A Chihuahuan Desert Paradise

A splash of blue stands out against limestone cliffs. The honking of a great blue heron, interspersed with the descending trill of a canyon wren, can be heard off in the distance. This landscape, which at times appears stark and desolate, comes alive with color after a rainstorm. Amistad National Recreation Area (NRA) is a land of contrasts... and of hidden treasures. The same water that draws people to boat and fish today, sustained over 300 generations of hunters and gatherers. They left behind a record of their existence through colorful rock art panels, bits of tools, and fibers preserved for thousands of years by the arid desert climate of the Lower Pecos River Region of southwest Texas.

Situated on the United States-Mexico Border, Amistad NRA is known primarily for excellent year round, water-based recreation including boating, fishing, swimming, scuba diving and kayaking. Amistad NRA also provides opportunities for picnicning, camping and hunting. The reservoir, at the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Devils River, was created by Amistad Dam in 1969. In addition to excellent recreation, this area is rich in archeology and rock art, and contains a wide variety of plant and animal life. So whether you come to boat, to ponder ancient mysteries, or to listen to bird song and watch the desert bloom, Amistad has something for you.

Monarch Butterflies Migrate Through Amistad NRA

Fall at Amistad National Recreation Area brings one of the most impressive animal migrations in the world—the passage of thousands of Monarch butterflies. The Monarchs pass through the Del Rio area on their way from southern Canada to their winter homes in the mountains of central Mexico.

Monarchs flying from Canada to Mexico will travel up to 3,000 miles in their fall migration. Del Rio and Ciudad Acuña are usually close to the center of the migration corridor, and most years you can see thousands of butterflies roosting in trees overnight around the lake and in town.

The return spring migration is more dispersed, and the Monarchs travel to northern Texas and Oklahoma to lay eggs for the next generation. Three or four more generations will recolonize the Plains all the way to Canada, until the late summer when they resume migratory behavior.

One of the most impressive aspects of the Monarch migration is, unlike birds, individual butterflies have never migrated before, since the migratory generation is separated by three or four non-migratory generations. Pure instinct guides these remarkable insects. The butterflies roost in a variety of trees, and they seem to inherently come to the same roosts as their ancestors in prior migrations.

Amistad NRA has utilized the Monarch as a resource shared among neighboring countries through education programs at schools in bordering towns such as Del Rio, Texas and Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, and Eagle Pass, Texas and Piedras Negras, Coahuila.

Local Birding Opportunities

by Karen Gleason

Winter is really the best time to birdwatch in Del Rio and Amistad NRA, but mostly it’s because of the weather, not because of the birds!

Del Rio’s normally mild winters allow for many days outdoors, and the wide variety of birds here during the winter offers birdwatchers an opportunity to find and watch hundreds of different species, including many that are often considered Mexican or tropical species.

Two of those local specialties are the Ringed Kingfisher and the Green Kingfisher. Both of these species may be found anywhere along Del Rio’s San Felipe Creek. In fact, the only species of North American kingfisher you may have trouble finding here is the Belted Kingfisher.

Visits to the creek should also produce many opportunities to study the boisterous antics of Great Kiskadee, as well as Vermilion Flycatcher, Black Phoebe and, early in winter, Couch’s Kingbird. Other area specialties that you may find on trips along the creek include Zone-tailed Hawk and the Yellow-crowned Night Heron.

The old hardwoods along San Felipe Creek provide plenty of food and cover for migrating warblers. Be ready for anything! Another wonderful place to indulge

Look Inside....

911 Info ........................................ 2
Superintendent's Letter .................. 2
What to See and Do ....................... 2
Tips for Visiting Mexico ............... 2
Fee Schedule .............................. 3
Volunteering .............................. 3
Park Activities .......................... 4
Ranger Programs ......................... 4
Park Map ................................. 5
Archeology and Rock Art .............. 6
Boating on Amistad ..................... 7
Reservoir Levels Chart ................. 7
Marinas .................................. 7
Fishing Tips ............................. 8
Welcome to Amistad National Recreation Area! My staff and I hope you enjoy your visit. We are working hard to improve your experience and safety here at Amistad NRA. I’d like to tell you about three recent projects underway in the recreation area.

