



The Pecos Railroad Bridge Constructed in 1944



Official Newspaper of
Amistad National Recreation Area
The High Bridge Tribune
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A Chihuahuan Desert Paradise

A splash of blue stands out against limestone cliffs. The honking of a great blue heron, interspersed with the descending trill of a canyon wren, can be heard off in the distance. This landscape, which at times appears stark and desolate, comes alive with color after a rainstorm. Amistad National Recreation Area (NRA) is a land of contrasts... and of hidden treasures. The same water that draws people to boat and fish today, sustained over 300 generations of hunters and gatherers. They left behind a record of their

existence through colorful rock art panels, bits of tools, and fibers preserved for thousands of years by the arid desert climate of the Lower Pecos River Region of southwest Texas.

Situated on the United States-Mexico Border, Amistad NRA is known primarily for excellent year round, water-based recreation including boating, fishing, swimming, scuba diving and kayaking. Amistad NRA also provides opportunities for pic-

nicking, camping and hunting. The reservoir, at the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Devils River, was created by Amistad Dam in 1969. In addition to excellent recreation, this area is rich in archeology and rock art, and contains a wide variety of plant and animal life. So whether you come to boat, to ponder ancient mysteries, or to listen to bird song and watch the desert bloom, Amistad has something for you.

Visit Amistad NRA's official web page:
www.nps.gov/amis

Monarch Butterflies Migrate Through Amistad NRA



Fall at Amistad National Recreation Area brings one of the most impressive animal migrations in the world—the passage of thousands of Monarch butterflies. The Monarchs pass through the Del Rio area on their way from southern Canada to their winter homes in the mountains of central Mexico.

Monarchs flying from Canada to Mexico will travel up to 3,000 miles in their fall migration. Del Rio and Ciudad Acuña are usually close to the center of the

migration corridor, and most years you can see thousands of butterflies roosting in trees overnight around the lake and in town.

The return spring migration is more dispersed, and the Monarchs travel to northern Texas and Oklahoma to lay eggs for the next generation. Three or four more generations will recolonize the Plains all the way to Canada, until the late summer when they resume migratory behavior.

One of the most impressive aspects of the Monarch migration is, unlike birds, individual butterflies have never migrated before, since the migratory generation is separated by three or four non-migratory generations. Pure instinct guides these remarkable insects. The butterflies roost in a variety of trees, and they seem to inherently come to the same roosts as their ancestors in prior migrations.

Amistad NRA has utilized the Monarch as a resource shared among neighboring countries through education programs at schools in bordering towns such as Del Rio, Texas and Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, and Eagle Pass, Texas and Piedras Negras, Coahuila.



Local Birding Opportunities

by Karen Gleason

Winter is really the best time to birdwatch in Del Rio and Amistad NRA, but mostly it's because of the weather, not because of the birds!

Del Rio's normally mild winters allow for many days outdoors, and the wide variety of birds here during the winter offers birdwatchers an opportunity to find and watch hundreds of different species, including many that are often considered Mexican or tropical species.

Two of those local specialties are the **Ringed Kingfisher** and the **Green Kingfisher**. Both of these species may be found anywhere along Del Rio's **San Felipe Creek**. In fact, the only species of North American kingfisher you may have trouble finding here is the **Belted Kingfisher**.

Visits to the creek should also produce many opportunities to study the boisterous antics of **Great Kiskadee**, as well as **Vermilion Flycatcher**, **Black Phoebe** and, early in winter, **Couch's Kingbird**. Other area specialties that you may find on trips along the creek include **Zone-tailed Hawk** and the **Yellow-crowned Night Heron**.

The old hardwoods along San Felipe Creek provide plenty of food and cover for migrating warblers. Be ready for anything! Another wonderful place to indulge (Birding Continued on Page 5)



Great Kiskadee

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The High Bridge Tribune



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The High Bridge Tribune: the official newspaper of Amistad National Recreation Area. The Pecos Railroad High Bridge is symbolic of the long span of human history represented at Amistad NRA. The steel bridge (pictured above) was built in 1892 for the Southern Transcontinental Railway; the current bridge (front cover) was finished in 1944. Visit the following website for photos of the High Bridge construction: <http://bridges.lib.lehigh.edu/books/book1631.html>

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National Park Service
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 www.nps.gov



A Letter From the Superintendent



Welcome to Amistad National Recreation Area! My staff and I hope you enjoy your visit. We are working hard to improve your experience and safety here at Amistad NRA. I'd like to tell you about three recent projects underway in the recreation area.

The first project will make it easier for visitors to find Amistad's recreational facilities. We are replacing all the park's large highway signs along US Highway 90 and US Highway 277. The new signs replace faded and hard-to-read signs that are, in some cases, more than twenty years old. Amistad's new signs are among the first in the entire National Park system to use a recently adopted standard graphic design.

We are installing low-intensity solar-powered lights in the Diablo East boat ramp parking area. These lights will improve visitor safety and security, especially during early morning fishing tournament launches. The lights were carefully chosen to minimize light pollution and impact to our

beautiful night sky. In fact, they will automatically turn off four hours after sunset, and turn back on two hours before sunrise.

The third project replaces courtesy and fishing docks at Box Canyon. The new docks are fully ADA compliant, and so will be useful for visitors with physical limitations.

We're always interested in listening to visitor suggestions that improve the recreation area. Feel free to contact me anytime at 830 775-7492 ext 200.

Alan W. Cox

"I Don't Have a Boat - What Can I See and Do Here?"

A. Visit Amistad Dam:

From the Amistad Visitor Information Center, take Hwy 90 W about 2.5 miles. You will see the turn off for the dam (Spur 349) on your left. You may drive out and park in the designated area. Turning back around is easy. Unless you drive through Mexico customs, you need not worry about being in Mexico. The total length of the dam is 6 miles.

B. Picnic or walk down by the water:

Governors Landing has both a day use area and a campground. There are 8 picnic areas around the lake.

C. Rent a boat:

Forever Resorts operates marinas at Diablo East and Rough Canyon.

D. Take a scenic drive:

Viewpoint Road at Diablo East (unpaved) leads to good spots for picnicking, swimming and SCUBA diving.

E. Tent or RV (dry) camp:

Amistad NRA maintains four primitive campgrounds located throughout the park (see larger centerfold map page 5).

F. U.S. Military:

Active or retired military may use the U.S.A.F. (Southwinds) Marina located out toward the dam.



