



**SIERRA
CLUB**

Dallas Sierra Club **Big Bend National Park Bus Trip**

Wednesday Evening, February 28 – Monday Morning, March 5, 2018

Discounted price for reservations received by February 10 – See page 2!

Bus Trip Leader: Arthur Kuehne, 6249 Hidden Oaks Dr, Quinlan TX 75474-5204, arthur@akuehne.com, 214-608-3210

Why February: The Dallas Sierra Club has been running bus trips to Big Bend National Park for over 35 years, and until a few years ago, we have almost always done them in November. Our Thanksgiving Big Bend Bus Trip was almost an institution. But we had many, many people who told us that they wanted to go on our bus trip to Big Bend but just could not get away over the Thanksgiving holiday. For a couple of years, we ran the bus trip a couple of weeks before Thanksgiving, but we still had a lot of people tell us they could not go. The trip was just too close to the holidays. We also heard from any people that by November they did not have the needed vacation days left.

So, for this trip, we are going at the end of February. The weather should be about the same and the days will see about an hour more daylight. The first hints of spring will be peeking out. It's a perfect time to go to Big Bend.

You will need to schedule two days of vacation, but we think you will find it well worth it to visit this amazing place. And, since it is not during the holidays, you don't have any excuse. Sign up **NOW!**

Area Description: Big Bend National Park is in Southwest Texas along the Mexican border, in a bend of the Rio Grande River that gives the park its name. The Park preserves a vast section of the Chihuahuan Desert larger than the state of Rhode Island, with over 1,106 square miles of area. Elevations within the park range from a high point of 7,825 feet at Emory Peak in the Chisos Mountains, to a low point of 1,680 feet on the Rio Grande at the east end of the park. There are mountain ranges within the Park, but most of the land lies between 3,000 feet and 4,000 feet in elevation. This high desert country, which at first seems featureless against the backdrop of the mountains, has been carved by wind and water into a varied landscape of mesas, spires, pour-offs and drainages.



The most dominant of the Park's mountain ranges is the Chisos Mountains, which includes the highest peaks at the center of Big Bend. The Basin, which is a bowl-shaped valley ringed by mountains, is the center of activity in the Chisos, and the starting point for three of this year's trips. The South Rim of the Chisos offers spectacular views of the desert 2,000 feet below its edge. Trails descend from the Chisos high country down several canyons, including Juniper Canyon and Blue Creek Canyon, offering a view of the succession of plant life at the lower elevations. Circling below the South Rim is the Dodson Trail, which traverses the foothills of the Chisos, passing the remains of several ranch outposts dating back to the 1800's. The Rio Grande River has carved three deep canyons along the Park's southern boundary: Santa Elena, Mariscal and Boquillas. Santa Elena Canyon, at the western end of the park, is formed by the river's penetration of the Mesa De Anguila.

Climate and vegetation vary with elevations in the Park. Remnants of once-larger forests of ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, quaking aspens, maples and oaks are found at the higher elevations above 6,000 feet. Life zones change quickly as elevations decrease, with the sparse forests changing first to Junipers, and then to desert plant communities with agaves, yucca, sotol, ocotillo, mesquite, creosote and, of course, cactus. Fauna within the park include mountain lions, coyotes, fox, bobcat, bear, peccaries (javelina), mule deer, white tail deer, as well as 55 species of reptiles and 400 species of birds. For more information about Big Bend National Park, visit <http://www.nps.gov/bibe>

Departure: Our chartered sleeper bus departs at **8:00 pm on Wednesday, February 28, 2018** from the Walmart store parking lot located on the southwest corner of the intersection of LBJ expressway (I-635) and Midway Road. Look for the bus in the parking lot on the west end of the Walmart, between the Walmart store and the Sam’s Club store. Plan on arriving at the bus by 7:30 pm to load and get settled in. The bus will leave promptly at 8:00. The bus will not wait for late arrivals. You may want to have someone drop you off and pick you up. If you do leave your car at Walmart, hide valuables from view. The Sierra Club, its leaders and Walmart are not responsible for the security of your car or its contents. Plan on eating dinner before boarding the bus. We will make a seat-to-bunk conversion stop at a truck stop west of Fort Worth.

Return: The bus will pick up participants at ending trailheads on Sunday afternoon. There will be a dinner stop at a restaurant in Fort Stockton. We should arrive back at the Walmart parking lot **between 5:00 am and 6:00 am on Monday, March 5.**

WARNING: IF YOU ARE NOT A UNITED STATES CITIZEN you must bring appropriate documents proving legal residency. The bus will go through at least one U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement border patrol checkpoint.

Cost: The trip cost for reservations received by Friday, February 9 is \$270. The cost for reservations received between February 9 and departure day is \$300. *Please consider sending your reservation as soon as possible. The Club has a deadline to prepay the bus cost. We need to know early if there will be enough participants to cover our costs.* You will need extra cash for snacks, breakfast when you arrive in the park (unless you bring your own), dinner in Fort Stockton on the return trip, and for snacks or souvenirs you may want. Cash is preferred over credit cards as it speeds up payment at restaurants.

