



First RV Trip - Fall 2018



The photo above is of the Chisos Mountain Range as the sun starts to hit it from our campsite at Hannold Draw

Hello to Family & Friends

Do I have a treat for you guys. This is a Special Edition of the First RV Trip Newsletter. This edition is called "ALL ABOUT CACTI". We will explore the 51 different species of cacti found in Big Bend National Park, descriptions, scientific names, growth patterns.....Everything You Never Wanted To Know About Cactus, And More!!!!

Not really. I am not a cacti kind of guy. Although maybe I have a prickly personality? LOL Look out, I'm hot! Get it? Desert? Hot?

It was very interesting to see the many varieties of cacti as we hiked the trails. There are several pictures below of the different types, the only name I know is Ocotillo, that one was pretty cool.



Day 12

Sunday

October 7th

Big Bend

National

Park

Weather

80's
Sunny
Dry

Our first hike today was supposed to be the Window Trail from the Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive. This direction was recommended over the normal Window Trail which starts from the Chisos Basin. Unfortunately the guide starts from the parking area, which is 1.2 miles from where we had to park. This turned the 5.5 mile hike into almost 8, of which I am sure 7.5 miles were uphill. We turned back after the waterfall.

This is the Ocotillo





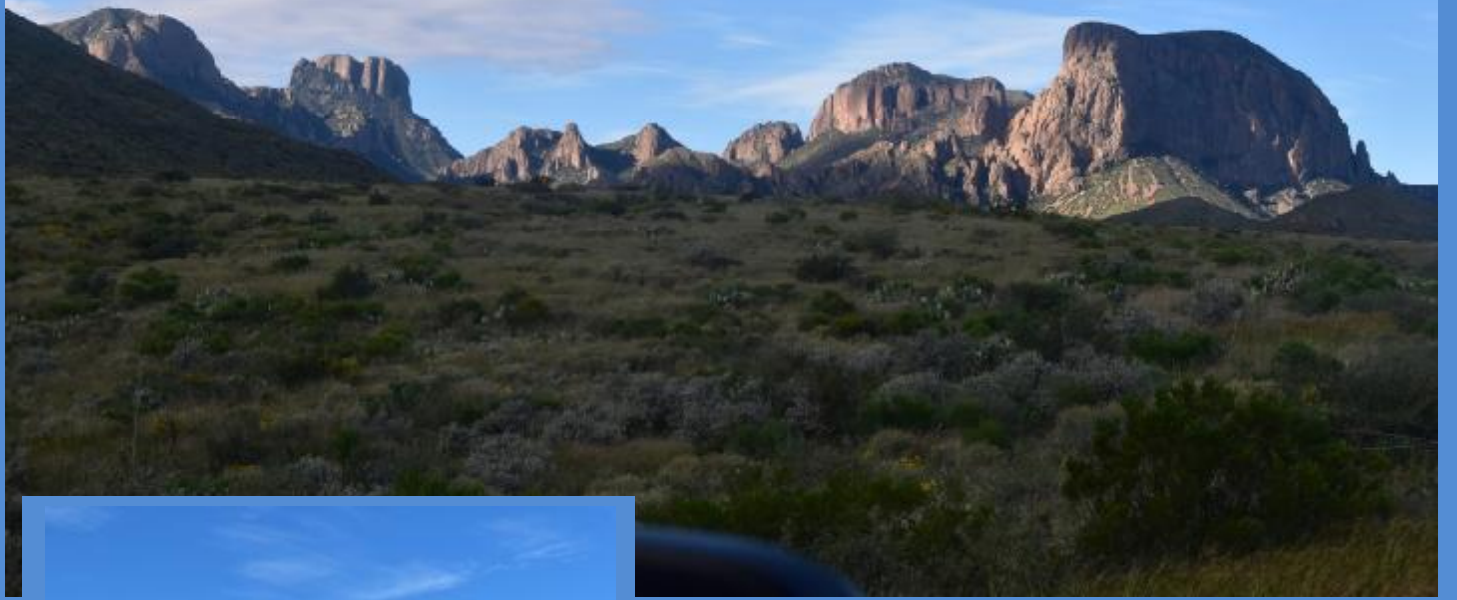




Ok, that's it for cactus, I promise.

Below is the same picture as page 1, but with full sun.





