



Activities Guide to the
**Natural
Experience**

Kreische Brewery & Monument Hill

• State Historic Sites •

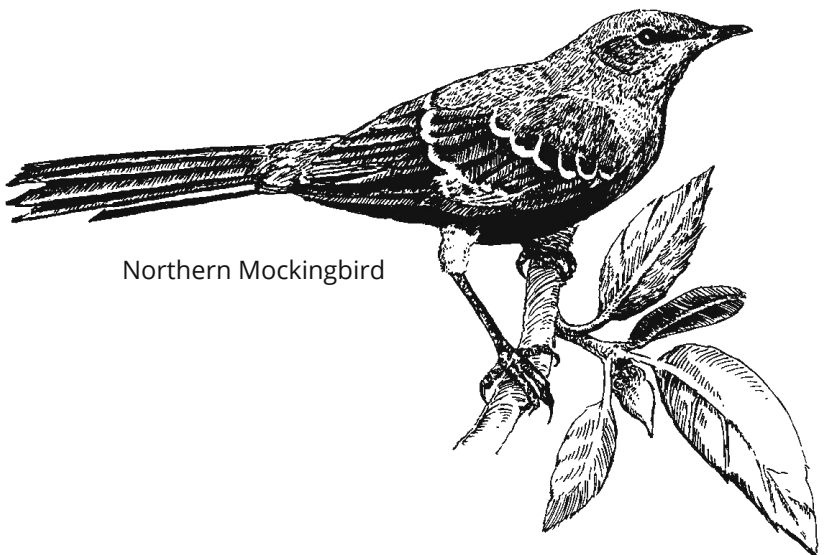
La Grange, TX

Introduction

Kreische Brewery and Monument Hill State Historic Sites are located one mile south of La Grange, TX. Historically, the land has been a place of gathering and community for over a millennium, but it has also served as a place to appreciate the natural beauty of the region.

The Texas Historical Commission manages the sites and shares the stories of the men of the Dawson and Mier Expeditions and the settlement of the Kreische family on the Bluff. In addition, there are plenty natural activities to explore during your visit, including hiking trails, picnic areas, and scenic views.

This booklet is a convenient guide to assist in identifying important historic structures intermixed with wildlife of the sites. Along the trails there are 10 areas with tidbits about historic and natural resources to enjoy. Follow along in your guide to see if you can find these special features around the sites!



Northern Mockingbird

Trail Guide

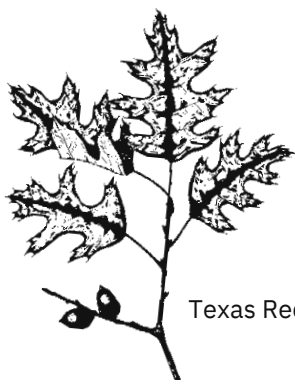
Refer to map on page 18.

1. Historic and Scenic Bluff Area

The Historic and Scenic Bluff Area provides an opportunity to learn about the Dawson Massacre, Mier Expedition, and the Black Bean Incident. It is also close to the former location of the Bluff Schuetzen Pavilion, where German-Texan society members gathered to test their target marksmanship skills.

Look for wildlife in this area such as mockingbirds, the nine-banded armadillo, and the Eastern fox squirrel. They thrive off of the food and shelter that the following trees provide.

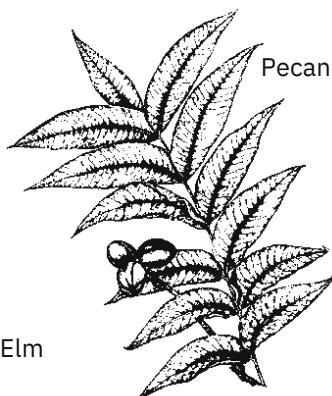
- The **Texas red oak** is native to Texas and is located on the south side of the Interpretive Shelter.
- Settlers used **Cedar elm** occasionally for wheel hubs and fence posts. This tree is located sporadically around the Historic and Scenic Bluff Area.
- The **pecan tree** is the official state tree of Texas. One is located on the north side of the restroom building.