A. Visit Amistad Dam: From the Amistad Visitor Information Center, take Hwy 90 W about 2.5 miles. You will see the turn off for the dam (Spur 349) on your left. You may drive out and park in the designated area. Turning back around is easy. Unless you drive through Mexico customs, you need not worry about being in Mexico. The total length of the dam is 6 miles.

B. Picnic or walk down by the water: Governors Landing has both a day use area and a camp-ground. There are 8 picnic areas around the lake.

C. Rent a boat: Forever Resorts operates marinas at Diablo East and Rough Canyon.

D. Take a scenic drive: Viewpoint Road at Diablo East (unpaved) leads to good spots for picnicking, swimming and SCUBA diving.

E. Tent or RV (dry) camp: Amistad NRA maintains four primitive campgrounds located throughout the park (see larger centerfold map page 5).

F. U.S. Military: Active or retired military may use the U.S.A.F. (Southwinds) Marina located out toward the dam.

Always remember to: LEAVE NO TRACE

**Keep America Beautiful!**

There are trash receptacles located throughout the park.

---

**Tips for Visiting Ciudad Acuña, Mexico**

- Bring personal ID and keep it with you because you will need it to reenter the U.S.
- Bringing weapons, ammunition and drugs into Mexico is a Mexican federal offense.
- If you are unsure of what not to bring call the Mexican Consulate 830-775-2352.
- Check with your insurance company to see if you need to buy Mexican car insurance.
- You may park near the U.S. Port of Entry and walk to Mexico, it’s 3/4 mile each way.
- U.S. Dollars are accepted at most stores. Some businesses will take credit cards.
- Declare ALL purchases when reentering the U.S. Alcohol and tobacco are taxed.
Volunteer Spotlight

Larry and Shirley Marriage of Johannesburg, Michigan have been part of Amistad National Recreation Area for a long time. They are here in Del Rio for their 14th winter season of camp hosting at Amistad NRA’s 277 N campground. It’s good to have them back!

The Marriages have also hosted at Governors Landing campground, and have participated in Amistad’s Trails & Rails Program aboard the Amtrak train the “Sunset Limited.”

On behalf of the staff at Amistad NRA, we’d like to say THANK YOU to Larry and Shirley Marriage for all they have given to this park. We appreciate their work and wish them best of luck and health in the future.

Amistad NRA Staff~

Amistad NRA Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Park User Fees</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Golden Age/Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance Fee</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Boat Use (24 hours)</td>
<td>$4.00/night/site</td>
<td>$2.00/night/site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Day Boat Use (72 hours)</td>
<td>$10.00/night/site</td>
<td>$5.00/night/site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Boat Use Full Year</td>
<td>$40.00/night/site</td>
<td>$20.00/night/site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping Spur 406</td>
<td>$4.00/night/site</td>
<td>$2.00/night/site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping San Pedro</td>
<td>$4.00/night/site</td>
<td>$2.00/night/site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping Governors Landing</td>
<td>$8.00/night/site</td>
<td>$4.00/night/site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping 277 North</td>
<td>$4.00/night/site</td>
<td>$2.00/night/site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Camp Sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pedro, 277 North, Rock Quarry</td>
<td>$2/person/night</td>
<td>$1/person/night</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amistad National Recreation Area has a variety of volunteer positions available each fall/winter season. Our greatest need is for Campground Hosts and Visitor Center Volunteers. We have 4 campgrounds that require hosts; however only one has full bookings (for the host only) and it is the easiest to fill. The other 3 have sewer only and are great for campers with solar panels.

We prefer long-term commitments for these positions. The term can be September- April continuous, or we can break it up into two 4 month positions from September - December and January - April. A background check is now being required for all volunteer positions.