Ross Maxwell
Scenic Drive

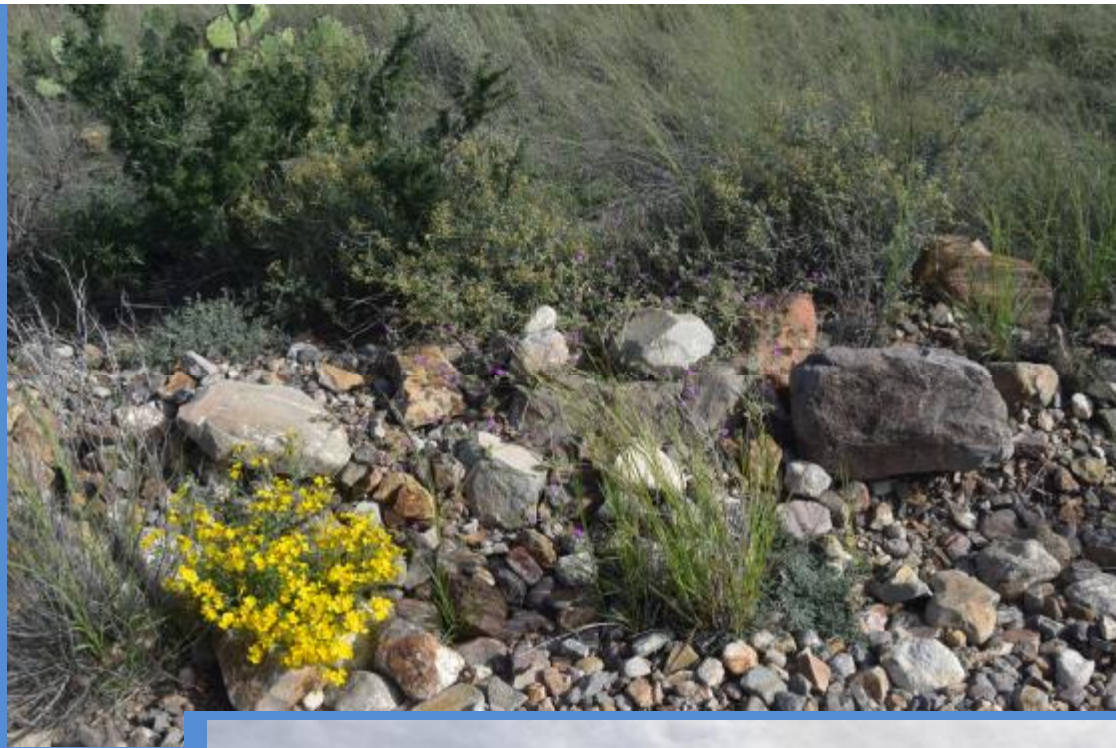




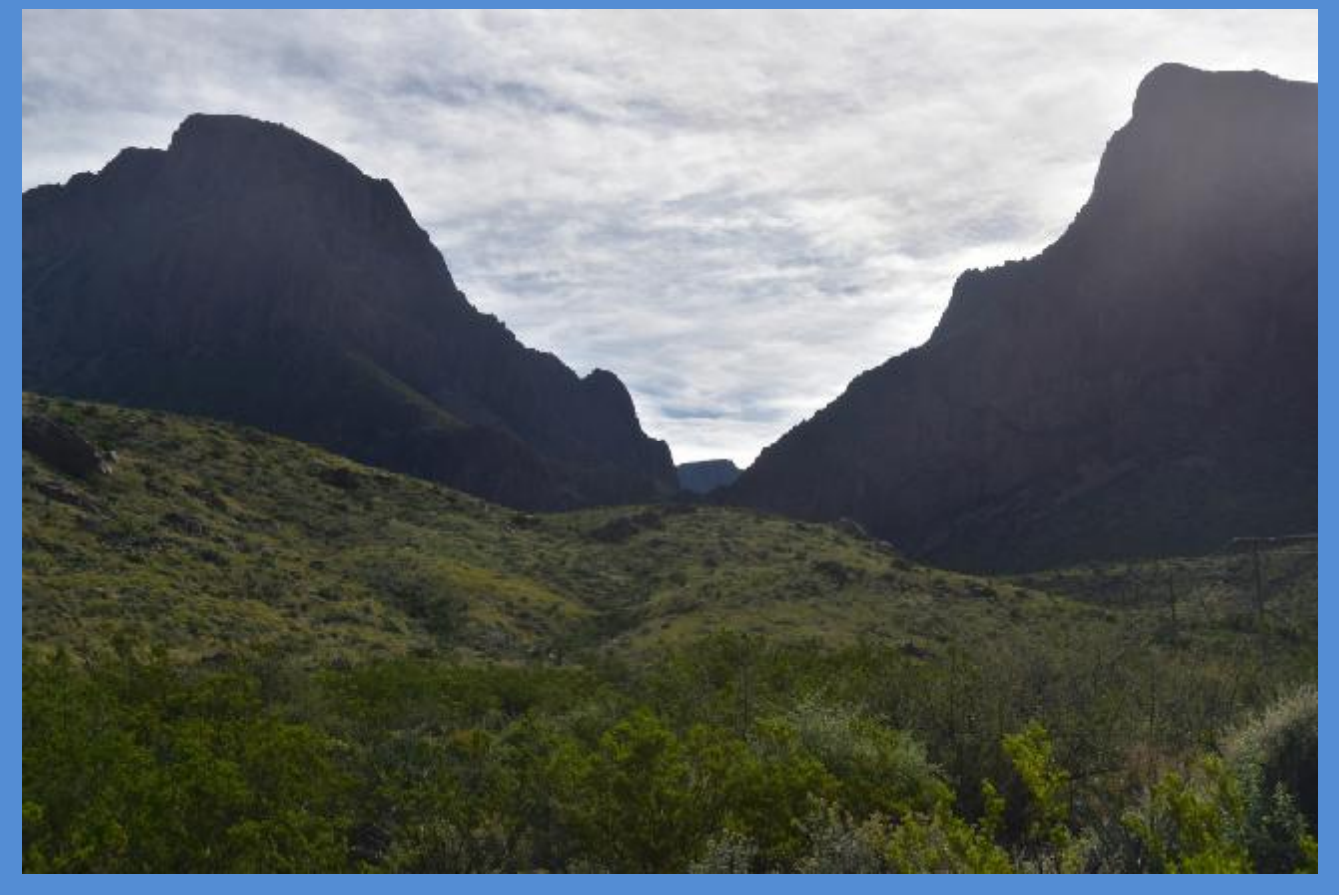
This is one of the oddball desert trees, and very few trees there are, that grow in the desert. I forget the name. It can live 50 years and only goes to seed one time in its lifespan.



