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**SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:**

- **January trip to Big Bend's Dog Canyon windy and wild**
- **February trip details**
- **New opportunity for PBOC members in Sibley Camera Club**
- **Attend the February 16th meeting**
- **Numbers needed for February trip!**

**BIG BEND'S DOG CANYON TRIP A GREAT SUCCESS!-
RICHARD**

About a dozen PBOC members attend January's trip to the Big Bend National Park's Dog Canyon and we weren't surprised by the wind but were a little surprised by the pleasant weather!.....at least on Friday. Because of parking concerns, I decided to camp at Nine Points Draw campsite, a little known and poorly marked campsite about a quarter mile from the trailhead to Dog Canyon. After making camp I loaded up camera gear on my back and day hiked to where the group was camping, meaning to spend a little time with everyone and then night hiking by moonlight back to my camp. I arrived at Dog Canyon after doing a little tracking to find exactly where everyone was. The narrow defile that is Dog Canyon turned out to be an exercise in learning how to live in a wind tunnel. At certain points in the canyon, where the trail made a sharp turn, a venture effect created an incredible wind effect. I don't know who has the pictures but we were leaning against the wind at the turn and you could almost go horizontal without falling! Okay, that's an overstatement but since the wind

was warm, we enjoyed testing our balancing skills, allowing the wind to keep us from falling on our faces.

After nightfall we all took time to eat our dinners and have a good 'ol PBOC camp talk. As always, topics ranged anywhere from jobs to photography, to the latest camping gear on the market, etc. I noticed some very bright eyes staring at us from across the canyon and on a very steep cliff. Opinions varied as to what the glowing eyes belonged to...from mountain lions to ring tailed cats..(my guess) but boy did they glow when you lit them up with headlamps! When folks started breaking up to go to bed, I decided to make my way back to my camp some 2 miles away. The half moon was so bright that I never turned my headlamp back on except for a couple of underbrush areas that might have contained something with fangs (it was that warm). After walking about 30 minutes I decided to climb out of the draw and see if I could see a small garden light that I had placed on a peak

near my camp (tents are infamously hard to find in the desert and I've spent hours in the past looking for them). I scanned the horizon and, along with stars, I saw the faintest glimmer of a what appeared to be a star **below the horizon**. It could have been lights at Panther Junction or in the Basin but I decided to head that way. In about 45 minutes I discovered that my little trick had worked and I was back at camp. I can't explain it but there are times when everything just clicks. Between the good company, the warm breeze, knowing that I didn't have to search for my camp, walking across the desert with only moonlight to light my way...everything was just perfect! The next day I set out toward Park Headquarters and the Basin to find photographic opportunities in the early morning sunlight. I later ran into some of the guys at the Basin and spent the rest of the day shooting photos and enjoying trails in the Basin in the company of friends. You just can't beat a trip like this!

FEBRUARY 19-21 BOY SCOUT RANCH TRIP

The club will be traveling to the Buffalo Trail Boy Scout Ranch in February to repeat our very enjoyable September 2009 trip to the Davis Mountains. The ranch is a relatively short drive from Midland/Odessa and features some incredible views and day hikes...or longer backpacking opportunities if you so choose. Last year Dan Damon, the ranch ranger, set

us up at a camp right across from the restrooms/showers and even turned the hot water heaters on for us all for \$2 a person a night...a total of just \$4 for the weekend! That's unusual comfort for this club. If you're interested in beautiful, very photogenic country, a short drive, and a very affordable camping experience, this trip is for you. We set a new record for PBOC trip attendance last

year with 46 members, 15 of those being kids. We have already paid our deposit for this trip and the September 2010 trip to the Scout Ranch **so we need to know no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 15th** if you plan to attend this trip to finalize the paperwork that is due in the Scout office prior to the trip. As of today, we have 17 members going. Let me know!