We have a new Visitor Information Center 5 miles west of our headquarters building on Hwy 90. We need volunteers to staff the information desk, sell park passports, boat permits, hunting permits and books, issue parking permits, and give quality information to our park visitors.

We can accept applications for Visitor Information Assistants to staff the Visitor Information Center year-round; however, we prefer long-term commitments of at least 4 months for these positions. We offer a full hook-up site in exchange for 32 work hours per week.

Mail your application to:
Amistad National Recreation Area
4121 Veterans Blvd.
Del Rio, TX 78840.
Attn: Volunteer Coordinator
or
Email: amis_interpretation@nps.gov
or
Apply online at:
www.volunteer.gov/gov

We look forward to your application.

NOTE: Unfortunately, we cannot consider anyone without their own accommodations and vehicle. Stipends are not available.
Amistad National Recreation Area offers water-based recreation and protects our natural and cultural heritage. Amistad (Spanish for friendship) Dam, built by the United States and Mexico in 1969, forms International Amistad Reservoir on the Rio Grande, and the Pecos and Devils Rivers. Boaters mark the US/Mexico border along the Rio Grande arm of the lake. Enjoy your visit to Amistad NRA!  

CAMPING
The National Park Service operates four campgrounds. All sites are primitive with no hook-ups, and features vault toilets, and covered picnic tables. Only Governors Landing has potable water. All sites are first-come, first-served. Reservations are not available except for group campsites. A dump station is located at Diablo East. (See page 3 for camping fee schedule)

SAN PEDRO
Open all year
35 Sites with long, flat spaces, suitable for RVs or tents, and 5 tent-only sites are available. Camp hosts may be on-site in the winter months.

GOVERNORS LANDING
Open all year
15 Sites, suitable for RVs less than 28 feet or tents. Camp hosts on-site in the winter months.

SPUR 406
Open all year
8 Sites, suitable for RVs or tents.

277 NORTH
Open all year
17 Sites, suitable for RVs or tents. Camp hosts on-site in the winter months.

GROUP CAMPSITES
Located at San Pedro, 277 North and Rock Quarry. All are primitive group sites and have covered picnic tables and a fire ring. Sites may be reserved up to three months (90 days) in advance.

PRIVATELY OWNED CAMPGROUNDS AND RV PARKS
Private owned campgrounds and RV parks with hookups are also available in the Del Rio area.

FISHING
The Rio Grande in Amistad Reservoir provides excellent fishing and attracts many anglers to Amistad NRA. Privately owned campgrounds and RV parks with hookups are also available in the Del Rio area.

CAST A LINE
The beautiful blue water of Lake Amistad provides excellent fishing and attracts many anglers to Amistad NRA.

BANK FISHING
You can fish from the shoreline anywhere outside of harbors and anywhere people swim. Courtesy fishing docks are located at, Box Canyon, Pecos River, Rough Canyon, 277 South and Blackbrush Point.

WHAT TO FISH FOR
Some of the favorite catches at Lake Amistad are Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, Striped Bass, Channel Catfish, and Black Crappie (more info on page 8).

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS
Texas fishing license requirements apply when fishing on the U.S. side of Lake Amistad. When in Mexican waters, you must adhere to Mexican fishing regulations, which differ from Texas in terms of size and catch limits. The Mexican border is indicated by numbered buoys running along the main channel of the Rio Grande in Amistad Reservoir.

MEXICAN FISHING LICENSE
Amistad Marine 830-775-0878 Fishermans Headquarters 830-774-1670 are both on Hwy 90 West and sell Mexican fishing licenses and boat permits.

NOTE
Mexican law strictly prohibits possession of guns, ammo, and illegal drugs. Anyone caught in Mexican waters with contraband will receive a mandatory prison sentence and a substantial fine.