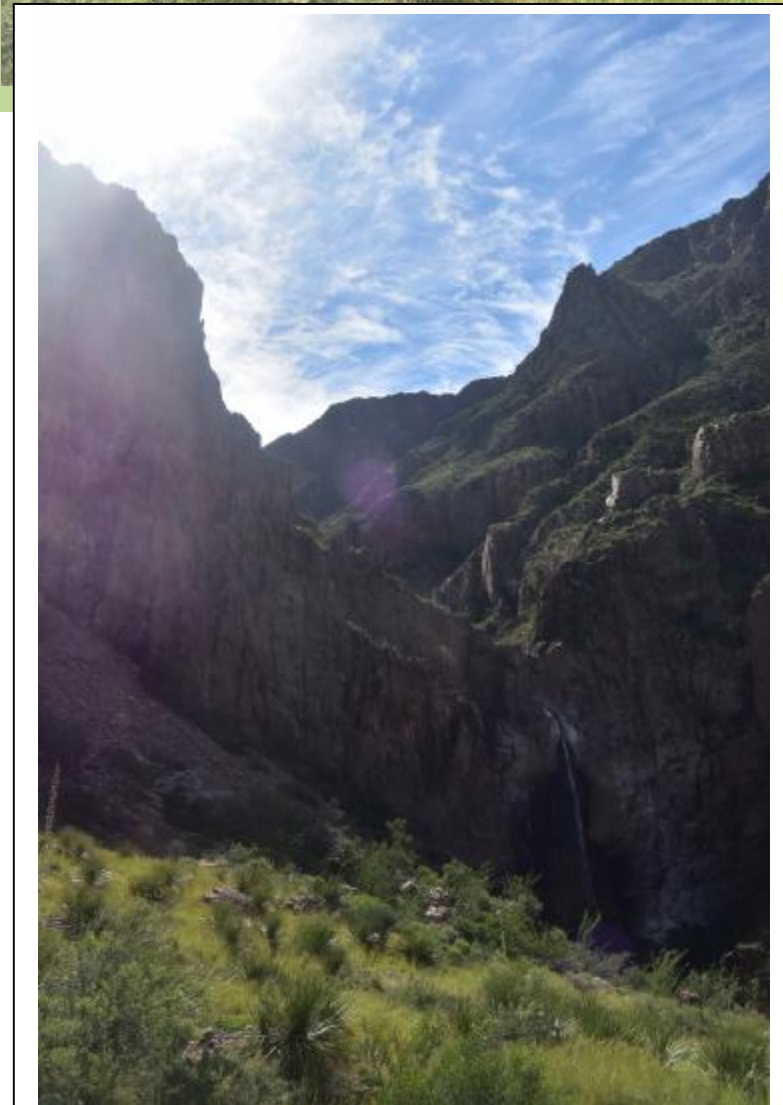
As I mentioned in the sidebar on page 1, this is the start of the trail to the Window. Too bad the extra 2.5 miles was too much for us, especially with the steepest and most dangerous part of the trail still to go. There were some beautiful views, as can be seen below, but not too long after seeing the Cattail Falls we turned around.



