



# Dallas Regional Group of the Lone Star Chapter

## Annual Bus Trip to Big Bend National Park

Wednesday, November 6 - Monday, November 11, 2013

**Trip Coordinator:** Arthur Kuehne 214-608-3210 cell, 972-635-9774 home  
2713 Marsha Ln arthur@akuehne.com  
Royse City TX 75189-5419

**Introduction:** The Dallas Sierra Club has been running bus trips to Big Bend National Park for almost 40 years. For most of that time, we have scheduled the trip over the Thanksgiving Holiday. A couple of years ago, we decided to move the trip to an earlier day to accommodate everyone who had complained that they could not get away from family obligations at Thanksgiving. This has the added benefit of going when the Park is much less crowded and permits are easier to obtain.

This year's trip will feature five hikes, each of which will give you an outstanding opportunity to explore this amazing part of Texas.



**Area Description:** Big Bend National Park is located in the Trans-Pecos region of 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 7825 feet at Emory Peak in the Chisos Mountains, to a low point of 1680 feet on the Rio Grande at the east end of the park. There are a number of mountain ranges within the Park, but the majority of the land lies between 3000 feet and 4000 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 take in 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 four of this year's trips. The South Rim of the Chisos offers spectacular views of the desert 2000 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 6000 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>.

## How to Sign Up:

1. First, read this entire document, including the trip descriptions and the cautions and restrictions.
2. Print the Trip Participant Form, the Medical Information form and the Sierra Club Release of Liability form at the end of the document. Print each page of these forms on a separate sheet of paper. Do not duplex (print on the back of the paper). Do not staple the forms together.
3. Fill out all of the forms completely. Incomplete forms will not be accepted and will delay your reservation. Be sure to sign where indicated.
4. Make your check or money order payable to Dallas Sierra Club.
5. Mail your completed forms and payment to the trip coordinator (see top of document). You will receive an acknowledgement via phone or email when your information and payment are received.
6. Trip assignments and bus seating assignments are based on the order your completed trip sign-up is received. The earlier you sign up, the more likely it is that you will get to hike on your preferred (not alternate) trip and get the bus seating you prefer.

Receipt of payment and forms does not constitute acceptance on the trip. Both the bus coordinator and individual trip leader will review the submitted sign-up form and medical information, and conduct 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 not deemed suitable for the prospective participant, the trip fee will be refunded in full.

**Cost:** The trip cost is \$235 for signups postmarked on or before October 22, 2013. The cost after October 22, 2013 is \$265. Make check or money order payable to Dallas Sierra Club.

You will need extra cash for breakfast when you arrive in the park (unless you bring your own), dinner in Fort Stockton on the return trip, and for any snacks or souvenirs you may want. Trip 5 will need extra for showers and lunch in Lajitas.

**Cancellation Policy:** Please notify the trip coordinator if you must cancel. There is a \$30 fee for cancellations through October 22, 2013. There are no refunds for cancellations after October 22, 2013. See the Travel Insurance paragraph below.

**Trips Cancelled or Changed by Dallas Sierra Club:** On rare occasions we must cancel or change trips. If this occurs, our responsibility is limited to a refund of any trip fees you have already paid. Dallas Sierra Club is not responsible for airline tickets, other tickets or payments, or any similar fees, penalties or costs that you may incur as the result of any trip cancellations or changes.

**Travel Insurance:** We strongly encourage you to purchase travel insurance to cover: cancellations fees associated with an outing as well as travel and other nonrefundable expenses in the event you need to cancel a trip, medical expenses incurred on a trip, and the cost of possible medical evacuation from a trip. Sierra Club has made arrangements with USI travel Insurance Services for you to purchase a comprehensive travel insurance plan.

Visit [www.travelinsuranceservices.com/sc](http://www.travelinsuranceservices.com/sc) for details. Feel free to contact USI Travel Insurance Services if you have any questions on this policy or its coverage. Dallas Sierra Club is not equipped to provide specific answers to questions about travel insurance. Other travel/trip insurance companies are available.