Authorized Fishing Guides
Herschel Black 830-775-3639 Glen McGonagill 830-775-6720 Charlie Rumfield 830-774-3494 Jerry Black (432) 292-4730 Gene Peil (830) 775-7243 Mike Fambro (432) 292-4658

INFORMATION
Amistad NRA’s Visitor Information Center is located 10 miles west of Del Rio on Hwy 90 West, and is open 7 days a week, 8 am - 5 pm, closed Thanksgiving Day, December 25 and January 1. The center has various interactive displays, a theater to watch a short film on the recreation area, an information desk, and a full book store and lounge area.

The book store is stocked by Big Bend Natural History Association and has many great titles and fun things for sale. You can purchase field guides, books on Texas history, rock art, borderland history, maps, star charts, wildlife posters, puzzles, childrens books and much, much more!

The information center has all National Park Passes for sale, and annual or daily boat permits. (See page 3 for info on passport and permit information)

SCUBA DIVING
Amistad’s exceptionally clear water makes it an excellent place for SCUBA diving. A dive cove is located at Diablo East. Depending on lake levels there are several submerged ranch houses to explore. Check with a park ranger or at Amistad Visitor Information Center before you dive, and pick up a copy of “Dive Amistad Safely.” Use your dive flag, know your safe limits and never dive alone. Don’t try SCUBA diving without training.

SWIMMING
Swimming at Amistad is a great way to escape the desert heat. You may swim anywhere in the lake, except in harbors and around docks. Water temperatures range from 64 degrees in winter months to 86 degrees late in summer.

SWIM SAFE!
◆ There are no lifeguards on duty; all swimming is done at your own risk.
◆ Stay within reach of children.
◆ Never swim alone.
◆ Diving from cliffs is extremely dangerous and is not recommended at any time.
◆ If you swim from a boat, make sure the boat is anchored and the engine is turned off.
◆ Never start a boat engine while swimmers are in the water.
◆ It is recommended that small children and non-swimmers wear Coast Guard approved life jackets; some areas in Lake Amistad have sudden drop offs into deeper water.

REMEMBER: Water activities and alcohol do not mix. Many drownings are alcohol-related and can be prevented by not drinking alcoholic beverages before or during water sports.

PICNICKING
Relax and enjoy lake side views at any of Amistad NRA’s eight picnic areas. Each area is equipped with covered picnic tables, grills, and vault toilets. Group picnic shelters are available by reservation. Facilities may be reserved up to 90 days in advance - call 830-775-7494 to check availability.

HUNTING
Unlike many National Park Service areas, Amistad’s enabling legislation allows limited hunting. Archery and small-game shotgun hunting is permitted on about 2,200 acres of federal land in five hunt areas. Texas hunting regulations and seasons along with Amistad’s regulations are used to manage hunting.

Permits are $20 for the season and are available IN PERSON only at the Visitor Information Center with the following documentation:

- Texas Hunting License
- Drivers License
- Hunter Education Card (if born after September 1, 1971) or state deferral

While hunting, hunters must have the permit in their possession, must fill in the Hunter Data Sheet daily, and return the form by March 15. Failure to comply will result in loss of future hunting privileges.

More information and maps are available at the visitor information center and on our web site: www.nps.gov/amis.

COFFEE WITH A RANGER
An informal talk with an NPS ranger or other guest is held every Thursday morning at 10 AM from January through March. The programs are rotated among 3 of Amistad NRA’s campgrounds (Governors Landing, San Pedro and 277 North) and are held at the Campground Host’s site. Coffee talks are open to the public and are free of charge. Bring your favorite mug, a comfortable chair, and lots of questions!

EVENING PROGRAMS
Every third Saturday of the month an evening program will be held in the theater at the Visitor Information Center on 1FWY W 50 W across from the Three Rivers RV Park. The free programs begin at 7:30 pm and cover a variety of subjects presented by experts in their respective fields. Contact the park for more information.