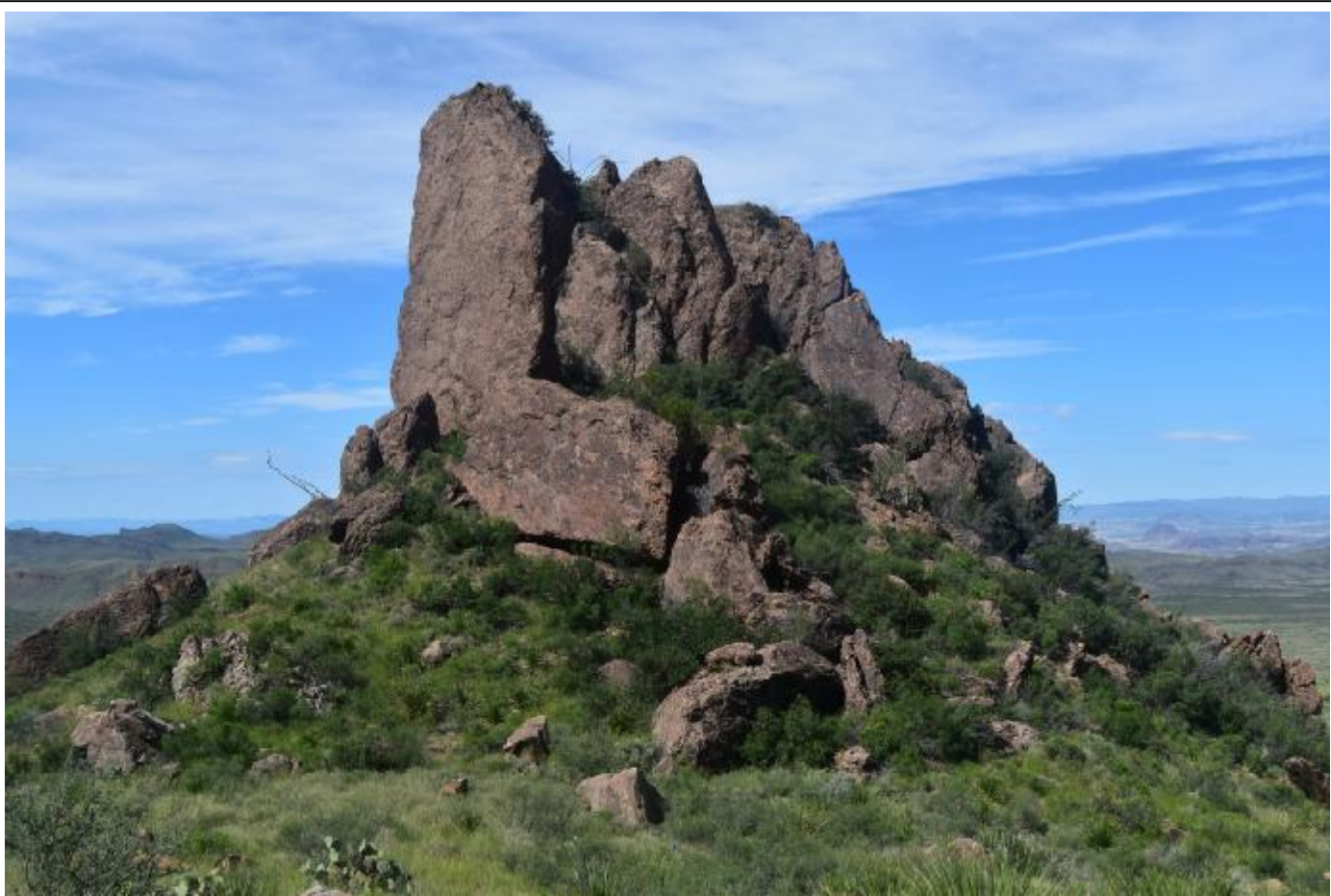
Nice yellow flowers mixed with the purple ones behind, which are hard to see



Cattail Falls



Bad angle to photograph the falls from in the morning. This should be an afternoon hike.





These flowers were the favorite of both Morgan and myself

Desert vista





Lower Burro Mesa Pourroff

1.0 mile round trip
120 feet elevation gain

The Lower Burro Mesa Pourroff trail is an easy walk that leads through a gravel creek bed to a narrow box canyon where water has carved a deep channel into Burro Mesa. This 100-foot pouroff attests to the power of water that floods this canyon during summer rains.