View of "Dive Cove" and picnic areas



Bronze Eagles on Amistad Dam



Photograph flora and fauna



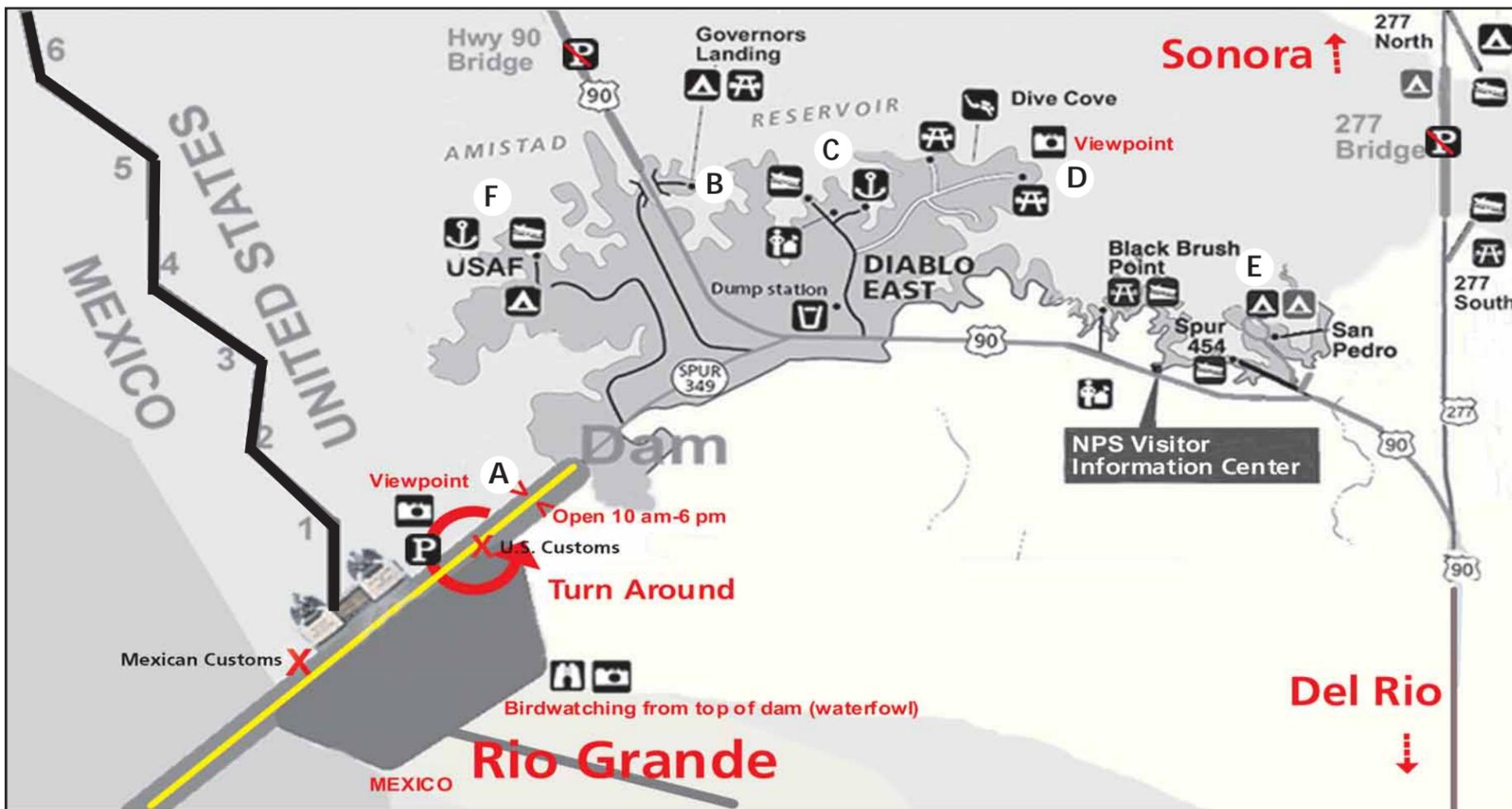
Picnic by the lake



Scene from Viewpoint Drive

Always remember to:
LEAVE NO TRACE
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL!

There are trash receptacles located throughout the park.



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Val Verde County Sheriff:

911 or (830) 774-7513.
 Val Verde County Sheriff monitors NPS radio frequency and will dispatch a park ranger or deputy for emergencies.

Ambulance:

911 or (830) 775-1111

For non-emergency response

Amistad Visitor Information Center:

7 Days a week - 8 am - 5 pm (830) 775-7491

Tips for Visiting Ciudad Acuña, Mexico

- * Bring personal ID and keep it with you because you will need it to reenter the U.S.
- * Bringing weapons, ammunition and drugs into Mexico is a Mexican federal offense.
- * If you are unsure of what not to bring call the Mexican Consulate 830-775-2352.
- * Check with your insurance company to see if you need to buy Mexican car insurance.
- * You may park near the U.S. Port of Entry and walk to Mexico, it's 3/4 mile each way.
- * U.S. Dollars are accepted at most stores. Some businesses will take credit cards.
- * Declare **ALL** purchases when reentering the U.S. Alcohol and tobacco are taxed.

Volunteer Spotlight



Volunteers Larry & Shirley Marriage

They have earned "Master Ranger Corp" status for putting in 500+ hours per year of volunteer time, and have been presented with the "Presidential Award" for having volunteered over 4,000 hours each.

On behalf of the staff at Amistad NRA, we'd like to say THANK YOU to Larry and Shirley Marriage for all they have given to this park. We appreciate their work and wish them best of luck and health in the future.

Amistad NRA Staff~

Larry and Shirley Marriage of Johannesburg, Michigan have been part of Amistad National Recreation Area for a long time. They are here in Del Rio for their 14th winter season of camp hosting at Amistad NRA's 277 N campground. It's good to have them back!

The Marriages have also hosted at Governors Landing campground, and have participated in Amistad's Trails & Rails Program aboard the Amtrak train the "Sunset Limited."



