

A Passion for Nature

Gay Dahlstrom first arrived at her family's historic ranch at the age of 6 and, until she died at 84, she walked the property regularly. Gay loved the connection the land gave her to her heritage and to the environment, and she always wanted to share that connection with others.

Now - thanks to Gay's vision – the public will have the opportunity to experience 384-acres of one of the state's most unique natural areas, The Gay Ruby Dahlstrom Nature Preserve ("Preserve"), at the 2,254-acre Dahlstrom Ranch on Onion Creek.



Pictured Above: A section of the Armadillo Trail (approx. 2 miles in length). This primitive loop trail makes for a moderate hike and is perfect for birders, wildlife watchers, or anyone simply wishing to see more of the preserve.

Preserve Open Hours

February—October:

Thursday - Sunday 8:00AM - 4:00PM

November—January:

Wednesday - Friday 8:00AM - 4:00PM

Preserve Closures

Gay Ruby Dahlstrom Nature Preserve will be closed to the public annually on several occasions (listed below). During those times no visitors will be allowed on the property and no public events will be held.

January 1st—5th

September 1st—8th

April 1st—8th

December 18th—31st

Contact Us

Emergency Number: 911

Park Line: 512-210-5417

Email: parks@hayscountytexas.gov

Website: www.hayscountytexas.gov/parks-and-recreation

In the event of an emergency please contact park staff or the emergency line immediately.



Gay Ruby Dahlstrom Nature Preserve

“As stewards, we believe that we have a responsibility to care for the land during our time and to leave it better than we found it for future generations”

-Gay Ruby Dahlstrom

5131 FM 967 Buda, TX, 78610

Preserve Open Hours:

Thursday - Sunday

8:00am - 4:00pm

Entrance by reservation only

Public Access Rules

1. No pets or other domesticated animals
2. No food or beverages on preserve (water is allowed)
3. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs
4. No camping
5. No smoking, vaping, or use of e-cigarettes
6. No fire or fireworks
7. No caving/tampering with caves
8. No firearms or archery equipment
9. No hunting or fishing
10. No removal or destruction of natural resources
11. No littering

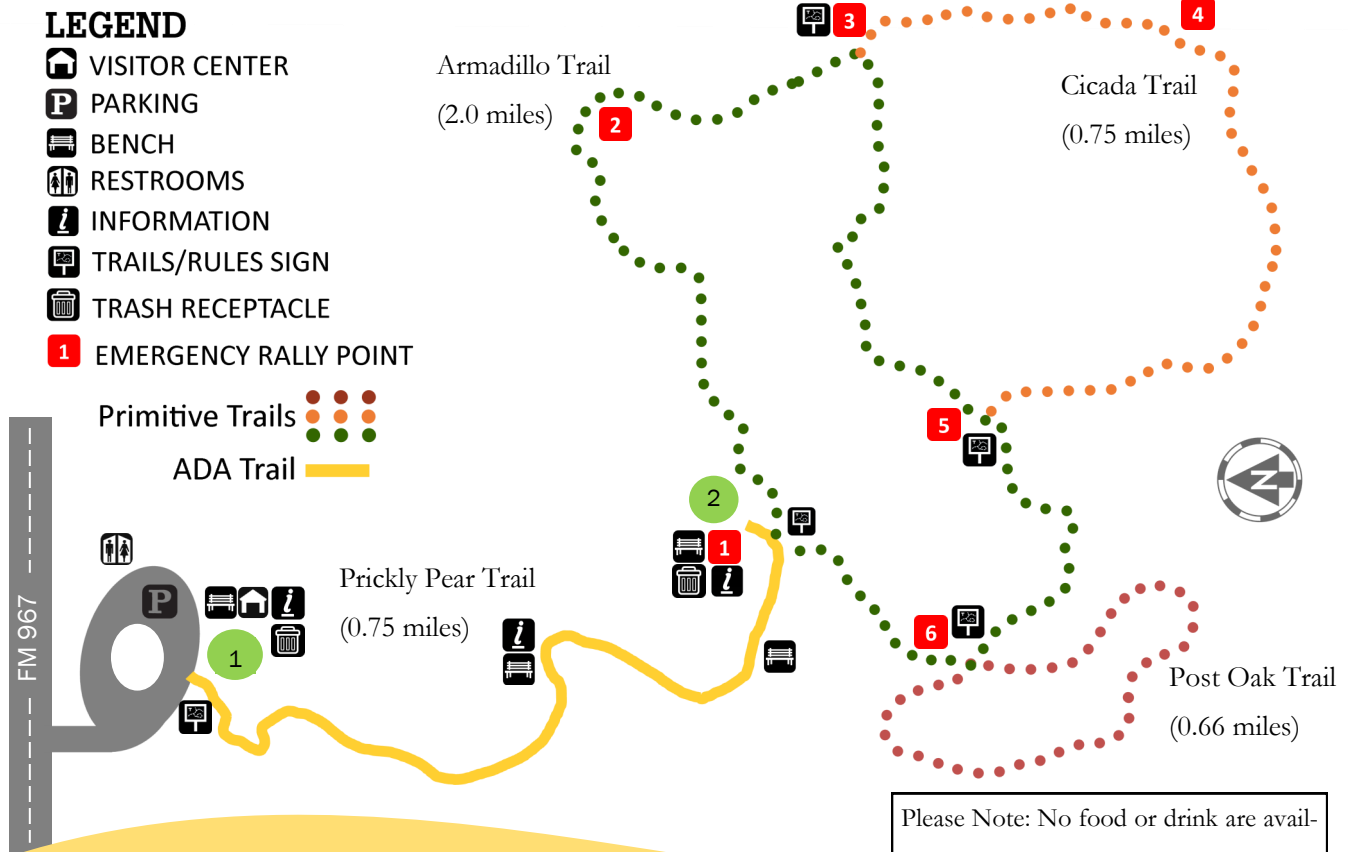
Groundwater Conservation

A **recharge zone** is a land surface area where precipitation and surface water are able to enter the aquifer. These areas are incredibly important for groundwater conservation and are sensitive to surface pollution. Gay Ruby Dahlstrom Nature Preserve lies entirely within the recharge zone of Barton Springs. Dye tracing has shown us that water entering the caves, faults, and fractures in this zone flows out of Barton Springs within a few days. Thus, the creation of this nature preserve allows for the protection and management of a valuable recharge zone.



Gay Ruby Dahlstrom Nature Preserve

Trails Map



Points of Interest

- 1 Visitor Center**
Learn about the Gay Ruby Dahlstrom Nature Preserve and the woman that made the Preserve possible.
- 2 Horseshoe Sink**
One of many karst features on the Preserve that recharge the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer.

Outdoor Etiquette

- Leave No Trace: this ethic encourages visitors to be mindful of the environment and responsible for their actions so the habitat can remain healthy for future generations to enjoy.
- Never pick flowers or pull leaves from trees. Do not touch or feed any of the wildlife you encounter.
- Please stay on established trails and use caution around overlooks and cliff edges. Existing roads are for Staff use only.
- Always be mindful of the people around you so all may enjoy the area together.