How to Sign Up: After carefully reading this complete trip write up, the trip descriptions and cautions and restrictions:

1. Complete and return the **Trip Participant Form** listing your first and second trip preferences. You will be contacted if, for some reason, your preferences can’t be accommodated.
2. Complete and return the **Medical Information form**. Be sure to list any medical data such as drug allergies, medical conditions, etc., which could affect medical treatment in case of an accident or illness. **Participants agree to notify the Bus Trip Leader before the trip date if there are any changes to the information provided on their Medical Information Form.**
3. Read, sign and return the **Sierra Club Release of Liability**. You will not be allowed to participate on this trip unless you sign the liability release.

Send the required forms and payment (check or money order only, payable to “Dallas Sierra Club”) to **Arthur Kuehne, Bus Trip Leader, 6249 Hidden Oaks Dr, Quinlan TX 75474-5204**. You are not signed up for the trip until your check AND all required forms are received, they have been reviewed and you have been accepted by the trip leaders. Checks made out incorrectly or forms incomplete or unsigned will be returned. Forms must be mailed or hand-delivered and include original signatures – no copies, faxes or scans of the release of liability will be acceptable. (Our legal advisors are sticklers.) Please print the forms single-sided and don’t alter, reduce or staple.

Trip Acceptance / Questions: If you still have questions after reading this complete trip write up, feel free to contact the bus leader, or any of the trip leaders. Receipt of payment does not constitute acceptance on the trip until both the bus coordinator and individual trip leader have reviewed the submitted sign-up form and medical information, and conducted any follow-up interviews to determine suitability. The bus coordinator and individual trip leaders reserve the right to determine whether a particular trip is suitable for a prospective participant, based on their experience, health, equipment or other factors. If the trip is deemed not suitable for the prospective participant, the trip fee will be refunded in full.



Cancellation Policy: Notify the bus trip coordinator if you must cancel. There is a \$60 fee for cancellations through February 9, 2018. There will be no refunds for cancellations after that date. See the Travel Insurance paragraph below. On rare occasions the Dallas Sierra Club must cancel or change trips. If this occurs, our responsibility is limited to a refund of any trip fees you have already paid. The Dallas Sierra Club is not responsible for airfares or other payments or costs you incur that are a consequence of a trip cancellation or change.

Travel Insurance: We strongly encourage you to purchase travel insurance to cover non-refundable expenses in the event you or the Dallas Sierra Club cancels a trip, medical expenses incurred on a trip and possible medical evacuation from a trip. The Sierra Club has made arrangements with USI Travel Insurance Services for you to purchase a comprehensive travel insurance plan. Visit <http://www.travelinsure.com/what/selecthigh.asp> for details. Feel free to contact USI Travel Insurance Services if you have any questions on policy options or coverages. Dallas Sierra Club is not equipped to answer questions about travel insurance. Other trip insurance companies are available.

Minors: Minors may only participate when accompanied by their legal guardian at all times.

CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. (California has a law called the California "Seller of Travel" Law. Since Sierra Club is a California non-profit corporation and we sell travel, we are required to post this notice.)

Transportation: We ride in a chartered sleeper bus with professional drivers. Seat assignments are based on the order that checks and completed forms are received. The sooner your check is received, the better chance you'll get your seating preference. Please indicate your seating preference – window or aisle, top or bottom bunk, front or back of bus – on your Participant Preference form. Also note the name of anyone you want to sit next to on the bus.

Each evening on the bus, the seats will be converted into bunks during a rest stop at about 10:00 pm. During this stop, everyone must remove any personal items from seat and floor areas, then disembark. When the conversion is completed, everyone will re-board and observe quiet hours and lights-out. Please respect your fellow passengers need for sleep.

Carry-ons: Space is limited on the bus. Please limit carry-on luggage to small (12" x 12" x 8" high) crushable bags that will fit under your seat or in the very-small overhead bins (12" deep by 8" high). Aisles must be kept clear. Only use overhead space immediately above your seat – don't take other's limited space. Because the seating arrangement is more like a plane without big overhead bins, you cannot carry on large bags. On-bus sleep gear, pillows and other bulky items can (and should) be kept in storage under the bus. You will have access to your evening/sleeping items when we stop to convert the seats to bunks.

Bus Survival: The bus will be cool at night, so you must have a blanket or light sleeping bag or you will be uncomfortable. You may find it easier to sleep if you also bring earplugs and a sleep mask. For the time when you are not sleeping, you may want to bring a few snacks, and/or some reading material. Have a jacket available on the bus no matter how warm or dry it is when we leave Dallas. It is often near freezing when we arrive in the park. Bottled water will be provided on the bus for the outbound bus trip. You are encouraged to stay well hydrated. In addition to water, beer and soda will be provided on the return trip.