Amistad NRA Fees

Park User Fees	Regular	Golden Age/Access
Entrance Fee	None	None
Daily Boat Use (24 hours)	\$4.00	\$2.00
3 Day Boat Use (72 hours)	\$10.00	\$5.00
Annual Boat Use Full Year	\$40.00	\$20.00
Camping Spur 406	\$4.00/night/site	\$2.00/night /site
Camping San Pedro	\$4.00/night/site	\$2.00/night/site
Camping Governors Landing	\$8.00/night/site	\$4.00/night/site
Camping 277 North	\$4.00/night/site	\$2.00/night/site
Group Camp Sites San Pedro, 277 North, Rock Quarry	\$2/person/night 15 person minimum	\$1/person/night 15 person minimum
Hunting	\$20	\$20

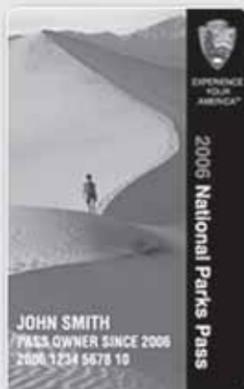


Park Passports

The **NATIONAL PARKS PASS** is a real bargain for the frequent visitor to National Park Service units. The pass is \$50 and provides free entrance to its holder and everyone in the vehicle for one full year from the month of purchase. Not all parks have an entrance fee, but most of them do, including some entrance fees up to \$20. The pass is only good for entrance and **does not** include any user fees such as parking, camping, and boat launching.



A handy booklet on the units of the National Park system is included with the purchase of a National Parks Pass. Anyone may purchase a National Parks Pass; however, it *may not be used for commercial purposes*. See the individual park for commercial vehicle entrance fees.



A **GOLDEN EAGLE UPGRADE** hologram can be purchased for \$15 and placed on the National Parks Pass to cover entrance into other federal lands, such as National Forests, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife areas.

PARK SPECIFIC PASS

Some parks may have an individual annual pass for entrance to that park only. This is great if you live near a National Park and enjoy visiting it often. The cost is less than a National Parks Pass, but can only be used at the park in which you purchased it.

The **GOLDEN ACCESS PASSPORT** is free of charge to U.S. citizens who are permanently disabled or blind. A Golden Access Passport admits its holder into all National Park Service units and many other federal fee areas for the lifetime of the holder. Other federal fee areas include those managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Entrance is also permitted to everyone in the pass holder's vehicle. The pass holder may also be entitled to 50% off all user fees such as camping, launching, and parking.



Where there is an individual fee, such as a cave tour, then only the pass holder is entitled to 50% off. Everyone with him/her must pay full price. The passport must be obtained in person along with proof of disability, and it is nontransferable.

The **GOLDEN AGE PASSPORT** is a lifetime entrance permit for U.S. citizens 62 years of age and older. This pass allows its holder the same benefits as the Golden Access. The Golden Age Passport must be **obtained in person** with proof of age. There is a one-time fee of \$10 for this pass to cover administrative costs. It is nontransferable.



Volunteer

Amistad National Recreation Area has a variety of volunteer positions available each fall/winter season. Our greatest need is for Campground Hosts and Visitor Center Volunteers. We have 4 campgrounds that require hosts; however only one has full hookups (for the host only) and it is the easiest to fill. The other 3 have sewer only and are great for campers with solar panels.

We prefer long-term commitments for these positions. The term can be September-April continuous, or we can break it up into two 4 month positions from September- December and January-April. **A background check is now being required for all volunteer positions.**

We have a new Visitor Information Center 5 miles west of our headquarters building on Hwy 90. We need volunteers to staff the information desk, sell park passports, boat permits, hunting permits and books, issue parking permits, and give quality information to our park visitors.

We can accept applications for Visitor Information Assistants to staff the Visitor Information Center year-round; however, we prefer long-term commitments of at least 4 months for these positions. We offer a full hook-up site in exchange for 32 work hours per week.

Mail your application to:

Amistad National Recreation Area
4121 Veterans Blvd.
Del Rio, TX 78840.

Attn: Volunteer Coordinator

or
Email:

amis_interpretation@nps.gov

or

Apply online at:

www.volunteer.gov/gov



We look forward to your applications.



NOTE: Unfortunately, we cannot consider anyone without their own accommodations and vehicle. Stipends are not available.

Park Activities

Amistad National Recreation Area offers water-based recreation and protects our natural and cultural heritage. Amistad (Spanish for *friendship*) Dam, built by the United States and Mexico in 1969, forms International Amistad Reservoir on the Rio Grande, and the Pecos and Devils Rivers. Buoys mark the US/Mexico border along the Rio Grande arm of the lake. Enjoy your visit to Amistad NRA!

CAMPING

The National Park Service operates four campgrounds. All sites are primitive with no hook-ups, and feature grills, vault toilets, and covered picnic tables. Only Governors Landing has potable water. All sites are first-come, first-served. Reservations are not available except for group campsites. A dump station is located at Diablo East.

(See page 3 for camping fee schedule)

SAN PEDRO

Open all year
35 Sites with long, flat spaces, suitable for RVs or tents, and 5 tent-only sites are available. Camp hosts may be on-site in the winter months.

GOVERNORS LANDING

Open all year
15 Sites, suitable for RVs less than 28 feet or tents. Camp hosts on-site in the winter months.

SPUR 406

Open all year
8 Sites, suitable for RVs or tents.

277 NORTH

Open all year
17 Sites, suitable for RVs or tents. Camp hosts on-site in the winter months.

GROUP CAMPSITES

Located at San Pedro, 277 North and Rock Quarry. All are primitive group sites and have covered picnic tables and a fire ring. Sites may be reserved up to three months (90 days) in advance.

Privately owned campgrounds and RV parks with hookups are also available in the Del Rio area.

FISHING

CAST A LINE

The beautiful blue water of Lake Amistad provides excellent fishing and attracts many anglers to Amistad NRA.



BANK FISHING

You can fish from the shoreline anywhere outside of harbors and anywhere people swim. Courtesy fishing docks are located at, Box Canyon, Pecos River, Rough Canyon, 277 South and Blackbrush Point.

WHAT TO FISH FOR

Some of the favorite catches at Lake Amistad are Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, Striped Bass, Channel Catfish, and Black Crappie (more info on page 8).

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Texas fishing license requirements apply when fishing on the U.S. side of Lake Amistad. When in Mexican waters, you must adhere to Mexican fishing regulations, which differ from Texas in terms of size and catch limits. The Mexican border is indicated by numbered buoys running along the main channel of the Rio Grande in Amistad Reservoir.

MEXICAN FISHING LICENSE

Amistad Marine 830-775-0878
Fishermans Headquarters 830-774-5670
are both on Hwy 90 West and sell Mexican fishing licenses and boat permits.

NOTE

Mexican law strictly prohibits possession of guns, ammo, and illegal drugs. Anyone caught in Mexican waters with contraband will receive a mandatory prison sentence and a substantial fine.