**California Seller of Travel Law:** Because the Sierra Club is a California based nonprofit corporation and California has a law called the "Seller of Travel" law, we're required to post the following notice: *CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.*

**Departure:** Our chartered sleeper bus departs on Wednesday, November 6, 2013 at 7:00 pm, from the Walmart store parking lot located on the northwest corner of the intersection of LBJ expressway (I-635) and Midway Road. Look for the bus in the Walmart parking lot behind the La-Z-Boy store. Plan on arriving at the bus by 6:30 pm to load and get settled in. The bus will leave promptly at 7:00 pm. 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, be sure to hide all valuables. 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 or bring it with you. We will make a seat-to-bunk conversion stop at a fast food restaurant or truck stop near Abilene at about 10:30 pm.

**Return:** The bus will begin picking up Trip 5 participants on Sunday, November 10 at about 3:00 pm. Participants of Trip 5 can shower and eat lunch at Lajitas. The other trips will be picked up between 4:00 pm and 4:45 pm (see trip descriptions). There will be a dinner meal stop in Fort Stockton. An additional short stop will be made on the way back to

convert the bus to bunks. We should arrive back at the Walmart parking lot between 4:00 am and 6:00 am on Monday, November 11.

**Important:** If you are not an American citizen, be sure to bring appropriate documents proving legal residency, as the bus will go through at least one U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement border patrol checkpoint station.

**Experience and Conditioning Required:** If you have never been backpacking before, this trip is probably not appropriate for you. Participants 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. Please discuss your abilities with the bus leader or one of the trip leaders if you have any question about your experience or physical abilities.

**Transportation:** We ride in a forty-passenger chartered sleeper bus with professional drivers. The bus is equipped with a bathroom.

Seats will be converted by the driver and bus leaders (not passengers) into bunks during a 30-minute rest stop at about 10:30 pm. Quiet hours (including use of music players with ear buds) will be enforced after 10:30 pm. Please respect your fellow passengers need for sleep.

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 the seats 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 sleeping bags, pillows and other bulky items can (and should) be kept under the bus. You will have access to this stuff when we convert the bus into bunks.

**Bus Survival:** The bus will be quite cool at night, so you must have a blanket, fleece sleep sack or light sleeping bag, or you will be very uncomfortable. You will 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 at the trailhead. Bottled water will be provided on the trip out to Big Bend. 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. They can break causing a hazard and mess to either clean up or live with for the duration of the trip.
- No perfume or cologne – some 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.
- Cell phones must be turned off during quiet hours on the bus.
- There are no cell phone charging facilities on the bus. Do not ask the bus driver to plug in your charger.
- 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.

**Weather:** While usually stable this time of year, almost anything could happen. The odds are in favor of 65 to 85 degrees during the day, 30 to 45 degrees at night and no rain. Past trips have experienced temperatures as low as 16 degrees and as high as 90+ degrees, as well as fog, rain, snow, sleet and blistering sun, though not all necessarily on the same trip. You should pack and have easily accessible clothing for the full range of conditions. You can leave what you don't need in the bus, based on the forecast that we get in the park.

**Water:** Water is scarce in the park but should be available at the locations noted in the trip descriptions that follow. Have leak-free containers to carry water in the quantities specified for the trip that you are on. **Do not fill your water containers in Dallas.** They could leak en route and get someone's equipment wet. You can fill your containers at a tap in the Park while the trip leaders get trail permits. On trips utilizing natural water sources, treat water with treatment tablets, filtration or boiling before drinking. Note that there are no guarantees that we will find water everywhere we plan to. It is a good idea to carry more than the minimum, just in case. See the trip descriptions for additional information about water.

**Gear:** Each person is responsible for his or her own equipment and food. The following list includes equipment, which is 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 Band-Aids. It is said that everything in the desert stings, sticks or stinks. Trips 1 and 2 can wear shorts without much fear of cactus spines.

**Equipment:** Tent and ground cloth. (Your leader may require that you share a tent as some camp sites are small and will accommodate fewer tents than usual); backpacking stove with fuel; pot; matches; sleeping bag rated down to 20 degrees; ground pad; backpack with hip belt; water containers and water treatment tablets (or filter); flashlight; compass; whistle, sunscreen; first-aid kit (including Moleskin or Spenco Second Skin for blisters); toilet paper, shovel and Zip Lock bags for used toilet paper; garbage bag; personal items. A note about ground pads: While self-inflating ground pads, such as Therm-a-Rest pads, 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. Bring your repair kit or consider using a foam pad such as a Ridge Rest or a Z-Rest.