Texas Red Oak



Cedar Elm



Pecan Tree

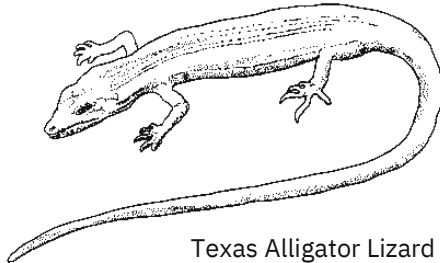
2. Bluff Overlook

The Bluff Overlook showcases a major erosional feature called the Oakville Escarpment, a sandstone formation that consists of alternating layers of calcareous sandstones and clays. It took thousands of years of erosion to create this structure, which was historically known as Kreische's Bluff. Kreische took advantage of the sandstone at the bottom to build his stonemasonry business.

The formation of this bluff forced the Colorado River to make a major regional course change from the southeast to the northeast. Hence, the bend in the River.



- The Texas alligator lizard is a rare species that exists at the sites. These lizards are identified by their large plate-like scales and unusually slow movement, unless frightened. They are more commonly found in the Edwards Plateau, but the isolated colony here is thought to be derived from ancestors that floated in on vegetation from the west during times of flooding.





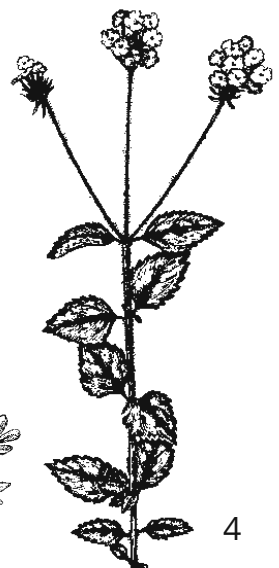
3. The Kreische House

The Kreische House was built beginning in the 1850s, and the live oak tree below the house is well over 200 years old. It provided shade to keep the house area cooler during the summers. Below the barn near Kreische Stairway Trail are the ruins of a natural spring. This groundwater was used in Kreische's brewing process.

In the yard of the Kreische House a variety of wildflowers may be seen, depending on the time of year. These wildflowers may include:

- **Brown-eyed Susan:** a native prairie biennial flower that forms a rosette of leaves the first year, followed by flowers the second year. It's covered with hairs that give it a slightly rough texture.
- **Texas bluebonnets:** the state flower of Texas, which can be found in prairies, open fields and along roadsides.
- **Texas lantana:** was used by Spanish colonists who drank and bathed in infusions of lantana for its alleged medicinal benefit.

Texas Lantana

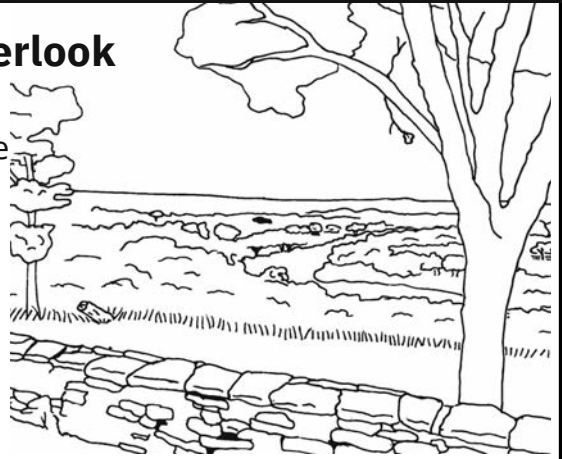


Texas Bluebonnet



4. Colorado River Overlook

You can see a view of the Colorado River as well as the city of La Grange by looking from this Overlook. The La Grange Water Tower, located just outside of town off Highway 77, is approximately 1.6 miles from this overlook.

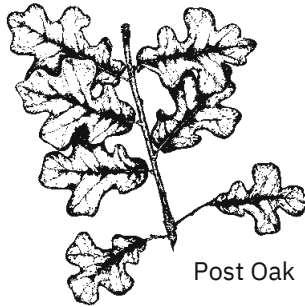


The Bluff was a landmark and ancestral home to the Lipan Apache and Tonkawa tribes. These groups followed an old hunting trail below. Spanish explorers later crossed the Colorado River on this route and deemed the trail the “**El Camino de la Bahia**,” which means “The Bay Trail.” Settlers used it for trade from present-day Goliad to Nacogdoches. The sites are considered part of the National Parks’ **El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail**.