Authorized Fishing Guides

Herschel Black
(830) 775-3639

Glen McGonagill
(830) 775-6720

Charlie Rumfield
(830) 774-3484

Jerry Black
(432) 292-4710

Gene Peil
(830) 775-7243

Mike Fambro
(432) 292-4638

INFORMATION

Amistad NRA's Visitor Information Center is located 10 miles west of Del Rio on Hwy 90 West, and is open 7 days a week, 8 am - 5 pm, closed Thanksgiving Day, December 25 and January 1. The center has various interactive displays, a theater to watch a short film on the recreation area, an information desk, and a full book store and lounge area.

The book store is stocked by Big Bend Natural History Association and has many great titles and fun things for sale. You can purchase field guides, books on Texas history, rock art, borderland history, maps, star charts, wildlife posters, puzzles, childrens books and much, much more!

The information center has all National Park Passports for sale, and annual or daily boat permits. (see page 3 for info on passport and permit information)

SCUBA DIVING



Amistad's exceptionally clear water makes it an excellent place for SCUBA diving. A dive cove is located at Diablo East. Depending on lake levels

there are several submerged ranch houses to explore. Check with a park ranger or at Amistad Visitor Information Center before you dive, and pick up a copy of "Dive Amistad Safely." Use your dive flag, know your safe limits and never dive alone. Don't try SCUBA diving without training.

SWIMMING

Swimming at Amistad is a great way to escape the desert heat. You may swim anywhere in the lake, except in harbors and around docks. Water temperatures range from 54 degrees in winter months to 86 degrees late in summer.

SWIM SAFE!

- ◆ There are no lifeguards on duty; all swimming is done at your own risk.
- ◆ Stay within reach of children.
- ◆ Never swim alone.
- ◆ Diving from cliffs is extremely dangerous and is not recommended at any time.
- ◆ If you swim from a boat, make sure the boat is anchored and the engine is turned off.
- ◆ Never start a boat engine while swimmers are in the water.
- ◆ It is recommended that small children and non-swimmers wear Coast Guard approved life jackets; some areas in Lake Amistad have sudden drop offs into deeper water.

REMEMBER: Water activities and alcohol do not mix. Many drownings are alcohol-related and can be prevented by not drinking alcoholic beverages before or during water sports.



PICNICKING

Relax and enjoy lake side views at any of Amistad NRA's eight picnic areas. Each area is equipped with covered picnic tables, grills, and vault toilets. Group picnic shelters are available by reservation only. Reservations can be made 90 days in advance-call 830-775-7491 to check availability.



HUNTING

Unlike many National Park Service areas, Amistad's enabling legislation allows limited hunting. Archery and small-game shotgun hunting is permitted on about 2,200 acres of federal land in five hunt areas. Texas hunting regulations and seasons along with Amistad's regulations are used to manage hunting.



Permits are \$20 for the season and are available IN PERSON only at the Visitor Information Center with the following documentation:

- Texas Hunting License
- Drivers License
- Hunter Education Card (if born after September 1, 1971) or state deferral.

While hunting, hunters must have the permit in their possession, must fill in the Hunter Data Sheet daily, and return the form by March 15. Failure to comply will result in loss of future hunting privileges.

More information and maps are available at the visitor information center and on our web site: www.nps.gov/amis.



PROGRAMS

COFFEE WITH A RANGER

An informal talk with an NPS ranger or other guest is held every Thursday morning at 10 AM from January through March. The programs are rotated among 3 of Amistad NRA's campgrounds (Governors Landing, San Pedro and 277 North) and are held at the Campground Host's site. Coffee talks are open to the public and are **free** of charge. Bring your favorite mug, a comfortable chair, and lots of questions!

EVENING PROGRAMS

Every third Saturday of the month an evening program will be held in the theater at the Visitor Information Center on HWY 90 W across from the Three Rivers RV Park. The **free** programs begin at 7:30 pm and cover a variety of subjects presented by experts in their respective fields. Contact the park for more information.

TRAILS & RAILS PROGRAM

The National Park Service has teamed up with Amtrak to provide educational programs onboard the Amtrak passenger train. Park staff and volunteers explain the fascinating natural and cultural history along the rail route through southwest Texas. The volunteers bring alive historical figures such as Judge Roy Bean and events such as the construction of the second transcontinental railroad.



For more information on the program contact: Lisa Evans at (830) 775-7491 x 223 or email: Lisa_Evans@nps.gov.

To check on the train's arrival status or for reservations, call **1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245)**.