A few important reminders for your safety and as a courtesy to your fellow bus passengers:

- No glass containers are allowed on the bus as they can break, causing a hazard and mess.
- No perfume or cologne – some people are highly sensitive to the scent, especially while in a confined area of a moving vehicle.
- Smoking is not allowed in the bus or around the bus.
- Electronic, musical and game devices may be used on the bus only with earphones or muted so they cannot be heard by those around you.
- Please try to make any necessary calls during our rest stops. Make cell phone calls on the bus only when absolutely necessary. Phones must be turned off during quiet hours on the bus.
- The bus does not have cell phone charging capability. If you must recharge, bring an external battery pack.
- If you have any questions or requests during the trip please chat with the bus leader or a trip leader. We want the driver to concentrate on the drive and not deal with possible conflicting information or instructions.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

Experience and Conditioning Required: Participants on all trips should have some backpacking experience and they should be in good physical condition. While the elevations in the park are moderate, the trails are rocky and rugged in places and some of the trips will be covering a lot of miles. Please contact the bus leader or one of the trip leaders if you have any question about your experience or physical abilities. As a rule of thumb, if you can walk around White Rock Lake (9 miles) with a light pack in under 3 1/2 hours (excluding reasonable breaks) in cool weather without being overly taxed, you should be in adequate shape for at least trips 1, 2 and 3. A much better test of your conditioning is to walk around White Rock Lake (or the equivalent) two or three days in a row. Trips 4 and 5 are considerably harder and more remote, requiring a greater level of experience, conditioning and confidence in your abilities.

Weather: Normal late-February temperatures range from 65 to 75 degrees during the day and 35 to 45 degrees at night. February and March are the driest months in the park, so you can expect no rain. Past trips have experienced temperatures as low as 16 degrees and as high of 90+ degrees and extended periods of rain and snow. You should pack clothing for the full range of possibilities. You can leave what you don't need in the bus, based on the forecast that we get in the park.

Gear: Each person is responsible for his or her own equipment and food. The following list includes equipment that's considered mandatory:

Clothing: Long pants (even if the weather is warm) for cactus protection; hat and long-sleeve shirt with collar for sun protection; rain jacket and pants (a poncho is not acceptable as it will be in shreds after only a short amount of hiking in Big Bend); jacket; long underwear and/or sweaters good in combination down to 25 degrees; well broken-in hiking boots; outer and inner socks. Optional: Short pants, short sleeve shirt (T-shirt). These may require an extra supply of sunscreen and bandages.

Equipment: Tent and ground cloth. (Small is good. Some campsites are small and will accommodate fewer tents than usual.) Sleeping bag rated to 20 degrees; ground pad; backpack with hip belt (trips 1,2,3,4,5); daypack (trips 1,2,5); water containers and water treatment tablets (or filter); headlight; whistle, sunscreen; first-aid kit (including stuff for blisters); trowel, toilet paper and zip lock bags for used toilet paper (Big Bend required that you carry out your used toilet paper); garbage bag; personal items. A note about ground pads: While inflatable ground pads, such as Therm-a-Rest or Neoair, are very comfortable, they must be used very carefully in Big Bend. Thorns and stickers are everywhere. Your pad will be at great risk for puncture if carried lashed to the outside of your pack or if you don't police your tent site carefully. Bring your repair kit or consider using a foam pad such as a RidgeRest or a Z-Rest. Bring a backpacking stove with fuel; pot and matches for cooking hot meals. (Note: Trip 1 participants MAY NOT bring ice chests.)



Note about gear: all participants are required to carry the 10+ essentials for safe hiking, whether backpacking or day hiking. If your trip includes day hikes, plan on using your backpack or bring a day pack sufficient to carry all your ten essentials, lunch and any personal items you may need.

Food: Bring three breakfasts (Thursday morning breakfast will be in the Chisos Lodge restaurant or, if you don't want to eat in the Lodge, bring a fourth breakfast), four lunches, three dinners, and snacks. See individual trip notes for deviations from this general rule. Avoid bringing meals that require excess water for clean-up.

Water: Water is scarce in the park but in years with normal rainfall, it's usually available at the locations noted in the trip descriptions that follow. You must have leak-free containers to carry water in the quantities specified for the trip that you are on. **Don't fill your water containers in Dallas.** They could leak in route and get someone's equipment wet. You can fill your containers at a tap in the park while the trip leaders obtain backcountry permits. Water you collect from natural sources must be treated with tablets, filtration or boiling before drinking. There are no guarantees that we'll find water at all expected sources. Your trip leader will give you additional information about water.

Packing and Preparation: Be careful with the optional items - the weight adds up quickly and the possible need to carry sufficient water will occupy a significant portion of your pack's capacity. Remember, water weighs 8 pounds per gallon.

Maps: If you would like to get your own full map of the area (encouraged), one of the best is the National Geographic Trails Illustrated Big Bend National Park map number 225 which is usually available at REI, One Map Place and similar stores, and on-line at Amazon.com and other outlets. A National Park Service map of the Big Bend may be viewed at <http://www.nps.gov/bibe>.

TRIP OPTION DESCRIPTIONS

Please read the following trip descriptions carefully before making your selection. Remember, you'll have more fun on a trip that matches your abilities rather than one that causes you to struggle. Contact the trip leader if you have any questions. All trippers may eat breakfast in the restaurant in the Chisos Basin. Trip 5 will board the bus for a trailhead further west after breakfast. Other trips will start backpacking / hiking from the Basin.