Burro Mesa gives evidence of Big Bend's volcanic past. The yellow and orange bands across the bluffs are ash-flow tuffs, which show the layered beds created as they were deposited. The top of the cliff is formed from Burro Mesa Rhyolite.

Pouroffs are seasonal waterfalls. During rainy times water might flow through these drainages in powerful flash floods, continuing to carve the channel. Without much permeable soil to soak in to, the water continues downhill quickly, often with the flow ending within a few hours after a rainstorm.

Water might continue to slowly flow beneath the surface of the gravel creek bed, causing water to seep down the face of the pouroff for days before drying again.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Johnson





Mule Ears Peaks

From many vantage points in the park, the Mule Ears appear unimpressive. Near and distant can be misleading in the desert landscape. By taking closer, you can gain an appreciation of the monumental forces that created these peaks.

The Big Bend country is filled with such extraordinary features that seem modest from a distance but show nature's awesome power when encountered directly.

Los Picos de las Orejas de Mula

Desde diversas lugares estratégicos del parque, los Picos de Mula aparecen insignificantes. Cercano y lejano pueden ser engañosos en el paisaje desértico. Al acercarse, se puede apreciar la fuerza monumental que creó los dos picos.

El parque de Big Bend está lleno de sitios extraordinarios. Los signos se ven modestos desde la distancia pero demuestran el poder poderoso cuando se encuentran directamente.



The Rock Slide
El Desmoronamiento de Piedra

River Running

On any day you might see rafts emerge from Santa Elena Canyon. Modern equipment and techniques enable river runners to negotiate the rapids upstream, but the trip was not always this safe. Unable to scout the broken, almost impassable terrain, the 1852 Boundary Survey launched an empty wooden boat at the canyon entrance. Only splinters and broken planks emerged at the canyon mouth.

In 1852 a team of surveyors and Texas Rangers made the first documented journey through Santa Elena Canyon,² though they portaged around the Rock Slide. Once they entered the sheer-walled gorge there was no escape, no place to climb out.

El viajar en balsa

En cualquier día se puede ver balsas salir del Cañón de Santa Elena. La técnica y el equipo modernos permiten los viajes en balsa dirigidos y seguros, pero el viaje no siempre ha tan seguro. Por no poder explorar el terreno por adelantado e intranquilo, en 1852 la Agrimensura lanzó un bote vacío en la boca del cañón. Solo las astillas y las tablas rotas salieron de la boca del cañón.

En 1852 un equipo de agrimensores y los Texas Rangers o la policía recorrió el cañón de Santa Elena en su primer viaje documentado por el Cañón de Santa Elena, aunque transportaron sus balsas alrededor del Desmoronamiento de Piedra. Una vez que entraron a la garganta de la boca del cañón no había ningún escape, ni lugar a donde salir.



To negotiate the river rapids safely, plan a route that fits in the canyon's twisted meanders and sharp turns. The types of obstructions, rapids, and holes advanced river runners try to avoid are shown.

Los ríos en sí mismos son un desafío en el cañón serpenteante. Planear la ruta que mejor se adapte a los rápidos, las curvas y los huecos que los navegantes intentan evitar se muestra en el diagrama.

Para guiar al río en sus rápidos serpenteantes y en sus curvas y huecos, planear una ruta que se adapte a los meandros y giros del río. Los tipos de obstáculos, rápidos y huecos que los navegantes intentan evitar se muestran en el diagrama.

Para navegar el río en sus rápidos serpenteantes y en sus curvas y huecos, planear una ruta que se adapte a los meandros y giros del río. Los tipos de obstáculos, rápidos y huecos que los navegantes intentan evitar se muestran en el diagrama.



The slot at the head of the canyon is the point of escape for the river. It is the only place the water can flow out of the canyon.

La boca del cañón es el punto de escape del río. Es el único lugar en el que el agua puede salir del cañón.

Santa Elena Canyon

Incept during flood season, the quiet waters below the red earth powerful enough to have carved Santa Elena Canyon. How the slow trail to the river and how closely at the water. Away with sand and silt. Like liquid sandpaper, the swift current files away at Santa Elena's hard limestone, cutting it deeper, in a rill or canoe you can actually hear the grit humming along the hull.

