

Radio Broadcast



CLIENT: TEXAS STATE PARKS BOARD
PRODUCT:
PROGRAM: THE PARKS OF TEXAS
TIME: 15 mins

DATE: June 18 1939
CONTINUITY: Roger Busfield
PRODUCTION:
ANNOUNCER:

SOUND EFFECT:
10 SEC.

(COMES ON - FADES - REMAINS MUTED)

(A.) 10 SEC.

Presenting THE PARKS OF TEXAS with Roger Busfield as your narrator.

SOUND EFFECT:
10 SEC.

(PICKS UP - FADES INTO

MUSIC: 30 SEC.

(COMES ON - FADES - REMAINS MUTED)

(A.) 30 SEC.

There is a fascination and thrill in watching the pages of time turn back as you follow the trails of LaSalle, Cortez, and the others who pierced the earliest frontiers. The romance of the Texas of long ago lingers today for thousands because of the care that has been taken to mark the sites of historic events. Today -- we are going to visit one of these historic sites -- the PALO DURO CANYON STATE PARK.

MUSIC: 30 SEC.

(COMES ON - FADES - OUT)

(B.)

Good Afternoon, Everyone! Well -- across a plain as level as the sea becalmed -- without so much as a tree or shrub or a bit of rising ground by which to calculate their progress -- a company of a thousand souls, noblemen, servants, and soldiers, four hundred years ago, strayed and hoped, searching for cities of gold as rich as Montezuma's ill-fated

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Tenochtitlan, where the conquering Cortez had appropriated unto himself the precious relics of an ancient civilization. Those one thousand wanderers -- followers of Francisco Vasquez de Coronado -- sought the fabled "Seven Cities of Cibolo" -- and -- found instead -- a limitless tableland, traversed in the year 1540 by roving Indians and thundering herds of Buffalo. Weary to distraction -- Coronado's followers came at last upon an incredible and unexpected gash in the level sunlit plain -- a league wide from one side to the other -- with a river in the bottom, and full of grotesque formations remindful of the devils and gnomes that -- according to legend -- people the subterranean Stygian caves. A day was set aside for feasting and prayer in thankful acknowledgement of the discovery of this marvel of nature's handiwork.

Within the depths of the canyon, the Palo Duro of Texas, buffalo and deer were plentiful, and here in a wilderness of contradictory vegetation, ranging from the graceful and sentinel-like cedar to the semi-tropical fern, Coronado's company camped indefinitely, departing after a while to leave it for three centuries the habitat of nomadic bands of Indians in search of the "Palo Duro" -- or hard wood, from which to fashion their tepee poles. Buffalo chips answered the purpose for fuel to keep them warm while the whistling winds sped across the prairies, level as the Pampas of the Argentine; but for the arrow shafts and tent poles wood was necessary, and within the canyon they found the honey-locust and the elm, the hackberry, the ash and the walnut, beside the crystalline rivulets filled with pond lilies, which, every few hundred feet, emptied into the main stream.

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Into this canyon, which is one of the geological wonders of the world -- Col. Charles Goodnight, known to the Indians as the "Leopard Coat Man - Dangerous Man", descended in 1876 to become the first cattlemán of the Panhandle, and to gain international fame as the founder of the Goodnight-Loving and the Goodnight-Chisholm trails. So steep were the walls that the Goodnight wagon had to be dismantled and lowered with ropes, and down its precipitous sides stumbled his herd of Longhorn cattle to displace the Buffalo, ten thousand strong, whose retreating hooves thundered with a tremendous echo as they pushed out of the canyon.

Living in baronial style in a canyon which stretches across six counties, Col. Goodnight, backed by the fortune of John G. Adair, of England, put into force his famous "Winchester Quarantine" to keep out nesters and cattle rustlers, treated with the Indians, and enabled the Panhandle to accomplish its settlement with less bloodshed and fewer killings than any other frontier of like size in America.

Although the Palso Duro was the scene of Gen. MacKenzie's great battle with the Comanches, Kiowa^s and Cheyennes, whose tepee poles still stand within the walls, and whose bullets and tomahawks scarred the rock precipices, Texas and the nation did not fully discover the Palo Duro Canyon until 1933, when this natural wonder of the plains was designated a TEXAS STATE PARK. Where Goodnight's cattle fattened and grew into grand championship steers, caliche roads now cut through the canyon, following the rugged rim far back into its thirty miles of length; and on the

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Permian red-beds which form its basin, and across the jagged walls, every conceivable color and shading, wind the fifty miles of bridal path laid out by the hands of Texas World War veterans as a CCC project.

On the breeze-swept brink of the Palo Duro -- the war veterans ~~at a~~
~~bit gray around the temples~~ have built El Coronado Lodge, a \$35,000 structure of three stories, so cleverly designed and located that it appears to be a part of the canyon rim. From the great windows in the dining room of the lodge, it is possible to look downward over a precipice three hundred feet high. Four miles away -- THE LIGHT HOUSE -- the best known of the many impressive formations found in the park can be clearly seen. And on display in the building are ~~some~~ fossilized bones of the Dinosaur, and many other animals that roamed ~~the~~ the plains a hundred million years ago. Indian pottery, arrow points, scalping knives, and hide scrapers -- petrified and agatized wood are also found among the relics which attract and hold the eye of the visitor in silent wonder.

