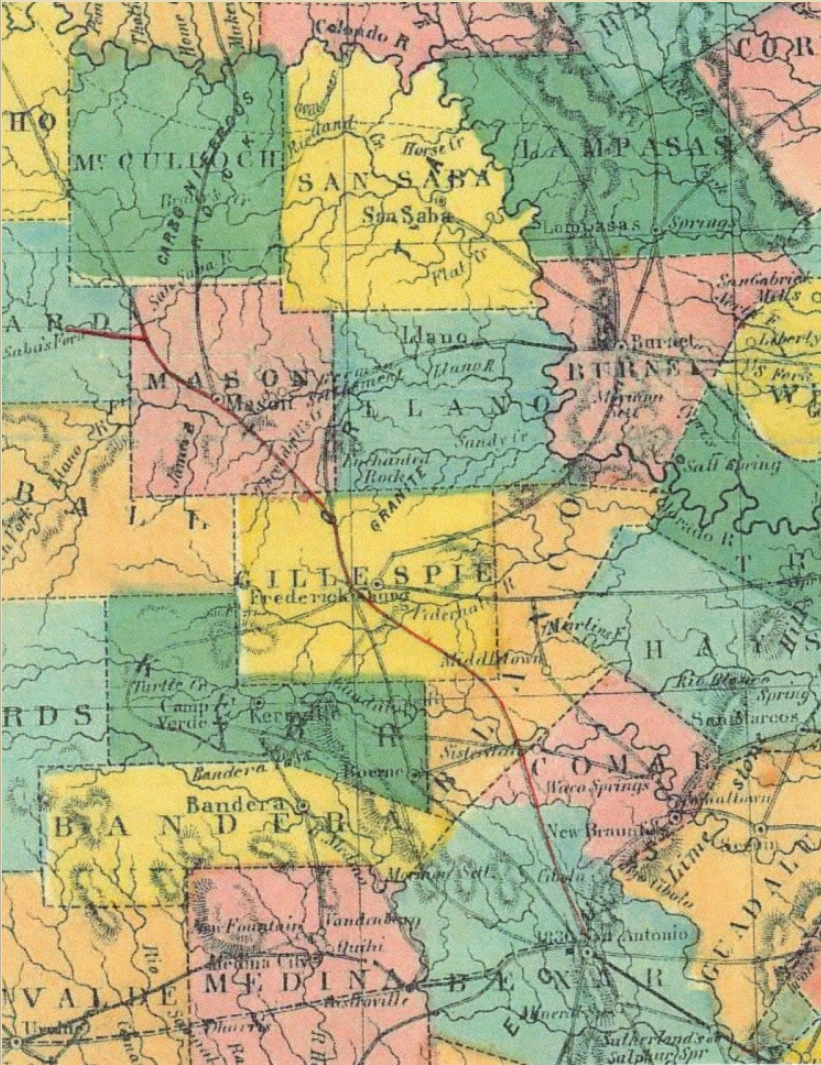


Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

A Tale of a Trail - The Pinta Trail



Dr. Ferdinand Roemer, who chronicled his 1845 – 1847 observations in the book, [Roemer's Texas](#), introduces us to the Pinta Trail: **From this point it takes a straight northwesterly course, following an old Indian trail, called the Pinta Trail, selected with Indian sagacity, which is the only convenient passage from the undulating prairies of western Texas to the interior of the rocky tableland, cut up by deep ravines and fissured river valleys.** Welcome back! Last edition we kicked off the topic of ancient trails by introducing the Camino Real (Old San Antonio Road) a portion of which channeled its way through Comal County from San Antonio on its way to northeast Texas. Not to be outdone, neighboring Kendall County lays claim to two segments of old Native-American pathways both of which also had its southern terminus anchored in San Antonio: the Camino Viejo and the Camino Pinta. Our focus today is on the Pinta Trail and the role it played in the development of the Hill Country by the hallmark journey it supported.

