

Texas Master Naturalist, Rio Brazos Chapter

Policies and Tips for Field Trips at Acton Nature Center

Acton Nature Center (ANC) offers trails through natural landscapes of prairies and trees, a pond, a butterfly garden, an Education Center (accommodates about 30 people) with adjacent bird blind, restroom facilities, and an open-air pavilion next to the parking lot. Lessons and activities may take place in the Education Center, bird blind, pavilion, and various locations throughout the area. After morning program activities, school groups can enjoy their brown-bag lunch in the pavilion.

Field Trip Policies and Tips

Field trip programs at ANC are often a favorite of students and teachers alike. Outdoor activities in a natural environment do require some precautions, however. For the safety and comfort of our field trip visitors, closed toe shoes and long pants are strongly recommended. Please, NO flip flops or sandals for children or adults for your school event! Insect repellent, sunscreen, and a hat are also recommended in warm weather. Warm clothing layers are essential for activities in cold weather. While we may have a drinking water cooler available, we encourage students, teachers, and other adults to bring their own water, especially in warm weather. There are no water fountains or vending machines at ANC.

Please note that for field trips at ANC we require a ratio of one adult for every 10 children. Our volunteers provide educational assistance, not supervision of children.

Scheduling Suggestions

April and October are the most popular months for field trips AND the busiest time of the year for our Master Naturalist volunteers. We recommend submitting an education assistance request as far in advance of your preferred dates as possible (three months suggested) so we have adequate time to line up volunteers.

We suggest that field trips be scheduled before the average first frost (November 22) and after the average last frost (March 12). Texas weather can be quite variable at any time. Even during ideal months, weather events can force cancellation of outdoor activities. Safety is always our first priority. In the event of inclement weather, the group's coordinator and/or the Master Naturalist program lead will determine in advance if a scheduled field trip will be cancelled.

ANC Requirements

ANC requires a parent or guardian of each student participating in a school field trip to sign a liability release form before their child or children can participate in the field trip on ANC property. You will get more information about this during the planning process of field trips at ANC for which you request assistance from the Rio Brazos Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program.