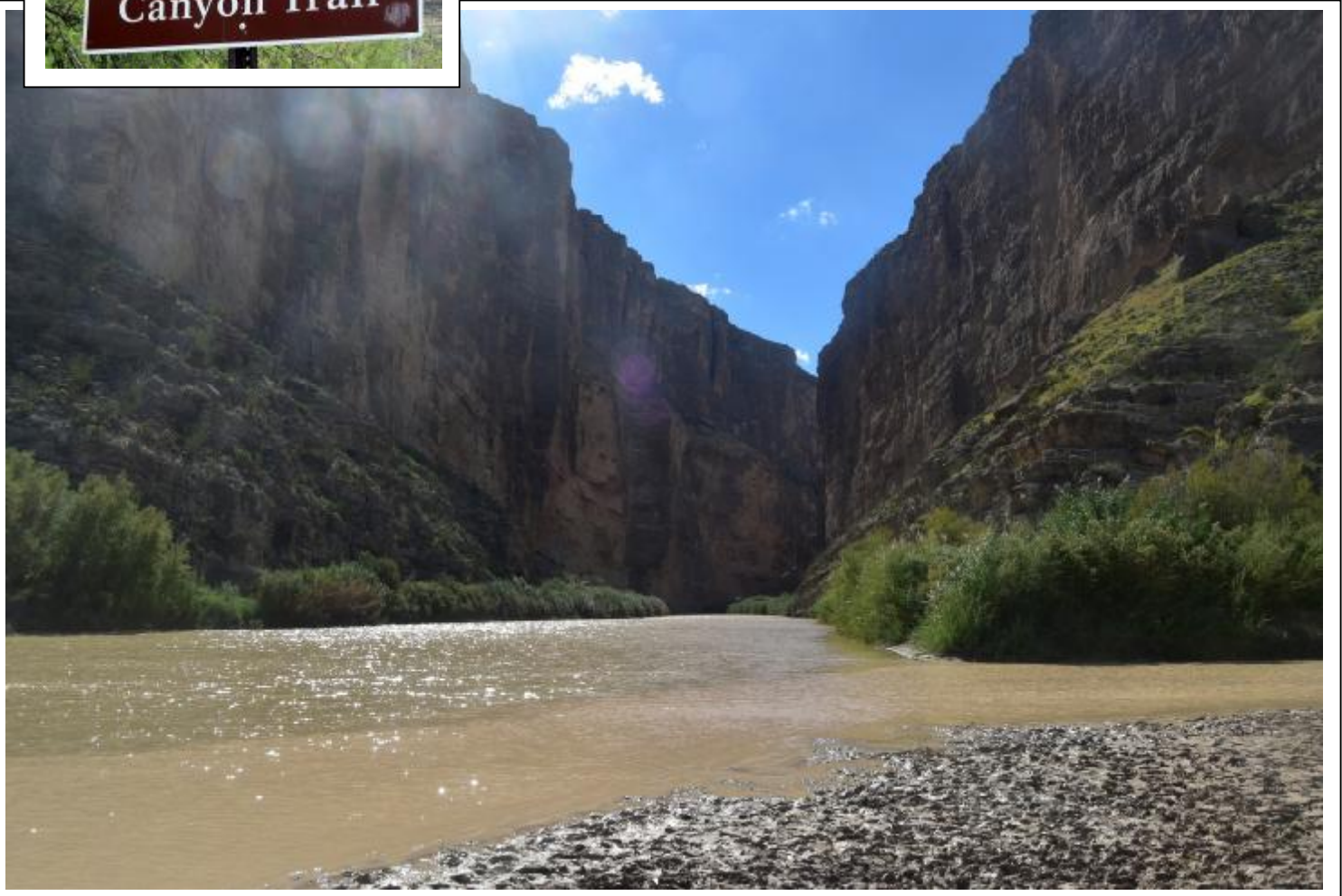
Cañón de Santa Elena

Con la excepción del tiempo de inundación, las aguas tranquilas de abajo son poderosas lo suficiente como para haber esculpido el Cañón de Santa Elena. Cuando por la noche corren hacia el río y absorben el sedimento que el agua se saca, con arena y fango. Como un líquido papel de lija, la corriente rápida lija la piedra caliza de Santa Elena, profundizando más y más. En una balsa o en una canoa, se puede oír el silbido de los granos de arena rozando la proa.



The Red Canyon established by present water is a result of the powerful flood. The river is the only place the water can flow out of the canyon.

El Cañón Rojo establecido por el presente curso de agua es el resultado de la poderosa avenida. El río es el único lugar en el que el agua puede salir del cañón.






By Bend National Park

Grand Canyon Farms

These are the remnants of a stone farmhouse owned by James and Melissa Belle Sublett, settlers who first came to Castolon in 1913.

Sublett is recognized for introducing mechanized farming into the Big Bend. In 1914 the Subletts moved into the Alvino house in Castolon, cleared much of the land, and installed the area's first irrigation system supplied by a water wheel. Sublett hired Mexican laborers to plant the new fields with sorghum, corn, alfalfa, and other livestock feed crops.

