



March 2019 Newsletter

Welcome to the Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas (FOSANA) 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. Please check our website, www.fosana.org, for periodic updates and program information.

Support FoSANA on March 28th BigGive SA

As members and Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas, we know you care about the continued sustenance of our parks and Natural Areas. On March 28, 2019, we ask that you join our community's day of giving to raise funds to support the San Antonio Natural Areas. In particular, we would appreciate if you would...DONATE! On March 28, just head to the [FoSANA BigGive](#) page and make a donation, because the Natural Areas are important to you.



What are some other ways you can help support FoSANA on our community day of giving?

- ASK your friends and family who enjoy and appreciate the parks to support environmental education, stewardship, and preservation by making a donation.
- CREATE momentum on March 28 and share the FoSANA BigGive page on social media and tell your community why the Natural Areas are important to you.
- ACQUIRE sponsors for matching gifts or incentives. The Big Give is a great opportunity to entice donors to have a greater impact on our organization by offering matching donations! Having some extra funds for the Big Give to use as incentives for donors can really motivate them to participate, therefore making a greater impact.



Some of the flowers blooming in Friedrich Park
Yellow Buckeye, Red Buckeye, Rusty Blackhaw Viburnum and Texas Redbud
Photos courtesy Thomas Paine

No Pets in Natural Areas: The Natural Reasons Why

If you hike through Friedrich Wilderness Park or Crownridge Canyon please note these are habitats for wildlife. San Antonio Natural Areas provide unique opportunities for people to experience nature "naturally," therefore no pets are permitted in these two natural area parks. Dog waste is not the same as the feces of wildlife. Wild animals eat food provided by the local ecosystem, and their feces essentially recycle those nutrients back into the ecosystem. In contrast, dog waste contains the byproducts of manufactured dog food and sometimes even pet medicines. As [Leave No Trace](#) points out, "Pet waste adds excess nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus to the environment. Excess of these nutrients in many ecosystems creates unstable conditions that allow algae blooms to cloud our rivers, lakes, and streams, and create an easy habitat for invasive weeds to grow." Think of what this means to our aquifer!

Moreover, pets disturb wildlife. In fact, studies have found when dogs are present in recreational areas, several wildlife species will change the way they use that habitat. 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. The following are specific examples of the impact dogs have:

- 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.

In an effort to satisfy patrons and despite the negative effects of pets on wildlife, most San Antonio Parks including two of our Natural Areas, Hardberger and Eisenhower Parks, allow dogs. The Parks Department even provides (at no cost) bags to pick up dog waste. Responsible pet ownership means picking up the bags and depositing them in the waste containers provided.



Upcoming Natural Areas Events

- **First Saturday Hike: Let's Go Birding** (recommended: ages 10 & up)
 - 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. | Saturday, March 2 | Crownridge Canyon Natural Area
In the spring, birds are very vocal while attracting their mates and defending their territories. This is a perfect time to take a walk through Crownridge with premier birding educators Patsy and Tom Inglet who will help identify and appreciate these avian songsters. RSVP required. Visit fosana.org to reserve your spot. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov.
- **Growing Up Wild: Animal Tracks** (ages 4-7)
 - 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. | Wednesday, March 6 & 20 | Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom
 - Explore wild animal tracks through stories, hands-on activities, and a guided hike. Growing Up Wild builds on a child's sense of wonder about nature and invites them to explore wildlife and the world around them. RSVP required. Visit fosana.org to reserve your spot. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov.
- **Slithering Snakes & Other Texas Reptiles!**
 - 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Saturday, March 9 | Eisenhower Park Mass Pavilion
Wild About Texas will lead a family-friendly show teaching kids about Texas reptiles, including the alligator lizard, snapping turtle as well as venomous and non venomous snakes. Shed your fear of snakes and learn about evolutionary adaptations and the many benefits snakes. No RSVP needed. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov.

All Programs (unless otherwise noted): RSVP required. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, or \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782 or email nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov.

Are you connected to San Antonio Natural Areas on social media?

You can like us on [Facebook](#).

Find us on [Instagram](#) @sanaturalareas.

Are you a member of Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas (FoSANA)?

Please support FoSANA on the preservation and educational outreach of natural areas around San Antonio by joining or renewing your membership [online](#) today.

Your membership this year will help us continue to

- offer over 400 environmental programs for families and adults at the Natural Areas.
- serve over 14,000 families and adults through education and outreach programs.
- coordinate over 400 volunteer programs and 7,500 volunteer hours supported trail maintenance, habitat conservation and restoration, and native landscapes and gardens.

Plus, when you renew your membership, you'll receive our monthly newsletter that provides updates on natural areas happenings and timely information on upcoming events.

Should you need any assistance or have any questions or comments about your membership, please feel free to email us at friendsofsanaturalareas@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
FoSANA Board

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 FOSANA website.

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