As a Native-American pathway the Pinta Trail had no formal date of origin ...it serviced the indigenous Native-Americans, Spanish, Mexican and representatives of the Republic of Texas as well as Texas and U. S. citizens and governments. Defined from its Spanish days where its southern anchors were the missions of San Antonio and

the northern terminus, Santa Cruz de San Saba, a failed mission near Menard on the San Saba River (there was also a nearby presidio), the Camino Pinta is estimated to be approximately 180 miles in length. On this excerpted portion of an 1860 map (above) the trail is enhanced in red. Kendall County is absent on this map since Kendall was organized in 1862. Today the route of the old Pinta Trail crosses five Texas counties - Bexar, Kendall, Gillespie, Mason and Menard. With Kendall County as the focus on this slightly more contemporary 1870 map excerpt (right), the portion of the Pinta Trail that snakes approximately 30 miles thru Kendall County has been enhanced. Both maps, Richardson's New Map of the State of Texas 1860 and Richardson's New Map of the State of Texas 1870, are courtesy of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.



While illustrated on these maps, a survey of earlier maps, including Mexican maps dating from the late 1820s on, a fairly predictable pattern emerges in our region: San Antonio is illustrated as a focal point with roads connecting the Rio Grande settlements, and without fail the maps also line out the route of the Camino Real from San Antonio to northeast Texas. However, not one map indicated the route of the Pinta Trail. The trend of omitting an illustration of the Pinta Trail continued with a sampling of Republic of Texas (1836 – 1845) maps. This is really not surprising as there was nowhere to go; there were no settlements in the Hill Country. There were no organized communities and the lack of pioneering developments had everything to do with the fact that there were occasional inhabitants. On both Mexican and Republic of Texas maps, cartographers, took the time to describe the residents who seasonally populated the lands north of the Cibolo Creek and Guadalupe & Pedernales Rivers: **Indios Comanches, Comanche Indians, Range of Comanches, Cumanches, and Comanche Chief Town.**

The days of leaving the Pinta Trail off maps changed shortly after Texas transitioned to statehood in late 1845. German immigration put it on the map. The Society for the Protection of German Immigrants (Adelsverein) brought thousands of German immigrants onto Texas shores with the promise of land and support. Their intended settlement was the Fisher-Miller grant which was located on the Llano and San Saba Rivers. However, again the concern for extensive Native-American presence on this land caused the Verein to scramble for a last minute alternative; in 1845 New Braunfels was founded. When more German immigrants continued to pour into Texas, additional land was secured. Their next settlement was on the Pedernales River; it was approximately 69 miles northwest as the crow flies from New Braunfels to Fredericksburg. The Adelsverein, however, did not plan for a direct route to connect the two settlements: they utilized a longer, circuitous route because it naturally presented fewer hazards to their ox-carts (estimated at 90 to 100 miles – outlined on the 1850 Hermann Wilke map left).

Carrying the German immigrants' possessions and means of settlement, the pioneering wagon train first traveled the old Camino Real (Old San Antonio Road) south toward San Antonio. The historical path was then channeled across today's northern Bexar County and stitched into the Pinta Trail, serving, as Dr. Roemer graphically described in today's opening paragraph, as the final, northwestern leg. The outcome of this routing decision: most preparatory expeditions, the actual migration to settle in 1846, and subsequent trips to resupply, replenish, and restock the Fredericksburg colony, rumbled along the Pinta Trail. While the



Pinta Trail served as the final leg of this historic journey to settle Fredericksburg, of greater significance was the establishment of a new wagon-road into the western edge of the Hill Country and beyond. The success of finding a direct passage with minimal obstructions and reliable water sources was an important factor in the development of Kendall County, the Hill Country, Texas and the west.

There are more stories to be told!

March Guadalupe River State Park Activities

by Craig Hensley

Bats of Texas

Saturday, March 1, 2014

7-8 p.m.

Join Guadalupe River State Park's Ranger for a presentation on the natural history of Texas bats. This PowerPoint presentation will also review the bats likely to be found in the Hill Country. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Bird in the Hand

Saturday, March 8, 2014

9 a.m.-Noon

Join Guadalupe River State Park's Ranger and bird banding crew for a morning of up close, beak-to-nose looks at the songbirds of the park. From cardinals to chickadees, you'll see and learn about local songbirds as well as what bird banding teaches us, and how you can help. This program will be held at the Amphitheatre at the Discovery Center and is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Stories in the Stars

Saturday, March 8, 2014

7-9 p.m.