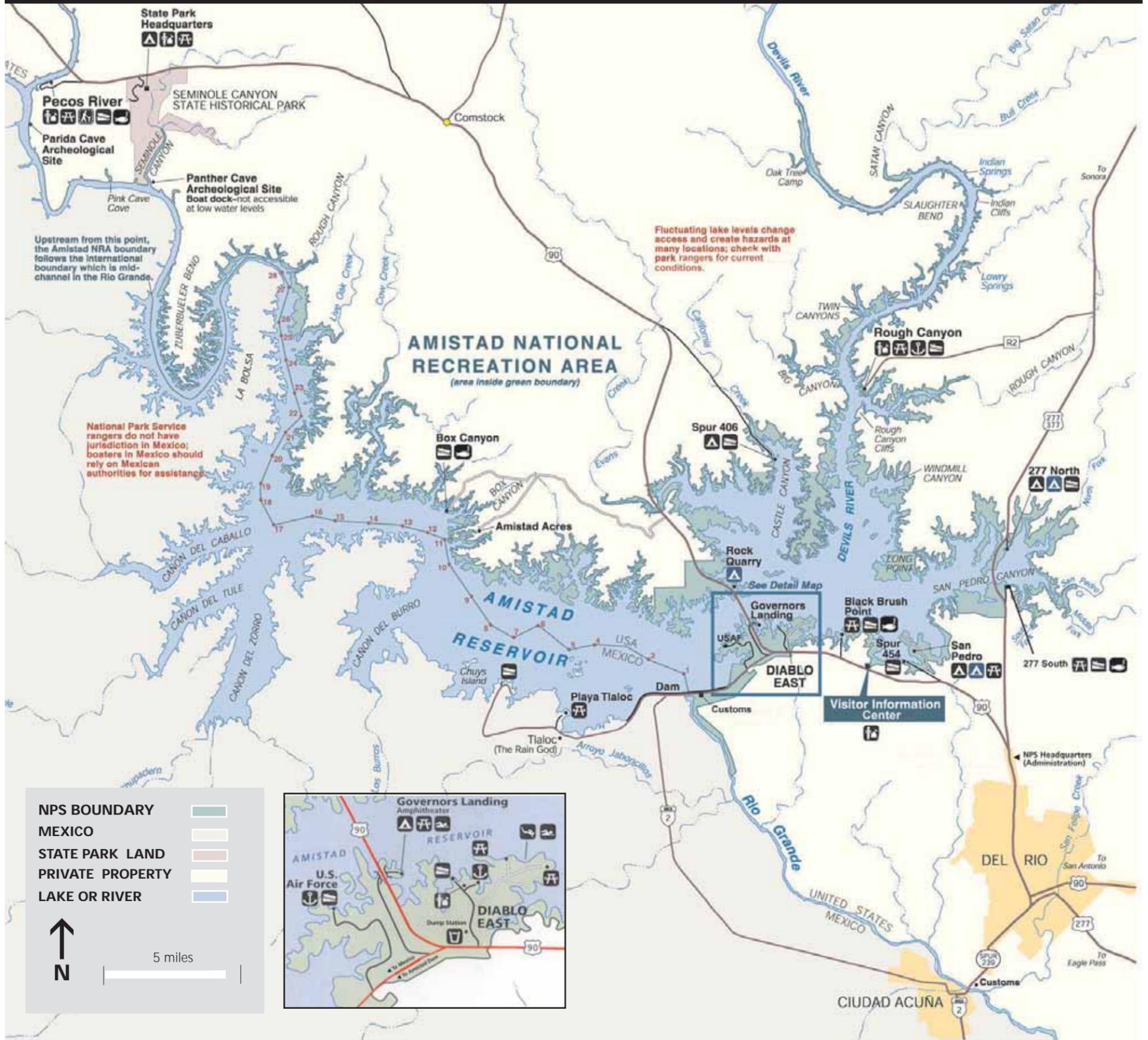
BIRD WALKS

A guided bird walk is offered every third Saturday of the month from September to May. Participants meet at Amistad NRA Visitor Information Center on Hwy 90 W at 8:00 am, then carpool to the Rio Grande below Amistad Dam. Bring binoculars, birding books, checklists, drinking water, snacks, and wear sturdy shoes. Bird walks are **free**.

DATES

Jan 21, 2006	Feb 18, 2006	Mar 18, 2006
Apr 15, 2006	May 20, 2006	Sep 16, 2006
Oct 21, 2006	Nov 18, 2006	Dec 16, 2006

Map of Amistad National Recreation Area



(Continued from front page Local Birding)

in Del Rio's rich and varied bird life is the city's Laguna de Plata. A map of this area can be obtained from The Del Rio Chamber of Commerce or the NPS Visitor Information Center. Two water sources at Laguna de Plata are a settling pond for one of the city's sewage treatment plants, and Cienegas Creek which forms the property's back boundary.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Wood Duck, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Blue-winged Teal, Green-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Gadwall, American Widgeon, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead and Ruddy Duck are among the species that can be found with regularity on the settling pond. Along the shoreline, watch for Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Spotted Sandpiper and Killdeer.



Painted Bunting

Common Yellowthroat and Hooded Warbler. The underbrush around the settling pond is also an excellent place to find Olive Sparrow and Long-billed Thrasher, two other Texas specialties.

The fields behind the settling pond are wonderful place to sharpen your skills looking for winter sparrows, which are numerous, but hard to find and even harder to identify once found. Patience will be rewarded, however, with likely looks at Chipping Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Black-throated Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow,

LeConte's Sparrow and White-crowned Sparrow. The Del Rio area offers you the opportunity to add some special birds to your "Life" and "North American" lists. Occasionally, the area plays host to birds from Mexico. One recent such example is the Rufous-capped Warbler. This Mexican species was spotted several years ago at Pink Cave Cove on the Rio Grande arm of Lake Amistad. A group of us that had gone there to find it located the bird in a grove of oaks, after several hours of searching.

BIRDING LOCATIONS WITHIN AMISTAD NRA

Spur 454

San Pedro Campground - Good for desert birds; very good for migrating and wintering sparrows. Good for butterflies in season. (See Monarch story on front cover).

Spur 406

Good for desert birds; in the summer use a spotting scope for Interior least terns flying over Lake Amistad.

Hunt Area 1

Great for desert birds. Check with Amistad NRA for hunting status.

Rio Grande Below Amistad Dam

Very good for riparian birds. Open by guided tour only. See bird walk schedule (page 4).



Meadowlark

Archeology and Rock Art

Amistad National Recreation Area

Amistad National Recreation Area has developed two major rock art sites for public visitation, Parida Cave and Panther Cave (which is jointly managed with Seminole Canyon State Park and Historic Site). Both sites were developed years ago and are intended to provide boaters with educational opportunities that complement recreational activities. In recent years, however, a prolonged regional drought had lowered lake levels by nearly 60 vertical feet. As a result, there were times when both Parida and Panther Caves were closed to boaters because of dangerous river conditions on the upper part of the reservoir. Fortunately, rising lake levels mean that both sites are again accessible to the public.

Panther Cave is the region's most famous pictograph site. The rear wall of the shelter is literally covered, from floor to ceiling, with hundreds of individual motifs collectively forming an uninterrupted panel more than 80 feet in length. The site's namesake, a giant red painted mountain lion or panther, is almost 9 feet long from nose to the tip of the tail. Visitors to Panther Cave climb a 60-foot steel staircase up to the rockshelter which is protected by a tall metal fence. Adjacent to the protective fence is an elevated catwalk that limits where visitors can go, thus reducing potential damage to vegetation. The steel fence and other major improvements were completed in 1996 by the NPS and were designed in such a way as to maximize photographic vantage points.

Parida Cave offers an amazing array of pictographs and a spectacular view of the Rio Grande. The site is located on the Rio Grande about 1.5 miles downstream from the NPS Pecos River boat ramp adjacent to the U.S. Highway 90 bridge. Parida Cave, once known as Painted Cave Station, was a welcome stop for travelers riding on the Southern Pacific's transcontinental railroad that began service through the region in 1883. By 1892, the trains adopted a newer, shorter route through the region; yet by this time travelers had already painted graffiti over and adjacent to the prehistoric pictographs at the site.

At both sites, unobtrusive interpretive panels provide visitors with information about the pictographs, the prehistoric cultures that once lived in the reservoir basin, and the need to protect and preserve Panther and Parida Caves, as well as the many other sites in the region. With both sites once again accessible by boat, the park hopes to see increased visitation to these unique resources.