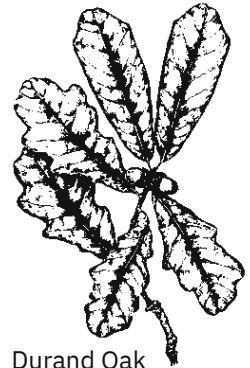
The oak woodlands below consist of:



Live Oak



Post Oak



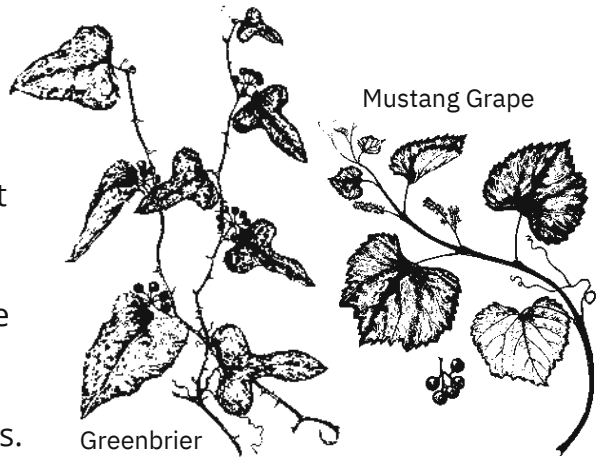
Durand Oak

- **Live oaks**, an evergreen tree that provided food and building material for indigenous tribes and early settlers.
- **Post oaks**, used for constructing posts for fence lines and railroad crossties.
- **Durand oaks**, which can grow up to 95 feet tall and have shaggy bark with leaves with wavy margins.

5. Brewery Overlook

The Brewery Overlook provides a bird's eye view of Kreische Brewery, which was in operation throughout the 1870s and early 1880s. The location of the brewery is in a valley with a springhead located at the top. Kreische utilized the landscape to his advantage and manipulated the water to run through his brewery.

There are a few creeping plants that exist in this area. **Greenbrier** is a woody climbing plant that is seen in many places along the trails. **Mustang grape** is easy to recognize by its hanging looped vines. The stems are twisted and climb on trees.

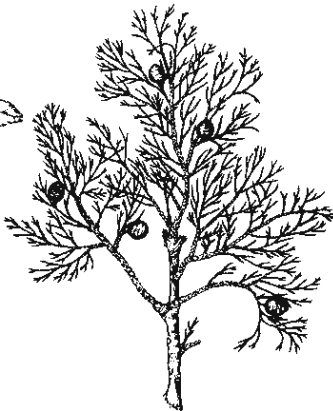


Some easily noticeable trees located in this area are:

Yaupon: This tree's scientific name is *Ilex vomitoria*, which refers to the effect that people can get from eating its fruit. Yaupon leaves contain caffeine which can be used to make tea.



