



JUST NORTH OF HOUSTON, A FORESTED WORLD LINES THE SHORES OF A GREAT LAKE. LAKE LIVINGSTON STATE PARK COMBINES A WEALTH OF OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES WITH A MAJESTIC WETLAND FOREST FULL OF LIFE AND A RICH CULTURAL HISTORY. OVER MILLENNIA, PEOPLE FROM MANY PLACES HAVE WRITTEN THEIR STORIES IN BOTH THE LAND AND WATER. THIS COUNTRY RETREAT IN A LANDSCAPE BOTH OLD AND NEW IS WITHIN YOUR REACH, YET FAR FROM THE CARES OF THE CITY.



INTERPRETIVE GUIDE



Gulf Coast Toad

THANK YOU FOR VISITING!

Lake Livingston State Park is a recreational and cultural area but also a nature preserve. Please help us protect the park's resources and your safety by following park rules. Call the park to schedule your group for programs on natural and cultural history. Park interpreters staff a nature center and offer a variety of programs. Check with park headquarters for more information.

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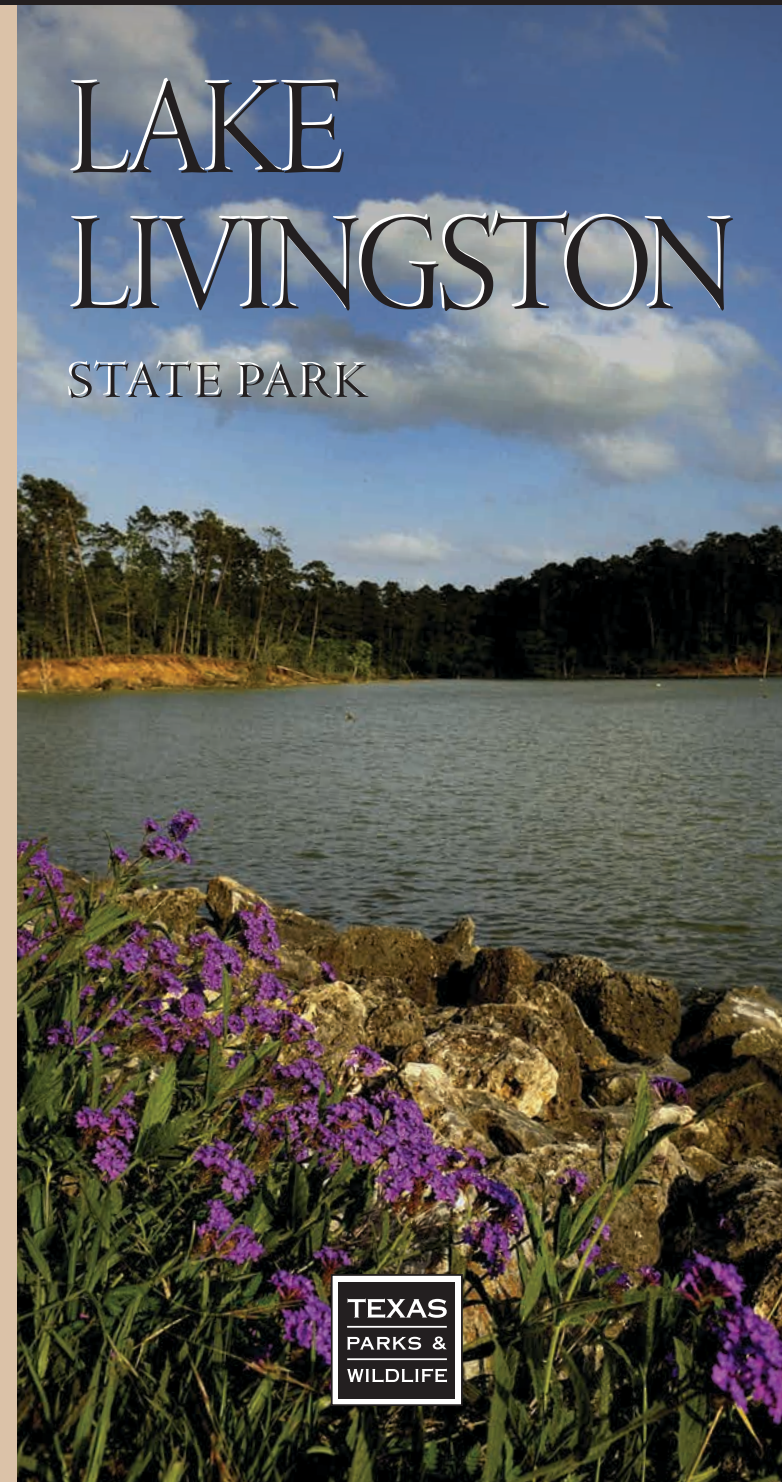
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LAKE LIVINGSTON STATE PARK