**Food:** 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. (Trips 5 only need three lunches.) Avoid meals that require excess water to cook or clean up after.

**Packing and Preparation:** Trip leaders will check to ensure that all trip participants are properly prepared before leaving the trailhead. Leaders reserve the right to leave the unprepared with the bus. Because campsites are assigned both by the number of people and the number of tents they can hold, leaders will strongly encourage (and perhaps insist) that tents be shared, particularly on trip 1, 2 and 3. Be careful with the optional items - the weight adds up quickly and water will occupy a significant portion of your pack's capacity. Remember, water weighs 8 pounds per gallon.

**Big Bend National Park 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:** After a long absence, bears have returned to Big Bend. If you are going on Trips 1, 2, 3, or 4 you will need to take bear precautions. The Park provides metal bear boxes at most campsites. The following are Park Service requirements:

- Only carry food that doesn't have strong aromas. Consider taking foods that require no cooking, as they generate fewer dirty dishes and wastewater.
- Store all food, beverages, trash, toiletries, and dirty dishes inside the food storage box provided at your campsite. Secure the door with the latch. Do not store these items in your tent.
- Prepare your meals away from your sleeping area.
- Keep your campsite clean. Pick up food scraps and keep them 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 these liquids when cooking.
- Remove food scraps from cooking water and place them with your trash in the food storage box. Disperse the 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.
- Proper food storage is strictly enforced.

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

**Maps:** A single sheet topographic map of the park area that includes your trip route will be provided to all participants. 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, Mountain Hideout, The Map Place, Amazon.com, and similar stores.

**Arriving in Big Bend:** Our bus will arrive in Big Bend National Park before dawn on Thursday, November 7. We will stop in an area called the Basin. We should have a bit of time to sleep before the sun starts to rise. As soon as the trip leaders wake you up, you can get ready to hike by putting away your night gear and getting your backpack ready to go. There is a water hydrant near the bus for you to fill your water containers. All trips need to get water at this location. Your trip leader will let you know how much water you need to start out with. The Basin Lodge restaurant opens at 7:00 am and you are encouraged to eat breakfast promptly (be in line when they open). If you do not want to eat at the lodge, you can bring your breakfast and eat at a picnic table. Trip leaders will obtain our hiking permits from the Basin Ranger Station and all of the trips except trip 5 should be on the trail by about 9:00 am. Trip 5 will re-board the bus for the trip to their trailhead in Lajitas, about 1½ hours away.

**After Trip Picture Party:** We will have a pot-luck picture party after the trip. Details will be sent via email.

**TRIP DESCRIPTIONS:** Please read the trip descriptions carefully before making your selection. Contact the trip leader if you have any specific questions.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Trip itineraries are subject to change. The availability of water, changing weather, limited availability of required permits, 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 One: Basin Dayhikes / Backpack**

#### **Rated: Moderate**

For the adventurous hikers who want some backpacking, this trip offers some of the most spectacular scenery in Texas.

Day 1, Thursday: After breakfast at the lodge, backpack about 1 mile to a camp in Juniper Flat or Boulder Meadow (1 mile, 400' ascent). After making camp, dayhike to summit of Emory Peak, tallest mountain in Big Bend for 360 degree views of the Big Bend area (7 miles, 2000' ascent/decent).

Day 2, Friday: Dayhike out and back to the Lost Mine Trail via the Pinnacles Trail and the road. Have breakfast at the lodge and dinner at the lodge on the way back. Return to camp with enough water for two days. Water available at the ranger station. (7 miles, 1500' ascent/decent)

Day 3, Saturday: Long dayhike to the South Rim via the Pinnacles Trail, Boot Spring Trail and Boot Canyon Trail. Have lunch at the Southeast Rim. Alternate Hike – Laguna Meadow via Pinnacles Trail, Colima Trail and return to camp via the Laguna Meadow Trail and Basin Loop Trail. (Various options, up to 12 miles, 2000' ascent/decent).

