



Celebration of Our Mountains

**Spring
2026
Program**

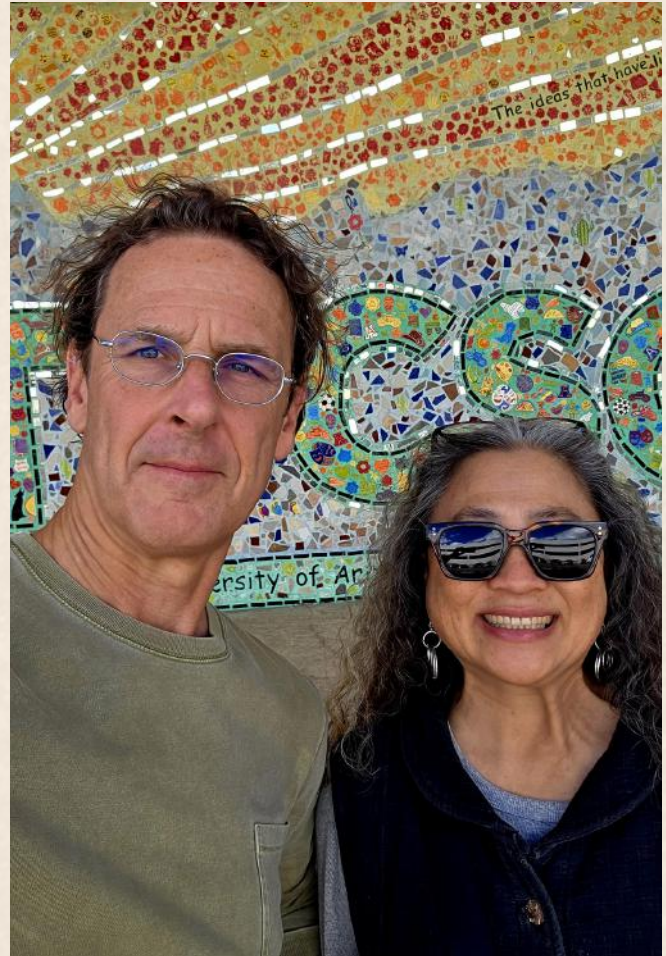


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Letter from the President

We welcome you to another one of our no-cost, action-packed semiannual programs... this one for Spring of 2026. You will notice that Spring is a time when many of the regional gems shows are held – we have organized trips to the Demming and T or C shows, both of which have their own local field trips for rock hounding. For those loving the rocks and minerals, we encourage you to attend one or more of the shows to learn about mineral forms and occurrence, self collecting, jewelry stones, and even lapidary techniques.



Following on from our collaboration with UTEP in the Fall 2025 program, we are highlighting the upcoming colloquium held by the Department of Earth, Environmental and Resource Sciences (DEERS) in April followed by a joint field trip to check out the mega-breccia in the Franklins where we will hear professors talk about the unique setting where precambrian igneous boulders were incorporated into much younger marine limestones on "Franklin Island". This season we have an expanded team of volunteer trip leaders who are working hard to show off their favorite places to enjoy the outdoors – be sure to sign up, notify a friend, dust off your hiking shoes and join us. Remember, we are an all volunteer organization and rely on donations...as always send us any suggestions, sign up as a volunteer, or make a donation to help our mission. Rock on!



2026 Spring Program

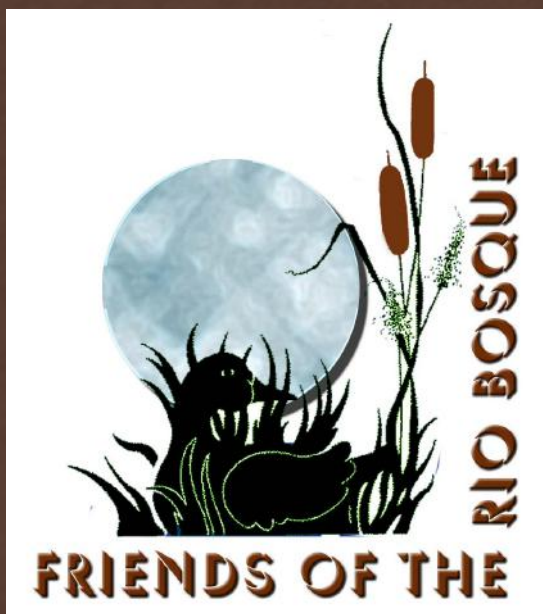
MAR 01	Junior Rangers: A Family Exploration Day Hueco Tanks
MAR 07	Rio Bosque Park Nature Walk
MAR 07	T or C Gem & Rock Show
MAR 14	RockHound RoundUp (Deming Gem & Mineral Show)
MAR 15	Slot Canyon Hike
MAR 21	El Paso Tin Mines
MAR 22	Hueco Tanks Tribal Perspective Tour
MAR 26	 Monthly Social
MAR 28	Tonuco Fluorite Mine & Petroglyphs
MAR 29	Junior Rangers: Discovering the Franklin Mountains
MAR 29	Outdoor Yoga in the Franklin Mountains: Movement, Breath, and Connection



2026 Spring Program

APR 04	Lost Dog Trail & Rescue Runners 915	
APR 09	 Colloquium	
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Collaborators