Partial Group Picture after Dog Canyon—photo by Richard

SIBLEY CAMERA CLUB

You may not know that with your PBOC/Sibley membership you are qualified to be a member of the recently formed Sibley Camera Club. The club currently has about 20 members. The purpose of the club is to gain knowledge of photography, share experiences and techniques, and to get together for "photo expeditions." Camera Club members are encouraged to sign up for outing club trips or to simply put

together their own outings to further their skills in photography. The group met this past Saturday and spent two hours on the Sibley Nature Trail taking photos of our Harris hawk family that is wintering here and other wildlife (including each other) on the trail. The club meets the second Thursday here at Sibley at 6:00 p.m. The meetings usually last only for an hour unless we have a

burning desire to continue talking on a subject. Topics such as panorama shooting, HDR photography, producing slide shows, understanding digital cameras, etc. are common topics. The group shares photos, ways to display photos, etc. at each meeting. If you want to be added to the email list, let me know and I'll slide your name and email address onto the Camera Club roster.

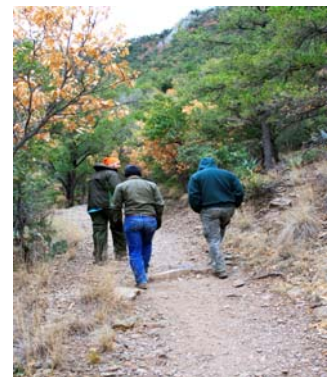
"Some places remain unknown because no one has ventured forth. Some places remain so because no one has ever come back."

FEBRUARY MEETING

The February meeting to plan and organize the February 19-21 trip to the Boy Scout Ranch will take place at Murray's Deli at 3211 W. Wadley in Midland at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 16th. We will have maps, etc. to the Scout Ranch and talk a little about optional activities. Murray's has gra-

ciously provided their back room for us to meet this year and if you haven't eaten there you will really appreciate the cuisine. If you are planning to go on the trip but, for whatever reason cannot attend the planning meeting, please let me know. It sounds like a trivial matter but you can't imagine what a

monkey wrench is thrown in the works if we're not sure of your intentions....and again, please attend the meetings even if you're not planning to go on the trip. It's a great time to get to know your fellow PBOC members and have a great meal! See you at Murray's on the 16th!



Ascending Lost Mine Peak Trail in the Basin—photo by Richard

INSIDE STORY HEADLINE-REPORT BY STEPHEN SCHAFERSMAN

Several members of the Permian Basin Outing Club enjoyed a weekend backpacking trip in Big Bend National Park. The trip was led by Pat Dearen, an extremely experienced backpacker and writer of novels and nonfiction set in Trans-Pecos Texas. Pat is great; he really takes care of his trip's participants. Being a geologist and paleontologist, I am a very experienced car camper and day hiker, but I didn't become a backpacker until Pat took me and two others to Big Bend several years ago on one of the first PBOC trips. That was my first overnight backpacking trip and I was hooked. My wife Gae became hooked, too, and now we backpack together in Big Bend and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks. If you haven't backpacked yet, use the PBOC as an opportunity to do so.

Cold and wet weather was expected when we arrived in Big Bend on Friday, January 22nd. After the short two-mile hike to the mouth of Dog Canyon, we camped and had dinner. Most of the others had already arrived and we talked briefly as the sun set, so the mountains glowed pink to orange, ad beautiful sight. On these trips, we go to bed when darkness

comes, reading in the tent with headlamps for a few minutes. Very late that night it rained, continuing into the morning. My wife and I stayed in our tents, but we heard the others leaving during a letup. It rained some more and they got caught, but these guys were rugged so we knew they would survive.

When the rain finally finished, we got up and explored Dog Canyon after breakfast. The canyon was magnificent; it is a gorge with steep walls and vertically-tilted limestone beds. Water from Bone Springs and Nine Point Draw drains to the northeast through this canyon. The uplifted and thrust-faulted Cretaceous range begins in the Santiago Mountains north of the park and becomes the Sierra del Carmen along the eastern park boundary and into Mexico, but the division at Dog Canyon is a arbitrary. There is no geological difference between the two ranges. The geology is complex and spectacular, and Dog Canyon cuts right across the folds and thrust sheets so the structure is clearly visible. Deep in the canyon, great tectonic forces have folded the Santa Elena Limestone from horizontal strata at the mouth of the canyon into

steep vertical beds. The Santa Elena is a hard, cherty, fossil rudistid-bearing white limestone, and you can find these features in the boulders at the bottom of the canyon.