All trip itineraries are subject to change. The availability of water, changing weather, limited availability of required permits, participant injury or sickness, and the leader's assessment of the group's strength may affect the trip. The leaders reserve the right to make changes to the trip itineraries as necessary.

Trip 1: Ultralight Hiking from a Chisos Mountains Base Camp

Rated: Strenuous (due to miles)

If you love to hike without hauling all your gear every day and you appreciate the comforts of a campground, this trip can be heavenly.

Thursday: After an early breakfast at the lodge, we'll set a three-night base camp at the Chisos Basin Campground, elevation 5,100 feet and 0.6 mile from our drop point. The campground has potable water, flush toilets (no showers), tables, grills and bear boxes. After setting camp, we'll hike through pinon pines, oaks and junipers on the Lost Mine Trail, 8.4 miles round-trip and an elevation gain of 1,600 feet. View Juniper Canyon, the East Rim and Mexico's Sierra del Carmen from the trail.

Friday: Hike the Laguna Trail to the South Rim and then hike beside Boot Creek to Boot Spring, the sole water sources for most of the Chisos Basin. This is perhaps the most classic hike in all Texas, worth all 13 miles.

Saturday: After breakfast, board our bus for a scenic 45-minute drive to Rio Grande Village at the eastern end of the park. We'll hike 3 miles from the Daniels Ranch historic area to Hot Springs. At Hot Springs, we can explore the historic motel and post office built by J. O. Langford in the 1900s as part of a health resort at the spring. After a soak in the hot spring, we'll return to our bus (total 5.6 miles and about 600 feet of altitude gain/loss on this day hike) and take a 15-minute ride to Boquillas Canyon. We'll hike about 0.6 miles into the canyon and explore this amazing place. After returning to the bus, we'll head back to our campsite in the Basin. Time permitting, we'll stop on the way back at Dugout Wells for a short hike on a desert nature trail.

Sunday: Hike to the Window, a pour-off where water occasionally cascades onto the drier lowlands below the Chisos Basin – a 5-mile round trip. Our bus will pick us up where it dropped us off on Thursday.

Although this trip option requires carrying no more than water, food and emergency preparedness items, the hikes are for people who exercise regularly and can walk long distances. Pack as you would for backpacking, but you may substitute a duffel bag or two and a day pack for a larger pack. A tent and warm sleeping bag are essentials. After Thursday breakfast at the lodge and before Sunday night dinner in Fort Stockton, you'll eat four lunches, three dinners, three breakfasts and snacks. Bring your own food to eat in camp and on the trail. There's a convenience store 0.6 mile from our camp where you may buy sandwiches, drinks and snacks. You might supplement or substitute food from home with food from the store or the lodge restaurant if you respect the group's hiking schedule times. The bus cannot navigate campground roads, so you'll need to carry all your gear at 0.6 mile on Thursday and Sunday between the bus and our camp. Plan and pack accordingly for a good time. Due to space constraints, ice chests are not allowed.

Leader: Arthur Kuehne, arthur@akuehne.com, 214-608-3210

Trip 2: Chisos Mountains and the Window

Rated: Moderate

This trip offers a great combination for backpackers who want to explore at a relaxed pace, camp in the high backcountry and day hike some of the more scenic trails in the park.

Thursday: After breakfast, we'll hike the scenic Laguna Meadows Trail, connecting to the Colima Trail across to Boot Canyon Trail from which we'll go a short distance to set up our three-night camp near Boot Canyon. (6 miles, gradual 1,800' ascent).

Friday: This is our day to day hike in the Chisos Basin. We'll hike in a counter-clockwise loop to enjoy spectacular vistas as the trail winds around the South Rim. From camp we'll hike east on the Colima Trail, continuing a loop visiting the spectacular South Rim of the Chisos before returning to camp. (7 miles, 500' ascent/decent)

Saturday: We'll have a very easy day as we hike to the summit of Emory Peak (elevation 7,832'), the tallest mountain in Big Bend National park. From the peak we'll have 360-degree views. We'll plan on having a leisurely lunch on the summit. We'll return to camp and then pack our dinner and return to the South Rim where we will have dinner and watch the sun set over the Rio Grande River and the low desert. We'll return to camp using flashlights/headlamps. (about 8 miles, 1,400' ascent/descent)

Sunday: On the last day, pack up early and head down the Pinnacles Trail to the Basin Lodge area. (5 miles, 1,400' descent) We'll be down by lunch time and have several options for the afternoon. One option is to dayhike down to the Window, a beautiful hike down the canyon that drains the Basin. (4.5 miles, 1,000' descent/ascent) Or, we can just hang out at the lodge and relax.

We'll carry at least two liters of water each day but bring containers for 6 to 8 liters in case we don't get the permits we expect and need to carry water to a dry campsite.

Leader: Jake Trousdale, jake.trausdale@gmail.com, 214-244-4887



Trip 3: High Chisos Mountains Backpacking and Upper Burro Mesa Pouroff Rated: Moderate

This trip offers a great combination for backpackers who want to explore at a relaxed pace, camp in the backcountry, day hike some of the most scenic trails in the park, and end their hike in the high desert at an old ranch house.