TRAILS & RAILS PROGRAM
The National Park Service has teamed up with Amtrak to provide educational programs onboard the Amtrak passenger train. Park staff and volunteers explain the fascinating natural and cultural history along the rail route through southwest Texas. The volunteers bring alive historical figures such as Judge Roy Bean and events such as the construction of the second transcontinental railroad.

For more information on the program contact: Lisa Evans at (830) 775-2492 x 225 or email: Lisa_Evans@nps.gov.

To check on the train’s arrival status or for reservations, call 1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245).

BIRD WALKS
A guided bird walk is offered every third Saturday of the month from September to May. Participants meet at Amistad NRA Visitor Information Center on Hwy 90 W at 8:00 am, then carpool to the Rio Grande below Amistad Dam. Bring binoculars, birding books, checklists, drinking water, snacks, and wear sturdy shoes. Bird walks are free.

DATES

4 The High Bridge Tribune Winter 2005-2006
in Del Rio’s rich and varied bird life is the city’s Laguna de Plata. A map of this area can be obtained from The Del Rio Chamber of Commerce or the NPS Visitor Information Center. Two water sources at Laguna de Plata are a settling pond for one of the city’s sewage treatment plants, and Cienegas Creek which forms the property’s back boundary.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Wood Duck, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Blue-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Gadwall, American Widgeon, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead and Ruddy Duck are among the species that can be found with regularity on the settling pond. Along the shoreline, watch for Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Spotted Sandpiper and Killdeer.

The trees along the banks of the settling pond are good places to look for Yellow-rumped Warbler (both Myrtle’s and Audubon’s varieties can be found), Orange-crowned Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and Hooded Warbler. The underbrush around the settling pond is also an excellent place to find Olive Sparrow and Long-billed Thrasher, two other Texas specialties.

The fields behind the settling pond are wonderful place to sharpen your skills looking for winter sparrows, which are numerous, but hard to find and even harder to identify once found. Patience will be rewarded, however, with likely looks at Chipping Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Black-throated Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, LeConte’s Sparrow and White-crowned Sparrow. The Del Rio area offers you the opportunity to add some special birds to your “Life” and “North American” lists. Occasionally, the area plays host to birds from Mexico. One recent such example is the Rufous-capped Warbler. This Mexican species was spotted several years ago at Pink Cave Cove on the Rio Grande arm of Lake Amistad. A group of us that had gone there to find it located the bird in a grove of oaks, after several hours of searching.

**Birding Locations Within Amistad NRA**

**Spur 454**
San Pedro Campground - Good for desert birds; very good for migrating and wintering sparrows. Good for butterflies in season. (See Monarch story on front cover).

**Spur 406**
Good for desert birds; in the summer use a spotting scope for Interior least terns flying over Lake Amistad.

**Hunt Area 1**
Great for desert birds. Check with Amistad NRA for hunting status.

**Rio Grande Below Amistad Dam**
Very good for riparian birds. Open by guided tour only. See bird walk schedule (page 4).
Amistad National Recreation Area

Amistad National Recreation Area has developed two major rock art sites for public visitation, Parida Cave and Panther Cave (which is jointly managed with Seminole Canyon State Park and Historic Site). Both sites were developed years ago and are intended to provide boaters with educational opportunities that complement recreational activities. In recent years, however, a prolonged regional drought had lowered lake levels by nearly 60 vertical feet. As a result, there were times when both Parida and Panther Caves were closed to boaters because of dangerous river conditions on the upper part of the reservoir. Fortunately, rising lake levels mean that both sites are again accessible to the public.

Panther Cave is the region's most famous pictograph site. The rear wall of the shelter is literally covered, from floor to ceiling, with hundreds of individual motifs collectively forming an uninterrupted panel more than 80 feet in length. The site's namesake, a giant red painted mountain lion or panther, is almost 9 feet long from nose to the tip of the tail. Visitors to Panther Cave climb a 60-foot steel staircase up to the rockshelter which is protected by a tall metal fence. Adjacent to the protective fence is an elevated 220-foot deck where visitors can go, thus reducing potential damage to vegetation. The steel fence and other major improvements were completed in 1996 by the NPS and were designed in such a way as to maximize photographic vantage points.