To the right of Dog Canyon as you approach it, a thrust fault has stacked the older Glen Rose Limestone on top of the younger Buda and Boquillas Limestones. The Santa Elena is younger than the Glen Rose and older than the Buda and Boquillas. All of these formations are Cretaceous in age. The Glen Rose forms the top of the broad ridge just to the right (south) of Dog Canyon with its walls composed of Santa Elena Limestone. The Boquillas Formation is easily identified here and elsewhere, since it consists of fossiliferous, chalky, tan beds of argillaceous limestone and interbedded shales. The Boquillas limestone beds form the flagstones seen throughout the park.

My wife and I then left for Devil's Den canyon, we left the trail and scrambled cross-country to the south across the base of the ridge for about two miles. I thought this was relatively easy to do, since there were cactus, creosote, mesquite, cat's-



Group Photo—by Stephen

“Less is more...unless you're standing next to the one with more. Then less just looks pathetic.”



Richard, Gae, Brandon—photo by Stephen S.

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We're on the web at:
www.sibleynaturecenter.org

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
PERMIAN BASIN OUTING CLUB**

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The Sibley Nature Center



The Window at Sunset—photo by Brandon Hawkins



The Window a little before Sunset—photo by Brandon



Saturday morning in Big Bend National Park—photo by Richard

(wowiee it was pretty that morning)

claw, and other vegetation. Along the way, we passed through great fields of dagger yucca, New Mexico agave, and Ephedra (Mormon's Tea, Poptillo). Gae was concerned since she doesn't like to leave the trail, but she bravely followed me (I wasn't worried since I could see the mountains and canyons at all times). We held our altitude as best we could and arrived at the northern rim of Devil's Den quite high above the mouth.

Devil's Den was superb. It is a deep canyon—a gorge, really—very steep limestone walls and boulders below. Several ancient rockslides were visible. The limestone appeared to consist of Glen Rose. The guidebooks warned about climbing in, but I didn't see how this was possible without rappelling gear. Of course, you could hike in from the mouth, but then you would have to cross giant boulders. Boulderling is a popular activity for climbers so I guess some people go into it. You could see abundant vegetation, trees, and tinajas (rock cavities filled with water) below, so this would be a great habitat for animals. After lunch, Gae and I headed west along the north rim trail (we could see a trail along the south rim, too). We eventually reached the mouth of Devil's Den canyon and saw tracks in the wet stream bed. The guys reached it earlier and must have gone into the canyon a short way.

We headed back to camp along the stream bed (draw or wash, since it was dry). The bed was filled with cobbles and you had to watch every step or you could easily slip and strain or break an ankle. This happened to one of our party late that night as they returned to camp. I hate hiking on cobbled draw beds but Gae was happy to be back on the trail, since cairns were visible along the way. During the day you can walk carefully. Along this trail, I discovered several great outcrops of limestone exposed in the stream bluffs. An excellent contact between the shaley brown Boquillas Formation above the hard white Buda Limestone was visible. The stream had cut down to the Buda and Boquillas formed a wall of flagstone above the stream bed. At the edge of this outcrop was a vertical contact between the two formations; I am not sure how this formed. We got back to camp safely and left Sunday morning. We reached the cars and took a self-timer group photo. Despite the rain and cold, Gae and I really enjoyed this trip since we saw some magnificent geological features during our day hike that most visitors never see.

Following pics by Stephen Schafersman



Big Bend Sunset



Boquillas above Buda



Devil's Den



Dog Canyon



Dog Canyon



Tinajas-Devil's Den