



WELCOME TO LAKE CASA BLANCA INTERNATIONAL STATE PARK, AN OASIS FOR EVERYONE. THE QUIET TRAILS OFFER A PEACEFUL BREAK FROM THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF CITY LIFE AND THE LAKE IS A COOL WAY TO BEAT THE HEAT ON THOSE HOT SOUTH TEXAS SUMMER DAYS. ENJOY THE PARK!



Lake Casa Blanca International State Park is a great place to enjoy the natural world around you. Try your luck fishing, take a hike or ride a bike on one of the trails, spend the night at one of our campsites, or just explore! Any way you choose to experience the park, please enjoy it safely and responsibly!

- Make sure your trash and especially your used fishing line ends up in the proper waste bin. Trash can hurt animals and plants in the park.
- The nature and history of the park are here for everyone to enjoy; please don't take anything away from future visitors.
- Please drive, bike, and hike only in designated areas so you don't disturb any wildlife or plants. It's their home, after all.

#### NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

Falcon State Park, Zapata  
TAMIU Planetarium  
Laredo Energy Arena  
LCC Environmental Center

#### FURTHER READING

*After the Dinosaurs* by Jim Westgate

Lake Casa Blanca International State Park  
5102 Bob Bullock Loop, Laredo, TX 78041  
(956) 725-3826 • [www.tpwd.texas.gov/lakecasablanca](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/lakecasablanca)



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**HELP US CONSERVE**  
PLEASE TURN IN FOR REUSE

Texas State Parks is a division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.



#### INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

# LAKE CASA BLANCA

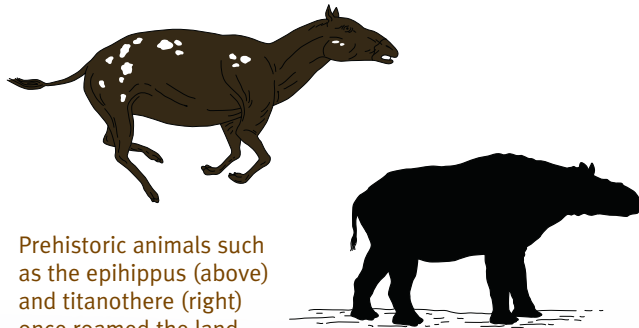
## INTERNATIONAL STATE PARK





## CHANGING LANDSCAPE, THEN AND NOW

Imagine standing here 42 million years ago among forested swamps on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. You'd see small primates move through the trees eating insects. Rhino-like beasts roam the shores and floating in the water grazing on plant life. Sharks hunt among the oyster beds in the saltwater bays. But changes in climate and geology led to the migration and extinction of these creatures. Dr. Jim Westgate and his students from Lamar University have dug up a treasure trove of fossils here since the 1980s. Based on these fossil finds, Westgate has described what life in this area was like so many millions of years ago.



Prehistoric animals such as the epihippus (above) and titanotherium (right) once roamed the land.



Forested swamps once lined the coast along the Gulf of Mexico.

Today the landscape looks dramatically different. The coast is 150 miles away in Corpus Christi and the air has dried to support the desert scrub around you. Sharks and oysters have been replaced with bass and freshwater mussels. Deer and javelinas roam the shores of the lake instead of the larger mammals of the past. And the primates are long gone along with the mangrove trees in which they foraged. Instead, you'll see birds like pyrrhuloxias and cactus wrens working through the mesquite trees all around the park. The park is also one of the only places in the United States you can see the Morelet's seedeater, a special target for many birdwatchers.



Cactus wren

## HELP US PROTECT YOUR PARK!



The ecosystem may have changed over the years, but one thing has not. This area has always supported life and will continue to do so, but only with your help. As one of the only lakes in the area, Lake Casa Blanca attracts a lot of visitors. As you enjoy the park, remember you're in the home of a javelina, black-tailed jackrabbit, Texas horned lizard or one of many other animals that live here. Be a good guest and leave no trace! Pick up trash when you see it and stay on hard surfaces like trails and roads. Leave flowers and plants where they are so the next visitor can enjoy their beauty.