RECREATION ABOUNDS

Its location along the shores of Lake Livingston and well-equipped facilities ensure that outdoor recreation activities abound at the park. You can hike, bike, or run five miles of forested trails, which include a mile-long ADA accessible boardwalk, and a wildlife viewing blind. The park rents kayaks and standup paddleboards at the park store and through a self-rental station. Sunset Marina and the park store also offer a courtesy boat dock. Exhibits at the park nature center adjoining the store, an amphitheater, and interpretive programs help you chart your paths of discovery.

Camping opportunities include everything from full RV hookups to water-only tent camping and screen shelters. You can catch a fish in the lake and fry it up on the grill that comes with your campsite or enjoy a picnic in one of the many day-use areas.

Abundant fishing makes the park a magnet for anglers of all types. You can fish from the lakeshore for crappie, bass, catfish, and several different kinds of sunfish. On the lake, anglers haul in white bass, hybrid and striped bass, and blue, yellow, and channel catfish. Fish-cleaning stations at one park boat ramp and the marina fishing pier help you prepare your catch.

THE FOREST IS ALIVE

A mixture of bottomland hardwood and upland mixed woods provides for a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians along the shoreline. Water-tolerant willow oaks, southern red oaks, and post oaks mix with sweetgum, water oak, and loblolly pines to form a thick tapestry of green. Heavy rainfall decorates the forest with a variety of wildflowers at different points throughout the year.

As you trek through the forest, you may encounter signs of some of the many mammals found in the park. Nine-banded Armadillos forage for insect larvae under rotting logs. Southern flying squirrels glide from tree to tree above the raccoons, opossums, and groups of white-tailed deer with whom they share the woods.



Nine-banded Armadillo

The lake's position on the Central North American Flyway and Mississippi Flyway makes it a mecca for birds and birders. Both year-round and migratory species live at the park. You can see and hear owls, red-shouldered hawks, egrets, cormorants, woodpeckers, and perhaps even a nesting pair of bald eagles. In all, over 330 different bird species have been spotted at Lake Livingston.



RICH CULTURAL HISTORY

The Trinity River attracted people to this area for thousands of years with the promise of food and water. Many native peoples hunted, fished, and gathered plants for food and medicine. After the founding of the United States, settlement of the lower South displaced the Alabama-Coushatta people from their original homes. They found a new home here during the early nineteenth-century. Then they helped Texas win independence from Mexico and built a thriving community that continues today as a vital link to our shared past.

Since the founding of the Texas republic in 1836, cotton farming, logging, and the construction of Lake Livingston have defined the land's history. The Trinity River helped transport cotton to distant markets, drawing many settlers to the area who established Swartout and other port towns. The river also transported logs cut for lumber, an industry that exploded after the Civil War as cotton production declined and railroads expanded. This led to intensive logging that ravaged the forest for decades.

Frequent floods also did great damage to property and threatened economic growth through much of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Flood control efforts and a need to supply water for the growing city of Houston led to the formation of the Trinity River Authority, the construction of Lake Livingston in 1969, and the creation of Lake Livingston State Park in 1977. The new lake submerged historic communities, including Swartout, but also provided many new recreation opportunities and helped set aside land for the park. This allowed the wetland forest ecosystem to make a surprisingly fast recovery from logging.