Thursday: After breakfast at the lodge, we'll hike the scenic Laguna Meadows Trail, connecting to Colima Trail and across to campsite near Boot Canyon where we'll set up camp for two nights. (6 miles, gradual 1,800' ascent).

Friday: This is our day to day hike some of the premier trails of Big Bend. From camp, we'll hike South on the Boot Canyon Trail and around the Southwest Rim to enjoy the spectacular views. We'll loop back North and continue on to explore the Laguna Meadow before returning to camp via the Colima Trail. (6 miles).

Saturday: Pack up and backpack down the Blue Creek Canyon Trail to the Homer Wilson Ranch. We'll explore the ruins of this historic ranch and camp in the area. We will have water waiting for us at a drop-off site. (6 miles, 2400' descent).

Sunday: On the last day we are going to do something we have never done before on a bus trip. We'll pack up and hike about 1 ½ miles on a road to the trailhead for Upper Burro Mesa Pouroff. From here we will hike to the pouroff and back, a distance of just under 4 miles. This pouroff is one of the most amazing geological features in the park. The bus will pick us up back at the trailhead. (6 miles, very little elevation change).

We'll carry at least two liters of water each day, but bring containers for 6 to 8 liters in case we don't get the permits we expect and need to carry water to a dry campsite.

Leader: Lynn Marple, mlmarple@gmail.com, 972-644-7266 and Ande Johnston, aahinds62@gmail.com, 214-914-3590

Trip 4: High Chisos / Outer Mountain Loop Backpack Rated: Strenuous

This trip combines the best of the high Chisos trails with a great hike on a major section of the Outer Mountain Loop, one of the best trails in the park.

Thursday: Thursday: Backpack to South Rim on Pinnacles, getting water at Boot Springs. Hopefully camping on the South Rim to catch the sunset. Day hiking on the High Chisos trails. Option: climb Emory Peak. Depending on campsite, we may make an additional trip back to Boot Springs for water. Distance – about 5.5 miles, elevation 2000 ft. ascent.

Friday: Backpack from South Rim (depending on campsite) down the Juniper Canyon Trail to the junction with the Dodson Trail. Approximate distance 6.5 miles and elevation change: -3000 ft.). Dry camp.

Saturday: Backpack on the Dodson trail. We will visit the ruins of the Dodson Ranch and then stop to camp at Fresno Creek. We'll be there early enough to dayhike down Fresno Creek to Elephant Tusk Mountain and return to camp on the Elephant Tusk Trail. 5.3 miles (not including the dayhike). Lots of ups and downs but only about 1000-foot elevation gain.

Sunday: Continue on the Dodson Trail to the Blue Creek Ranch where we will meet the bus. We will pass Carousel Mountain traversing some of the best scenery on the Outer Mountain Loop, if not the park. Distance: 5.7 miles; elevation change: -1000 feet but with the typical ups and downs.

Water: Due to the uncertainty of our water sources, you will need to bring containers for, and be able to carry, 6 liters of water. As the trip date approaches, we may have additional information on water sources.

Leader: Christian Costello, j.christian.costello@gmail.com, 972-591-1547

Trip 5: Mesa de Anguila Backpacking and Day Hiking

Rated: Strenuous

Spend four days in the most remote and isolated part of the Big Bend National Park; Mesa de Anguila, which rises in the remote western-most corner of the park, is rarely visited by park visitors, and offers experience backpackers opportunities for unsurpassed solitude, spectacular views and magnificent experience in the Chihuahuan desert. We will travel on some infrequently maintained trails and mostly on cross country routes. Our route will traverse the mesa from the Northeast edge to the Southeast edge at Santa Elena Canyon (SE)

Thursday: Lajitas to upper Tinaja Grande, taking the north trail. The first 4 miles are mostly backpacking through an overgrown thorny wash. There are two steep saddles to cross. From the trail junction to Tinaja Lujan, we will continue on down a wash to Bruja Canyon and then cross-country route to Upper Tinaja Grande & the Wax Camp. This will be our base camp for the next two nights. Approximate distance is 10 miles. Quite a few short and steep ascends/descends, (2500 ft. / -1700 ft.). Net elevation gain: 800 ft.

Friday: We will day hike Southeast along the high bench of the mesa to the cliff edge of the mesa at the rim of SE Canyon. Here we will have one of the most spectacular views in Texas and the Big Bend National park. Below us a 1500 feet deep and narrow Santa Elena Canyon, To the NE a great view of the Chisos Mountains and the Chihuahuan desert all around us. We will continue along the cliff edge of the canyon to the confluence of SE Canyon with Fern Canyon in Mexico. Continue to the hidden Tinaja De la Verga. Return to camp at Tinaja Grande. Approximate distance: 12 miles with few steep escarpments to climb. The entire day is on cross-country routes. 2700 ft. / -2700ft.