Join our Park Ranger and members from the San Antonio Astronomical Society for a fun-filled look at the night sky. We'll check out seasonal constellations and learn about the stories of heroes, villains and princesses that adorn the night sky. We'll then head out to look at the moon and other celestial wonders through our telescopes. This program will begin at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center inside the park. This program is free with a TPWD Park Pass or after paying the \$7 entrance fee (children ages 12 and under are free).

Spring Break at the Park: Fishing 101

Monday, March 10, 2014

9-11 a.m.

Get your Spring Break off to a great start at Guadalupe River State Park for an introduction to fishing. We'll provide the rods and reels as well as the bait as we go in search of sunfish, bass and catfish. Your child will learn the basics of casting, setting the hook and how to properly release a fish. We do have a limited number of rods and reels, so please email Park Ranger Craig Hensley at craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov to reserve a spot for your child, or call 830.438.7653. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Spring Break at the Park: Geocaching 101

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

9-11 a.m.

Join Guadalupe River State Park to learn the basics of geocaching during Spring Break at the Park. You'll learn to use a GPS unit, and test your skills on the Park's practice course. You'll meet at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Spring Break at the Park: Our Feathered Friends

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

9 – 11 a.m.

We're checking out our feathered friends at Guadalupe River State Park and you and your children are invited! We'll take a look at birds through feathers, skulls and bones, go on a bird walk with real binoculars and end the morning by banding a live bird or two. This program is free with a TPWD Park Pass or after paying the \$7 entrance fee (children ages 12 and under are free).

Spring Break at the Park: Stories in the Stars

Thursday, March 13, 2014

7:30-9:30 p.m.

Head out to Guadalupe River State Park for a Spring Break in the Park night of stargazing fun. We'll check out seasonal constellations and learn about the stories of heroes, villains and princesses that adorn the night sky. We'll then head out to look at the moon, Jupiter and other celestial wonders through our telescopes. This program will begin at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center inside the park. This program is free with a TPWD Park Pass or after paying the \$7 entrance fee (children ages 12 and under are free).

Spring Break at the Park: Mammal Mania

Friday, March 14, 2014

2-3:30 p.m.

If your child likes bats, raccoons, deer and other hairy critters, then join Guadalupe River State Park for a Spring Break afternoon of mammal mania. We'll discover just what makes a mammal a mammal and take a look at skulls, skins and other cool stuff. We end with a walk along our trails to search for tracks, scat and other signs of their presence. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Fishing 101

Saturday, March 15, 2014

9-11 a.m.

If you are looking for a lifetime gift for your child, consider joining the staff and volunteers at Guadalupe River State Park for an introduction to fishing. We'll provide the rods and reels as well as the bait as we go in search of sunfish, bass and catfish. Your child will learn the basics of casting, setting the hook and how to properly release a fish. We do have a limited number of rods and reels, so please email Park Ranger Craig Hensley at craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov to reserve a spot for your child, or call 830.438.7653. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Prowlin' for Owls

Saturday, March 15, 2014

7-8:30 p.m.

We're heading out for a hootin' good time as we call and listen for owls that inhabit Guadalupe River State Park. Join the Park Ranger to learn about owls and their amazing adaptations as well as who's whooooo among the owls of Texas. This program will be held at the Amphitheatre at the Discovery Center and is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Geocaching 101

Saturday, March 22, 2014

10-11:30 a.m. or 2-3:30 p.m.

Join Guadalupe River State Park for to learn the basics of Geocaching. You'll learn to use a GPS unit, and test your skills on the Park's practice course. Please call 830.438.7653 to register for either the morning or afternoon program. You'll meet at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Slitherin' Snakes Alive!

Saturday, March 22, 2014

7:30-8:30 p.m.

They are slimy and sting and chase you and...well, maybe not! Snakes are fascinating creatures with wonderful adaptations and life histories – and Texas has a LOT of them! Join Guadalupe River's Park Ranger for a PowerPoint presentation about our Texas snakes. You'll learn how they survive, their value to the natural world and which ones live in the park. You'll even meet a live one up close and personal. Meet at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center for this presentation. This program is free with a Park Pass or \$7 daily entry fee (children 12 and under are free).

