

# Chihuahuan Desert Gardens

Chihuahuan Desert Gardens  
Wiggins Road and University Avenue,  
UTEP Campus  
(915) 747-5565  
[www.museum.utep.edu](http://www.museum.utep.edu)

# 1

The Chihuahuan Desert Gardens on Centennial Museum grounds display the plants of the Chihuahuan Desert and adjacent regions in the United States and Mexico. They contain over 625 different species of plants, one of the largest collections of Chihuahuan Desert flora in the world. Self-guided tour brochures in English and Spanish, and current lists of plants found in the Gardens, are available from the reception desk or from the website.



# Chihuahuan Desert Gardens and Nature Trails

Chihuahuan Desert Gardens  
and Nature Trails  
4301 Transmountain Road  
(915) 755-4332  
[www.elpasotexas.gov/arch\\_museum](http://www.elpasotexas.gov/arch_museum)

# 2

A mile-long nature trail with signage on the 15.5 acres of the El Paso Archaeology Museum grounds offers examples of more than 200 native plants, a gazebo for picnics, and extramural exhibits. Along the trail are unparalleled views of the Franklin Mountains, the Hueco Bolson that stretches from the Franklins east to the Hueco Mountains, and on clear days, Mt. Sierra Blanca. Trail exhibits include a tepee ring and lodge pole structure, an Apache brush hut, a stone-lined agave roasting pit, and a replica of the foundations of a three-room prehistoric pueblo. The museum plants an Indian garden of native corn, beans, squash and amaranth each spring and harvests the plants in October. Snakes and other reptiles, rabbits, insects, and birds are often observed on the museum grounds.

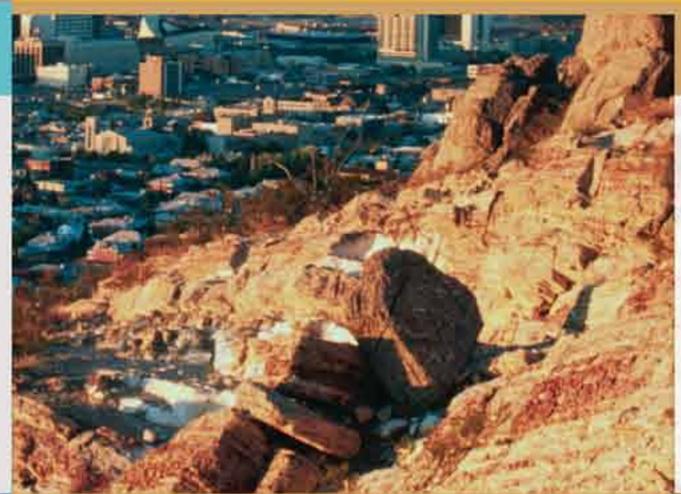


# El Paso Zoo

El Paso Zoo  
4001 East Paisano Drive  
(915) 521-1850  
[www.elpasozoo.org](http://www.elpasozoo.org)

# 3

The 35-acre El Paso Zoo serves as a regional center for family fun, education and conservation efforts for wildlife and habitats. Currently the Zoo is home to over 220 species of animals, including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates from around the world in several habitat exhibits: the South American Pavillion, Americas Aviary, Cisneros Paraje, Birds of Prey, Forest Atrium, Asia Grasslands, Asian Endangered Species Elephant Complex and the new Africa exhibit. The Zoo offers food and beverage at the Grasslands Café.



# Scenic Drive

Scenic Drive  
Between Rim Road and  
Richmond Avenue  
(915) 534-0600

# 4

Scenic drive offers a picture perfect view of El Paso and Mexico at an altitude of 4,222 feet above sea level. The winding 2.2 mile road ascends the slopes of the Franklin Mountain, the southernmost tip of the Rockies, for a spectacular view of two countries, two states and two cities. Telescopes and interpretive markers describing the major points of interest are available at the viewing area.