Trip Leaders



Amy Bocanegra

Artist, Explorer

Angelica Paz

Explorer, Educator, Queen & King



Brenna April

UTEP Student: Geology

Brian Gillis

Board Secretary, Educator



Cristian Trujillo

Photographer, Birder



Daniel Fox

Educator, Native Plant Expert



Trip Leaders



Eugenio Lucero

Climber, Mountaineer



Fernanda Lugo

Environmental Activist



Dr. Jay Champan

Geologist, Professor



Dr. Katalina Salas

Outreach Lead, Environmental Scientist



Dr. Ken Steigman

Ecologist, Educator

Lance Robert

Board President, Geologist





Trip Leaders



Lexi Dominguez

Educator, Experienced Hiking Guide

Dr. Melissa Ortega

Geoscience researcher, Educator



Pam Almodovar

Educator, Animal Science

Paul Galvan

Educator, Geologist



Dr. Paul Hyder

Ecologist, Educator, Musician

Trinity Fushille

UTEP Student: Geology



MAR

01

Junior Rangers: A Family Exploration Day Hueco Tanks



Date & Time: Sunday, March 1, 2026 · 9:00am

Location: Hueco Tanks State Park

Meet-up Location: Park Entrance Gate

Join Celebration of Our Mountains for a special Junior Rangers experience designed for families with young explorers! This easy, ranger-style program takes place on short, mostly flat trails and introduces children and caregivers to the natural and cultural wonders of Hueco Tanks through hands-on activities and guided exploration. Participants will learn about desert ecology, cultural history, rock art preservation, and responsible outdoor stewardship while moving through one of the most culturally significant landscapes in our region. Activities emphasize curiosity, storytelling, observation, and respect for the land. This event has limited capacity to the first 25 individuals.

Distance: ~0.5–1 mile total

Duration: ~3 hours

Difficulty: Easy (family friendly; ideal for elementary-aged children)

Best for: Children and families

Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, water, sun protection, and snacks

Important: Hueco Tanks is a culturally sensitive site. Participants are expected to follow all park guidelines, remain on designated trails, and respect cultural resources at all times.

Trip Lead: Lexi Dominguez, **Contact:** 915-873-7323, **Co-Lead:** Amy Bocanegra



MAR
07

Rio Bosque Park Nature Walk



Date & Time: Saturday, March 7, 2026 · 4:00 PM

Location: Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Meet-up Location: Bridge by the River side canal

Join us for an easy, family-friendly afternoon walk through the Rio Bosque Wetlands, one of El Paso's most important environmental restoration sites. This guided nature walk follows flat dirt and gravel paths and offers participants an opportunity to explore the unique riparian ecosystems that exist along the Rio Grande corridor. As we move through the wetlands, participants will learn about habitat restoration efforts, migratory bird pathways, and the role of water systems in shaping life along the U.S./Mexico border. This experience is designed to be accessible and engaging for all ages, making it ideal for families, first-time participants, and anyone interested in learning more about local ecosystems without the physical demands of a traditional hike.

Distance: ~1–1.5 miles

Duration: ~2 hours

Difficulty: Easy (family friendly)

Best for: All ages

Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, water, sun protection, and camera/binoculars if you have them.

Important: Trails are flat but include dirt and gravel surfaces; dress for weather and outdoor conditions.

Trip Lead: Katalina Salas, **Contact:** katsalas7@gmail.com, **Co-Lead:** Cristian Trujillo



MAR
07

Truth or Consequences Rock & Gem Show



Date & Time: Saturday, March 7, 2026 · 7:45 AM

Location: Sierra County Fairgrounds, 2953 S Broadway, T or C NM

Meet-up Location: Dairy Queen/Speedway gas station at Transmountain and I-10 (6990 N Desert Blvd, 79912)

Join us for a day trip to the annual Sierra County Rock and Gem Society (SCRAGS) Rock & Gem Show, a favorite regional event for mineral enthusiasts, collectors, and curious newcomers alike. Participants will have time to explore the rock and gem show floor, featuring mineral and fossil specimens, lapidary arts, educational displays, door prizes, and opportunities to engage directly with collectors and experts. For those interested, optional field trips are available through SCRAGS, including visits to the Palm Park barite and fluorite site and the “candy” rhyolite site near Hatch. These field trips are primarily vehicle-based with little to no hiking and are scheduled to depart around 10:00 AM. Field trip participation is optional, and details are provided directly by the rock show organizers.

In addition to the show and field trips, participants may choose to explore the town of Truth or Consequences, known for its historic mineral hot springs, local dining, and relaxed desert charm. This trip offers flexibility, allowing participants to tailor their experience based on interest and energy level. Note: we will depart promptly at 8:00 AM to ensure arrival in time for scheduled field trips and show activities. Entry is free.

Distance: Minimal walking; mostly indoor and vehicle-based

Duration: ~6 hours total (including travel)

Difficulty: Easy (all experience levels welcome)

Best for: All ages

Bring: Comfortable clothing, water, snacks, sun protection, cash or card for vendors

Trip Lead: Lance Robert, **Contact:** hlswrob@yahoo.com, **Co-Lead:** Amy Bocanegra.