Yaupon

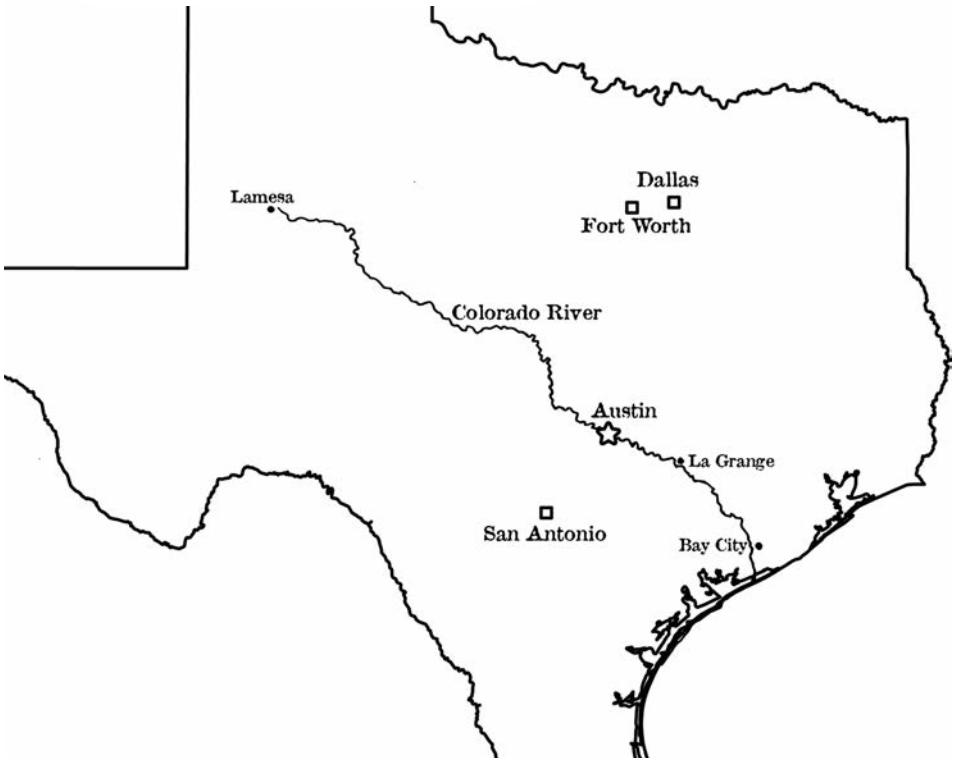


Red Juniper/Eastern redcedar

Eastern redcedar: This evergreen tree with bluish berries is actually a juniper, however, Spanish settlers called them cedars due to their resemblance to cedar trees in Europe. It is a pioneer invader—one of the first trees to repopulate cleared, eroded, or otherwise damaged land.

6. Lower Bluff Overlook

The hillside at the Lower Bluff Overlook serves as a drainage basin, or watershed, that leads to the Colorado River. The Colorado is 862 miles long, making it the 11th-longest river in the United States, and it lies entirely within Texas. It starts to flow south of Lubbock and empties into Matagorda Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.



The Colorado is vital to farming irrigation, electrical power production, and for providing several recreational activities. Before bridges, crossing rivers could be at its best, a minor annoyance, and at its worst, a treacherous feat. Kreische created a ferry service at the bend of the Colorado to aid in crossing from downtown La Grange to his land on the Bluff.

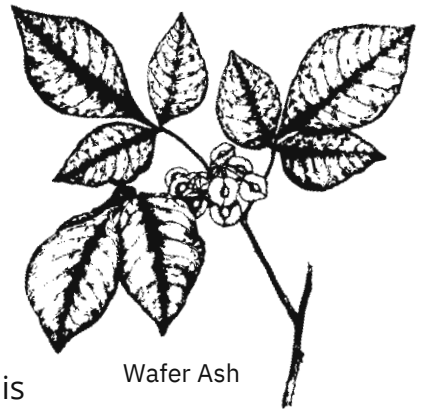
7. Forest Area

In this forest area it is important to stay on the trail to prevent erosion and to save wildlife habitat.

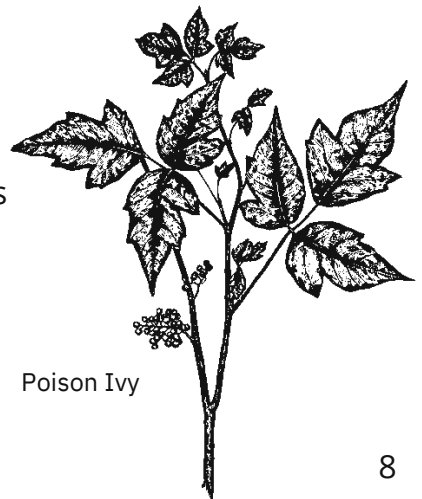
This habitat provides food and shelter needed for survival. By staying on the marked trails, you can ensure that the wildlife's necessities will go unharmed and grow as needed. Please don't leave your trash behind anywhere on the trails. This trail continues down to a road that goes to the left or right. The left goes on to private property and down to the ferry site that Kreische operated. The right will take you to the upper level of the brewery ruins.

Some shade-tolerant species of plant life that can be seen around this area are:

- **Wafer ash:** The common name, Hop Tree, refers to its bitter fruit being used in earlier days as a substitute for hops in brewing beer. Kreische could have used this in some of his brewing batches.
- **Poison ivy:** Not a true ivy but, in fact, a woody vine that is well known for its ability to produce urushiol, a skin irritant that causes an itching rash, so please watch your step.