Amazing Adaptations

Saturday, March 29, 2014

10-11:30 a.m.

From hard shells to the ability to hide in plain sight, animals (and plants) have a wide variety of adaptations that help them survive. Join the Park Ranger at Guadalupe River State Park for a look at the amazing adaptations of our local plant and animal life followed by a nature walk to discover firsthand how they do it. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Who Goes There?

Saturday, March 29, 2014

7:30-9 p.m.

Join Guadalupe River State Park's Ranger Craig Hensley for a walk in search of signs of wildlife along the Park's trails after the sun goes down. From hooting owls to spider eyes to bats overhead, we'll put on our detective hats to see who's out and about. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Look for April and May park activities on the Park's website.

2014 Butterfly Surveys at Guadalupe River State Park

by Craig Hensley

The following dates have been advertised to conduct by-monthly surveys of the park for butterflies between February and May 2014 at Guadalupe River State Park. The surveys last between three and four hours and involve the use of volunteers, including Master Naturalists.

No experience is required to participate as you'll learn identification from direct encounters. A pair of close-focus binoculars and a butterfly guide is encouraged (the park has binoculars for loan).

Please bring water and lunch for those surveys that go through the lunch hour.

To sign up to participate, please email Craig Hensley at craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov.

Thursdays, February 13 & 27, 1 - 4 p.m.

Thursdays, March 13 & 27, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. (bring lunch)

Wednesday, April 9 & Thursday, April 24, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. (bring lunch)

Thursdays, May 8 & 29, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. (bring lunch)

Golden-cheeked Warbler Survey Dates 2014

by Craig Hensley

Bauer Unit (GRSP) & Honey Creek State Natural Area

The following is what is planned for Golden-cheeked Warbler surveys for Spring 2014 at Guadalupe River State Park and Honey Creek State Natural Area. The goal is to conduct five surveys at each site. A training event for the surveys will take place Thursday, March 6 from 10 a.m. to Noon at the Discovery Center at the Park.

If you are interested in participating, please notify Craig Hensley at craig.hensley@twpd.texas.gov.

Thursday, March 6, 10 a.m. - Noon: I will be conducting a session for volunteers and interested staff

Survey Dates:

Sunday, March 16, 7:30-11 a.m. – Bauer Unit

Wednesday, March 19, 7:30-11 a.m. – Bauer Unit

Sunday, March 23, 7:30-11 a.m. – Honey Creek SNA

Friday, March 28, 7:30-11 a.m. – Honey Creek SNA

Sunday, March 30, 7-11 a.m. – Honey Creek SNA

Sunday, April 6, 7-11 a.m. – Bauer Unit

Friday, April 11, 7-11 a.m. – Bauer Unit

Sunday, April 13, 7-11 a.m. – Bauer Unit

Friday, April 18, 7-11 a.m. – Honey Creek State Natural Area

Sunday, April 20, 7-11 a.m. – Honey Creek State Natural Area

Sunday, April 27 – Rain Out Date.

School Programs Upcoming at Guadalupe River State Park

by Craig Hensley

The Park is pleased to have a number of schools coming to the park for programs this spring. Below are the dates and schools. We are looking for people interested in helping with these programs. Should you be interested, please contact Park Ranger Craig Hensley at craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov by March 5.

Tuesday, April 8: Kendall Elementary School – 2nd grade

Thursday, April 10th: Cibolo Creek Elementary School – 2nd grade

Tuesday, April 15th: Bill Brown Elementary – 5th grade

Wednesday, April 30th: Fabra Elementary School – 2nd grade

Friday, May 2: Currington Elementary School – 2nd grade

Tuesday, May 6th: San Antonio Christian School – 7th grade

Wednesday, May 14th: San Antonio Christian School – 6th grade

Thursday, May 15th: Woodbridge/Cambridge Elementary – Bird in the Hand demos

Friday, May 16th: Fair Oaks Ranch Elementary – 2nd grade

Flying Wild Workshop

by Craig Hensley



Flying WILD Workshop



Are you a classroom teacher or environmental educator?

Do you work or volunteer for a local nature or conservation organization or group?

Do you facilitate other environmental education programs?

Then the Flying WILD Program is for YOU!

