

Trails

of McKinney Falls State Park



Greater Roadrunner

McKinney Falls State Park Headquarters
Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., 7 days a week

Emergency contact after 5 p.m.
Dial 9-1-1

STAYING SAFE

Know before you go, plan ahead and be prepared.

- **Weather conditions change rapidly.** Expected forecasts and trail conditions available at the Park Headquarters.
- **Let others know your plans** (anticipated activity and timeframe). If alone, leave details visible from your vehicle.
- **Know your limits.** Prepare for sun and heat. Take plenty of water, snacks and a first aid kit.
- **People average two miles per hour hiking.** We recommend you carry at least one full quart of water per hour of activity.
- **Swimming safety is YOUR responsibility.** Swim at your own risk; there are no lifeguards on duty. Be aware of the possibility of strong undertow, which can pull you dangerously near the falls.
- **Wild and harmful wildlife exist in the park.** Stay on trails/mowed areas where you can see possible snakes and poison ivy.
- **Helmets are advised when bicycling in the park.**

TRAIL ETIQUETTE

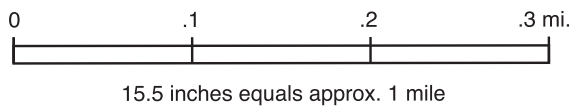
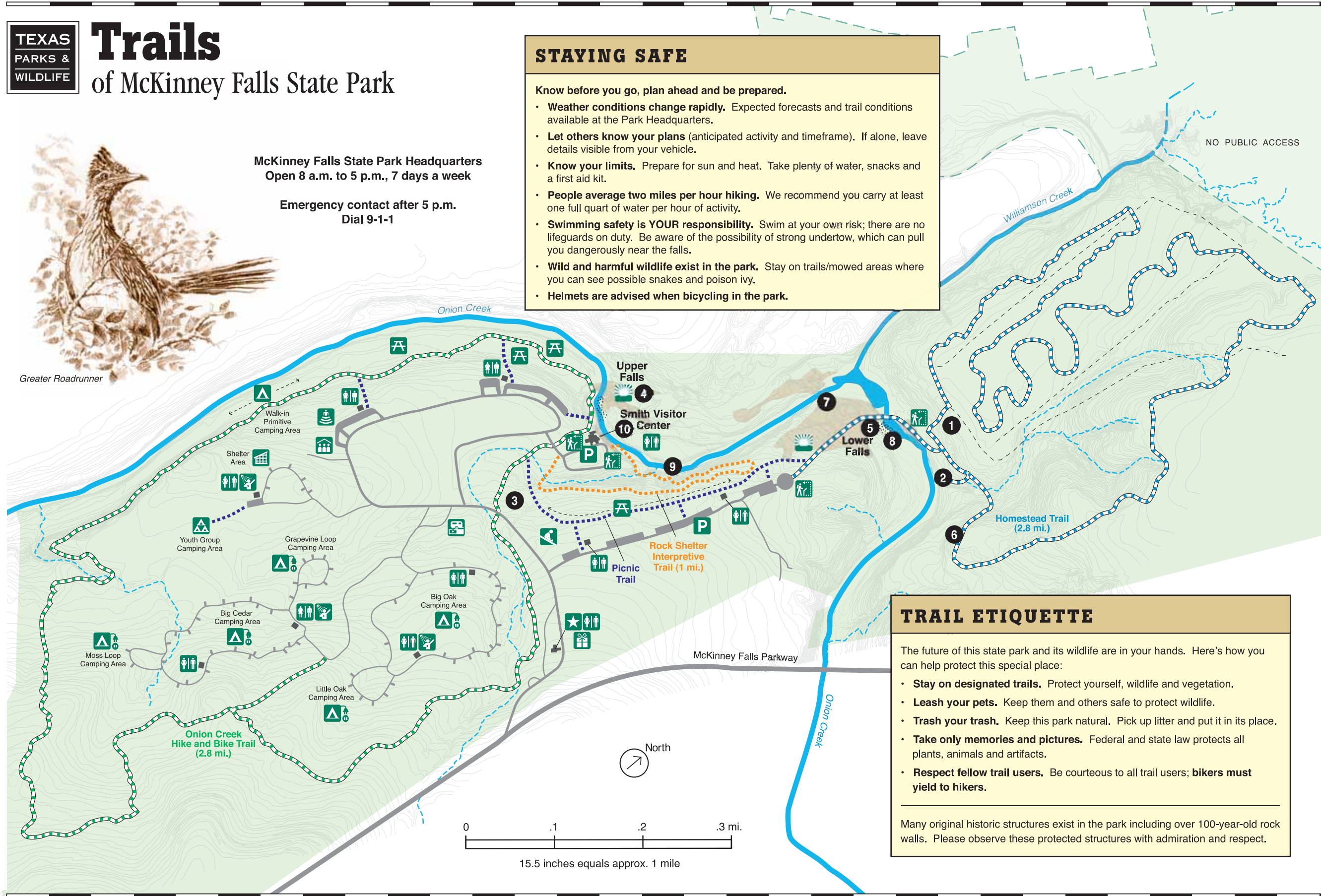
The future of this state park and its wildlife are in your hands. Here's how you can help protect this special place:

