

# Davy Crockett National Forest

Do you have a desire to explore the Wild Frontier like the legendary pioneers once did? If your answer is yes, then there is a perfect place for you in northeast Texas. The Davy Crockett National Forest encompasses 160,000 acres just waiting to be explored. Covered with forests, ranch land, and small towns, the area contains woodlands, streams, recreation areas, and plenty of wildlife habitats.

If you enjoy wildlife, the Davy Crockett National Forest will not disappoint. The land is home to squirrel, deer, quail, dove, turkey, waterfowl, and if you listen hard enough, you may even hear the pecking of the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. The forest is like its own national zoo. This is why the Alabama Creek Wildlife Management Area has been set aside within the National Forest. Intensive wildlife management and conservation practices have been implemented to designate 14,500 acres of the forest to develop and maintain good population levels of various wildlife species.

The beautiful forest invites people to engage in independent, unstructured recreation like hiking and personally discover nature's hidden secrets. Big Slough Wilderness Area will allow you to escape modern development and discover solitude through natural experience. For an excellent, pre-planned hike, journey the 20-mile long Four C National Recreation Trail that snakes through towering pines, bottomland hardwoods, boggy sloughs, and traverses the upland forests. The historically curious can wander amidst old sawmill ruins and a reconstruction of the Mission Tejas Chapel from 1690.

For those who prefer more organized or group-based recreation opportunities, Ratcliffe Lake Recreation Area is just the right place. The area surrounds a 45 acre lake, which offers camping, picnicking, a swimming beach and bathhouse, amphitheatre, interpretive forest trails, boating and fishing, amongst other enjoyable activities. The variety of opportunities makes this place feel like a nature amusement park.

At the end of the day, there is nothing better than a nice place to rest your head and share the day's stories around a toasty campfire. Camping areas are dispersed throughout the entire National Forest, 20 of which are designated for hunters looking for the perfect trophy.

This park offers opportunity for all walks of life. No matter who you are, there is adventure awaiting you here at the Davy Crockett National Forest.

## Source(s):

Great Outdoor Recreation Pages. (2010). Retrieved February 2, 2011 from <http://www.gorp.com/parks-guide/davy-crockett-national-forest-outdoor-pp2-guide-cid10385.html>

USDA Forest Service. (2008). National Forests & Grasslands in Texas. Retrieved from [http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/texas/recreation/davy\\_crockett/davycrockett\\_gen\\_info.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/texas/recreation/davy_crockett/davycrockett_gen_info.shtml)

## Author(s):

Written by Maggie Pottkotter (Intern) and Zach Rogers (Undergraduate Student) in the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University, as part of a National Park Service Trails and Rails project funded by Amtrak, 2011.