Day 4, Sunday: On the last day, pack up camp by 7 and have breakfast at the lodge. Head out the Window View Trail by 9 am. Stop at the Window for a view. A short section of this trail is somewhat exposed and can be slightly intimidating if you are afraid of heights. Hike to Oak Creek Spring follow Oak Creek Spring Rd to Castolon Highway where bus will pick up at 4:45 pm (6.5 miles, 1350' descent).

Carry three quarts of water each day, but have containers for an additional four quarts, as the camp will be dry. Water will be available at the ranger station in the Basin, which will be about one to two miles from the base camp. In addition to your backpack, you will need a daypack large enough for a day's worth of warm clothes, rain gear, first aid, water and lunch.

Leaders: Diana Rawlins, [diana.rawlins@att.net](mailto:diana.rawlins@att.net), 972-783-0962, and Mike Rawlins

### **Trip Two: High Chisos Backpack / Day Hike**

#### **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 also have the luxury of a few potential meals at the Lodge Restaurant.

Day 1, Thursday: After breakfast at the lodge, we'll hike up the scenic Laguna Meadows Trail, a long, gradual climb connecting to the Colima Trail. Depending on permit availability, we'll either camp in the group site half way across the Colima Trail or hike about a half mile farther to the Boot Canyon Trail from which we'll go a short distance to Boot Canyon campground and set up camp for the next two nights. (6 1/2 miles, 1,200 ft. ascent).

Day 2, Friday: Today offers day hiking some of the premier trails of Big Bend. We'll hike connecting trails (counter-clockwise loop) to enjoy the spectacular views as the trails wind around the South Rim. From camp we'll hike south on Boot Canyon Trail, continuing a loop using the Southwest, Southeast then Northeast Rim trails, stopping along the

Southeast Rim to enjoy lunch and a few other “pullouts” to relax and enjoy the view. We’ll return to camp on the easy downhill route on Boot Canyon Trail. (7 miles, first mile is gradual uphill to rim, then flat or downhill from there).

Day 3, Saturday: We’ll break camp and hike down Boot Canyon and Pinnacles Trails to set up camp at Juniper Flat camp area, stopping along the way for an optional 2 mile round trip hike to the summit of Emory Peak (elevation 7,832), the tallest mountain in Big Bend. From the peak we have 360 degree views of the Big Bend area. Plan to eat dinner in camp. If weather/energy allow, we may hike a mile to enjoy dinner at the Lodge and then night hike back to camp. (4 miles backpacking plus optional 2 miles to/from peak and optional 2 miles to/from Lodge for dinner.)

Day 4, Sunday: On the last day, pack up early and leave camp by 7am to hike a mile to the Lodge for breakfast. We’ll then head out the Window View Trail by 9 am. Stop at the Window for a view (elevation 4500’). A short section of this trail is somewhat exposed and can be slightly intimidating if you are afraid of heights. Hike to Oak Creek Spring, follow Oak Creek Spring Rd to Castolon Highway where the bus will pick us up at 4:45 pm. (7 miles, 1350’ descent).

Important note about water: We’ll carry at least two liters of water each day. Trip 2 participants must bring containers for and be prepared to carry 6 – 8 liters the first day in the very unlikely event we don’t get the permits we want and need to carry water to a dry campsite. If we don’t get permits for Boot Canyon camp or nearby, we’ll camp at or near Juniper Flat (3 nights) and do the hikes described above as long day hikes, beginning at a lower elevation.

Co-Leaders: Liz Wheelan, Lizwico@aol.com, 214-368-2306 and Lynn Marple, mlmarple@gmail.com, 972-345-5528.

### **Trip Three: 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.

Day 1, 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.

Days 2, 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.

Day 3, Saturday: Backpack on the Dodson trail. We will visit the ruins of the Dodson Ranch; stop at Fresno Creek to rest and take on water and then continue an additional ½ mile and a final 500 foot climb to camp near the junction with the Elephant Tusk trail. Distance: 5.3 miles. Lots of ups and downs; crossing washes but only about 1000 foot elevation gain.

Day 4, 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: Stephen Fleischman, stephen.fleischman@verizon.net, 972-618-3007

### **Trip Four: Outer Mountain Loop / Mule Ears Backpack**

#### **Rated: Strenuous**

This is considered one of the best hikes in the park. You will experience more of the different ecosystems in the park than any other trip we are offering.