- **Stay on designated trails.** Protect yourself, wildlife and vegetation.
- **Leash your pets.** Keep them and others safe to protect wildlife.
- **Trash your trash.** Keep this park natural. Pick up litter and put it in its place.
- **Take only memories and pictures.** Federal and state law protects all plants, animals and artifacts.
- **Respect fellow trail users.** Be courteous to all trail users; **bikers must yield to hikers.**

Many original historic structures exist in the park including over 100-year-old rock walls. Please observe these protected structures with admiration and respect.

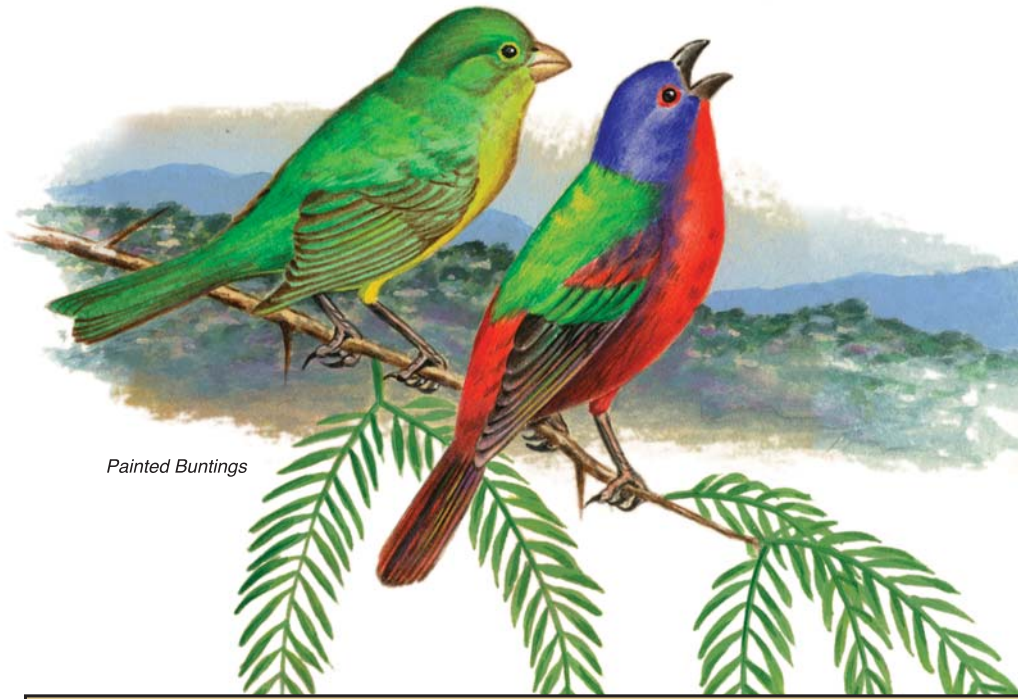
Legend:

- Headquarters
- State Parks Store
- Parking
- Rest Rooms
- Showers
- Camping
- Water/Electric
- Group Camping Area
- Screened Shelters
- Group Dining Hall
- Sanitary Dump Station
- Picnic Area
- Playground
- Amphitheater
- Scenic View
- Trailhead and Interpretive Trail
- Points of Interest
- Hike and Bike Trails
- Hiking Only Trails
- Service Road

