

CARL KIEKE

Master naturalists offer monthly hikes at Cedar Creek Waterway, Lake Abilene

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Would your youth group be interested in a guided nature hike in the Abilene area? How about just as a family event?

Opportunities are available at least twice a month. The Big Country chapter of Texas Master Naturalists offers hikes along the Cedar Creek Waterway in Abilene and at Lake Abilene, each once a month.

The Lake Abilene hike is offered the first Saturday of most months; Cedar Creek hikes are on the third Saturday.

For the Lake Abilene hike, check in at the park headquarters by 9 a.m., then proceed as directed to the lake entrance. The hike usually lasts around two hours.

For Cedar Creek hikes, go to the trail entrance off of East South 11th Street. It is easily seen across an open field on the east side of the creek, with a large stone marker also designating the site. Again, expect about two hours' duration.

Be sure to wear appropriate shoes; open-toed shoes are strongly discouraged. Boots or walking/jogging shoes will be fine. Be prepared to encounter rocks or mud, especially if there has been recent precipitation.

Check the weather beforehand and dress appropriately. Water, snacks and a small first aid kit would be nice to have. Also binoculars and/or cameras.

Sometimes the hikes have a specific theme, but often they are more informal. You walk, enjoy looking at nature, and if you spot something that raises a question, you should get a knowledgeable answer.

There is no cost for the hikes and no pre-registration is required. Trails are well-marked and maintained, so if the hike is too long, you can always turn back. The trails are not designed

for wheelchair access, but someone so enabled could enjoy at least part of the journey, and with some help probably all of it.

To find out more about the Master Naturalist chapter activities, go to facebook.com/BCTXMN.

If the website stimulates interest, the Master Naturalists have classes for new members in the fall. Registration opens during the summer, if not before. Keep an eye on the website for updates.

Upcoming events

Grace Academy reservations open Tuesday. Thegracemuseum.org under What's Happening/Summer Camps. 325-673-4587.

Cub Scout/Scouts BSA leaders' roundtable, 7 p.m. March 10, Highland Church of Christ, 325 Highland Ave., Abilene. Enter from South Fifth Street side. 325-677-2688.

Scouts BSA Order of the Arrow spring fellowship, March 11-13, Camp Tonkawa. Members \$20, Ordeal candidates \$50, Brotherhood candidates \$40; \$10 late fee after Thursday.

Register at texasrtrailsbsa.com, Robert.goodson@scouting.org or 706-346-0599.

Deadlines

Wednesday for "The Ghost of Pandora's Manor" March 16. Virtual event for girls (not just Girl Scouts) in second through fifth grades. \$17 per Scout; register at gsctx.org under "Events" calendar.

Check online

There are many events (a lot of them virtual) you can join. Keep up at gs-top.org or gsctx.org for Girl Scouts; and at texasrtrailsbsa.com for Cub Scouts/Scouts BSA.

Closings/cancellations

Girl Scout facilities in Central Texas Council, including Brownwood office, available by appointment only. Masks required unless otherwise specified. gsctx.org or 800-733-0011.

Contact Carl Kieke at 325-673-3552 (voice only); or kiekek@suddenlink.net. Deadline is Monday for publication the following Monday.