Saturday: After breaking camp we will walk a short distance to a vista point to view the water shade of Bruja Canyon and Middle Tinaja Grande. Then backpack to the Sink Hole to do some caving. Continue to a trail intersection near La Mariposa, a very distinctive shaped mountain. Here we will drop our packs and day hike to Joel's Canyon and continue down to the Rio Grande River near the entrance to the Canyon. Hike back to our packs. Continue to Tinaja Rana for overnight camp. Approximate distance, 11 miles. 2747 ft. / -2718 ft.

Sunday: Backpack to Lajitas via the Saddle (trail), 5.5 miles and 900 ft descent for shower, lunch and bus pickup at 3:00 PM.

Everybody should carry minimum of 4 liters of water and have containers for 6 to 8 liters (to minimize going back and forth to the tinaja). Bring a daypack large enough for a day's worth of extra clothes, water (minimum 4 liters) and lunch. Note: Much of this trip is cross country over rough terrain that is covered by some of the meanest cactus on earth. A pair of full leather sturdy hiking boots and a pair of leather gloves is highly recommended for this trip.

Maps: USGS 1:24,000 Lajitas and Mesa De Anguila (7.5 Minute Series)

Leader: Zeev Saggi, zsaggi@aol.com, 214-538-2437

A FEW MORE RULES AND CAUTIONS

Leave No Trace: Low or no impact wilderness ethics are expected of all participants. All trash must be packed out; human waste buried, and used toilet paper packed out (so bring zip-lock bags for this purpose). Campfires are not allowed, so bring a small camp stove if you plan hot meals. Smoking, pets, radios and firearms are not allowed.

Medical: Although our trip leaders have completed wilderness first aid training, they are not medical professionals. All participants are encouraged to have first aid supplies and a basic knowledge of how to deal with medical emergencies. If you have medical training, let the leader know so that he or she can use your skill in an emergency. Inform the leaders if you have a medical condition that could require special treatment in an emergency, such as controlled diabetes, heart problems, allergic reactions, etc. Carry any necessary medications for these conditions on your person at all times and let the leader know where you store them. If you are extremely allergic to bee stings, poison ivy or anything else that we are likely to encounter, ask your doctor if you should carry an antidote kit. If you are blind without your glasses, bring a spare. We will be hiking in a wilderness area, where rescue is difficult and time-consuming. The nearest hospital is over 100 miles away. Medical help could be days in arriving. Air evacuations are extremely expensive, and the injured party is responsible for payment of costs. **If you have a health condition that could require immediate medical treatment, you should not go on this trip.**

Group / Safety: It is important for group safety to follow the leaders' directions. By failing to obey the leader's instructions, you assume the risks of any consequences that result. The group should stay together to minimize the chance of someone getting lost, or an injured person going unaided. Sierra Club prohibits individuals from leaving the led group (the leader and those participants with the leader) for separate day hiking or other activity. If you leave the group, you do so at your own risk. Participants who leave the led group against leader advice will be asked to sign out of the trip and are no longer part of the trip. Don't expect the group or the leader to do more than notify the authorities if you do not return. The leader's responsibility is to those who are following him or her, not to those who choose to follow a different route and put themselves at risk. Note that if you leave the group and miss the scheduled bus pick-up at the trailhead, the bus will not wait and you will be responsible for getting your own transportation home.

If you want to leave the led group to do separate day hiking, **you do so at your own risk.** If you choose to take that risk, please don't hike alone. Most deaths in the wilderness occur when a solo hiker becomes incapacitated, and dies of hypothermia or dehydration before being found. If you do leave the led group, you should hike in parties of at least three people, and tell the leader your planned route and time of return. If someone is injured while away from the led group, leave one person and all of the party's food and warm clothing with the injured person, and send all of the others for help, either at the trailhead or at the trip's base camp.

If you do get lost, stop and wait to be found; don't wander aimlessly. **When day hiking, even for short trips, bring a jacket, raingear, warm hat, space blanket or space bag, food, water, map, compass, flashlight, first-aid kit, matches and whistle.** If you twist an ankle or get lost, these essentials could save your life if you end up spending the night away from camp. Potential nighttime lows in the 20's make hypothermia a real threat.

Leaders are not allowed to search for missing persons at night. They may not put others in the group at risk to look for a lost participant. When leaving camp even for a moment (to go to the bathroom), especially at night, be careful to not get disoriented and lose your way back. This could create a life-threatening situation if the weather is bad or the person is not dressed for the cold.

The biggest single danger on this trip is falling off ledges due to clumsiness, inattention or loose and unstable rock. Do not get too close to cliff edges, such as at the South Rim, on Emory Peak, or at the Windows Overlook.

Sunburn is a potential problem. Remember, this is a desert environment with little shade; wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, a wide-brimmed hat and bandana, and use sunscreen.

Big Bend Rules: The following regulations apply to this trip and must be followed:

- No ground fires. You must use a backpacking stove for all cooking.
- Pack out all litter. Trash should be carried back to Dallas. Big Bend has very limited solid waste disposal facilities.
- Disturbing or collecting any natural or historical feature or object is prohibited.
- Do not bathe, swim, wash in or contaminate water sources.
- Bury human waste at least 6 inches deep well away from camp or water sources. **Big Bend National Park requires that you carry out all toilet paper.** Carry extra Ziploc bags for your used TP.