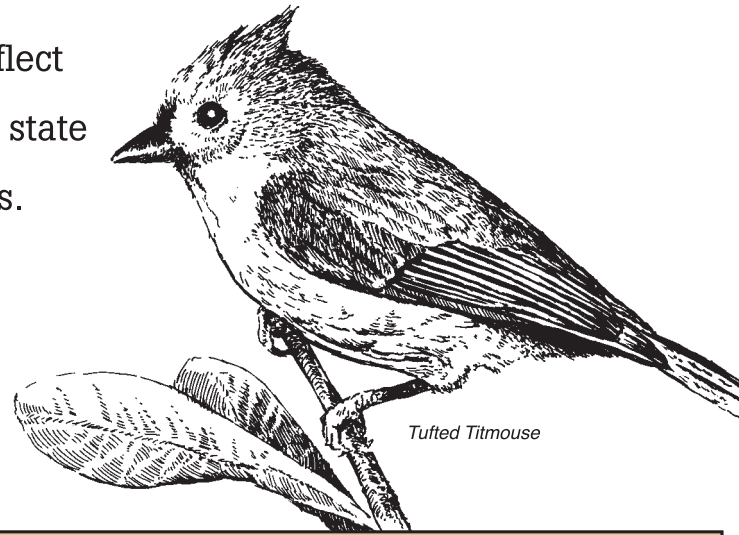


5808 McKinney Falls Parkway
Austin, TX 78744
(512) 243-1643

Welcome to a natural retreat from the city where you can reflect and listen to nature's soothing sounds. Inviting trails throughout this 725-acre state park will lead you to beautiful waterfalls, Indian rock shelters and pioneer ruins.



Painted Buntings



Tufted Titmouse

Rock Shelter Trail

Start / Finish: Smith Visitor Center (0.90 miles)
Elevation change: 60 feet

| | |
|--|---|
| Users Hiking Only | Width Minimum 3 feet |
| Surface Compacted Dirt Exposed Rocks Natural Steps | Other Hazards Cliff Edges Poison Ivy |

Onion Creek Hike and Bike Trail

Start / Finish: Smith Visitor Center (2.8 miles)
Elevation change: 139 feet

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Users Hiking Biking | Width Minimum 6 feet |
| Surface Man-made Tarmac | Other Hazards Road Crossings Steep Sections |

Homestead Trail

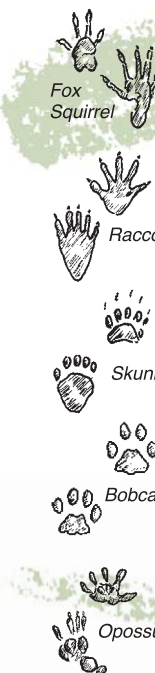
Start / Finish: North side of Onion Creek / Lower Falls (2.75 miles)
Elevation change: 117 feet

| | |
|---|---|
| Users Hiking Biking | Width Minimum 3 feet |
| Surface Compacted Dirt Exposed Rock Natural | Other Hazards Creek Crossing Poison Ivy Single Track Steep Slops |

POINTS OF INTEREST

(GPS coordinates given in Lat/Long Minute Decimal – NAD 83)

- The Homestead** (30° 18.954" N; 97° 72.054" W)
Homestead remnants, built in the 1850s by racehorse breeder Thomas McKinney, who was one of Stephen F. Austin's original 300 colonists.
- Gristmill** (30° 18.876" N; 97° 71.946" W)
This ingenious harnessing of nature with water powered turbines was the most modern technology when built in 1852.
- Horse Trainer's Cabin** (30° 18.172" N; 97° 72.532" W)
Remains of the former residence of John Von Hagen, the McKinney's horse trainer.
- Upper Falls** (30° 18.442" N; 97° 72.573" W)
Water cascades through natural channels within a massive bed of exposed limestone.
- Lower Falls** (30° 18.846" N; 97° 72.098" W)
Onion Creek flows across a gently dipping limestone shelf and then plunges six or eight feet over a small limestone cliff into one of the park's best swimming holes.
- Smith Picnic Table** (30° 18.812" N; 97° 71.825" W)
Picnic at the same table the Smith family, the donors of the park, used during their family outings.
- Bouldering Rocks** (30° 18.696" N; 97° 72.210" W)
Enjoy one of the state's most ideal spots for the popular sport of bouldering.
- Beach Area** (30° 18.830" N; 97° 72.059" W)
Situated below the lively lower falls, this is one of the best natural swimming areas offered in Austin.
- Rock Shelter Trail** (30° 18.463" N; 97° 72.291" W)
Explore the naturally occurring limestone cliffs that have provided people shelter for over 8,000 years.
- Smith Visitor Center** (30° 18.392" N; 97° 72.484" W)
Hands-on exhibits, educational activities, a native wildscape, and a scenic overlook of the upper falls can all be found here at the Smith Visitor Center.



Wonderfully Wild

Two major creeks converge in the park and provide important protected wildlife corridors. The park protects these ribbons of wildlife from the surrounding development and is a great place to connect with nature.

Who lives here? McKinney Falls State Park is home to many plants and wildlife. Over 225 species of birds call this park home.

Where are the animals? They are here, but many of them are hiding or resting. Some wild animals, especially many mammals, come out only at night or at dawn and dusk.

How can I find them? With practice, you can find animals and their signs all year round. Speak and walk quietly and slowly so you won't scare them. Look down for tracks and up for birds. Listen for the songs of birds, frogs and insects. Enjoy and respect wildlife; you are a guest in their home.