MAR
14

RockHound RoundUp (Deming Gem & Mineral Show)

Date & Time: Saturday, March 14, 2026 · 10AM

Location: Deming, NM

Meet-up Location: Dairy Queen/Speedway gas station at Transmountain and I-10 (6990 N Desert Blvd, 79912)

Join us for RockHound RoundUp, a relaxed, all-ages trip to the Deming Gem & Mineral Show, one of the Southwest's long-running gatherings for mineral enthusiasts, collectors, and curious learners. This easy, low-physical-demand experience centers on exploring indoor and outdoor exhibitor spaces rather than hiking trails. Participants will have time to browse a wide range of mineral specimens, fossils, lapidary art, jewelry, and educational displays while engaging directly with vendors, collectors, and subject-matter experts. Throughout the visit, participants are encouraged to ask questions, handle specimens, and learn about the geology behind Southwest mineral diversity, how specimens are formed, and the science and ethics of collecting. The show environment makes this an ideal entry point for beginners, while still offering depth and variety for experienced rockhounds. The flexible format allows participants to move at their own pace, making this trip accessible for families, older adults, and anyone interested in geology without the physical demands of a traditional hike.

Distance: Minimal walking on paved and packed surfaces

Duration: Half-day experience

Difficulty: Easy (all ages and experience levels welcome)

Best for: All ages

Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, water, snacks, sun protection, and cash or card for vendors

Important: This trip focuses on exhibitor spaces; no field collecting is planned.

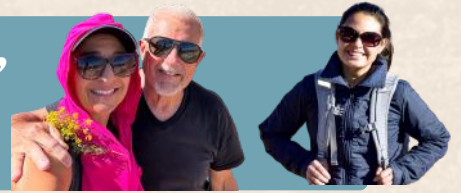
Trip Lead: Celebration of Our Mountains Members



MAR

15

Slot Canyon Hike: Erosion, Water, and Desert Landscapes



Date & Time: Sunday, March 15, 2026 · 7:45AM

Location: Las Cruces, NM

Meet-up Location: Dairy Queen/Speedway gas station at Transmountain and I-10 (6990 N Desert Blvd, 79912)

Join Celebration of Our Mountains for a guided slot canyon hike that explores one of the desert's most striking landforms, narrow canyons carved by erosion and episodic flash flooding. This moderate out-and-back hike winds through sandy washes and rocky passages, offering participants a close-up look at how water, sediment, and time shape desert landscapes. As we move through the canyon, participants will learn about desert geomorphology, sediment transport, and canyon formation, with hands-on discussions focused on reading rock layers, recognizing erosional features, and understanding the role of intense but infrequent rainfall events. The narrow walls and changing terrain provide dramatic scenery and a tangible sense of how dynamic desert environments can be. This hike is designed for teens and adults and requires comfort navigating uneven terrain, sandy sections, and confined spaces. The pace allows time for observation, discussion, and photography while maintaining a steady forward movement through the canyon.

Distance: ~2–3 miles round trip

Duration: 3 hours

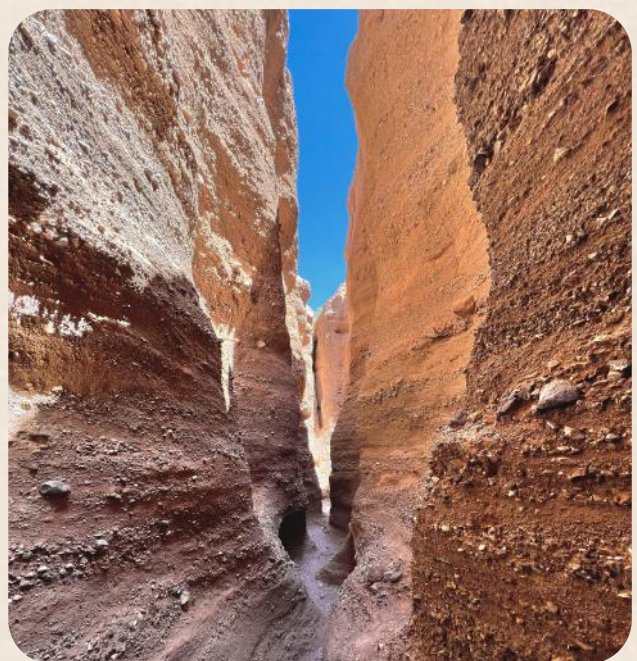
Difficulty: Moderate

Best for: Teens and adults

Bring: Sturdy hiking shoes, water, sun protection, snacks, and a small backpack

Important: Slot canyons are weather-dependent environments. This hike will be canceled or rescheduled if rain or flash flooding is forecast.

Trip Lead: Angelica Paz, **Contact:** 915-525-5081, **Co-Lead:** Melissa Ortega



MAR
21

El Paso Tin Mines Hike: Mining History & Desert Geology



Date & Time: Saturday, March 21, 2026 · 7:45AM

Location: Franklin Mountains State Park

Meet-up Location: Jon Cunningham Boulevard, parking lot Chuck Heinrich Memorial Park.

Join us for a moderate, geology-focused hike through the historic tin mining district of the Franklin Mountains, where El Paso's industrial past meets complex desert geology. This guided out-and-back hike explores remnants of early mining activity while offering participants a deeper understanding of how geology, resources, and human history intersect in this iconic mountain range. As we move along rocky trails with gradual elevation gain, participants will learn about the region's tin mining history, the economic importance of mineral extraction, and the role of igneous processes in the formation of mineral deposits. Discussions will connect visible landscape features to broader geologic processes, helping participants interpret rock types, structures, and landforms encountered along the route. The hike rewards participants with sweeping desert views and opportunities to pause for observation, discussion, and reflection on how the Franklin Mountains have shaped, and been shaped by, human use over time. This experience is best suited for teens and adults who are comfortable hiking on uneven, rocky terrain.