Parida Cave offers an amazing array of pictographs and a spectacular view of the Rio Grande. The site is located on the Rio Grande about 15 miles downstream from the NPS Pesos River boat ramp adjacent to the U.S. Highway 87 bridge. Parida Cave, once known as Painted Cave Station, was a welcome stop for travelers riding on the Southern Pacific's transcontinental railroad that began service in the region in 1883. By 1892, the trains adopted a new, shorter route through the region; yet by this time travelers had already painted graffiti on the rock shelter and adjacent to the prehistoric pictographs at the site.

At both sites, unobtrusive interpretive panels provide visitors with information about the pictographs, the prehistoric cultures that once lived in the reservoir basin; and the need to protect and preserve Panther and Parida Caves, as well as the many other sites in the region. With both sites once again accessible by boat, the park hopes to see increased visitation to these unique resources.

The Rock Art Foundation

In addition to the state and national parks in the region, the Rock Art Foundation is a private foundation that offers opportunities for visiting additional sites in the region which are not on public lands. Membership in this organization also provides opportunities for a wide range of educational activities, as well as field trips that can be found nowhere else in the region.

The Rock Art Foundation (RAF) was established by renowned photographer Jim Zingraf. The RAF sponsors numerous activities for its members, including field schools, conservation and research projects, and an annual rendezvous. It manages the Galloway White Shaman Preserve, adjacent to the Pesos River near Seminole Canyon State Park & Historic Site, and also offers regular field trips to some of the region's most famous rock art sites. The RAF recently produced a CD-ROM featuring Lower Pesos Region pictographs. The RAF web site is among the best pictorial presentations on regional rock art available anywhere on the Internet. Visit their web site at www.rockart.org.

The outstanding preservation conditions and concentration of world-class rock art sets the Lower Pesos apart from all other regions of North America.

SHUMLA SCHOOL

Shumla Adventures offers a wide range of programs to people of all ages. Each program offers an opportunity to step away from urban life-styles and vival. Activities are designed to bridge the gap between art and science-

- Music around the campfire at night
- Hiking through canyons and canyoning rivers
- Visiting some of the most spectacular rock art sites in the world
- Learning to once make paint the prehistoric way
- Learning about the plants used for food and medicine in prehistory
- Building an earth oven to cook desert plants using prehistoric techniques
- Creating baskets and producing pottery using local available resources
- Evening discussions on the "work of art" in the past and present
- Evening lectures on the history and archeology of the region
- Music around the campfire at night

Some of the locations visited in these programs require climbing into and out of rock shelters located in the walls of canyons.

If you have questions, feel free to contact Shumla School by mail: PO Box 629, Comstock, TX 78837; or by E-mail: info@shumla.org.

ARCHEOLOGY FAIR

“Texas Archeology Awareness Month” occurs every October, and throughout the state activities are put on by communities and organizations in celebration. The Val Verde County Archeology Fair is no exception. Together, the National Park Service, Whitehead Memorial Museum, and Shumla School hold a spectacular fair, with guest speakers, demonstrations, and hands-on activities for all ages.

For information on attending, or participating in the 2006 Archeology Fair call Lisa Evans at (830) 775-7491 x 223, or email her at: Lisa_Evans@nps.gov. The Val Verde County Archeology Fair is held outdoors (weather permitting) at the Whitehead Memorial Museum, South Main Street, Del Rio, Texas.
Boating on Lake Amistad

Each year, tens of thousands of visitors come to Amistad to enjoy boating, fishing, and other water sports. The National Park Service is committed to ensuring that their visit is safe and enjoyable. You can help protect yourself and other lake users by knowing and obeying state and federal boating laws.