The taking of any artifacts or deliberate destruction of any cultural or natural resource on federal or state lands is against the law and punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.

Seminole Canyon SP & HS

Seminole Canyon State Park & Historic Site offers rock art enthusiasts the most complete venue in the region and features a bookstore, campground, interpretive center, and guided tours to sites. Located 42 miles west of Del Rio on U.S. Highway 90, the park has 31 campsites (23 sites with partial hookups). Be sure to call the park for camping, entrance and tour fees.

At 10:00 am and 3:00 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday, the park offers guided tours to several large pictograph sites in Seminole Canyon. Due to extreme summer heat from June - September only the 10 am tour is offered. Additional guided tours to remote sites in the park are offered on an irregular basis with advance registration and a nominal fee. These tours include the Presa Canyon tour, which requires about 8 hours of very strenuous hiking and climbing but offers the rare opportunity to visit seven of the park's pictograph sites normally closed to the public.

Another is the Upper Canyon tour, which takes about two hours of moderate hiking, and includes stops at two pictograph sites and several 19th century railroad sites. Those planning a trip to Seminole Canyon State Park & Historic Site should check out their web site at: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/seminole or call 432-292-4464 for tour times and fees.

The Rock Art Foundation

In addition to the state and national parks in the region, the Rock Art Foundation is a private foundation that offers opportunities for visiting additional sites in the region which are not on public lands. Membership in this organization also provides opportunities for a wide range of educational activities, as well as field trips that can be found nowhere else in the region.

The Rock Art Foundation (RAF) was established by renowned photographer Jim Zingtraff. The RAF sponsors numerous activities for its members, including field schools, conservation and research projects, and an annual rendezvous. It manages the Galloway White Shaman Preserve, adjacent to the Pecos River near Seminole Canyon State Park & Historic Site, and also offers regular field trips to some of the region's most famous rock art sites. The RAF recently produced a CD-ROM featuring Lower Pecos Region pictographs. The RAF web site is among the best pictorial presentations on regional rock art available anywhere on the Internet. Visit their web site at www.rockart.org.

The outstanding preservation conditions and concentration of world-class rock art sets the Lower Pecos apart from all other regions of North America.

Texas Beyond History - Before Amistad

A new section has been added to the existing Lower Pecos exhibit on Texas Beyond History (TBH), the public education service web site published by the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) in partnership with 10 other organizations having a vested interest in the cultural heritage of Texas.

"Before Amistad" (<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/pecos/before.html>) tells the story of the archeological and paleoenvironmental research that took place in southwestern Texas in advance of the 1969 completion of Amistad International Reservoir.

The addition is sponsored by the Amistad National Recreation Area, National Park Service (ANRA-NPS), a partner in TBH. Steve Black (TBH) wrote the section, aided by Vaughn Bryant (Anthropology Department, Texas A&M, a TBH partner) and Joe Labadie (NPS).



SHUMLA SCHOOL

Shumla Adventures offers a wide range of programs to people of all ages. Each program offers an opportunity to step away from urban life-styles and experience first-hand how people for millennia have met the challenges of survival. Activities are designed to bridge the gap between art and science



Shumla Adventures Hiking in Seminole Canyon

as we study the human use of materials, land, and art. Programs incorporate innovative studies in archeology, ecology, natural history, prehistoric life-ways, botany, and art. Incorporated into each program are some of the following activities:

-Hiking through canyons and canoeing rivers

- Visiting some of the most spectacular rock art sites in the world
- Learning how to make paint the prehistoric way
- Learning about the plants used for food and medicine in prehistory
- Building an earth oven to cook desert plants using prehistoric techniques
- Creating baskets and producing stone tools using locally available resources
- Evening discussions on the "work of art" in the past and present
- Evening lectures on the history and archeology of the region
- Music around the campfire at night

Some of the locations visited in these programs require climbing into and out of rock shelters located in the walls of canyons.

If you have questions, feel free to contact Shumla School by mail: PO Box 627, Comstock, TX 78837; or by E-mail: info@shumla.org.

ARCHEOLOGY FAIR

"Texas Archeology Awareness Month" occurs every October, and throughout the state activities are put on by communities and organizations in celebration. The Val Verde County Archeology Fair is no exception. Together, the National Park Service, Whitehead Memorial Museum, and Shumla School hold a spectacular fair, with guest speakers, demonstrations, and hands-on activities for all ages.

For information on attending, or participating in the 2006 Archeology Fair call Lisa Evans at (830) 775-7491 x 223, or email her at: Lisa_Evans@nps.gov. The Val Verde County Archeology Fair is held outdoors (weather permitting) at the Whitehead Memorial Museum, South Main Street, Del Rio, Texas.



Boating on Lake Amistad

Each year, tens of thousands of visitors come to Amistad to enjoy boating, fishing, and other water sports. The National Park Service is committed to ensuring that their visit is safe and enjoyable. You can help protect yourself and other lake users by knowing and obeying state and federal boating laws.

LAKE USE PERMITS

◆ A valid Amistad lake use permit is required for motorized vessels of any length and for non-motorized vessels 14 feet or longer. Lake use permits can be obtained from machines at Diablo East, Rough Canyon, Box Canyon, and the Pecos. Or can be obtained in person at the NPS Visitor Information Center on Highway 90 West.

◆ Annual and daily lake use permits are available. If you purchase an annual permit from a machine, you must exchange the receipt and obtain a sticker



from the Visitor Information Center, Diablo East Marina, or

Rough Canyon Marina. Attach the sticker to the port (left) side of your vessel near the registration numbers. Annual permits are valid for one year from the month in which they were purchased.

REQUIRED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs):

◆ All vessels must have one Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III, or V wearable PFD for each person on board. Check the labels inside your PFDs if you are not sure what type they are. PFDs must be in good condition, readily accessible, and the correct size for the people on board.

◆ All children under 13 years of age must wear their PFDs while the vessel is underway.

◆ All vessels over 16 feet in length (except canoes and kayaks), are required to have one Coast Guard approved Type IV throwable PFD on board.

Audible Warning Device:

◆ All vessels must have a functioning horn, whistle, or other adequate sound-producing device on board.

Required Lights:

◆ All vessels operated between sunset and sunrise, or in periods of low visibility, must display a white light visible from 360 degrees around. In addition, power driven vessels must display red and green navigation lights while underway between sunset and sunrise, or during low visibility.

◆ If you plan to launch your boat before dawn, remember to turn on your lights until sunrise.

