

5 p.m. All other exhibits and activities are free. Use of the Challenger Learning Center is by reservation only. Weekday programs are also available. For information, call (979) 553-3400 or (281) 242-3055 or visit [www.georgeobservatory.org](http://www.georgeobservatory.org). Gift shop inside.

## Picnicking and Day Use Facilities

Three picnic areas are located in the park. All areas have tables, grills and rest room facilities. Group picnic pavilions are available for a fee and are located at Elm and Hale lakes picnic areas. Both pavilions seat approximately 100 and have electricity, water, lights, a stone BBQ pit and open grill. The group dining hall, located in the camping area, is an enclosed facility with a kitchen including freezer, refrigerator, stove, grill and ovens. It has ceiling fans and a heater. Outside there is a stone BBQ pit and open grill. It seats approximately 100. All three facilities can be reserved in advance. Ask for fee schedule and reservation procedures.

Playgrounds are located at the 40-Acre and Hale lakes picnic areas and camping area.

Fishing is permitted from bank or pier only. Bait can be purchased just outside the park, approximately one mile south. Perch, crappie, sunfish, black bass, bowfin, gar and catfish can be found. **DO NOT ENTER THE WATER!** Piers are located at 40-Acre, Elm and Hale lakes picnic areas. Do not use a stringer as it can be stolen by an alligator. If an alligator becomes interested in your fishing line you need to find another place to fish. Do not cast

at, over or near an alligator. This will create a nuisance animal and possibly a dangerous situation for you and/or the alligator.

## Camping

Multi-use sites are available and include water and electricity, table, BBQ grill, fire ring and raised tent pad. Screened shelters have no amenities other than a table inside and out, shelving, ceiling fans and electricity. Water is located outside each shelter. There are two centrally located rest rooms with showers. Three youth group camping areas are located in the Hale Lake area. The sites are primitive. Primitive equestrian camping is also available. Ask for fee schedule and reservation procedures. Reservations are recommended for weekends during the spring, fall and holidays.

Pay phones are located at the dining hall in the camping area and at headquarters. Convenience stores with gas and ATMs are located one mile south of the park.

## FEEDING OF WILDLIFE IS PROHIBITED.



4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, Texas 78744

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# Brazos Bend

STATE PARK

## Activity Guide

HIKING/BIKING

WILDLIFE VIEWING

NATURE CENTER

GEORGE OBSERVATORY

GIFT SHOPS

FISHING

PICNICKING

CAMPING

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

### Park Information

(979) 553-5101 or [www.brazosbend.org](http://www.brazosbend.org)

### Reservations

(512) 389-8900 or [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

### George Observatory

(979) 553-3400 or (281) 242-3055



## Hiking, Biking and Wildlife Viewing

There are almost 25 miles of hiking and biking trails, including an 8-mile equestrian trail system. Consult your park map. Please ride at a safe speed and be considerate of other trail users. The park does not rent bicycles. No off-road vehicles are permitted. Trails marked “foot trail” or “foot traffic only” are not suitable for bicycle traffic.