Distance: ~3 miles round trip

Duration: ~3-4 hours

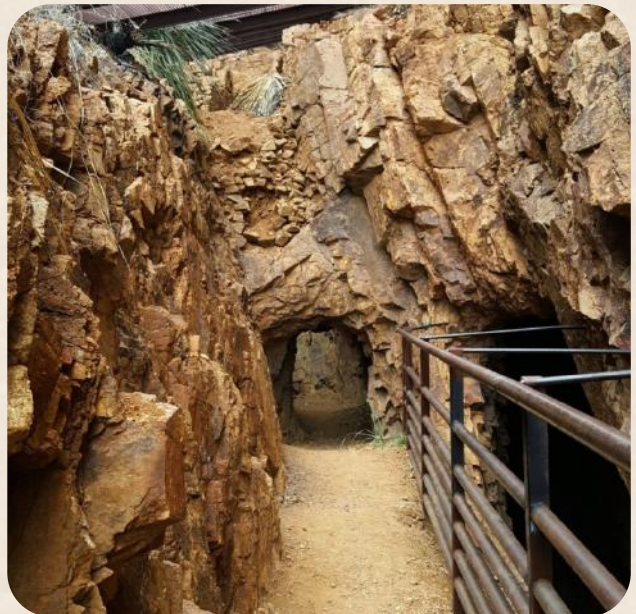
Difficulty: Moderate, rocky surfaces and elevation gain; participants should be prepared for sustained hiking in desert conditions.

Best for: Teens and adults

Bring: Sturdy hiking shoes, water, sun protection, snacks, and a small backpack

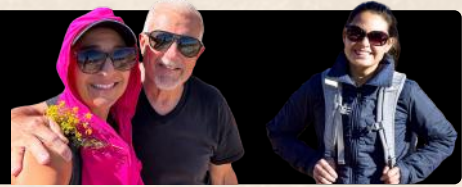
Trip Lead: Lexi Dominguez,

Contact: 915-873-7323, **Co-Lead:** Eugenio Lucero



MAR
22

Hueco Tanks Tribal Perspective Tour



Date & Time: Sunday, March 22, 2026, 8:45AM

Location: Hueco Tanks State Park & Historic Site

Meet-up Location: Park Entrance Gate

Join us for a guided walking experience at Hueco Tanks that centers Indigenous perspectives on land, history, and stewardship. This tour invites participants to engage thoughtfully with one of the most culturally significant landscapes in the region, emphasizing listening, reflection, and respectful presence. This easy, low-impact walk focuses on cultural narratives, rock art interpretation, and the enduring importance of Hueco Tanks to Indigenous communities past and present. Rather than emphasizing physical challenge, the experience prioritizes understanding how place, memory, and responsibility intersect, and how cultural knowledge shapes relationships with land over time.

Participants will be encouraged to consider multiple ways of knowing the landscape, including oral histories, cultural continuity, and stewardship practices that extend beyond recreation. The pace is intentionally slow, with frequent pauses for discussion, observation, and reflection. This experience is best suited for adults and older teens who are interested in cultural learning and are willing to engage with the site thoughtfully and respectfully.

Distance: ~1 mile total

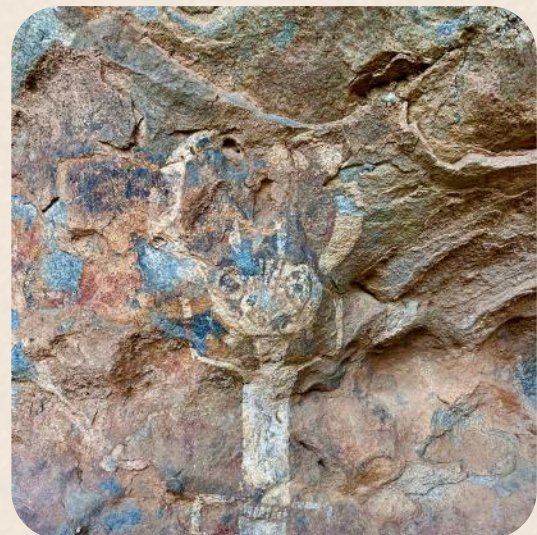
Duration: 3 hours

Difficulty: Easy

Best for: Adults and older teens

Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, water, sun protection, and an open, respectful mindset

Important: Hueco Tanks is a culturally sensitive site. Participants are expected to follow all park guidelines, remain on designated trails, and respect cultural resources at all times.



Trip Lead: Angelica Paz, **Contact:** 915-525-5081, **Co-Lead:** Melissa Ortega

MAR
26



March Monthly Social

Date & Time: Thursday, March 26, 2026, 6:00PM

Location: Angry Owl Southwest Grill & Cantina, 4799 N Mesa St, El Paso, TX 79912

We're excited to invite you to our monthly gathering. The evening will feature a special lecture from an expert, more details to come!

- Enjoy delicious food and drinks
- Connect with wonderful company

Whether you're an experienced geology, ecology, birds, hiking, yoga or just curious about getting outside, this event is sure to be both informative and fun. Feel free to bring along a friend or two—everyone is welcome! We can't wait to see you for a night filled with laughter, learning, and camaraderie.



