

Big Bend

Ranger Programs

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Bend National Park
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River



April 16 - 24, 2016

Celebrate National Park Week at Big Bend!

Saturday, April 16 – National Junior Ranger Day!

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. The walk is a great opportunity for **Junior Rangers** to discover the secrets of life in the Chihuahuan desert! Meet at Dugout Wells, six miles south of Panther Junction Visitor Center. Bring water and a hat. ¼ mile. 1 hour.

1:00 - 3:00 PM Junior Ranger Activity – “Touch Table of Discoveries” Stop by the front patio at the Chisos Basin Visitor Center anytime during this timeframe for a chance to explore a Touch Table full of interesting and curious Big Bend objects. Get your hands in the sand to uncover fossils, hold a puma/mountain lion skull, compare a bear paw to your foot, and more!

8:30 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.

Sunday, April 17

10:30 AM - 12:30 PM - “Touch Table of Discoveries” Stop by the front patio at the Panther Junction Visitor Center anytime during this timeframe for a chance to explore a Touch Table full of interesting and curious Big Bend objects. Get your hands in the sand to uncover fossils, hold a puma/mountain lion skull, compare a bear paw to your foot, and more!

8:30 PM Evening Program – “Find Your Park in Big Bend” As one of 59 National Parks and 410 National Park units, Big Bend National Park offers spectacular opportunities for recreation, education, and discovery. Join Ranger M. Lavender to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service by exploring the uniqueness of Big Bend and “Find Your Park!” Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 45 minutes.

Monday, April 18

Sorry, no programs today. Why not try an early morning walk on the Rio Grande Village Nature Trail? This easy walk offers opportunities for viewing wildlife and seeing plants typical of the Chihuahuan desert and the Rio Grande floodplain. Ask a park ranger for more details.

Tuesday, April 19

Sorry, no programs today. 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!

Wednesday, April 20

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “Birds Do Crazy Things” Observe Texas specialty birds and explore some of their unique behaviors. Stroll the Rio Grande Village area (approximately 1 mile). Meet Volunteers J. and S. Ewan at the Rio Grande Village Amphitheater parking lot. Please bring water and binoculars if you have them. 1-1 ½ hours.

See other side for more programs

Thursday, April 21

9:30 AM Guided Walk – “Chasing Birds” Birds, birds, everywhere! Join Volunteers P. and P. Spruell on a bird walk exploring the Chisos Basin area. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater parking lot. Bring water and binoculars if you have them. 1 mile. -1 ½ hours.

8:30 PM Evening Program – “A Fundamental Purpose” 100 years ago, far thinking citizens and legislators fought for the creation of an agency whose mission is to conserve wild, beautiful, and historic places in the United States. Join Ranger B. Smith for an evening’s discourse on the National Park Service. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour.

Friday, April 22 - Earth Day!

2:00 - 4:00 PM - “Touch Table of Discoveries” Stop by the front patio at the Chisos Basin Visitor Center anytime during this timeframe for a chance to explore a Touch Table full of interesting and curious Big Bend objects. Get your hands in the sand to uncover fossils, hold a puma/mountain lion skull, compare a bear paw to your foot, and more!

8:30 PM Evening Program – “Find Your Park in Big Bend” As one of 59 National Parks and 410 National Park units, Big Bend National Park offers spectacular opportunities for recreation, education, and discovery. Join Ranger M. Lavender to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service by exploring the uniqueness of Big Bend and “Find Your Park!” Meet at the Rio Grande Village Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 45 minutes.

Saturday, April 23

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. The walk is a great opportunity for **Junior Rangers** to discover the secrets of life in the Chihuahuan Desert! Meet at Dugout Wells, six miles south of Panther Junction Visitor Center. Bring water and a hat. ¼ mile. 1 hour.

2:00 PM Special Program – “National Park Week Celebration” Participate in an “Instameet!” Join Ranger M. Lavender to learn more about the National Park Service, engage in social media, and celebrate with free refreshments. Meet at the Chisos Mountains Lodge patio. Wheelchair accessible. 30 minutes.

Sunday, April 24 – Park Rx (Prescription) Day

9:30 AM Walk for Your Health – “Beautiful Boquillas” Many health professionals are prescribing nature activities to promote healthier lifestyles for their patients. Join Ranger J. Jurado for a walk into Boquillas Canyon and a discussion about how national parks and other public lands are important for our physical and mental health. Meet at the Boquillas Canyon Trailhead. Bring a hat, water, and hiking shoes. 1 mile round-trip. 1 hour.

7:30 PM Walk for Your Health – “Evening in the Basin” What a perfect way to end the day – an evening walk in the Chisos Basin. Join Ranger B. Frohbieter for a walk on the Basin Loop Trail and a discussion about how national parks and other public lands are important for our physical and mental health. Meet at the Chisos Basin Trailhead near the Camp Store. Bring a hat, water, and hiking shoes. 1.8 mile round-trip. 1 ½ hours.

Not able to attend a program? Consider these alternatives:

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

Explore beyond the park and learn more about Big Bend history. The Terlingua Ghost Town offers several restaurants and stores, as well as a self-guiding tour of the old quicksilver mining district and historic cemetery.