



WELCOME TO RESACA DE LA PALMA STATE PARK! LEAVE YOUR STRESS AT THE GATE AND ENJOY THE PEACE OF A SIMPLER WORLD. DISCOVER NEW BEAUTY AROUND EVERY BEND OF THE TRAILS OR TRAM LOOP. THIS REMNANT PIECE OF HABITAT IS SOME OF THE LAST OF ITS KIND. COME ON IN AND ENJOY YOURSELF WHILE EXPLORING ITS WILDERNESS.



INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

RESACA DE LA PALMA STATE PARK



Gulf Fritillary

STEPHEN SINCLAIR

YOU CAN HELP!

Resaca provides a beautiful respite for both people and wildlife, but we need your help. Please remember that you're in their home so don't pick flowers or plants that they rely on. Leaving what you find also makes sure that the next visitor gets to experience the beauty of this place. Playing bird calls can disrupt behavior so that is strictly forbidden here. You can also help wildlife a lot by planting native plants they rely on at your home, creating your own haven for wild creatures.

Resaca de la Palma State Park
1000 New Carmen Ave. (off Hwy. 281 or FM 1732)
Brownsville, TX 78521
(956) 350-2920

www.tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/resaca-de-la-palma

Other parks in the area:

Estero Llano Grande State Park – Mercedes, TX
Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park – Mission, TX

Cover photo by Lois and George Hartshorn



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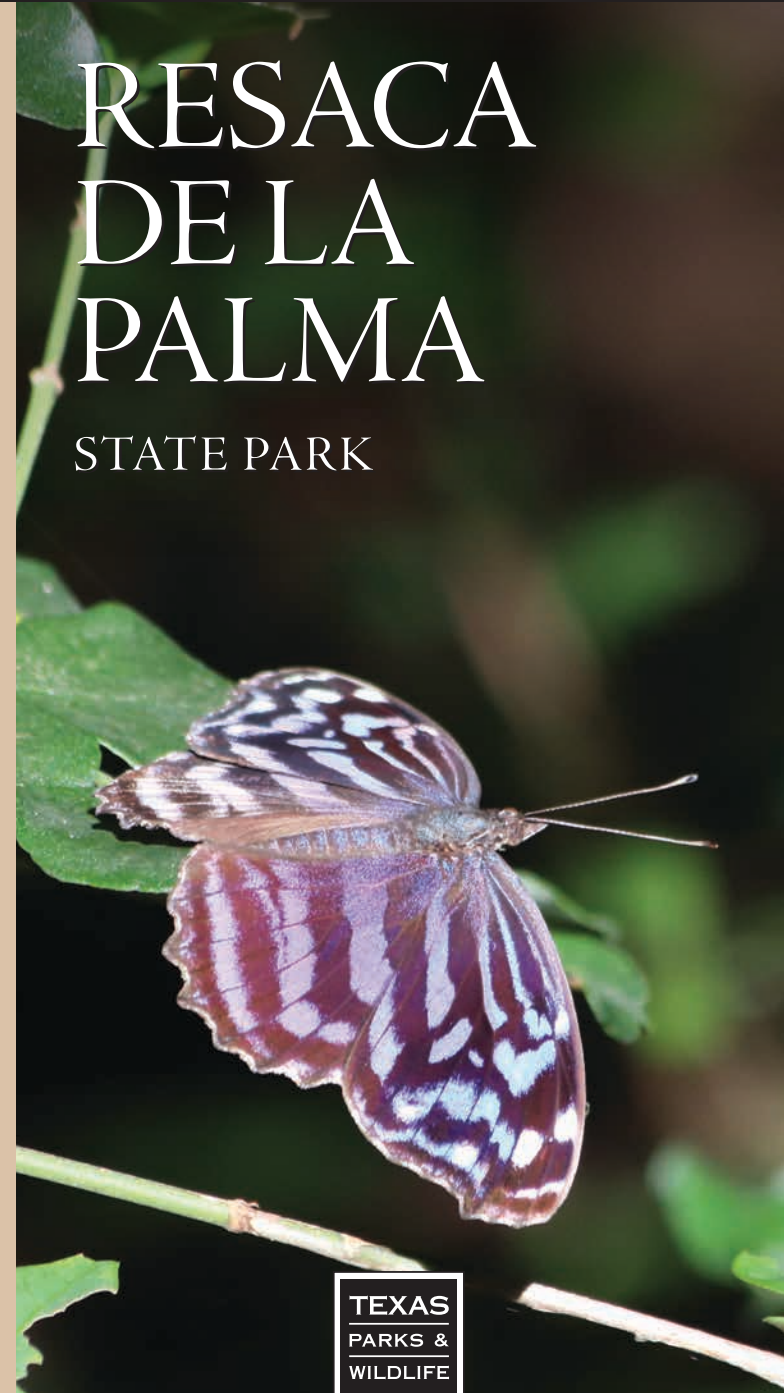
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WHAT ONCE WAS

The once-wild Rio Grande River shaped the land here for generations, leaving rich soil and thick thorny brush as far as the eye could see. Periodic flooding of the river inundated the land, rejuvenating the nutrients and scouring temporary channels. When the water receded, those channels kept some of the water in what we call resacas. That ebb and flow kept resacas teeming with plant and animal life. People have tamed the wild river, so we must simulate that cycle by filling the resacas with water artificially. This is one of the only places that follows this historic pattern, making it a continued haven for biodiversity.



LOIS AND GEORGE HARTSHORN

PROGRESS BRINGS CHANGES

Along with the changes to the river came changes to the land use. The thick, short, and thorny brush that you see around the park is called the Tamaulipas thornscrub and once covered the valley. Mesquite, ebony, anacua and cenizo grow together to form this dense habitat perfect for the birds, insects, reptiles, and mammals that rely on them. To create farmland on the rich soils, though, people removed the thornscrub for grazing and farmland. Now there is only a fraction of the habitat that once was. In the park you can see large areas that were farmland, now filled with invasive species like old world bluestem. The staff works constantly to try to restore the land to its former glory.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird



LOIS AND GEORGE HARTSHORN

LOCATION IS KEY

Because Resaca de la Palma sits in major migratory paths and close to Mexico, it provides an island of hope for the birds, butterflies and dragonflies looking to rest and feed on their way north in the spring and south in the fall, as well as year-round species that call the habitat home. Birds like Altamira Orioles and Plain Chachalacas and butterflies like the Mexican Bluewing (pictured on the cover) thrive here, found almost nowhere else in the United States.



Altamira Oriole

Green Jay

BOTH PHOTOS BY LOIS AND GEORGE HARTSHORN