Wafer Ash



Poison Ivy

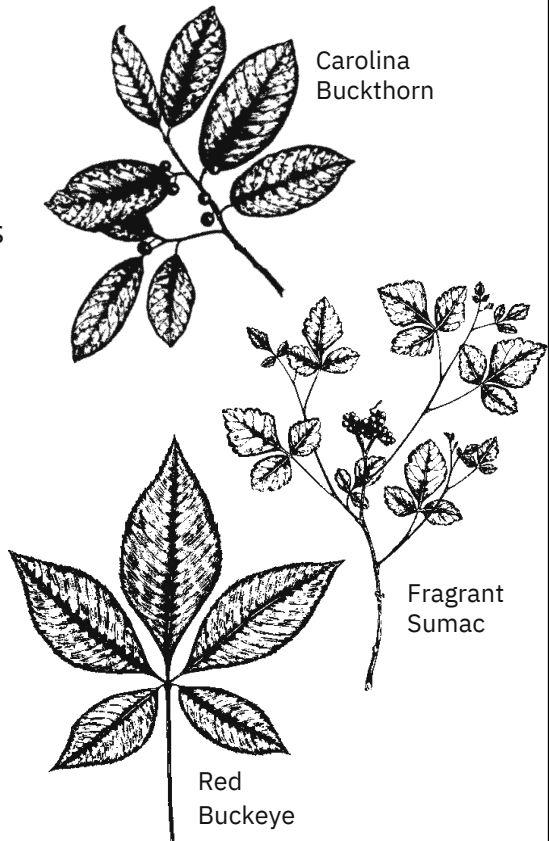
8. Kreische's Bridges and Trails

Kreische's bridges and trails are located along the lower level. Customers, travelers, and family once used bridges built by Kreische and his hired hands to pass through the property with greater ease. Kreische carefully maintained the road because it was an important part of his business operations.

Kreische's bridges are located at the end of a ravine. This ravine is an excellent water source for wildlife such as field mice, rabbits, raccoons, deer, foxes, lizards, snakes, turtles, frogs, and many species of birds.

Also located around the area are several trees, including:

- **Carolina buckthorn:** Animals consume its berries, which are thought to have medicinal properties.
- **Red buckeye:** Fruits of this deciduous tree have saponins, chemicals which are poisonous to humans, but are not particularly dangerous because they're not easily ingested.
- **Fragrant sumac:** The fruit from this tree is a favorite of many wild animals including wild turkey, raccoon, and white-tailed deer.



9. Prairie Area & Nature Loop

The prairie area, like many around the sites, has **little bluestem grass** as the main undergrowth species. Little bluestem grows in clumps in prairies, open woods, and dry hills.

Numerous birds and small mammals utilize the dried stems for cover and for nesting material. The small seeds are also a good source of food for wildlife. Look along the trail for signs of white-tailed deer or other wildlife.

Various species of plants and trees can be found in the surrounding area as well as throughout all of the trails in the sites. Some species include:

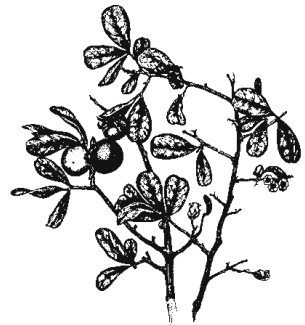
- **White Ash:** Its bark is light gray with narrow ridges separated by deep fissures into interlacing patterns. The natural life span of these trees can reach a maximum of 300 years.
- **Basket grass:** This grass prefers limestone hills and ravines in lightly wooded areas. It is a native species in the Edwards Plateau area.
- **Texas Persimmon:** Fruit provided by this tree is edible but stains clothes, hands and teeth.