# Franklin Mountains State Park

Franklin Mountains State Park  
Visitor Center: 1331 McKelligon Canyon Road,  
Park entrances on Transmountain Road and  
McKelligon Canyon Road, (915) 566-6441  
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/franklin/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/franklin/)

# 5

Towering above the city of El Paso is the Franklin Mountains State Park, the nation's largest state park in an urban setting. Here you can hike rugged terrain in 37 square miles of desert wilderness, scrub vegetation and open space, with 125 miles of multi-use trails that are especially popular with mountain bikers. Camping and picnicking are also available.

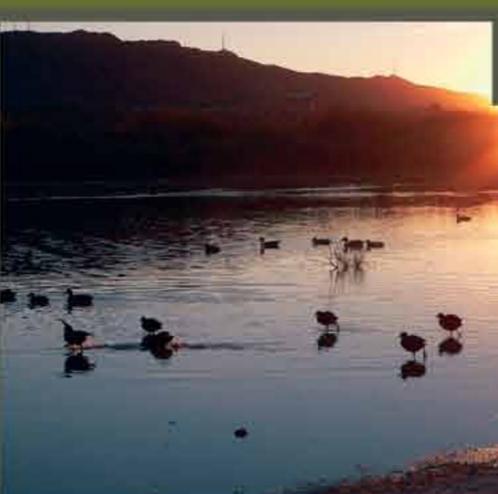


# Hueco Tanks State Historic Site

Hueco Tanks State Historic Site  
6900 Hueco Tanks Road #1  
(915) 857-1135  
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/hueco\\_tanks/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/hueco_tanks/)

# 6

World renowned for rock climbing, Hueco Tanks State Historic Site is also known for its many American Indian rock paintings and unique geology. Pictograph tours are offered, as well as hiking, picnicking, climbing and camping opportunities. To preserve its priceless historical treasures, the Park admits limited numbers of visitors. Please call in advance to arrange reservations.

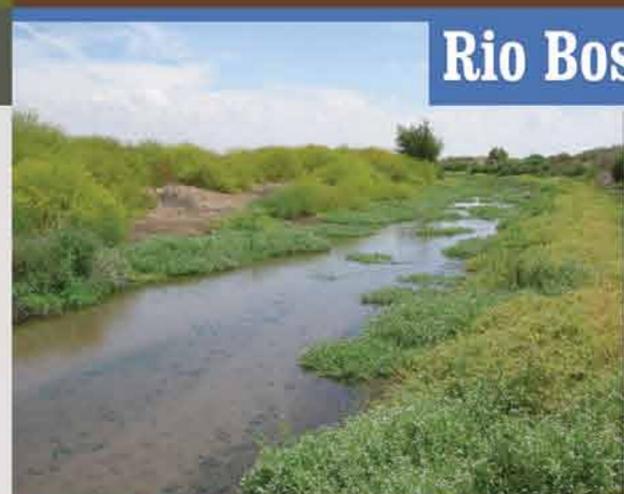


# Keystone Heritage Park

Keystone Heritage Park  
4200 Doniphan Drive, (915) 584-0563  
[www.keystoneheritagepark.org](http://www.keystoneheritagepark.org)

# 7

Keystone Heritage Park comprises an Archaic period archaeological site, wetlands, and a desert botanical garden. The 4,500-year-old site is one of the oldest villages in the United States. The wetlands are home to many birds, and over 200 species have been spotted there on their seasonal migrations. The botanical garden features a variety of native plants, and includes a pavilion and a replica of an Archaic period brush hut. The newest component, the Chihuahuan Desert Experience, is a work in progress that will feature a chance for visitors to stroll the 900-mile length of desert over a 17-acre recreation of the indigenous plant life.



# Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Rio Bosque Wetlands Park  
Visitor Center: Pan American Drive  
& Riverside Canal  
(915) 747-8663  
<http://research.utep.edu/Default.aspx?PageContentID=888&tabid=18875>

# 8

Rio Bosque is a 372-acre city park, managed by the Center for Environmental Resource Management of the University of Texas at El Paso, which began restoration efforts at the park in 1998. In the fall and winter, water flows through the park along the route of the river before it was confined within levees in the 1930s. Many animals and birds have returned to the area as the restoration proceeds, and over 200 species of birds have been sighted.