Flying WILD makes it easy to educate students about **conservation** using **birds** as the vehicle.

Help **reconnect kids with nature** and **build science skills**.

Educator Training: Friday March 21, 2014, 9:00am–4pm

Guadalupe River State Park, Spring Branch, Texas

Fee: \$25 (includes Educator's Manual)

To Register for this Workshop

Contact: Craig Hensley

For more information, contact Craig Hensley: craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov

- **Flying WILD** provides **interdisciplinary activities** and **environmental education** for educators to help students excel academically with a program that engages students in real inquiry while meeting national science standards.
- **Flying WILD** materials provide interactive, interdisciplinary, standards based activities to help students understand the importance of migratory birds and their conservation.
- Educators learn how to conduct **WILD** lessons and participate in hands on activities from the activity guide, which teaches basic biology, identification, ecology, bird conservation, and service learning activities.
- **Formal educators receive 6 CEU credits;**
Master Naturalists are eligible for 6 AT hour credits.

Flying WILD is presented in conjunction with the
Council for Environmental Education

and the Cibolo Nature Center,
Flying WILD City Partner for San Antonio





Park Happenings

by Craig Hensley

This spring, and throughout the next 12 months, will see upgrades coming to the park. The largest is going to involve a major project that will see the 30-year old water and electric lines being replaced throughout much of the park.

Secondly, we have been working on a new set of visitor orientation panels that we hope will be in place by the end of August. These are sorely needed and will be a great improvement to what is currently available.

In terms of land management, the Park has seen dramatic landscape adjustments in the past few months. A project to eliminate Ashe juniper trees in our uplands continues at Honey Creek. This project has been completed in the park and burning of the slash will occur sometime in the next year or so.

These projects, along with our annual Golden-cheeked Warbler surveys, bird banding, bird and butterfly surveys, and public hunts work hand-in-hand with the land management efforts to help us manage the Park and Honey Creek to enhance diversity and restore habitat.

We hope you'll make plans to visit YOUR Texas State Park this spring and summer to enjoy a day at the river, participate in a weekend program, camp, hike, fish, or just find a shady spot under which to read a book or relax.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

2014 Dues

by J.W. Pieper

2014 Membership Dues Are Now Payable

It is a time of renewal, and if you have not renewed your Friends of GRSP/Honey Creek membership for 2014 it is time to do so. As you know, this newsletter keeps you current with the activities at the Park, but the costs of sending out the newsletter are continuing to increase.

As a reminder, we are a 501 (c) 3 organization which means that contributions to the Friends organization are tax deductible. Just use the application on the inside back cover of this newsletter and mail your check to the official address for the Friends, 3350 Park Road 31, Spring Branch, Texas 78070 or drop it off at Park Headquarters on your next visit.

The Board of Directors has authorized the cancellation of subscription privileges to the Quarterly Newsletter in February for all members who are in arrears.

Friends of Guadalupe River / Honey Creek, Inc. Membership

(Membership Renewal date is January 1st)

Name(s): _____ Date _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Email _____ Phone: _____

Membership Type: _____ New Member _____ Renewal _____ Change of Address

Level of Membership: _____ \$5 Education or Youth Organization _____ \$50 Sustaining Member
_____ \$5 Student (under 18) _____ \$100 Contributing Member
_____ \$10 Individual (over 18) _____ \$500 Corporate Partner
_____ \$15 Family _____ \$1000 Life Membership

I would like to help the Friends by volunteering for:

- Interpretive hikes, Outdoor Ed. Programs, Trail Maintenance, Historical Drama, Evening Programs, South Island Beautification, Trail Ride Event, Fundraising, Other

Send checks payable to "Friends of GR/HC, Inc. Mail to: 3350 Park Road 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070

Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization. All donations are tax deductible.

**Friends of Guadalupe River
and Honey Creek, Inc.**

3350 Park Road 31
Spring Branch, Texas 78070

We're on the web!
www.honeycreekfriends.org

**The Friends of Guadalupe River and
Honey Creek, Inc. is a
non-profit organization working with
Guadalupe River State Park and
Honey Creek State Natural Area.**

**The "Friends" meet monthly at the Park.
Please join us on the first
Thursday at 6:30 pm.
And bring a friend!**