Little Bluestem Grass



White Ash

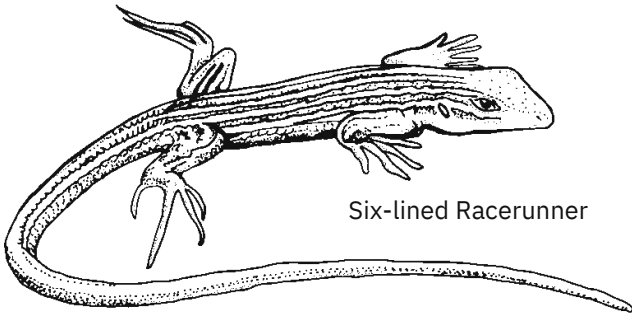


Texas Persimmon

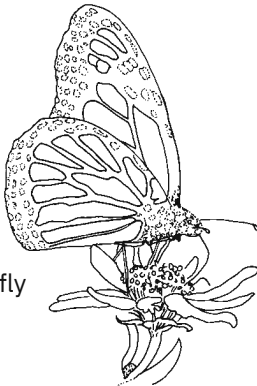
Kreische Critters

A number of animal species that can be seen throughout the grounds, include:

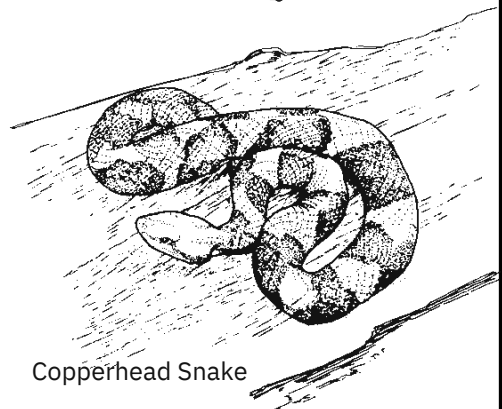
- **Six-lined racerunner** is a 6 to 9 1/2-inch lizard with six light-yellow or white stripes down its back. Its ground-dwelling habits and impressive speed are often sufficient to identify it from a distance.
- **Monarch butterfly** is the official state insect of Texas. The monarch feeds on milkweed, which makes this species poisonous to predators such as robins, cardinals, grackles, and brown thrashers.
- **Copperhead snakes** average between 12 to 24 inches long. These venomous snakes prefer the shelter of leaf litter, logs, branches and rocks. Typically, they won't hurt you if you don't disturb them.



Six-lined Racerunner



Monarch Butterfly



Copperhead Snake

Texas Tracks



RACCOON



WHITE-TAILED DEER



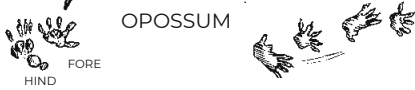
RINGTAIL



SKUNK



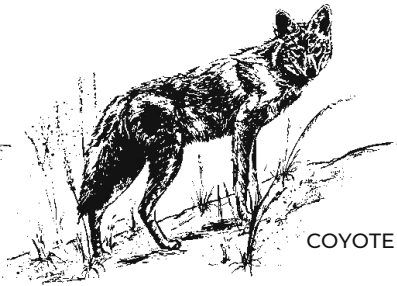
OPOSSUM



FOX SQUIRREL



BOBCAT

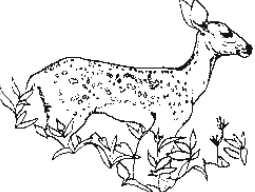





COYOTE



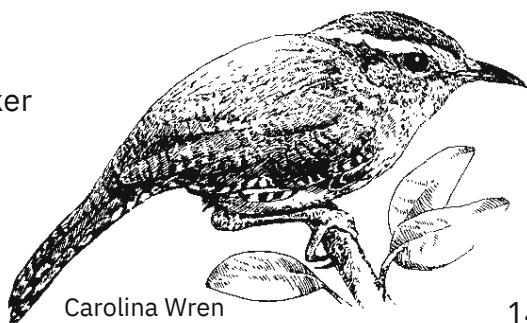
Creature Habitat

Research the following animals using books, the computer or any other source to find out what kinds of food they eat, where they get their water, and what they use for shelter. Fill in the table with as much information as you can. All of the animals below can be found on the grounds if you look hard enough! Researching what they eat and where they live may help you to find them on your visit.