Fire Extinguishers:

◆ All vessels with permanently installed fuel tanks are required to carry a functional "B" or "B,C" fire extinguisher on board.

◆ Extinguishers must be charged and in good working condition.

◆ If you are not sure whether you are required to carry an extinguisher, play it safe - carry one anyway.

BOATING RULES

Obey Buoys and Other Markers:

◆ Cut your throttle to idle speed in no-wake zones in harbors. No-wake zones were established to protect docked boats from damage. Remember, you are legally responsible for any damage caused by your wake. These areas are marked by orange and white buoys with a circle and the words "flat wake" or "no wake."

◆ Respect closures. Some areas of the lake are closed to protect swimmers, divers, and wildlife. These areas are marked with signs and/or orange and white buoys with a crossed diamond.

◆ Do not attach your vessel to buoys or other navigation aids. Doing so is illegal, as it may cause buoys to move, endangering other boaters.

Watch For Hazards:

◆ The lake level is constantly fluctuating, exposing or concealing rocks and shallow areas. If you are unfamiliar with an area, or water levels have changed since you were last there, slow down and keep an eye out for underwater hazards. It is impossible for the National Park Service to mark every rock and obstacle in the water; you are responsible for operating carefully and avoiding accidents.

◆ Be especially careful beyond buoy #28 on the Rio Grande, and near Indian Springs on the Devils River. Shallow areas and rocks have caused accidents in these areas.

◆ Some hazards are marked by orange or orange and white buoys with a diamond symbol.

Check Weather Reports:

◆ Weather conditions can change rapidly on Lake Amistad. Check weather reports before you leave the dock, and tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return. Get off the water as soon as possible if high winds, large waves, or storms develop.

Follow the "Rules Of The Road:"

◆ When meeting another boat head-on, keep to the right.

◆ When crossing the path of other vessels, yield to vessels ahead and to the right of you.

◆ When passing another vessel from behind, stay clear and pass on the safest side.

◆ Remember that non-motorized vessels always have right-of-way over motorized vessels.

Water Skiing and Wakeboarding:

◆ You must have a second person in the boat as an observer. A rear view mirror is not sufficient according to federal law.

◆ Persons being towed must wear a Coast Guard approved PFD.

◆ You may not tow a skier or wakeboarder within 500 feet of a harbor, a swimming beach, or a mooring area, or within 100 feet of a person swimming, fishing, or diving. No one may be towed between sunset and sunrise.



MARINAS

BOAT RENTALS

Lake Amistad Resort & Marina 830-774-4157
Rough Canyon Marina & Store 830-775-8779
Air Force (Southwinds) Marina 830-775-7800

CANOE / KAYAK RENTALS

Ruthie's Canoe Rentals - Rough Canyon

830-774-5377
www.ruthieatamistad.com
info@ruthieatamistad.com

Amistad Water Sports

Kayak Rentals
Single and Double
Hwy 90 W, Del Rio, TX
carlcourtney21@aol.com
830-734-1445 or
830-734-6533



International Demarcation Buoys divide the United States and Mexico boundaries up the old Rio Grande Channel in Amistad Reservoir.

GUIDED TOURS

Pecos Jack Tours

Canoe & Kayak
832-276-6885
pecosjack12@yahoo.com
www.pecosjacktours.com

Tours de Tejas Canoe Tours

Jay Johnson Sr. 830-768-1100
host@villadelrio.com



PADDLING

Lake Amistad is a canoeing and kayaking paradise. Amistad NRA has both open space and steeply walled canyons, which makes it a great place for paddling your canoe or kayak.



The park boundary extends 74 miles up the Rio Grande, 25 miles up the Devils River and 14 miles up the Pecos River. Protected coves provide superb fishing and ideal camping spots.

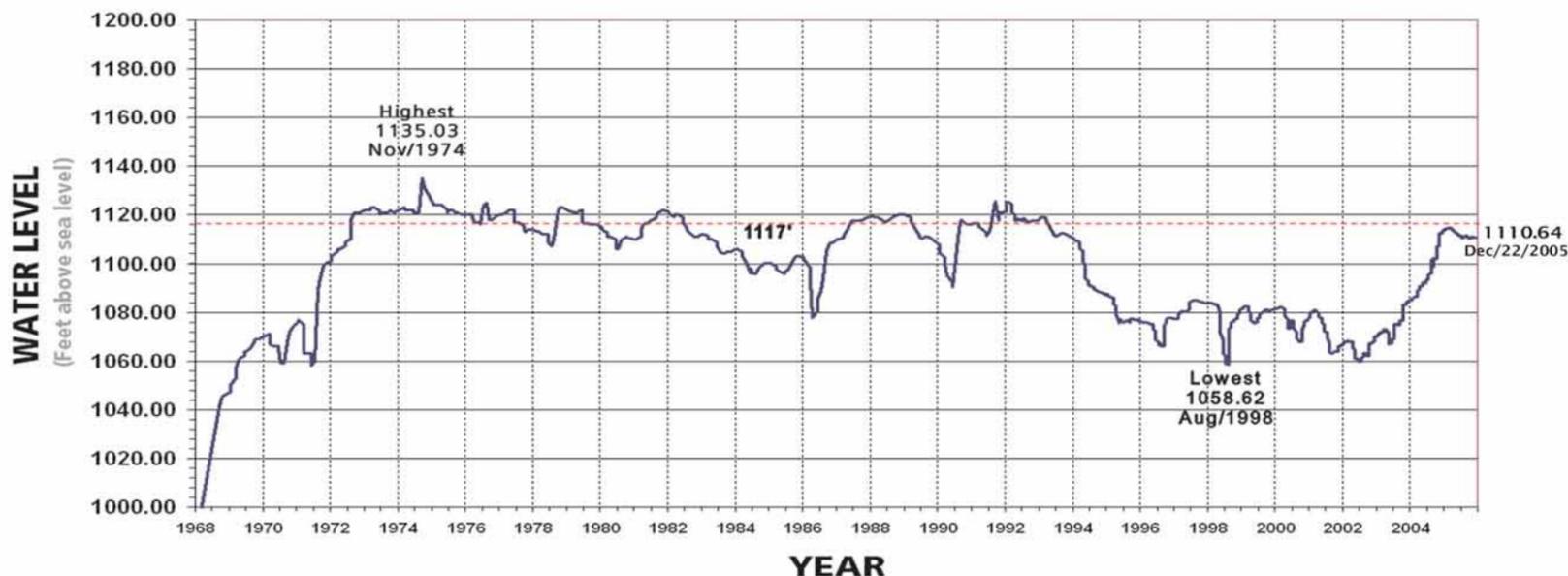
Amistad is an international reservoir-the United States-Mexico border is marked by buoys that follow the historic channel of the Rio Grande.