MAR
28

Tonuco Fluorite Mine & Petroglyphs



Date & Time: Saturday, March 28, 2026 · 7:45AM

Location: Near Tonuco Mountain NM (~1 hr north of EP)

Meet-up Location: Dairy Queen/Speedway gas station at Transmountain and I-10 (6990 N Desert Blvd, 79912)

Join Celebration of Our Mountains for an exploration-focused hike near Tonuco Mountain that weaves together geology, mineral resources, and cultural history in a rugged desert landscape. This guided outing introduces participants to fluorite mineralization, volcanic features, and ancient petroglyphs, offering a layered understanding of how natural processes and human presence have shaped this area across time. As we hike across rocky and uneven terrain, participants will examine fluorite deposits and volcanic rock features while learning about the geologic processes responsible for mineral formation. Along the route, we will also discuss the cultural significance of petroglyphs in the region and what these markings reveal about long-standing human relationships with the land.

The hike balances hands-on geology discussions with thoughtful engagement around cultural resources, emphasizing observation, interpretation, and respect. This experience is best suited for teens and adults who are comfortable hiking on uneven ground and interested in both earth science and cultural history.

Distance: ~2 miles total

Duration: approximately 6 hours

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult

Best for: Teens and adults

Bring: Sturdy hiking shoes, water, sun protection, snacks, and a small backpack

Important: Petroglyphs and cultural features are protected resources. Participants must remain on designated routes and observe without touching or altering any features.

Trip Lead: Brian Gillis, **Contact:** 915-861-2990, **Co-Lead:** Paul Galvan



MAR
29

Junior Rangers: Discovering the Franklin Mountains



Date & Time: Sunday, March 29, 2026 · 9AM

Location: Franklin Mountains State Park

Meet-up Location: Park Headquarters Parking Lot, 2900 Tom Mays Access Rd. 79911

Join us for a Junior Rangers experience designed especially for families and elementary-aged children who are ready to explore the Franklin Mountains together. This easy, interactive program follows short park trails and introduces young participants to the desert environment through movement, observation, and hands-on learning. Along the way, children and caregivers will learn about desert plants, wildlife, basic geology, and “Leave No Trace” principles in an age-appropriate and engaging way. The program includes frequent stops for discussion, activities, and questions, allowing children to build confidence outdoors while discovering how scientists and stewards observe and care for natural places. With its low difficulty level and flexible pace, this experience is ideal for first-time hikers, curious young scientists, and families looking for a welcoming introduction to outdoor learning in one of El Paso’s most iconic landscapes.

Distance: ~1 mile total

Duration: 2– 3 hours

Difficulty: Easy (family friendly; ideal for elementary-aged children)

Best for: Children and families

Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, water, sun protection, snacks, and curiosity

Important: Children must be accompanied by an adult. Participants are expected to stay on designated trails and follow park guidelines.

Trip Lead: Pam Almodovar, **Co-Lead:** Lexi Dominguez, **Contact:** 915-873-7323



MAR
29

Outdoor Yoga in the Franklin Mountains: Movement, Breath, and Connection



Date & Time: Sunday, March 29, 2026 · 8AM

Location: Franklin Mountains State Park

Meet-up Location: Park Headquarters Parking Lot, 2900 Tom Mays Access Rd. 79911

Join Celebration of Our Mountains for a grounding outdoor yoga experience set within the natural beauty of the Franklin Mountains. This all-levels yoga session invites participants to slow down, breathe deeply, and reconnect with their bodies while surrounded by desert landscapes and open skies. Led by Fernanda Lugo, the practice will focus on gentle, accessible movement, mindful breathing, and presence in nature. The session is designed to be welcoming for beginners and experienced practitioners alike, with options offered throughout to support different bodies and comfort levels. Rather than intensity or performance, the emphasis is on connection—to breath, to place, and to community.

This experience offers a restorative complement to Celebration of Our Mountains' hiking and exploration programs, creating space for reflection, balance, and embodied engagement with the landscape. This is an outdoor event on natural ground. Participants should expect uneven surfaces and variable weather conditions.

Duration: ~60 minutes

Difficulty: Easy (all levels welcome)

Best for: Teens and adults

Bring: Yoga mat or towel, water, sun protection, and comfortable clothing

Yoga Instructor: Fernanda Lugo, Contact: lumiferz@gmail.com



APR
04

Lost Dog Trail & Rescue Runners 915



Date & Time: Saturday, April 4, 2026 · 8:00 AM – ~10:00 AM

Meet-up Location: EPAS Westside Adoption Center, 5625 Confetti Dr, El Paso, TX 79912

Attendance Capacity: 15 participants

Join us for a meaningful morning at the Lost Dog Nature Preserve, where outdoor recreation meets community connection and conservation. This trip includes a special partnership with Rescue Runners 915, a local nonprofit that helps shelter dogs get exercise, enrichment, and visibility outside the shelter environment. Eligible participants will be paired with a shelter dog to walk during the hike, supporting both physical activity and socialization for these pups. Participants will hike approximately two miles through the Lost Dog Nature Preserve, a protected area stewarded by Frontera Land Alliance. Along the way, we'll learn about the importance of conserving natural spaces within urban environments and how protected trails contribute to ecological health and community well-being.