Animals	Type of Food	Source of Water	Location of Shelter
 White-tailed Deer			
 Common Gray Fox			
 Texas Alligator Lizard			
 Northern Cardinal			

Bluff Birds

- ___ American Crow
- ___ American Goldfinch
- ___ American Kestrel
- ___ American Robin
- ___ Bald Eagle
- ___ Black Vulture
- ___ Black-chinned Hummingbird
- ___ Blue Jay
- ___ Buff-bellied Hummingbird
- ___ Carolina Chickadee
- ___ Carolina Wren
- ___ Chipping Sparrow
- ___ Crested Caracara
- ___ Downy Woodpecker
- ___ Eastern Phoebe
- ___ Eastern Screech-Owl
- ___ Eurasian Collared-Dove
- ___ Great Horned Owl
- ___ House Sparrow
- ___ Inca Dove
- ___ Ladder-backed Woodpecker
- ___ Mississippi Kite
- ___ Mourning Dove
- ___ Northern Cardinal
- ___ Northern Flicker
- ___ Northern Mockingbird
- ___ Painted Bunting
- ___ Pileated Woodpecker
- ___ Red-bellied Woodpecker
- ___ Red-shouldered Hawk
- ___ Red-tailed Hawk
- ___ Rock Dove
- ___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- ___ Summer Tanager
- ___ Tufted Titmouse
- ___ Turkey Vulture
- ___ White-crowned Sparrow
- ___ White-winged Dove
- ___ Wood Duck
- ___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker



Carolina Wren

Kreische Brewery & Monument Hill
State Historic Sites

Word Search

Using the sentences on the next page, find the words that fit in the blanks to make the sentence correct. After you have filled in the blanks with the missing words, find them in the puzzle. Some words can be found diagonally, horizontally, vertically and even backwards. Have fun!

N S S V O G B L A G R A N G E A P B
C C A M V S D N D O B Q G F P E K M
B Z L O W U T W P G E R M A N Y H W
G Q A M N Y H O H P Y O E W V C D U
O S D B E A N S N Y K M Q W V W D J
M H O M M O N U M E N T I G E E T D
G A S T O C M W X T M C B E G R R T
K J X R O Z Q V G H R A Y R R N Y U
B T J T O M B E S B B L S L S J S B
N Q B L U F F Z K I F S P O I N R A
H S H N I M F L K L D Y J R N U X N
Z A O G N V G F L G D A W S O N V Q



Word Search Clues

1. The _____ Expedition included 54 men, mostly from Fayette County, who went to the aid of San Antonio against a Mexican army under General Adrian Woll in 1842.
2. The Dawson Massacre occurred at _____ Creek near San Antonio.
3. The men of the _____ Expedition were taken prisoner and marched to Hacienda Salado in Mexico. Escaped prisoners would later draw _____ to determine their fate.
4. The bodies of the fallen men from the Dawson and Mier Expeditions were buried in a _____ constructed by Heinrich Ludwig Kreische in 1848.
5. Heinrich Kreische was an immigrant born in _____. He moved to Texas and settled in the town of _____.
6. Kreische was trained as a _____. He built the tomb, his family's house, the 3rd county courthouse, and the 2nd county jailhouse in town.
7. Heinrich opened a _____ on his land and began to make beer.
8. Heinrich, his wife Josepha, and their six children, were part of the _____ Schuetzenverein, a marksmanship society that regularly met on their land.
9. A 48-foot _____ was erected in 1936 for the Texas Centennial to serve as a Memorial to the fallen men of the Dawson and Mier Expeditions.