Amistad NRA does not require a lake use permit for non-motorized craft under 14 ft. in length, but if you plan to paddle onto the Mexican side be sure to have a Mexican boating permit. A Mexican fishing permit is also required if you plan to fish on the Mexican side. You can download some maps and paddling routes from our web page:

<http://www.nps.gov/amis/paddlingamistad.htm>

AMISTAD RESERVOIR LEVEL

1968 - 2005



Are the Fish Biting?

by Ron Castle

Lake Amistad offers as wide a variety of species as anywhere in the state of Texas: **Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass, Striped Bass, Hybrid Striped Bass, White Bass, Yellow and Blue Catfish, Crappie, Freshwater Drum (Gas-pargoo) and several varieties of Perch.** For those of you so inclined, there are also plenty of **Carp and Gar** which are often taken by bow fishermen.



Alligator Gar

All of these species are found in abundance on the international waters of Lake Amistad. The biggest portion of Lake Amistad is in US territory, but half the lake on the Rio Grande (western) arm of the lake is in Mexico. Anyone is welcome to fish Mexican waters, but you do need to purchase a Mexican fishing license as well as a Mexican boat permit before you enter their side of the lake.

You can get a current fishing report from the Texas Parks & Wildlife either in the newspaper or on their web site (www.tpwd.state.tx.us). There's also plenty of information on the lake at: (www.amistadlake.com). You can find current fishing reports as well, and other links with plenty of info.

Bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted): The record largemouth bass caught on Amistad is 15.68 lbs, 28.30 inches. You probably won't find too many of those, but you will find many in the trophy range throughout the lake. The largest smallmouth caught here was 5.37 lbs., but there is no registered record for a spotted bass. There are so many ways to catch each of these species it's impossible to go through all of them. For someone just wanting to catch a few fish for dinner, here are a couple of suggestions:



Largemouth Bass

If you have a good depth finder, locate the edge of the hydrilla in about 25 feet of water, and work along the edge with either a Carolina-rigged Zoom Fluke (watermelon color) or a drop-shot rig with a small finesse worm also in a natural color. The hydrilla is

found in nearly all parts of the lake. You can also catch the bigger ones on a heavy jig worked along the same edge, but just a little shallower in the heavier



Dave Castle with Largemouth Bass

grass. If you can find a submerged tree near the hydrilla, you may hit the mother lode! If you catch one, keep working the same tree for some more.

Striped Bass: You can find striped bass all over the lake in open water since they roam the lake with their primary food source, the shad. For those of you lucky enough to be on the lake during the month of April, the top water action can be phenomenal. The biggest striper caught on the lake was 45 lbs, on May 14th in 1990, but most of the really good action starts in late March and continues through April and early May. The easiest way to catch a striper during that time is to work near the dam with a large chrome redfin top water in the early morning and late afternoon. During other times of the year, working slabs vertically under diving birds is a great way to catch them.



Striped Bass

White Bass: This is one species that anyone can catch in big numbers just about any time and anywhere on the lake. They start their spawning run up the major river channels in January, and you can find lots of them in shallows in February near the

influx of the Devils River and the Rio Grande. The best way to catch these little critters is to use small slabs under diving birds. If you know how to use your depth finder, you can locate the schools in the deep water and drop slabs to the holding depth. A favorite slab to use here is the locally produced Jim's 1/2 to 1 oz in either a white or light green color.

Catfish: There are lots of catfish everywhere on the lake, so I don't know where to start! Cheese baits and just about any other nasty smelling thing will work, especially if you take the time to chum the water with some fermented wheat or corn. Since the hydrilla has spread so prolifically throughout the lake, fishing for catfish is a little more difficult in the shallows, but you can still catch plenty deep. Trot lines are also very popular here with live perch.



Channel Catfish

Crappie: One of the best eating fish anywhere is the Crappie, but Amistad does not have a large population of these guys. You can find them, but it's really hit and miss. My suggestion would be to concentrate in the Devils River arm, and work the big trees on both sides of the river channel near Rough Canyon Marina. You can also find some big trees further up the Devils, on the west side. You can't go wrong using live minnows for bait, but if you know what you're doing with a very small jig, you can also catch them.

During 2004 and early 2005 the lake has gained over 25 feet of new water, and there are lots of smaller trees which have been flooded. These should also hold some Crappie, but there are so many of them, you'll just have to be an explorer!



Crappie

Fish illustrations courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife Division

Ron Castle is a local tournament fisherman with the Del Rio Bass Masters fishing club. Amistad National Recreation Area is host to many fishing tournaments. Check our web site for a schedule (www.nps.gov/amis).

Join Big Bend Natural History Association

Yes!

Please enroll me as a member of BBNHA

ANNUAL DUES

Individual (\$25) Associate (\$50)
 Corporate (\$100)

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Individual or Family (\$250)
 Corporate (\$500)
 Benefactor (\$1,000)

New Member Renewal

Mr./Ms./Mrs. _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____

Make check payable to BBNHA or charge to:

Visa Mastercard Discover

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

DETACH AND MAIL TO:

BBNHA, P.O. Box 196
Big Bend National Park, Texas 79834
Telephone: (432) 477-2236
e-mail: bibe_bbnha@nps.gov

Please accept our invitation to join Big Bend Natural History Association

The Association's goal is to educate the public and increase their understanding and appreciation of the Big Bend Area and what it represents in terms of our historical and natural heritage. You can be an important part of this effort when you become a member.

Past and present projects include:

- Operate book sales outlets in Big Bend National Park and Amistad National Recreation Area.
- Publish trail guides and brochures and assist with the publication of The High Bridge Tribune.
- Sponsor an on-going Seminar program.
- Provide annual grants for research projects and administer grants and gifts received for the park.
- Support the parks' volunteer and educational outreach programs.

Your benefits as a member:

- A 15% discount on items sold by BBNHA.
- A 10% discount on most seminars.
- Current Big Bend calendar.
- Discounts at many other association book stores in visitor centers at other national park sites.
- Opportunity to support scientific, educational, and historical programs in Big Bend NP and Amistad NRA.

BBNHA was founded in 1956 to aid educational, historical, and scientific programs for the benefit of Big Bend NP, Amistad NRA, and their visitors.