



STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE PARK INCLUDES 473 ACRES OF BOTTOM-LAND HARDWOOD FOREST AND SWAMP JUST WEST OF THE FAST-GROWING HOUSTON METRO AREA. YOU WILL FIND GIANT COTTONWOOD TREES, THICK VINES, WHITE-TAILED DEER, ARMADILLO, BOBCAT, AND MANY SPECIES OF BIRDS IN THE PARK'S FOREST AND RIVER HABITATS. ALL OF THE PARK'S NATURAL BEAUTY CAN BE EXPERIENCED WHETHER YOU CAMP OR IF YOU BIKE, HIKE, STARGAZE, OR BIRDWATCH FROM THE FIVE MILES OF TRAILS. JUST BEYOND THE BIG CITY LIES A QUIET PLACE OF NATURAL BEAUTY RARELY FOUND IN SOUTHEAST TEXAS TODAY.



PARK INFORMATION

You are visiting a nature preserve as well as a recreation area. Help us protect the park's wildlife diversity and ensure your safety by observing park rules.

- ✦ Stay on park trails
- ✦ Keep pets on a leash
- ✦ Take only pictures, leave only footprints

Call the park to schedule your group for programs or to learn about other wildlife educational opportunities.

Stephen F. Austin State Park
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INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE PARK





BOTTOMLAND FOREST

The bottomland forest's moist soil gives life to an array of plant and animal species different from those of the drier upland nearby. Towering cottonwood trees evoke the image of a waterfall as their leaves blow in a breeze. The sound of rushing water surrounds you as you stroll down the shady paths in this "lower level" of the park. The huge leaves of sycamores offer a much-needed respite from the sun on a hot summer day. Look closely and you can see evidence of flood succession, a process by which willows and cottonwoods take advantage of newly formed bare soil deposits created by high water. In these areas, a single species will have a short-lived dominance, quickly giving way to heartier species.

RECREATION



Recreation activities offered at Stephen F. Austin surprise many a first-time visitors. Both RV and tent camping is available for campers at one of the 100 campsites that bring you to a place of peace and natural beauty. Over five miles of well-maintained trails provide a way for hikers and cyclists to experience the wonder of nature firsthand. Birdwatchers will delight at the numerous species seen throughout the park. Nature is easily observable from the park's wildlife viewing area. Permanent geocaches exist within the park and are a fun way to bring technology and the outdoors together. After the sun sets, you can also look up at the stars, and marvel at the night sky.



WILDLIFE WONDERS

The Brazos River quietly meanders along the northern edge of the park. The river's frequent inundating provides moist soil for the array of plant and animal species that live within the park boundaries. Despite the Texas heat, giant cottonwoods, sycamores, and cedar elm trees provide plenty of shade. You can almost always spot a white-tailed deer galloping through the park and hear the music of birds. However, the park comes alive at night. That is when if you are quiet, you might spot an armadillo, a raccoon, or even some bats.

