

Big Bend

Ranger Programs

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Bend National Park
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River



October 4 - October 17, 2015

Sunday, October 4

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “Desert Trivia” What defines a desert? Considered desolate, uninhabitable lands by some, deserts can be places of spectacular diversity and stark beauty. Join Ranger M. Lavender and learn about the deserts of the US, and what makes the Chihuahuan Desert of Big Bend so special. Meet at Dugout Wells, 6 miles southeast of Panther Junction. Bring water, a hat, and good walking shoes. ½ mile. 1 hour.

Wednesday, October 7

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “Fire: Friend or Foe?” For years fire suppression was park policy, but now the National Parks start their own fires. Join Ranger J. Jurado for a look at wildfire in Big Bend. Meet at the Chisos Basin trailhead. 1/3 mile. 45 minutes.

Thursday, October 8

8:30 PM Evening Program -- “Star-gazing with Binoculars and the Naked Eye” You don’t need a telescope to locate and enjoy many of the natural wonders in the night skies over Big Bend National Park. Join Volunteer R. Wonite for a laser-guided tour of the more prominent stars, star clusters, and nebulae in the current evening sky. Meet at the pullout near Mile 15.3 on the road to Rio Grande Village. Wheelchair accessible. Bring binoculars and/or a chair if you have them. Program may be cancelled due to weather or cloudy conditions. Duration 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Friday, October 9

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “Life at the Windmill” The desert may seem to be an impossible place to live but a significant number of living things thrive in this extreme environment. Join Ranger B. Smith for an hour of discovery and exploration into the secret, and not so secret, stories of life at the windmill. Meet at Dugout Wells, six miles south of Panther Junction Visitor Center. Bring water and a hat. ¼ mile. 1 hour.

Saturday, October 10

8:00 PM Evening Program – “Big Bend’s Top 10” What makes Big Bend special or unique among national parks? Join Ranger J. Jurado for a look at the top ten things Big Bend can boast. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour.

Thursday, October 15

10:00 AM Program – “Bear Country” Whether you are staying at the Lodge, camping, or hiking in the Chisos Mountains or foothills you are in *Bear Country*. Join Ranger M. Lavender to learn more about how to enjoy Bear Country safely and agreeably with the unique population of Mexican Black Bears that make Big Bend home. Meet at the patio outside the Chisos Mountains Lodge. 45 minutes.

Saturday, October 17

7:00 PM Photography Program – “You’re Not Ansel Adams, But You Could Be...” Photography in National Parks can be a rewarding experience, a lasting memory, or just a way to document a place in time. Simple techniques will help you get the most out of your camera, be it digital or film. Regardless of format, the pretty view you’re attempting to capture may not be what you think it is... Join Ranger B. Smith for a photographic and resource discussion. Meet at the pull-out at mile 15.3 on the road to Rio Grande Village. Bring a camera, tripod, and a chair if you have them. 1 hour.

Not able to attend a program? Consider these alternatives:

The 22-mile-long Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive offers access to eight different trails, several scenic vistas, many paved pullouts with exhibits that highlight park geology and cultural history, and culminates at the Castolon Historic District. Take a day and go explore!

Enjoy the breath-taking beauty of Big Bend National Park in cool air conditioned comfort with our 22-minute Park Orientation film. Available daily on request at the Panther Junction Visitor Center.

Consider a hike on Lost Mine Trail. The entire hike is 2.4 miles one-way with an elevation change of 1,100 feet, but walking the first mile to marker #10 leads to rewarding views.