



November 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.

What Do a Free-loading Roommate, Lice, and Certain Plants Have in Common?

A parasite is defined as an organism that lives on another; pinworms, tapeworms, and lice are ones we are familiar with - in addition to a roommate who does not clean up or pay their share of rent. Though most plants make their own food by photosynthesis, some take advantage of other plants. *Cuscuta* spp, or dodders, are one kind of parasitic plant that you may see in the Natural Areas. Found throughout the world, the Dodder genus includes over 150 species, [about 20 of which occur in Texas](#). Dodder uses tiny peg-like structures called haustoria to invade its host plant tissues for water and nutrients. It is a yellowish orange vine with significantly reduced leaves, so they may be just scales and some species are actually leafless. The vine may twist around different kinds of plants, including live oaks and bluebonnets. Dodder's small white flowers produce seeds that drop to the ground, germinate, and grow roots. The young dodder plant then puts out tendrils in search of its host.



[Smartweed Dodder](#)

Texas Indian Paintbrush, or *Castilleja indivisa*, is a colorful annual or biennial spring blooming wildflower that may be seen along roadsides, in fields, and sometimes in our Natural Areas. It is classified as a [hemiparasite as it has green leaves](#) and can make its own food by photosynthesis, but it penetrates the roots of nearby grasses and other plants to get some of its nutrients. Used by hummingbirds and insects for its nectar, [Indian paintbrush seeds are tiny, numbering 4 million seeds per pound.](#)



Texas Paintbrush and Mealy Blue Sage

Mistletoe is a parasite that may be found in our area on trees including Spanish oak, cedar elm, and hackberry. Its small sticky white seeds are spread by birds. Under suitable conditions, the seeds germinate and a haustorium is formed. The haustorium penetrates the bark and invades the tree's water and nutrient transporting structures. Mistletoe is difficult to control chemically; removing it physically is also difficult as the part that penetrates the host must be extracted. The plant and its berries are toxic, so it's best to limit your exposure to perhaps just kissing under the mistletoe.

Parasitic plants are opportunists. While they do damage, it's important to respect the diversity of means they have evolved to get what they need to survive. In this season of thanksgiving, let us all pause to respect the diversity among us.



[Mistletoe](#)

(Photo: Forrest M. Mims III / For The Express-News)

Upcoming Events

November

- **Arbor Day for SA: Celebrating San Antonio Trees and Nature** (all ages)
 - 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Saturday, November 2 | Olmos Basin Park 651 Devine Rd
Join the celebration! Visit Olmos Basin Park to learn about trees and nature in the San Antonio area. This event will feature hands on activities, tree climbing demos, nature inspired crafts, and a native tree adoption while supplies last. Enjoy a special presentation by Tree Circus at 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. FREE. No reservations needed.
- **Starting Out Wild: Terrific Turkeys** (ages 1-3)
 - 10:00-11:00 a.m. | Fri. November 1 & 15 | Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom
Learn all about turkeys through stories, songs, and hands-on fun! These high energy, engaging programs are a perfect way to foster an appreciation of the natural world. 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: Terrific Turkeys** (ages 4-7)
 - 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. | Wed. Nov. 6 & Thurs. Nov. 21 | Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom
Ever see a wild turkey? Learn about these unique birds through stories, songs, games! 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.
- **Celebrate Native American Heritage Month with Apache Del Rio** (all ages)
 - 10:00 a.m.-11:30 p.m. | Saturday, November 9 | Medina River Natural Area
Join the Apache Del Rio Intertribal as they dance, tell stories and sing songs of their ancestors. Create an arrowhead necklace, and other crafts available. FREE. Program will be held in the outdoor pavilion. No reservations needed.
- **Sunrise Hike at Friedrich Wilderness Park**
 - 6:45 a.m.-11:00 a.m. | Saturday, November 16 | Friedrich Wilderness Park
Catch the morning light and enjoy a rejuvenating and scenic hike along Restoration Trail, Main Loop, and Vista Loop. Participants are advised to wear hiking shoes, pack a snack and at least a liter of water. Guided hike will cover approximately 5.25 miles. RSVP required.
- **Star Party at Eisenhower Park**
 - 5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. | December 14 | Eisenhower Park Mass Pavilion
What's to see in the Fall skies? Observe the night skies with the San Antonio Astronomical Association and learn about the planets and the moon. Family-friendly activity included! During inclement weather, be sure to check the calendar as this program may be

cancelled.
No reservations needed.

All programs (unless otherwise noted): 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.



ARBOR DAY FOR SA

CELEBRATING SA TREES & NATURE

Free Trees and Kid-Friendly Activities!
Sat. November 2 • 9am–12pm
Free For All Ages • Olmos Basin Park • 651 Devine

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO PARKS & RECREATION
ALAMO FOREST PARTNERSHIP
SAN ANTONIO PUBLIC LIBRARY
Information, imagination, ideas.
CITY OF SAN ANTONIO METROPOLITAN HEALTH DISTRICT
SPAA
TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST
Alamo Area Chapter

San Antonio Water System
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ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT
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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
BAT CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL
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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
PARKS & RECREATION

CELEBRATE NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN • HERITAGE MONTH •

NATIVE AMERICAN DRUMMING, DANCING & STORYTELLING FEATURING...
APACHE DEL RIO INTERTRIBAL ORGANIZATION



APACHE CHIEF JAMES A. GARFIELD, DETROIT PHOTOGRAPHIC CO.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9
MEDINA RIVER NATURAL AREA
10AM - 11:30AM • 15890 HWY 16 SOUTH
ENJOY HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES • BRING YOUR OWN CHAIR OR BLANKET



WWW.FOSANA.ORG
WWW.SAPARKSANDREC.COM



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](#)