By 1918, with a growing farm business in place, Sublett purchased 2,560 acres in this area and called it Grand Canyon Farms. He built a large adobe house on top of the hill to the southeast, and a smaller house below, known today as La Casita (follow the trail to see these other ruins). While little remains of the Subletts' adobe house, their stone farmhouse and La Casita survive, and have received historic preservation treatments.




A little warmer at the Rio Grande elevation





Looking back at the Santa Elena Canyon cut into the cliffs

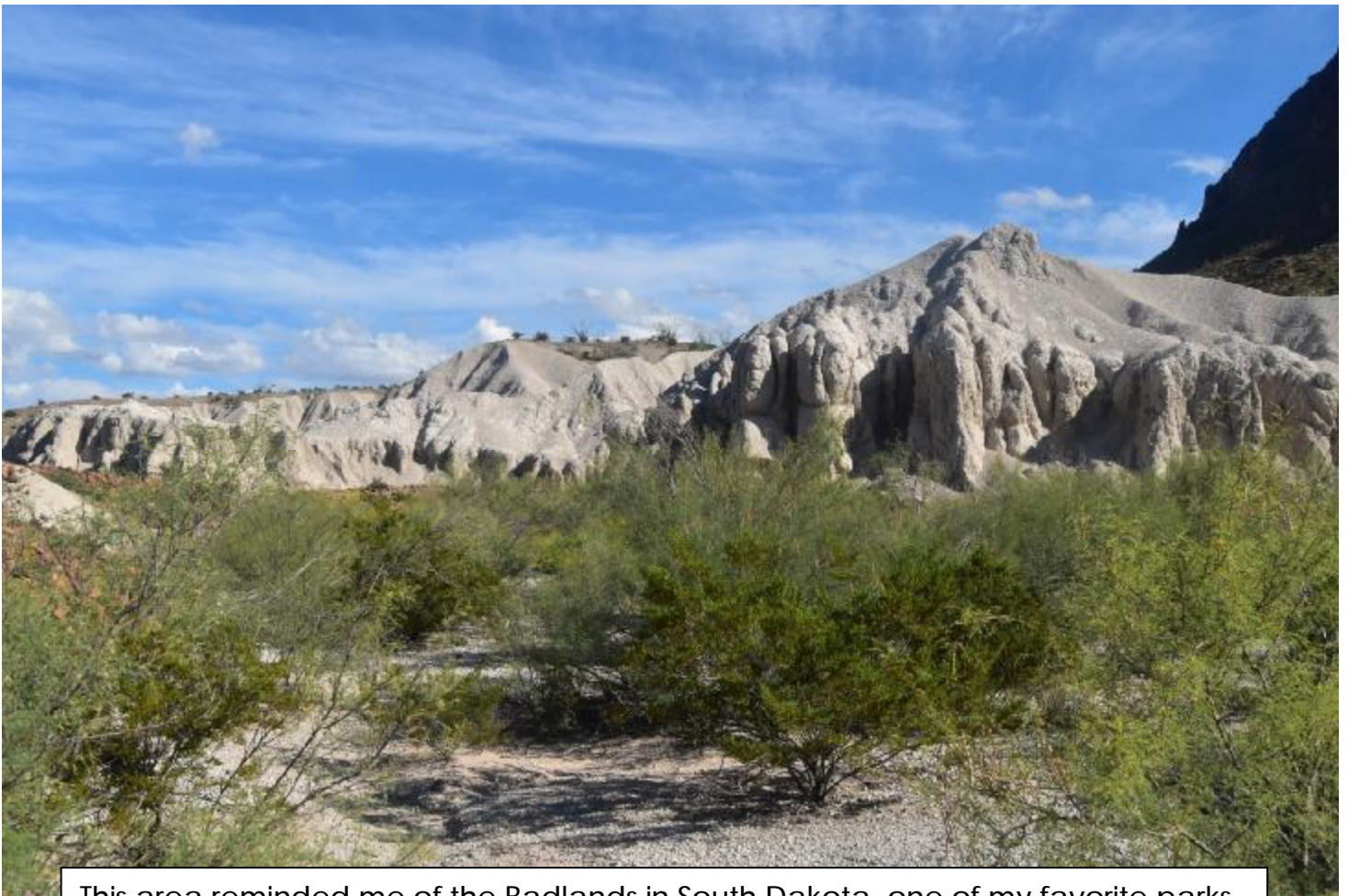
Pics at the Castolon (closed) Visitor Center





This is the La Casa de los Alvino mentioned in the Dorgan-Sublett plaque a few pages earlier.