Day 1, Thursday: From the Basin trailhead, hike into the high Chisos Mountains via the Pinnacles Trail to Boot Springs. (Depending on the strength of the group, we may have time to hike out to the South Rim, adding about 3 miles to our first day.) From there, hike the Juniper Canyon Trail to our dry campsite near Upper Juniper Springs. Total of 5.8 miles, 1800’ ascent, 1700’ descent.

Day 2, Friday: Continue down the Juniper Canyon Trail to the Dodson Trail and then head west to a wet camp at Fresno Creek. Total of 8.4 miles, 1700’ descent, 900’ ascent.

Day 3, Saturday: Continue west on the Dodson Trail and then head South on the Smokey Creek Trail to a dry camp. Total of 7.8 miles, 700’ ascent, 1700’ descent.



Day 4, Sunday: Hike off trail over rough terrain for a mile or so and then pick up the Mule Ears/Smokey Creek Trail. After a stop at Mule Ears Spring, head west to our pickup point at the Mule Ears Overlook parking lot, where the bus pick-up is at 4:00 pm. Total of 5.5 miles, 300' ascent, 1000' descent.

The total backpacking mileage is between 27 and 31, depending on options. The last part of Day 3 and the first part of Day 4 may be modified to an easier route if needed.

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: Arthur Kuehne, arthur@akuehne.com, 972- 635-9774

### **Trip Five: Mesa De Anguila Backpack / Dayhike**

#### **Rated: Strenuous**

Spend four days on the most remote and isolated part of the Big Bend National Park; Mesa de Anguila is rarely visited by park visitors and offers 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.

Day 1, 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 walk to Upper Tinaja Grande & Wax Camp for base camp for the next two nights. Approximate distance is 10 miles. Quite a few short and steep ascends/descends. Net elevation gain, 800 ft.

Day 2, Friday: We will day hike Southeast to the cliff edge of the mesa and the rim of Santa Elena Canyon (SE). Here we will have one of the most spectacular views in the park, a 1500 feet deep and narrow Santa Elena Canyon, and a great view of the Chisos Mountains to the NE and the desert below. We will continue along the cliff edge of the canyon to the confluence of Santa Elena Canyon with Fern Canyon in Mexico. Then continue along the edge of SE to the hidden Tinaja De la Verga. Return to camp at Tinaja Grande, Approximately 12 miles with few escarpments to climb. Entire day is on cross-country routes.

Day 3, 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 and continue to Canyon Flag, the highest point on the Mesa or climb La Mariposa, somewhat exposed rock scramble. Continue to Tinaja Rana for water refill. Overnight possible at a dry camp, approximate distance 7.5 miles.

Day 4, 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 (4 liters minimum) and lunch.

Note; this trip is a cross country trip for most of its part on rough terrain and in terrain covered by some of the meanest cacti on earth, a pair of full leather sturdy shoes and a pair of leather gloves is highly recommended for this trip.

Maps: USGS 1:24000, Lajitas and Mesa De Anguila (7.5 Minute Series)

Leader: Zeev Saggi 972-960-4411 (work), 214-692-5907 (home), zeev.saggi@hdrinc.com

### **RESTRICTIONS / CAUTIONS:**

**If you are not an American citizen**, be sure to bring appropriate documents proving legal residency, as the bus will go through at least one U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement border patrol checkpoint station.

**Participants should be in good health, with prior experience on backpacking trips of similar length and difficulty.**

If you have a question about your experience or physical ability, feel free to call the individual trip leaders. If you have any doubt about your physical condition, consult your physician before participating on any of these trips. As a rule of thumb, if you can walk around White Rock Lake (9 miles) with a light pack in under three hours in cool weather without being overly taxed, you should be in adequate shape for at least trips 1 and 2.

