

WELCOME TO LAKE COLORADO CITY STATE PARK! THIS OASIS ON THE WEST TEXAS PLAINS PROVIDES UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES TO APPRECIATE THE OUTDOORS. ENJOY A STAY IN ONE OF THE LAKE-SIDE MINICABINS, SEE WILDLIFE AND VIEWS OF THE LANDSCAPE ON THE HIKING TRAILS, OR SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY AT ONE OF THE MANY PICNIC SITES. SEASONALLY, YOU MAY PARTICIPATE IN A PUBLIC HUNT OR FISHING AT THE LAKE. THE NIGHT SKIES ARE PARTICULARLY STUNNING AT THIS SITE.



Scaled quail

Today, Lake Colorado City State Park provides a safe and diverse location for visitors to recreate on the West Texas Plains. Plants and wildlife benefit from the fluctuating water of the lake, while the grasslands and mesquite forests are a home for many species. Texas Parks and Wildlife staff practice conservation to preserve the ecosystem, such as prescribed burns and chemical and mechanical removal of invasive species.

While you are here:

- Check with park staff for the best way to enjoy the park seasonally.
- Leave No Trace of your visit. Throw away all trash and observe the wildlife without disturbing.
- Leave any artifacts where they are found, and alert park staff to their presence.
- Ask about volunteer opportunities, special events, or conservation efforts at the site.
- Please keep all pets on leashes no more than six feet and clean up pet waste.
- Be kind and respectful of other visitors.

Lake Colorado City State Park
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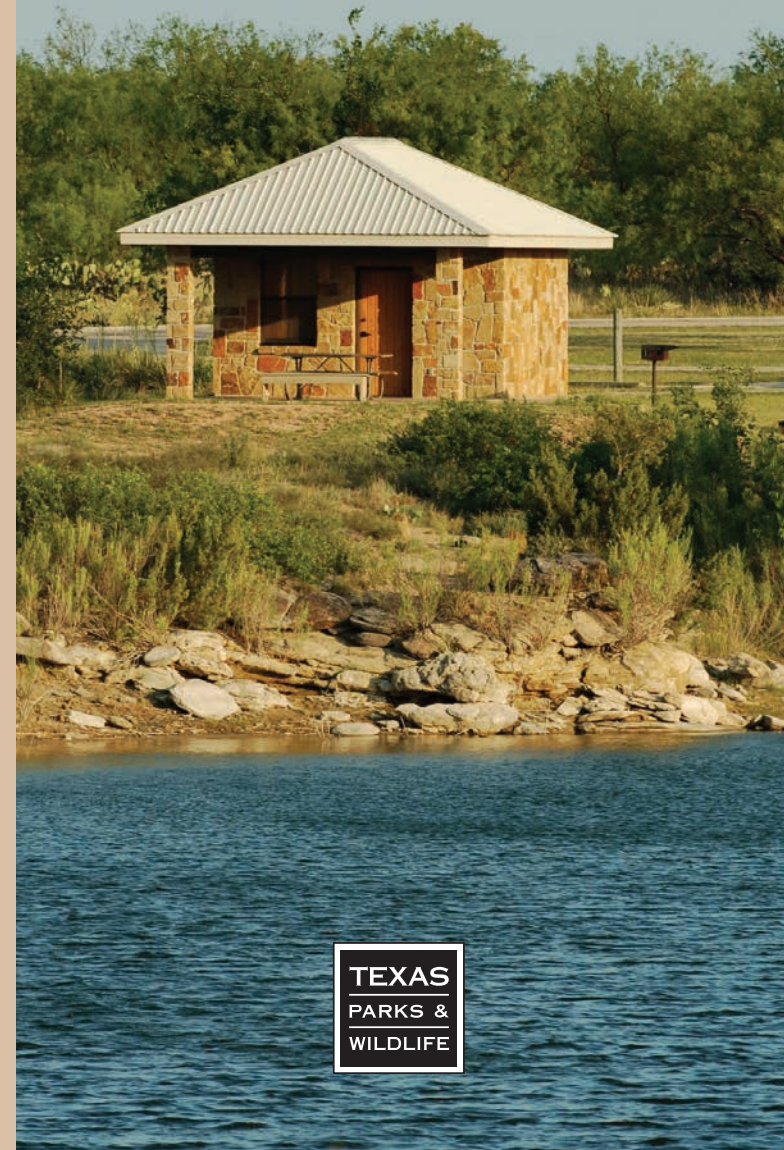


This publication can be found at tpwd.texas.gov/park-pubs



INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

LAKE COLORADO CITY STATE PARK





AN OASIS IN THE BASIN

Lake Colorado City State Park lies within the rolling mesquite plains of the Permian Basin. The area contains some of the most diverse plants and wildlife of the state, as well as providing economic benefits such as farming, wind energy, and oil and gas production. The state park is one of the few areas where this habitat is conserved.

The site falls within the Central Migratory Flyway, where many birds find shelter and water during migration. In fact, over 300 species of birds have been recorded in the park.

With miles of shoreline along Lake Colorado City, fishing, boating, and swimming are popular activities when lake levels are high.

UNPREDICTABLE WATER

Lake Colorado City was created in 1949 when the Texas Electric Service Company constructed a dam across Morgan Creek just before it joins the Colorado River. The original purpose of the dam was to provide a municipal water supply for Colorado City and cooling water for condensers to produce electricity. At the time, it was the largest body of water in the West Texas/Midland-Odessa area. In 1971, 500 acres along the lake's southwestern side was leased to the state to develop a park. Lake Colorado City State Park opened the following year.

Water conservation is especially important in West Texas for people and wildlife. Today, Lake Colorado City's water comes only from rainfall. In years of drought, lake levels are low. When weather conditions are favorable for golden algae blooms, fish can die off in large numbers. While not harmful to humans, pets, or livestock, golden algae can sometimes be toxic to fish.



Cactus wren

A LIFELINE ON THE PLAINS

The water of Morgan Creek and the Colorado River have been important to life for many years. Prior to colonization, the land surrounding Lake Colorado City State Park was roamed by mammoth, followed by bison and pronghorn.

Evidence of Native American use, such as dart and arrow points, stone tools, and piles of mussel shells, have been found in the area. If you find an artifact, please leave it where it lies and alert park staff.

In the 19th century, Colorado City was a popular spot for buffalo hunters, who sold the hides and bones. This led to the nickname "The Mother City of West Texas," as the bustling town became a center for railway commerce. The fruits of bison hunts, agriculture and ranching were shipped east and west from Colorado City.



Pronghorn antelope