Distance: ~2 miles (loop trail)

Duration: ~2 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Best for: Adults

Bring: Sturdy walking shoes, water, sun protection, and a small backpack

Important: Participants must be 18 years or older to be assigned a shelter dog. No personal pets allowed to ensure the safety of shelter dogs, one dog per vehicle. All dog-handling guidelines provided by Rescue Runners 915 must be followed.



Trip Lead: Katalina Salas, **Co-Lead:** Pam Almodovar, **Contact:** katsalas7@gmail.com



****Limited to 15 participants. Advance registration through Eventbrite is required, and participants must present their Eventbrite ticket at check-in. No walk-ins permitted.**

[Register Here!](#)



UTEP Department of Earth, Environmental, and Resource Sciences Colloquium

April 9th, 10th, 11th

Geology of the Mega-breccia of the "Franklin Island" in the El Paso Group Limestones

Date & Time: Saturday, April 11, 2026 · 09:45 AM – ~1:00 PM

Meet-up Location: Thunderbird Trailhead, 1110 Thunderbird Dr., El Paso, TX 79912

This trip is offered in collaboration with the UTEP Department of Earth, Environmental, and Resource Sciences (DEERS) and is designed for adults and students interested in Earth history and geologic processes. During this guided hike, participants will examine large-scale breccia deposits formed when portions of the Franklin Mountains were uplifted out of the sea during Cambrian–Ordovician time, approximately 500 million years ago. Discussions will focus on depositional environments of the time, tectonic uplifting, and the nature of the great unconformity. The route follows an arroyo and involves hiking on uneven, bouldery terrain. Along the way, participants will stop frequently to observe outcrops, interpret rock relationships, and connect visible features to broader regional geologic history. The emphasis is on careful observation, scientific interpretation, and understanding how the Franklin Mountains fit into the larger geologic story of the Southwest.

Distance: ~2 miles round trip

Duration: ~3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Best for: Adults and students comfortable on uneven terrain

Bring: Sturdy hiking shoes, water, sun protection, snacks, and a small backpack

Important: Terrain includes loose rock, boulders, and uneven surfaces, and note there is an \$8 per day, per vehicle park fee, or free street parking nearby.

Trip Lead: Dr. Jay Chapman, **Coordinator:** Lance Robert
(hlswrob@yahoo.com)

APR

12

Kilbourne Hole Volcanic Crater Tour



Date & Time: Sunday, April 12, 2026 · Time TBD

Location: Kilbourne Hole, NM

Visit one of the Southwest's most spectacular volcanic features! Kilbourne Hole is a maar crater formed by a powerful volcanic explosion thousands of years ago. Today it's a National Natural Landmark and one of the best places to see mantle xenoliths (chunks of Earth's mantle brought to the surface).

Distance: ~1 mile

Duration: ~2–3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Best for: All ages

Bring: Walking shoes, water, sun protection

Trip Leader: Brenna April, **Co-Lead:** Trinity Fushille, **Contact:** btapril@miners.utep.edu



APR
18

Who's Running Around the Desert at Night?



Date & Time: Saturday, April 18, 2026 · 6:30 PM – 9:30 PM

Location: Franklin Mountains State Park

(Specific meeting details provided to registered participants only)

Join Celebration of Our Mountains for a unique evening adventure into the nocturnal desert. This guided night hike offers participants a rare opportunity to experience the Franklin Mountains after sunset, when cooler temperatures and darkness reveal a very different side of the desert ecosystem. After a brief orientation and safety briefing, we'll set out on a ~1-mile round-trip hike, pausing along the way to observe desert plants, animal tracks, and wildlife behaviors that are often hidden during daylight hours. Participants will learn how nocturnal animals adapt to the desert environment and how plants and landscapes change once the sun goes down.

Distance: ~1 mile

Duration: 2–3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Best for: All ages

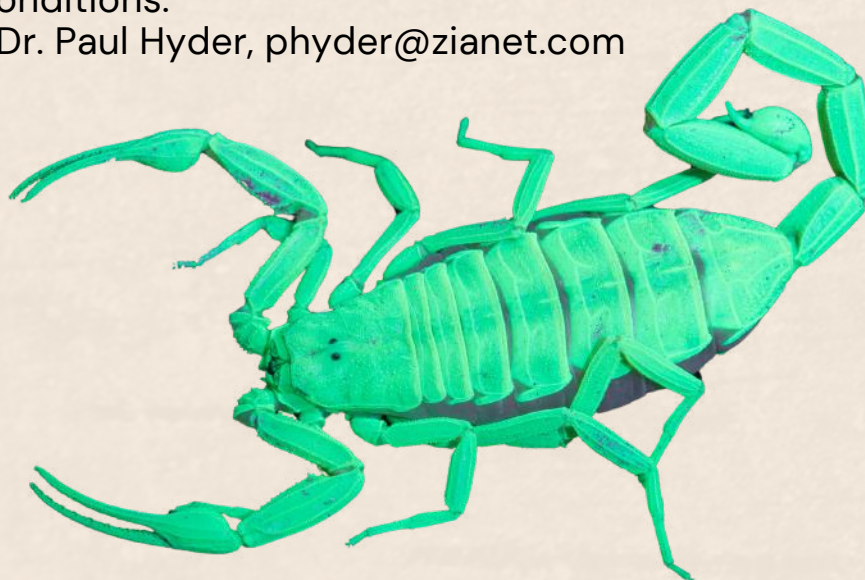
Bring: Good walking shoes, water, snacks, and a reliable flashlight or headlamp

Important: A Texas Parks & Wildlife park pass is required and must be purchased in advance online. Participants should be comfortable hiking in low-light conditions.