Bears: Big Bend has bears! Bear canisters will eventually be required for backcountry use. The Park provides metal bear boxes at selected campsites. The following are Park Service requirements:

- Bring food that doesn't have strong aromas. Consider foods that require no cooking, as those generate fewer dirty dishes and wastewater.
- Store all food, beverages, trash and toiletries inside the food storage box provided at your campsite if there is one. Do not store these items in your tent.
- Prepare meals away from your sleeping area.
- Keep your campsite clean. Keep scraps in the storage box with your trash and unused food.
- Do not pour oils or grease used in cooking onto the ground. Carry out these residuals once they have congealed. Take care not to spill liquids when cooking.
- Disperse cooking water over a wide area, away from camp.
- Carry out all garbage, left over food, and waste cooking oils and grease. **Do not bury your trash.**

Park rangers take food storage requirements seriously. A few years ago, a bus trip participant was fined \$50 for improper food storage.

Should you encounter a bear or mountain lion, group together, make lots of noise, waive your arms, and look mean. Don't run. Do not turn your back to a mountain lion – keep facing it directly. Give the animal an escape route if you have accidentally cornered it. If you are between a bear and her cubs, slowly move away from both while doing all of the above.

The Dallas Sierra Club has run trips such as those described above for over 35 years without any serious injuries. If you are in reasonably good physical condition, have the necessary experience and skills, and select a trip matching those abilities (and of course, don't do anything stupid), these trips are reasonably safe. The above cautions and disclosures of risk are intended to give you the information necessary to make an informed decision on whether you should participate in any of these trips. Hopefully, they will also encourage those who do participate to be safe and careful; so we can all have a good time.



Join us for fun and relaxation in Big Bend National Park by signing up TODAY!

**Dallas Sierra Club
Big Bend National Park Bus Trip
February 28 – March 5, 2018**

PARTICIPANT PREFERENCE FORM

Please return this form, your check payable to "Dallas Sierra Club," the Medical Information Form, and the Sierra Club Sign-In/Release of Liability to the trip leader (address on page 1).

PARTICIPANT NAME (please print): _____

Current Sierra Club member: Yes _____ No _____ Amount enclosed: _____

TRIP PREFERENCE

Trip number choice (indicate 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5): 1st choice: _____ 2nd choice: _____

BUS PREFERENCES:

Area of bus: Front _____ Middle _____ Back _____ No preference _____

Seat: Aisle _____ Window _____ No preference _____

Bunk: Upper _____ Lower _____ No preference _____

Sit / bunk together with (name): _____

GENERAL INFORMATION (required – please answer every question:

How did you learn about this trip?

Have you hiked at high altitudes before? If yes, how high and how far

If you are interested in Trip 1 – Have you hiked long distances on multiple days before? Yes _____ No _____

Trip 2,3,4,5 - Have you ever backpacked before? Yes _____ No _____

Have you gone on any other Dallas Sierra Club bus trips? Yes _____ No _____

If YES, to where (and about when, if recent), if NO, describe your backpacking experience including location, distances and elevations (use back of page if necessary):

Important – Read and Sign

By signing below, I certify that I have read the attached trip descriptions, restrictions and cautions, and understand the described difficulties and risks associated with the trip(s) that I have selected above. I certify that I have no known health problems that would require me to need immediate medical attention, and that I am in sufficient physical condition to participate in the trip I have selected. I understand that immediate medical assistance will not be available if I become ill or injured while on this trip, that evacuation could take several days if I do become ill or injured, and that I am responsible for any evacuation and medical costs that may be incurred should I need medical attention. I understand that should I miss the bus returning to Dallas, that I am responsible for the arrangement of, and the cost of, my return to Dallas.

Signature of Participant (Adult) _____ Date _____

Signature of Legal Guardian if Participant is a Minor: _____ Date _____



Please fill in this form as accurately as possible. It is essential for leaders to evaluate individual and group health needs as part of trip planning, and for use during emergencies. After reviewing this form, the leader may contact you to discuss whether the trip will be safe and enjoyable for you considering your medical history.

We will keep the information on this form confidential. It will be seen only by leaders, medical personnel, or others who know and understand its confidential nature. This form will be destroyed following the trip. If you choose not to go on the trip, this form will be destroyed immediately.

General Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Nickname: _____

Address: _____ Gender: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Email Address: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Height: _____ Weight: _____ Blood Pressure: _____ / _____ Resting Heart Rate: _____ bpm

Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Secondary Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Evacuation and Medical Insurance Information

We strongly encourage you to have medical and evacuation insurance and to bring your insurance card or other documentation with you on the trip.

Evacuation Insurance	Medical Insurance
Company Name:	Company Name:
Policy Number:	Policy Number:
Contact Phone Number:	Contact Phone Number:

Allergies

Include medicines, foods, animals, insect bites and stings, and environment (dust, pollen, etc.). NONE

Allergy	Reaction	Medication Required (if any)

Continued on next page . . .