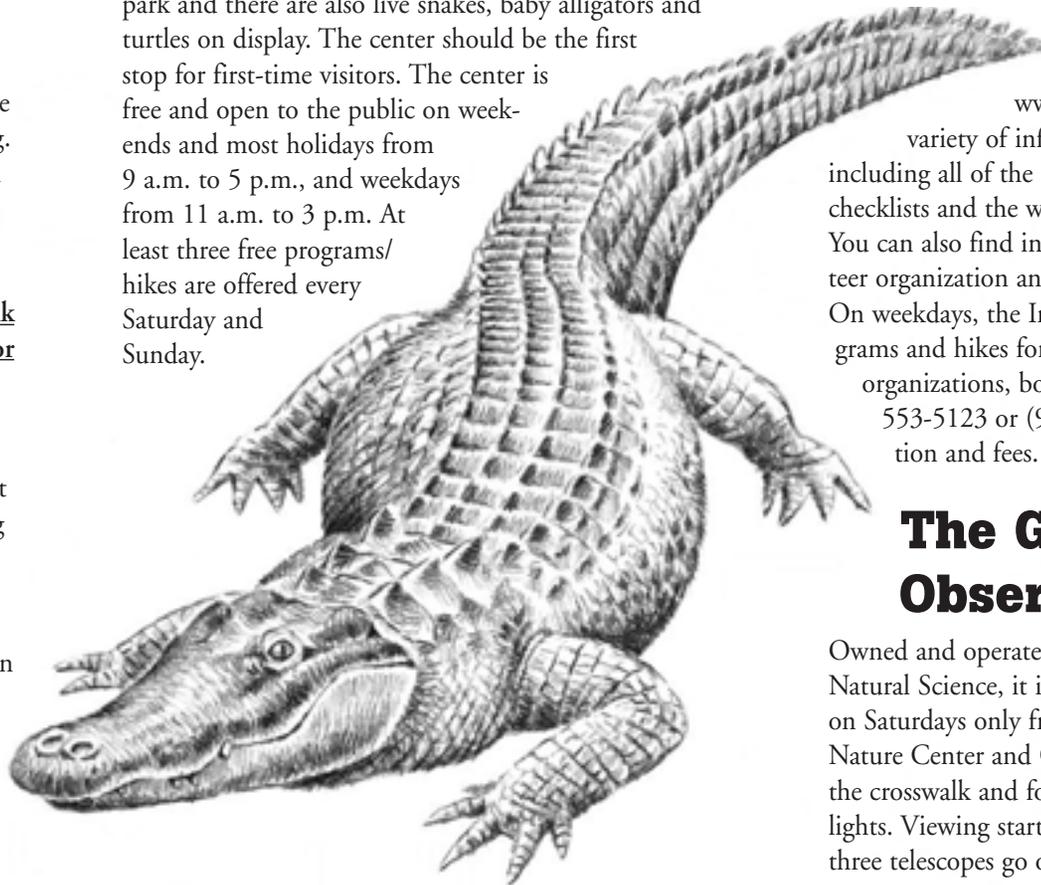
Elm Lake and 40-Acre Lake trail systems are the best areas to view alligators. Alligators are best viewed in the spring and fall or on mild winter days. They do not like it too hot, too cold or too cloudy and rainy. In the summer months, they are best viewed in the early morning and late evening. Know your Alligator Etiquette found on the park map. Always take plenty of water and your map. Insect repellent is also a good idea. **Pets on leash only.** Leash can be no longer than six feet. **Do not, under any circumstances, allow pets to drink from the lake or enter the water!** **Bring water for your pet.**

The Horseshoe Lake area trails are more forested with less wetland habitat. The Brazos River is best viewed from the Red Buckeye Trail. Birdwatching is excellent throughout the park. Bring your binoculars. 40-Acre, Pilant and Elm lakes are the best areas to view wading birds and waterfowl, with a mix of songbirds and sparrows. Raptors can be viewed anywhere. Hale Lake area is more suitable for forest and songbirds. The Prairie Trails are good for sparrows and other upland birds. The Prairie Trails start at the 40-Acre Lake parking area. Wildflowers can be found throughout the park and are very diverse according to

habitat but the best variety can be found on the prairies. Field guides for plants and animals can be purchased at the headquarters and Nature Center gift shops. The Creekfield Lake All-Accessible Trail is a paved half-mile trail. Take the crosswalk from the Nature Center and Observatory parking lot. Wayside exhibits are usable for everyone. Marsh and woodland habitat are viewed from this trail.

## Nature Center

Located near the center of the park, this facility houses exhibits pertaining to the three major ecosystems in the park and there are also live snakes, baby alligators and turtles on display. The center should be the first stop for first-time visitors. The center is free and open to the public on weekends and most holidays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and weekdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At least three free programs/hikes are offered every Saturday and Sunday.



## Educational Activities

An Outdoor Guidebook is available in the Nature Center Gift Shop. The Gatorwise Club for kids can be completed in a few hours by taking a guided hike or attending a program and answering a few questions about the ecosystems. The Junior Naturalist Club is a more involved program involving three patches that can be earned. Depending on the patch, it may take a day or more to complete but can be completed at any time. Scavenger hunts and alligator census pages are also available. Visit [www.brazosbend.org](http://www.brazosbend.org) for a variety of information about the park including all of the above, plus animal and plant checklists and the weekend program schedule. You can also find information about our volunteer organization and how to become a member. On weekdays, the Interpretive staff offers programs and hikes for school groups and other organizations, both on and off site. Call (979) 553-5123 or (979) 553-5124 for information and fees.

## The George Observatory

Owned and operated by the Houston Museum of Natural Science, it is open to the general public on Saturdays only from 3-10 p.m. Park in the Nature Center and Observatory parking lot, take the crosswalk and follow the path with the footlights. Viewing starts at dusk and tickets for all three telescopes go on sale at the observatory at