# River Park Trail

Rio Grande Heritage Trail  
Valley Creek Park  
Gomez Rd., West El Paso  
(915)-581-7099  
[www.epcounty.com/history/](http://www.epcounty.com/history/)

# 9

The River Park Trail is a paved 10 mile stretch that parallels the Rio Grande from Country Club Road in El Paso, TX to the New Mexico state line in Anthony, TX. Whether you walk, jog, or ride a bike the trail provides panoramic views of the Franklin Mountains to the east, Mount Cristo Rey to the south and the mesas of New Mexico on the western horizon. Historical signage denoting the colorful history of El Paso dots the trail.



# Wyler Aerial Tramway at Franklin Mountains State Park

Wyler Aerial Tramway at  
Franklin Mountains State Park  
1700 McKinley Ave., (915) 566-6622  
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/wyler\\_aerial\\_tram/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/wyler_aerial_tram/)

# 10

The Wyler Aerial Tramway at Franklin Mountains State Park features an aerial cable car situated on nearly 200 acres on the east side of the rugged Franklin Mountains. Swiss-made gondolas travel on a 2,600 ft. long, 1-3/8 in. diameter steel cable. The 4-minute ride soars above a canyon 240 ft. deep. From Ranger Peak, 5,632 ft. above sea level, visitors can enjoy a view of 7,000 square miles, encompassing three states and two nations. There are accessible ramps and paved grounds leading into an observation deck with pay-per-view high power telescopes to enhance the experience. Challenging hikes off the deck onto ridge-top trails are available to experienced hikers.



# El Paso Municipal Rose Garden

El Paso Municipal Rose Garden  
1702 North Copia Street (at Aurora)  
(915)-532-7318  
[http://www.elpasotexas.gov/community/\\_archive/072806/quality7.asp](http://www.elpasotexas.gov/community/_archive/072806/quality7.asp)

# 11

The All-American Rose Selection (AARS) public garden is one of over 100 certified gardens within the United States. There are over 1900 rosebushes, with 500 varieties. The wrought-iron fenced garden has wide walkways with handicap accessibility, raised beds, a waterfall, and trees and shrubs. Several new rose varieties are planted each year, and after two years the highest-rated are named and receive the AARS symbol. The annual rose show is held every year. Please contact the association for exact dates and times.



# Pat O'Rourke Memorial Trail

Pat O'Rourke Memorial Trail  
Northwest El Paso on the corner of Resler Drive and Helen of Troy Drive, (915)-541-4331

# 12

This 4.4 mile trail (round trip) beautifies a thoroughfare with native landscaping and an astonishing view of the Franklin Mountains. Located on El Paso's Westside of town, the trail is a popular place for walking, running, and recreational cycling. This quintessential trail offers signage, parking and fun for the whole family!



# McKelligon Canyon

McKelligon Canyon  
1331 McKelligon Canyon Drive  
El Paso, Texas 79930  
(915) 566-6441  
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

# 13

Nestled on the south eastern side of the Franklin Mountains and surrounded by desert canyon walls, McKelligon Canyon is a popular destination known for its rock climbing, hiking, running, walking and biking. Visitors have a variety of rock climbing routes to choose from and the symmetric terrain is filled with crevices and cracks. All hiking trails including the Ron Coleman Trail begin at the end of McKelligon Canyon and are open year round. Please note, McKelligon Canyon is part of the Franklin Mountains State Park and therefore is subject to fees and restrictions from the Texas parks and Wildlife Department.



# Ascarate Park

Ascarate Park  
6900 Delta Avenue  
El Paso, Texas 79905  
Phone (915) 772-5605  
<http://www.co.el-paso.tx.us/>

# 14

Encompassing 448 acres, Ascarate Park is the largest public-use recreational park in El Paso County. Occupying 18 acres, Ascarate Lake allows visitors to take in the sights via canoe and pedal boat rentals. The park allows for a variety of recreational activities including picnicking, playgrounds, an 18-hole golf course and more.



