

Vernal Pools: A Threatened Natural Resource

The "islands" of vegetation on the bare granite summit of Enchanted Rock are some of the most ecologically significant and severely threatened features of this State Natural Area. Known as soil islands, weather pits, gnammas, or vernal pools, these patches of vegetation on bare rock develop in depressions formed by weathering over thousands of years.



Too often visitors perceive them as nothing more than

convenient rest areas or even "bathrooms" for people and pets, and subject them to trampling, littering, and other forms of waste. **Please** refrain from entering or allowing pets in weather pits under any condition. Enjoy and observe these special features only from their granite margins **stay on the rock**.

Conservation and Preservation

Law prohibits the taking of plant parts including lichens and the taking or defacing of rocks.

To conserve the delicate plant life in the pools, potholes, and holes on the granite dome, please avoid walking through these areas—observe their delicate plant and animal life from the edge.

Where You Can Drive

All vehicles must remain on paved surface at all times, parking only in designated areas. No trailers, RV's, buses, or vehicles longer than 20 feet may cross the main bridge.

Sanitation and Garbage Disposal

Solid Waste—Remove all garbage and litter (including cigarette butts) out of the area for disposal in trash receptacles at the trailheads. Burying garbage is not permitted.

Human Waste—Self-composting toilet facilities are adjacent to the trail at the designated camping areas. **Do not throw any non-biodegradable waste or smoking materials into the composting tank.**

Contact Information

Park Superintendent:
915/247-3903
Route 4, Box 170
Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

Emergency Numbers:

- Llano Sheriff 915 247.5050
- Llano EMS 915/247-4521
- Llano Hospital 915/247.SOS1

Enchanted Rock State Natural Area



Introduction to Enchanted Rock

We here at Enchanted Rock welcome you to a primitive hiking and camping area—a country where you can break away from everyday "civilized" life. This country is reverting to its natural condition by minimizing the intrusions of man, which offers you a unique experience. To maximize your experience in this natural setting, you should closely observe the sounds, smells, and the feel of nature. Close observation of these things will make the trail before you both enjoyable and inspirational.

General Information



Future generations can enjoy and experience the primitive backcountry only if today's visitors protect the land. The satisfaction of travelling through a primitive area will be complete only if you leave no sign of your visit. You can help us preserve the harmony and nature of the backcountry.

We provide these instructions to help maintain the quality of the primitive for both you and your group, as well as others who follow. We ask for your cooperation in the rules outlined in this brochure.

Rules for the Trails

- Stay on the trail. Failure to do so results in unnecessary erosion and gulying of the trail.
- Hiking on foot is the only mode of travel allowed on the trails.
- Please report any trail problems to the Park Superintendent.

Fire Safety

- **Caution: extreme hazards exist. Avoid ground fires.**
- We do not allow campfires in the primitive area due to the possibility of wildfires.
- **You should cook only on containerized fuel stoves.**

Camping Manners

- Consider others when camping.
- Do not crowd your neighbors.
- Noise is out of place in the primitive area.
- Checkout time for all campsites is 2:00 p.m.

Tent Camping Areas

- You can camp overnight in the designated area of the park **only** with a permit obtainable at the park headquarters.
- No vehicle camping: no RV's, campers, or trailers.

Primitive Campsites (for Backpacking)

- You can camp overnight only in the designated primitive camping area.
- **Camp within camping area boundaries.**
- Do not rearrange the landscape.
- **Do not construct your campsite.**
- As much as possible, please avoid disturbing the groundcover and topsoil.
- Locate your camp to take advantage of natural drainage and topography.
- Pitch bedsites or tents on naturally flat ground. Do not dig or level an area for a bedsites.
- Please remove all traces of your camp when you leave.

Rock Climbing Safety

Visitors exploring Enchanted Rock Fissure should use caution. This 1,000 foot-long fissure contains over 20 entrances with tight passages, slippery surfaces, numerous steep inclines, and hazardous vertical drops. Rock climbing requires some skill and climbing ability to experience safely. To ensure safe

- Carry at least one light source and loose, protective clothing and proper footwear such as climbing boots or rubber-soled shoes.
- Avoid using pistons.
- Climb "clean" and preserve the resource for others to enjoy.
- Use approved footwear for all rock climbing activities.
- Nearest medical facilities are in Fredericksburg, and most parts of the park are accessible only by foot.