And of greater interest to the students of nature are the numerous geological features that unroll themselves in colorful splendor. The gradual processes of erosion that have formed the canyon began more than a million years ago and still are in operation today. Day by day and year by year the canyon becomes slightly deeper, wider and longer. Thus the rock strata which may be compared to the pages in a gigantic book are exposed -- and when you descend ~~down~~ safe all-weather roads to the bottom of the canyon you have gone back into pre-history several ~~hundred~~ hundred million years.

For more than 30 years Floyd Studer, dean of archaeologists in that

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section of the state, has observed the natural phenomena of the Cap Rock area, and -- finding within this natural paradise -- bones of animals long ago unfamiliar to the eyes of man -- dinosaurs and huge armed lizards -- and evidences of daily life of prehistoric races that roamed the Llano Estacado, and whose communal houses must have been already in a state of ruin when the vain and glamorous emissary of the King of Spain -- gold-hungry Coronado -- trailed across the plains.

In an area free from flies, mosquitoes, insects and reptiles, where a variety of 150 birds find haven in the fall and spring -- and where the deer, buffalo, coyote and badger find a home undisturbed by the hunter -- much of Texas' history has been made.

On entering the canyon you rapidly traverse a fascinating series of varied geological formations. The first of these is made up mostly of ~~caliche~~ caliche and chert, representing the Ice Age. It was at this time that the elephant, the sabre-toothed tiger, and camel roamed the plains of West Texas.

Continuing along the highway below the rim rock you see the sedimentary beds are still light in color, which represents an even earlier chapter in the history of the ~~Earth~~ Earth.

Rocks of Triassic age in the Palo Duro Canyon State Park may be recognized by their wonderful display of varied color. Purple, yellow, brown, blue and ~~red~~ red blend and grade into each other in all the harmony of a rainbow.

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Below the ~~variegated~~ shales and sandstones of the Triassic are the brick-red sands and shales of the PERMIAN AGE. These strata were deposited as continental sediments by lakes and rivers, and are interbedded here and there with white layers of crystalline gypsum.

Near Timber Creek bridge, Triassic Point, with its red sandstone layers, tells the story of the earth as it was many million of years ago. ~~Right~~ **NEARBY** is the ~~site~~ site of a dugout used forty years ago by T-Anchor ranch hands while getting posts for the first fences in Randall County.

AND The stern profile of ~~the~~ Satanta, a noted Kiowa chief, carved by nature from the cliff that ~~bears~~ bears his name -- overlooks the roaring stream of the Palo ~~duro~~ Duro river.

Picnic unit number one is located at the old Comanche and Kiowa Indian camp ground, where the red men left rocks that were used to grind corn, mesquite beans and meat. Starting from this point, hiking enthusiasts will find the old Comanche Trail an interesting route to travel, leading through ^ggardens of huge boulders, dense growth of trees and shrubs, by Indian Springs to Point Lookout, where there is an excellent view of the canyon and its tributaries.

Artists can spend thrilling moments admiring the white, yellow, green, blue, and red formations found in Sunday Canyon. An interesting 30-minute hike can be made to the Gypsum beds, and gigantic toadstools fifty feet high, capped with huge boulders weighing many tons. Here the Devil's Tombstone towers 75 feet above the canyon bed.

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At the summit of the roller-coaster like road -- Capitol Peak dominates the ~~scene~~ scene. It takes but little imagination to view it as a Capitol building reproduced by nature -- on the one side if the House of Representatives and on the other -- the Senate chamber.

Smoky Rock garden is an area that has yielded many Indian relics and fossils to searchers. Many people enjoy hiking the winding trails with their huge boulders and deep tree filled gorges, occasionally stopping to pick up beads and arrows left by the Pueblo Indians years ago.

At cow camp, near the terminus of the gravel road, many trails branch out and canyon bird life may be seen at its best. High cliffs nearby reflect thirty shades of color changing hourly during the day; and above them are the mesas on which Indians maintained look-outs. The visitor may stay at this historic old camp ground for a day, a week, or a month in comfort with pure water, picnic tables, ovens and all the modern conveniences. Rustic lodges constructed of native materials and furnished with hand-made cedar furniture are available.

And at twilight there are glimpses of the deer silhouetted against the caprock rim -- later the coyote's call echos from rock to rock; and through the night the owl's deep hooting adds to the fascinating strangeness of this wonderland; until dawn comes with the song of wrens welcoming the new day.

Yes -- nature, in fashioning the Palo Duro, was in a generous mood,



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placing it as she did in the most unexpected spot in the world, surrounding it with numerous little hills, majestic by virtue of their very barrenness and lack of decoration. Palo Duro Canyon State Park -- a painted oasis lying in the center of hundreds of thousands of acres of undulating grassland, is the result of nature in an attitude of abundance, warm generosity, and largesse.

Be sure to include the Palo Duro State Park on your summer "must list."

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MUSIC: 20 SEC. (COMES ON - FADES - REMAINS MUTED)

(A.) 30 SEC. This program, written and narrated by Roger Busfield, has been a presentation of THE TEXAS STATE PARKS BOARD AND THE TEXAS STATE NETWORK, and originated in the studios of KNOW, Austin, TSN's affiliate for the state capitol.

MUSIC: (UP TO FILL)

(A.) _____ Y _____ speaking. This is the TEXAS STATE NETWORK.

END