LAKE USE PERMITS

◆ A valid Amistad lake use permit is required for motorized vessels of any length and for non-motorized vessels 14 feet or longer. Lake use permits can be obtained from machines at Diablo East, Rough Canyon, Box Cabyon, and the Pecos. Or can be obtained in person at the NPS Visitor Information Center on Highway 90 West.

◆ Annual and daily lake use permits are available. If you purchase an annual permit from a machine, you must exchange the receipt and obtain a sticker from the Visitor Information Center, Diablo East Marina, or Rough Canyon Marina. Attach the sticker to the port (left) side of your vessel near the registration numbers. Annual permits are valid for one year from the month in which they were purchased.

REQUIRED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs):

◆ All vessels must have one Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III, or V wearable PFD for each person on board. Check the labels inside your PFDs if you are not sure what type they are. PFDs must be in good condition, readily accessible, and the correct size for the people on board.

◆ All children under 13 years of age must wear their PFDs approved Type IV throwable PFD on board.

Audible Warning Device:

◆ All vessels must have a functioning horn, whistle, or other adequate sound-producing device on board.

Required Lights:

◆ All vessels operated between sunset and sunrise, or in periods of low visibility, must display a white light visible from 360 degrees around. In addition, power driven vessels must display red and green navigation lights while underway between sunset and sunrise.

◆ If you plan to launch your boat before dawn, remember to turn on your lights until sunrise.

◆ Respect closures. Some areas of the lake are closed to protect swimmers, divers, and wildlife. These areas are marked with signs and/or orange and white buoys with a crossed diamond.

◆ Do not attach your vessel to buoys or other navigation aids. Doing so is illegal, as it may cause buoys to move, endangering other boaters.

Watch For Hazards:

◆ The lake level is constantly fluctuating, exposing or concealing rocks and shallow areas. If you are unfamiliar with an area, or water levels have changed since you were last there, slow down and keep an eye out for underwater hazards. It is impossible for the National Park Service to mark every rock and obstacle in the water, you are responsible for operating carefully and avoiding accidents.

◆ Be especially careful beyond buoy #28 on the Rio Grande, and near Indian Springs on the Devils River. Shallow areas and rocks have caused accidents in these areas.

◆ Some hazards are marked by orange or orange and white buoys with a diamond symbol.

Check Weather Reports:

◆ Weather conditions can change rapidly on Lake Amistad. Check weather reports before you leave the dock, and tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return. Get off the water as soon as possible if high winds, large waves, or storms develop.

Follow the "Rules Of The Road:"

◆ When meeting another boat head-on, keep to the right.

◆ When crossing the path of other vessels, yield to vessels ahead and to the right of you.

◆ When passing another vessel from behind, stay clear and pass on the safest side.

◆ Remember that non-motorized vessels always have right-of-way over motorized vessels.

Water Skiing and Wakeboarding:

◆ You must have a second person in the boat as an observer. A rear view mirror is not sufficient according to federal law.

◆ Persons being towed must wear a Coast Guard approved PFD.

◆ You may not tow a skier or wakeboarder within 500 feet of a harbor, a swimming beach, or a mooring area, or within 100 feet of a person swimming, fishing, or diving. No one may be towed between sunset and sunrise.

BOATING RULES

Obey Buoyos and Other Markers:

◆ Cut your throttle to idle speed in no-wake zones in harbors. No wake zones were established to protect docked boats from damage. Remember, you are legally responsible for any damage caused by your wake. These areas are marked by orange and white buoys with a circle and the words “flat wake” or “no wake.”

◆ Respect closures. Some areas of the lake are closed to protect swimmers, divers, and wildlife. These areas are marked with signs and/or orange and white buoys with a crossed diamond.

◆ Do not attach your vessel to buoys or other navigation aids. Doing so is illegal, as it may cause buoys to move, endangering other boaters.