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

**Leave No Trace:** Low or no impact wilderness ethics are expected of all participants. All trash must be packed out; human wastes must be buried, and used toilet paper packed out (bring zip-lock bags for this purpose). Plan on cooking on a stove; campfires are not allowed in the Park. Pets, radios and firearms are not allowed. No smoking is allowed on this trip, both for safety reasons and in consideration of others

**Medical:** The leaders 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 any participant does have medical training, let the leader know so that they can rely on that expertise 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 while on the trip, and let the leader know where you are keeping it. 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 be carrying 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 these costs. If you have a health condition that could require immediate medical treatment, you should not go on this trip. Each participant must complete and return the attached form with emergency information to the coordinator. This form will be provided to the leader of the trip that you select and may be provided to health care professionals if needed.

The trip leaders are in charge of each trip's itinerary, and reserve the right to change the planned route due to group capabilities, weather or safety concerns. 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.

**Group / Safety:** The group should stay together to minimize the chances 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) to do 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 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, and cannot put others in the group at risk to look for a lost participant. When leaving camp even for a moment, especially at night, be careful to not get disoriented and lose your way back. This could create a life-threatening situation if the weather was bad or the person not dressed for the cold.

The biggest single danger on this trip is falling off of exposed ledges, due to clumsiness, not paying attention to where you are going, or loose and unstable rock. Many trails in the Park are poorly maintained, and the rock found in the park often crumbles easily. Walking with trekking poles (either one or two) can help maintain balance at steep slopes. Do not get too close to cliff edges, such as at the South Rim, on Emory Peak, or at the Windows Overlook. Some of the trips involve some non-technical (no rope protection) rock scrambling. If you are not comfortable being in exposed high locations, such as near the edge of a cliff, or are not coordinated enough to jump from rock to rock on a steep slope of a mountain, let the leader know of your limitations. Technical climbing is not allowed on these trips. Similarly, free climbing on rock should be limited to situations where you will not be seriously injured if you lose a hand or foothold and fall. Only you know your own abilities and limitations – don't take chances.

If the weather is hot, heat exhaustion or heat stroke is a risk. Drink plenty of fluids. Sunburn is also 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 if it is sunny. Watch where you walk and what you brush against. Almost all of the plants have spines or thorns.

There are mountain lions in the area, and if you are in the Chisos Mountains, you may have some contact with black (not grizzly) bears. All of the camps in the Chisos Mountains have bear-proof containers—use them. Don't keep food in your tent or pack while in camp, even outside the Chisos Mountains, unless you want holes chewed in them, or worse. 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 laterally away from both while doing all of the above. If the weather is warm, there could be snakes along the trail or in camp. This includes rattlesnakes, so watch where you step.

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.



## Preference and Experience Form Big Bend National Park Bus Trip November 6 - November 11, 2013

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): \_\_\_\_\_

**SIERRA CLUB MEMBER:** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**AMOUNT ENCLOSED:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (payable to **Dallas Sierra Club**)

### TRIP PREFERENCE

Trip choice (indicate 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5): \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> choice: \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> choice: \_\_\_\_\_

**BUS PREFERENCES:** We give seating priority to trip leaders and then try to honor preference in the order complete registrations are received. We try to hold upper bunks for people six feet and taller, but this is not always possible for later registrants.

Area of bus:	<input type="checkbox"/> Front	<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Back	<input type="checkbox"/> No preference
Seat:	<input type="checkbox"/> Aisle	<input type="checkbox"/> Window	<input type="checkbox"/> No preference	
Bunk:	<input type="checkbox"/> Upper	<input type="checkbox"/> Lower	<input type="checkbox"/> No preference	

Sit and bunk together with (if you have a preference): \_\_\_\_\_

We ordinarily seat men with men and women with women unless both people request sitting and bunking with a specified person. If we may seat you with an unspecified person of the opposite sex, please check here: ☐

**HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS TRIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

### BACKPACKING EXPERIENCE:

Have you ever backpacked before? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you hiked at high altitudes before? If yes, how high \_\_\_\_\_

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

If YES, to where and when, if NO, describe your backpacking experience: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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, 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Outing: Big Bend National Park Bus Trip	Date(s): November 6- November 11, 2013
Leader: Arthur Kuehne	Additional Leaders: Diana Rawlins, Mike Rawlins, Liz Wheelan, Lynn Marple, Stephen Fleischman, 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.

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

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# SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

## Dallas Sierra Club Medical Form

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:** 2013 Big Bend Bus Trip **Trip Dates:** November 6-11, 2013

**Signature (required):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_