Trip Leader: Dr. Paul Hyder, phyder@zianet.com



****Limited to 25 participants. Advance registration through Eventbrite is required, and participants must present their Eventbrite ticket at check-in. No walk-ins permitted.**



[Register Here!](#)

APR
19

Spring Canyon Hike & Geology Tour



Date & Time: Sunday, April 19, 2026 · 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Spring Canyon

Meeting Location: Fairacres Post Office, 3800 W Picacho Ave, Fairacres, NM

This moderate hike (approx. 3 miles) explores Spring Canyon just to the west of Picacho Peak and south of the Robledo Mountains. Participants will learn about the flora and fauna of the canyon that are supported by a small perennial spring that provides water throughout the year. In addition, the area is a story for land preservation and is a classroom for the interesting Tertiary volcanic geology of the area. This trip is suitable for teens and adults; the hike involves a moderately strenuous hike within a rocky arroyo and panoramic canyon views. The trip lead will be Ken Steigman who is a local resident and member of the Las Cruces Native Plant Society.

Distance: ~3 miles

Duration: ~4–5 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Best for: Adults and teens

Bring: Hiking shoes, water, snacks, sun protection

Trip Leader: Ken Steigman, **Co-Lead:** Lance Robert, **Contact:** klmecsteigman@gmail.com



APR
25

Oro Grande Mining District, Native Plants & Rockhounding



Date & Time: Saturday, April 25, 2026 · 9:00 AM – ~3:00 PM

Meet-up Location: Circle K at Hwy 54 & Transmountain (next to Lowe's), El Paso, TX

Join us for a day of exploring the Oro Grande Mining District, where geology, mining history, desert botany, and hands-on rockhounding come together in a rugged desert landscape. This outing is designed for adults and children 10 years and older who are comfortable navigating uneven terrain and desert terrain. Participants will learn about the mining history of the district while exploring abandoned mining features and examining the mineral resources that drew early prospectors to the area. Along the route, we will also focus on native desert plants, discussing the unique plant species and hybridization in this area.

Rockhounding is a key component of this trip, and participants will have opportunities to collect colorful mineral specimens (where allowed) while learning about collecting practices and land stewardship. The experience emphasizes observation and respect for both natural and historical features. The hike includes uneven ground, rocky surfaces and steep terrain. A portion of the trip requires travel on dirt roads, making high-clearance vehicles necessary. Carpooling will be coordinated as needed.

Distance: ~2 miles total walking

Duration: ~5–6 hours (including travel and stops)

Difficulty: Moderate (participants will have choices on amount of walking)

Best for: Adults and children 10+

Bring: Sturdy hiking shoes, water, sun protection, snacks, collection containers/backpack

Trip Lead: Lance Robert, **Contact:** (hlswhrob@yahoo.com), **Co-Lead / Plant Expert:** Daniel Fox



APR
26

Mammoth Rock Trail: Limestone, Erosion, and Desert Landscapes



Date & Time: Sunday, April 26, 2026 · 7:45AM

Location: Franklin Mountains State Park

Meet-up Location: Smugglers Pass Unit, Franklin Mountains State Park, Mammoths Trunk Trail, El Paso, TX 79904

Join us for a challenging and rewarding hike to Mammoth Rock, one of the Franklin Mountains' most striking limestone formations. This out-and-back hike offers participants the opportunity to explore how erosion, uplift, and long-term geologic processes have shaped the dramatic desert landscape visible throughout the park. As we navigate rocky trails with sustained elevation gain, participants will learn about limestone geology, erosion patterns, and the desert ecosystems that persist in this rugged environment. Along the way, we'll pause to examine rock features, discuss landscape formation, and connect visible landforms to the broader geologic history of the Franklin Mountains.

This hike provides a strong physical workout and is best suited for teens and adults who are comfortable hiking longer distances on uneven terrain. The effort is rewarded with expansive views across the surrounding desert and opportunities for photography, reflection, and deeper appreciation of the region's natural history.

Distance: ~4 miles out and back

Duration: 3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate, Trails are rocky and include elevation gain; participants should be prepared for sustained hiking in desert conditions.

Best for: Teens and adults.