GUIDED TOURS

Pecos Jack Tours

Canoe & Kayak

830-276-6885

pecosjack2@yahoo.com

www.pecosjacktours.com

Tours de Tejas Canoe Tours

Jay Johnson Sr. 830-768-1100

host@villadelrio.com

PADDLING

Lake Amistad is a canoeing and kayaking paradise. Amistad NRA has both open space and steeply walled canyons, which makes it a great place for paddling your canoe or kayak.

The park boundary extends 74 miles up the Rio Grande, 25 miles up the Devils River and 14 miles up the Pecos River. Protected coves provide superb fishing and ideal camping spots.

Amistad is an international reservoir—the United States-Mexico border is marked by buoys that follow the historic channel of the Rio Grande.

Amistad NRA does not require a lake use permit for non-motorized craft under 14 ft. in length, but if you plan to paddle onto the Mexican side be sure to have a Mexican boating permit. A Mexican fishing permit is also required if you plan to fish on the Mexican side. You can download some maps and paddling routes from our web page: http://www.nps.gov/amis/paddlingamistad.htm
All of these species are found in abundance on the international waters of Lake Amistad. The biggest portion of Lake Amistad is in US territory, but half the lake on the Rio Grande (western) arm of the lake is in Mexico. Anyone is welcome to fish Mexican waters, but you do need to purchase a Mexican fishing license as well as a Mexican boat permit before you enter their side of the lake.

You can get a current fishing report from the Texas Parks & Wildlife either in the newspaper or on their web site (www.tpwd.state.tx.us). There’s also plenty of information on the lake at: (www.amistadlake.com). You can find current fishing reports as well, and other links with plenty of info.

Bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted): The record largemouth bass caught on Amistad is 15.68 lbs, 28.30 inches. You probably won’t find too many of those, but you will find many in the trophy range throughout the lake. The largest smallmouth caught here was 5.37 lbs, but there is no registered record for a spotted bass. There are so many ways to catch each of these species it’s impossible to go through all of them. For someone just inclined, there are also plenty of Carp and Gar which are often taken by bow fishermen.

Catfish: There are lots of catfish everywhere on the lake, so I don’t know where to start! Cheese baits and just about any other nasty smelling thing will work, especially if you take the time to chum the water with some fermented wheat or corn. Since the hydrilla has spread so prolifically throughout the lake, fishing for catfish is a little more difficult in the shallows, but you can still catch plenty deep. Trott lines are also very popular here with live perch.

Crappie: One of the best eating fish anywhere is the Crappie, but Amistad does not have a large population of these guys. You can find them, but it’s really hit and miss. My suggestion would be to concentrate in the Devils River arm, and work the big trees on both sides of the river channel near Rough Canyon Marina. You can also find some big trees further up the Devils, on the west side. You can’t go wrong using live minnows for bait, but if you know what you’re doing with a very small jig, you can also catch them.

During 2004 and early 2005 the lake has gained over 25 feet of new water, and there are lots of smaller trees which have been flooded. These should also hold some Crappie, but there are so many of them, you’ll just have to be an explorer!

Join Big Bend Natural History Association

Please accept our invitation to join Big Bend Natural History Association

The Association’s goal is to educate the public and increase their understanding and appreciation of the Big Bend Area and what it represents in terms of our historical and natural heritage. You can be an important part of this effort when you become a member.

BBNHA was founded in 1956 to aid educational, historical, and scientific programs for the benefit of Big Bend NP, Amistad NRA, and their visitors.

Past and present projects include:
- Operate book sales outlets in Big Bend National Park and Amistad National Recreation Area.
- Publish trail guides and brochures and assist with the publication of The High Bridge Tribune.
- Sponsor an on-going Seminar program.
- Provide annual grants for research projects and administer grants and gifts received for the park.
- Support the parks’ volunteer and educational outreach programs.

Your benefits as a member:
- A 15% discount on items sold by BBNHA.
- 10% discount on BBNHA’s publications.
- Current Big Bend calendar.
- Discounts at many other association book stores in visitor centers at other national park sites.
- Opportunity to support scientific, educational, and historical programs in Big Bend NP and Amistad NRA.