ranger M. Lavender to learn about fossils, the exhilarating finds in Big Bend, and the importance of preserving the fossil story of Earth’s past. Meet at the Fossil Bone exhibit, 8 miles north of Panther Junction. Bring water and a hat. 45 minutes.

Saturday, May 17

8:30 AM Guided Walk -- “Home Sweet Home” Ever wonder where all the wildlife hangs out? Join Ranger R. Dean on this guided walk for a peek into the desert homes of some of the Big Bend’s most interesting critters. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater parking lot. Wear walking shoes, bring water, and a hat. 1 mile. 1½ hours.

9:00 PM Evening Program – “Beating the Heat, Defying the Drought” Join Ranger M. Manning to learn how reptiles and amphibians survive and even thrive in the desert. Bring a flashlight. Wheelchair accessible. 1 hour. **Chisos Basin Amphitheater.**