BEANS
BLUFF
BREWERY
DAWSON

GERMANY
LAGRANGE
MIER
MONUMENT

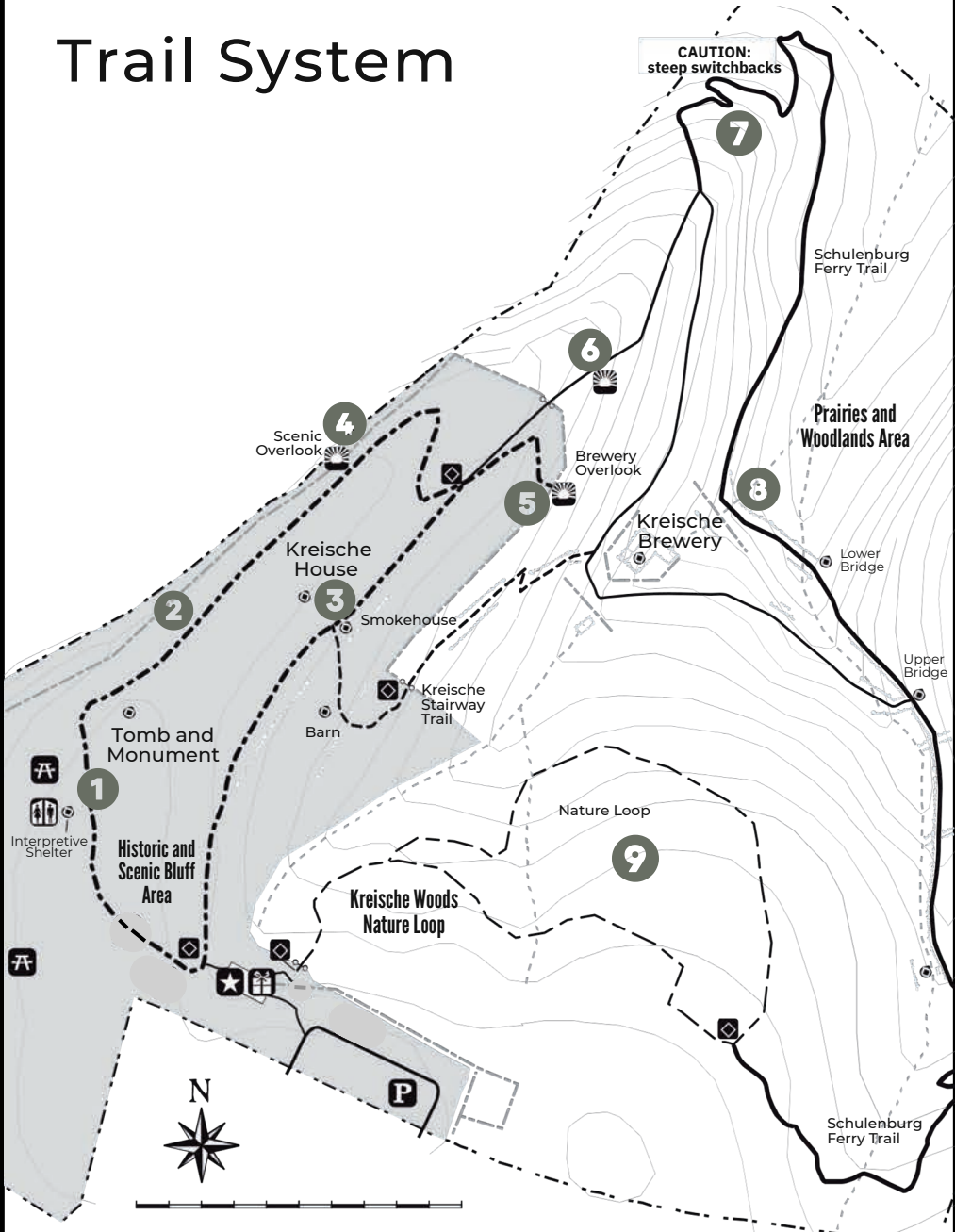
SALADO
STONEMASON
TOMB

Nature Trail Scavenger Hunt

You do not need to gather any of the items below, just check the box next to the item once you have seen it. Also, if you come across anything interesting along the nature trail, add the name or description of it to your list. But remember, leave everything where you found it!

	Find a tree with BALL MOSS on it.
	Find a PRICKLY PEAR CACTUS.
	Find any sign of a DEER (deer tracks, deer droppings, or an actual deer).
	Find a GREENBRIER (a type of thorny vine).
	Find a LIZARD.
	Find some ANIMAL TRACKS.
	Find a CARDINAL.
	Find a BIRD'S NEST.
	Find a SPIDER'S WEB.
	Find any kind of INSECT.
	Find a red or yellow FLOWER.
	Find any sign that HUMANS have been on the trail.

Trail System



Kreische Brewery & Monument Hill

State Historic Sites

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La Grange, TX 78945
visitkreischebrewery.com
visitmonumenthill.com
979-968-5658

TEXAS
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REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES



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