# Annual Outdoor Events

**Franklin Mountains Poppies Celebration** (March)  
Nature walks and talks, educational exhibits and more.

**El Paso Marathon** (March)  
USATF certified marathon course staged in historic downtown.

**Featherfest** (April)  
Bird watching, plant discussions, presentations and displays by numerous naturalists at Keystone Heritage Park.

**FloraFest** (April)  
Centennial Museum's annual native plant sale.

**Alfresco Fridays** (April-September)  
Outdoor concert series staged in downtown El Paso.

**Jazz on the Rocks** (May-September)  
Enjoy the jazz concert series at McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre, nestled in the picturesque McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre.

**Viva El Paso** (June-August)  
A musical drama depicting El Paso's history and culture staged in the picturesque McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre.

**FrogFest** (July)  
Nationwide celebration of frogs hosted by the El Paso Zoo.

**BugFest** (August)  
Get up close and personal with the El Paso Zoo's most popular bugs.

**Movies in the Canyon** (August-September)  
Your favorite films and theatre snacks under a star lit sky.

**Chihuahuan Desert Fiesta** (September)  
Highlighting the animals and plants of the Northern Chihuahuan Desert.

**Elephant Festival** (September)  
The El Paso Zoo celebrates the city's favorite pachyderms Savannah and Juno in a celebration of elephants worldwide.

**Eagle in the Sun Triathlon** (September)  
USAT sanctioned event held on the historic Mission Trail and Tigua Indian reservation.

**Celebration of Our Mountains** (October)  
Enjoy the outdoor treasures of the El Paso del Norte Region.

**Hueco Tanks Interpretative Fair** (October)  
Traditional Native American song and dance, folklorico and matachine dancers, pictograph and birding tours.

**Luminaria Walk** (December)  
Enjoy thousands of luminarias lining the walkways at Keystone Heritage Park.



### Legend:

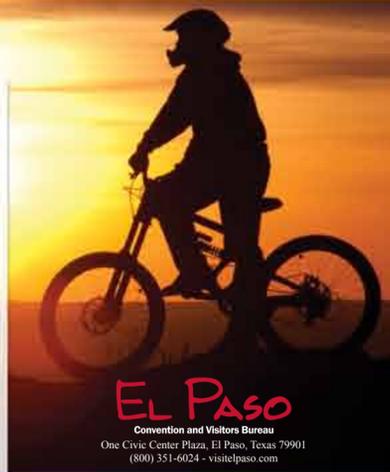
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11. El Paso Municipal Rose Garden
12. Pat O'Rourke Memorial Trail
13. McKelligon Canyon
14. Ascarate Park

Picnic Area  
 Gift Shop  
 Free Admission  
 Admission Cost  
 Guided Tour  
 Birding  
 Biking  
 Hiking

# El Paso, Texas

Boasting more than 300 sunny days a year, El Paso is a great place for year-round outdoor activities. Located in the fascinating and biodiverse northern Chihuahuan Desert—the largest desert in North America, El Paso offers visitors many ways to enjoy the sunshine with an excellent array of outdoor recreational opportunities. The region is home to hundreds of species of plants, birds, reptiles and mammals, many of them unique to the area, and also features a great diversity of landscapes, ranging from rivers to grasslands to open desert to rugged mountains. Archaeological sites abound, as well as spectacular canyons, sheer cliffs along mountain trails, sand dunes, lava fields, caverns and a host of other natural attractions. Hikers, runners, cyclists, backpackers, campers and adventurers are sure to find something to enjoy in this magnificent corner of North America where the United States and Mexico come together. This brochure provides a brief introduction to some of the natural sites and opportunities for outdoor activities in and around El Paso. Additional information is available at [www.outdoorelpasso.com](http://www.outdoorelpasso.com).

Check with individual sites for up-to-date information on hours, events, directions and access for disabled visitors.



**EL PASO**  
Convention and Visitors Bureau  
One Civic Center Plaza, El Paso, Texas 79901  
(800) 351-6024 - [visitelpaso.com](http://visitelpaso.com)



Real Adventure is still Alive

**EL PASO**  
TEXAS

Guide to Outdoor Adventure