Medical History

Please list all prescription, over-the-counter, and natural medications you are taking. Use a separate sheet if necessary.

Medication Name	Dosage	Frequency	Side Effects (known & potential)	Reason for Taking

Do you currently have, or have a history with, the following conditions (explain in blank and use separate sheet if necessary):

- Yes No Respiratory problems, Asthma, Do you smoke _____
- Yes No Diabetes _____
- Yes No Gastrointestinal problems _____
- Yes No Cardiac problems, Hypertension _____
- Yes No Neurological problems, Seizures _____
- Yes No Vision or Eye problems _____
- Yes No Hearing problems _____
- Yes No Bone, Joint, Muscle problems _____
- Yes No Head trauma, Traumatic Brain Injury _____
- Yes No Substance Abuse, Anxiety, Depression _____
- Yes No If female: Are you pregnant _____
- Yes No Have you had an illness within the last 12 months _____
- Yes No Have you had surgery or been hospitalized in the last 12 months _____
- Yes No Have you ever had problems related to exposure to altitude _____
- Yes No Any other health complaint or medical issue that would affect your participation in this trip _____

If YES, please explain _____

Date of last tetanus immunization: _____ Date of most recent physical: _____

Physician's name: _____ Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Please have physician sign if your leader requires a physical prior to trip

Physician's signature: _____ Date: _____

The information provided here is a complete and accurate statement of any physical and psychological conditions that may affect my participation on this trip. I realize that failure to disclose such information could result in serious harm to myself and other participants. I agree to inform my trip leader should there be any changes to my health status prior to the start of the trip. I understand the outing may require vigorous activity that is both physically and mentally demanding in isolated areas without medical facilities. **I am fully capable of participating on this trip.**

Trip Name: Big Bend Bus Trip **Trip Dates:** February 28-March 5, 2018

Signature (required): _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Outing: Big Bend National Park Bus Trip	Date(s): February 28 – March 5, 2018
Bus and Trip Leader: Arthur Kuehne	Additional Leaders: Lynn Marple, Jake Trousdale, Christian Costello and Ze'ev Saggi

Sign-In Sheet & Acknowledgment of Outing Member Responsibility, Express Assumption of Risk, and Release of Liability

I understand that during my participation in this Sierra Club Outing, I may be exposed to a variety of hazards and risks, foreseen or unforeseen, which are inherent in each Outing and cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the Outing. These inherent risks include, but are not limited to, the dangers of serious personal injury, property damage, and death ("Injuries and Damages") from exposure to the hazards of travel and the Sierra Club has not tried to contradict or minimize my understanding of these risks. I know that Injuries and Damages can occur by natural causes or activities of other persons, animals, trip members, trip leaders and assistants or third parties, either as a result of negligence or because of other reasons. I understand that risks of such Injuries and Damages are involved in adventure travel such as Sierra Club Outings and I appreciate that I may have to exercise extra care for my own person and for others around me in the face of such hazards. I further understand that on this Outing there may not be rescue or medical facilities or expertise necessary to deal with the Injuries and Damages to which I may be exposed.

In consideration for my acceptance as a participant on this Outing, and the services and amenities to be provided by the Sierra Club in connection with the Outing, I confirm my understanding that:

- I have read any rules and conditions applicable to the Outing made available to me; I will pay any costs and fees for the Outing; and I acknowledge my participation is at the discretion of the leader.
- The Outing officially begins and ends at the location(s) designated by the Sierra Club. The Outing does not include carpooling, transportation, or transit to and from the Outing, and I am personally responsible for all risks associated with this travel. This does not apply to transportation provided by the Sierra Club during the Outing.
- If I decide to leave early and not to complete the Outing as planned, I assume all risks inherent in my decision to leave and waive all liability against the Sierra Club arising from that decision. Likewise, if the leader has concluded the Outing, and I decide to go forward without the leader, I assume all risks inherent in my decision to go forward and waive all liability against the Sierra Club arising from that decision.
- This Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law. If any provision or any part of any provision of this Agreement is held to be invalid or legally unenforceable for any reason, the remainder of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby and shall remain valid and fully enforceable.
- To the fullest extent allowed by law, I agree to **WAIVE, DISCHARGE CLAIMS, AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY** the Sierra Club, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders from **any and all liability** on account of, or in any way resulting from Injuries and Damages, even if caused by **negligence** of the Sierra Club its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders, in any way connected with this Outing. I further agree to **HOLD HARMLESS** the Sierra Club, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders from any claims, damages, injuries or losses caused by my own negligence while a participant on the outing. I understand and intend that this assumption of risk and release is binding upon my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, and includes any minors accompanying me on the Outing.
- I have read this document in its entirety and I freely and voluntarily assume all risks of such Injuries and Damages and notwithstanding such risks, I agree to participate in the Outing.

Name (print clearly): _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

If you are a minor (under age 18), your parent or legal guardian must sign this Agreement on your behalf.

I hereby agree and consent to the foregoing Agreement on behalf of the minor below.

Print Name and Age of Minor: _____ Age: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Date: _____