Bring: Sturdy hiking shoes, water, sun protection, snacks, and a small backpack

Trip Lead: Lexi Dominguez, **Contact:** 915-873-7323



APR
30



April Monthly Social

Date & Time: Thursday, April 30, 2026, 6:00PM

Location: Angry Owl Southwest Grill & Cantina, 4799 N Mesa St, El Paso, TX 79912

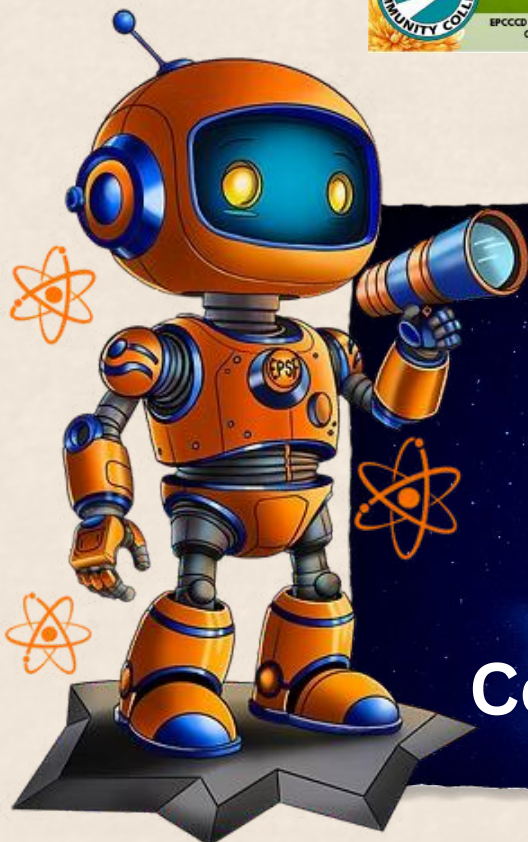
We're excited to invite you to our monthly gathering. Gather with your fellow Earth nerds for an Earth Day bash that's all about mingling with experts and your fellow community member. We will also feature a special lecture from an expert, more details to come!

- Enjoy delicious food and drinks
- Connect with wonderful company

Dive into tasty treats, spirited chats, and maybe even a quirky Earth Day activity or two. Whether you're a seasoned eco-warrior or just dipping your toes into the green scene, this event promises to be both enlightening and a hoot. Don't miss the fun, see you there!



Community Events We're Attending



**El Paso Science
Festival
April 18 & 19
El Paso
Convention Center**

OUR FRIENDS



BLUE LIZARD YOGA



UTEP
DEERS

SUPPORT OUR MISSION SPONSOR AN EVENT!



We invite you to support our mission by sponsoring an event. Sponsorships help cover essential costs like permits, expert guides, and educational materials, ensuring we can continue offering these experiences to the community for free. As a sponsor, you'll have your name featured on the event and across all our social media and promotions, plus recognition at the event itself. It's a great way to give back, show your support for outdoor education, and connect with our amazing community.

Contact us for details on how you can help!



Contact Us!

SCAN ME!

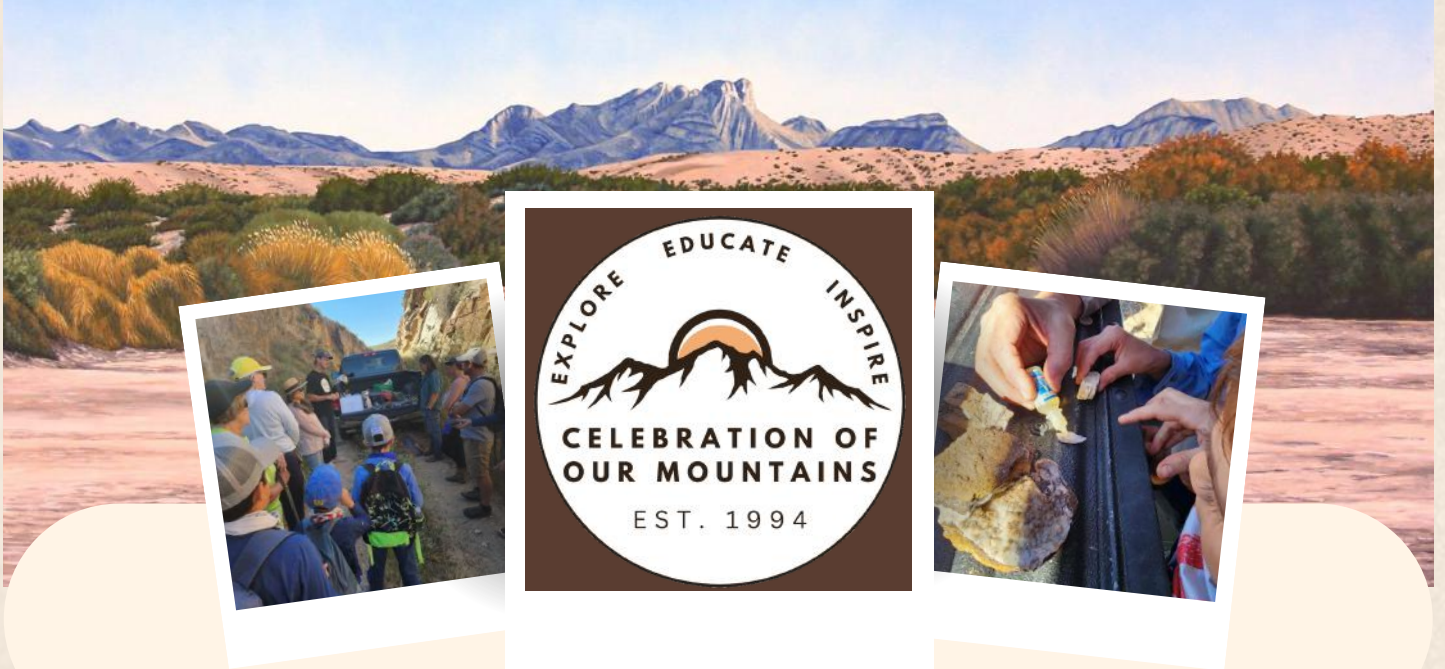


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Donate to Get more people outside!

We're waving our fundraising flag and hoping you'll join the parade! We'd love your donations to keep our programs thriving and our expertise shining bright during our adventures!

SCAN ME



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[Link to Donate](#)

NOTES:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slightly aged or off-white appearance. The edges of the paper are visible against a dark background.

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