



## June 2017 Newsletter

*Welcome to the Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas (FSANA) e-newsletter! We share natural areas news, the Friends' efforts, and opportunities to get involved in volunteering or educational programs at San Antonio's natural areas parks. Going forward, we aim to bring you this newsletter quarterly in 2017, at minimum. Please check our website, [www.fosana.org](http://www.fosana.org), for periodic updates.*

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### **Thanks for your participation!**

A BIG thank you to all who participated in the BigGive to help FSANA raise nearly \$2000. Your donations and membership contribute to the continued success of our primary mission, to promote the conservation of Friedrich Wilderness Park, Crownridge Canyon Natural Area, Eisenhower Park, Medina River, Walker Ranch, Hardberger Park, and other natural areas. We reached 10-percent of our long-term goal for the coming year to raise funds for acquiring lands adjacent to the parks that will provide a buffer for the natural areas. All your contributions also help support ongoing educational programs for children and families of our natural areas.

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### **Natural Areas June Stewardship Report *San Antonio Parks & Recreation Department***

*Ecosystem:* A system that includes all living organisms (biotic factors) in an area as well as its physical environment (abiotic factors) functioning together as a unit. An ecosystem is made up of plants, animals, microorganisms, soil, rocks, minerals, water sources and the local atmosphere interacting with one another. The term ecosystem was coined in 1930 by [Roy Clapham](#).

- Among the more prominent members of the local northwest San Antonio ecosystem are limestone, golden-cheeked warblers, Ashe juniper (commonly called "cedar"), monarch butterflies, bluebonnets, and the Edwards aquifer. Some of our local ecosystem members are here year round, others only seasonally.
- Although with enough time and resources, it may be possible to identify many of the individual members of an ecosystem, the relationships among those members are often much more difficult

to discern. For example, who would have guessed that all known populations of the bracted twistflower occur within 1 km of the Balcones Fault Zone?

- Moreover, it is difficult to predict the impact of the loss of one ecosystem member on the whole system. For example, consider oak wilt and the potential it has for significantly changing our local ecosystem. Try to imagine San Antonio without live oaks. Visualize not just the loss of the trees themselves, but also the plants that live beneath them, the birds that nest in them, even the soil around them.
- The great thing about ecosystem focused management is that it benefits more than one species. For example, savanna restoration benefits monarchs (as well as other butterflies), birds, herps, grasses, forbs, insects, water quality and quantity, and more!
- Come join us as we do ecosystem management. In June we will work at various City of San Antonio Natural Areas in the northwest part of San Antonio. You must make a reservation for each work day by e-mailing Jayne Neal at [Jayne.neal@sanantonio.gov](mailto:Jayne.neal@sanantonio.gov). Jayne will confirm your reservation and give you directions to the specific site and the designated parking area. Work sites will not typically have access to water or restrooms.
- June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 2017, 8:00 – 11:30 am, Location to be determined. To reserve a spot, you must contact Jayne Neal, e-mail above.

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## Upcoming Natural Areas Events

- **First Sundays: Tai Chi in the Natural Areas**
  - 9-10 a.m. | Sundays, June 4 | Friedrich Wilderness Park
  - Take a break from your busy week and center yourself with Tai Chi classes at Friedrich Wilderness Park. Each class provides an introduction to the practice of Tai Chi for physical and personal development. Wear comfortable, loose clothing and walking shoes. RSVP by calling (210) 207-3782, or [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov)
- **Starting Out Wild: Batty Bats** (*ages 1-3*)
  - 10:00-11:00 a.m. | Friday, June 2 | Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom
  - Learn how bats are beneficial! These high energy, engaging programs are a perfect way to foster an appreciation of the natural world. It is recommended that a child be walking and a parent or caretaker attend with each child. Most classes will take place outdoors. RSVP required. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov).
- **Hike Friedrich with the Family!**
  - 9:00-11:00 a.m. | Saturday, June 3 | Friedrich Wilderness Park
  - Enjoy a family-friendly hike along the trails of Friedrich Wilderness Park. Explore the flora and fauna along Water Trail and Forest Range with Nature Preserve Officer Thomas Paine. Hike will cover approximately one mile. RSVP required. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov).
- **Growing Up Wild: Lunch for a Bear** (*ages 4-7*)
  - 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. | Thursday, June 8 | Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom
  - Learn about bears and their habitat through stories, songs, and hands-on activities. Growing Up Wild builds on a child's sense of wonder about nature and invites them to explore wildlife and the world around them. Activities are designed to provide an early foundation and appreciation of nature. RSVP required. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov).
- **Dinosaur George at Eisenhower Park** (*all ages*)
  - 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. | Saturday, June 10 | Eisenhower Park
  - Dino George is back, and brings his renowned dinosaur program to Eisenhower Park! On display will be amazing replicas of dinosaur skulls and teeth, including giant killer birds and large Texas mammals. Dinosaur George engages adults and children of all ages—there's something for everyone! No reservations needed. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov).

## Starting Out Wild: Batty Bats (ages 1-3)

- 10:00-11:00 a.m. | Friday, June 16 | Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom
- Learn how bats are beneficial! These high energy, engaging programs are a perfect way to foster an appreciation of the natural world. It is recommended that a child be walking and a parent or caretaker attend with each child. Most classes will take place outdoors. RSVP required. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov).

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## Natural Areas & Pets

We often have questions about allowing pets into the Natural Areas. Most San Antonio parks including Hardberger and Eisenhower allow dogs and even provide (at no small cost) bags for people to use to pick up the dog waste. PLEASE pick up the bags and deposit them in the waste containers provided.

- Pets can disturb wildlife. Mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, and other wildlife react to the sound, scent, and/or sight of dogs, leashed or not. Wildlife thus disturbed has diminished energy available for breeding, finding food, raising young, etc.
- Bird nesting areas, especially those of ground nesting birds, are disturbed by dogs and sensitive wildlife habitat is damaged.
- When dogs urinate in nesting and sensitive wildlife habitats to "mark" their territory, it becomes undesirable or uninhabitable to the wildlife living there.
- Seeds are picked up by dog fur and paws pick up seeds, which can spread invasive plant species.
- Unleashed dogs can chase and injure (or even kill) squirrels, birds, and other wildlife.
- It is important to removed dog waste as it contains bacteria and organisms that can spread disease in people and other dogs. In humans, contact with dog waste can cause stomach illnesses and rashes.
- Dog waste also spreads disease among dogs, including serious illnesses like giardia and parvovirus.
- The environmental impact of dog waste is significant. While human waste is directed into sewage pipes, dog waste left on the ground eventually pollutes our waterways. When dog waste is left on the ground, it also deposits excessive amounts of nitrogen fertilizer to the soil, increasing the spread of nitrogen-loving weeds at the expense of native plants.



Are you the person who 'forgot' to pick up your dog  
poop bag to deposit it in the waste container 50'  
away?

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**Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas is dedicated to promoting stewardship of San Antonio's Natural Areas, and to the understanding and appreciation of nature through educational and scientific programs.**

*For the latest updates and more activities, please see the calendar on the FSANA website.*

**[Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas Website](#)**

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