This area reminded me of the Badlands in South Dakota, one of my favorite parks





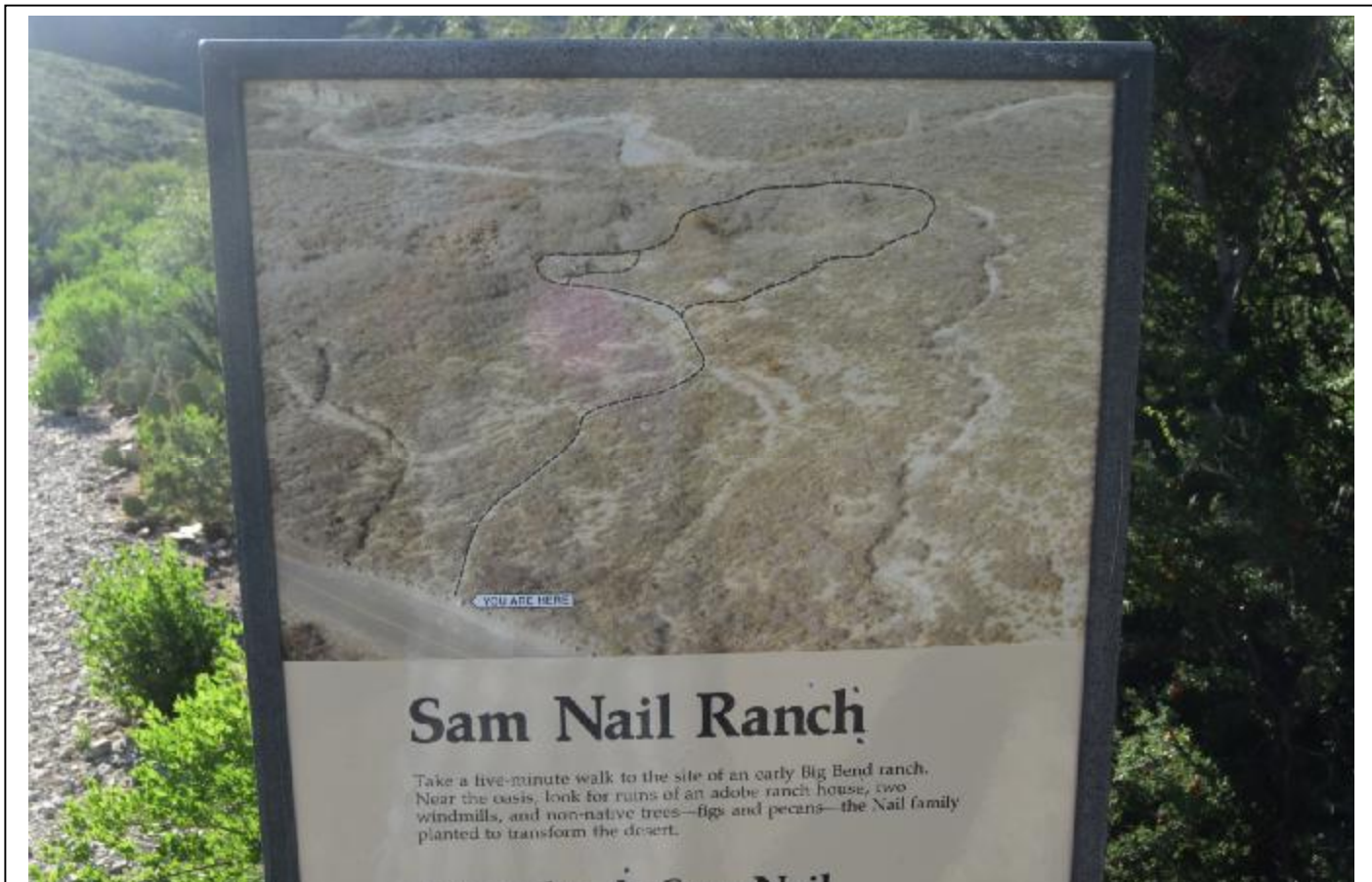
Homer Wilson Ranch

The buildings below look like an active ranch, though this line camp was abandoned in 1945. Take the short trail down into the canyon for a closer view. The foreman's house makes eloquent use of native materials: reed ceiling from the river, timbers from the mountains, and large stones from Blue Creek Canyon. Nearby are the ruins of a bunkhouse, a circular corral, and a dipping vat for sheep and goats – just enough remains to evoke the era of frontier ranching.

Campamento del Riachuelo Azul

Los edificios de abajo parecen ser parte de un rancho en actividad, aunque este campamento fue abandonado en 1945. Para examinarlos más de cerca, tome la senda hacia abajo del cañón. La casa del capataz utiliza apropiadamente los materiales nativos: el techo de caña del río, la madera de las montañas y las piedras grandes del Cañón del Riachuelo Azul. Cerca a los edificios...

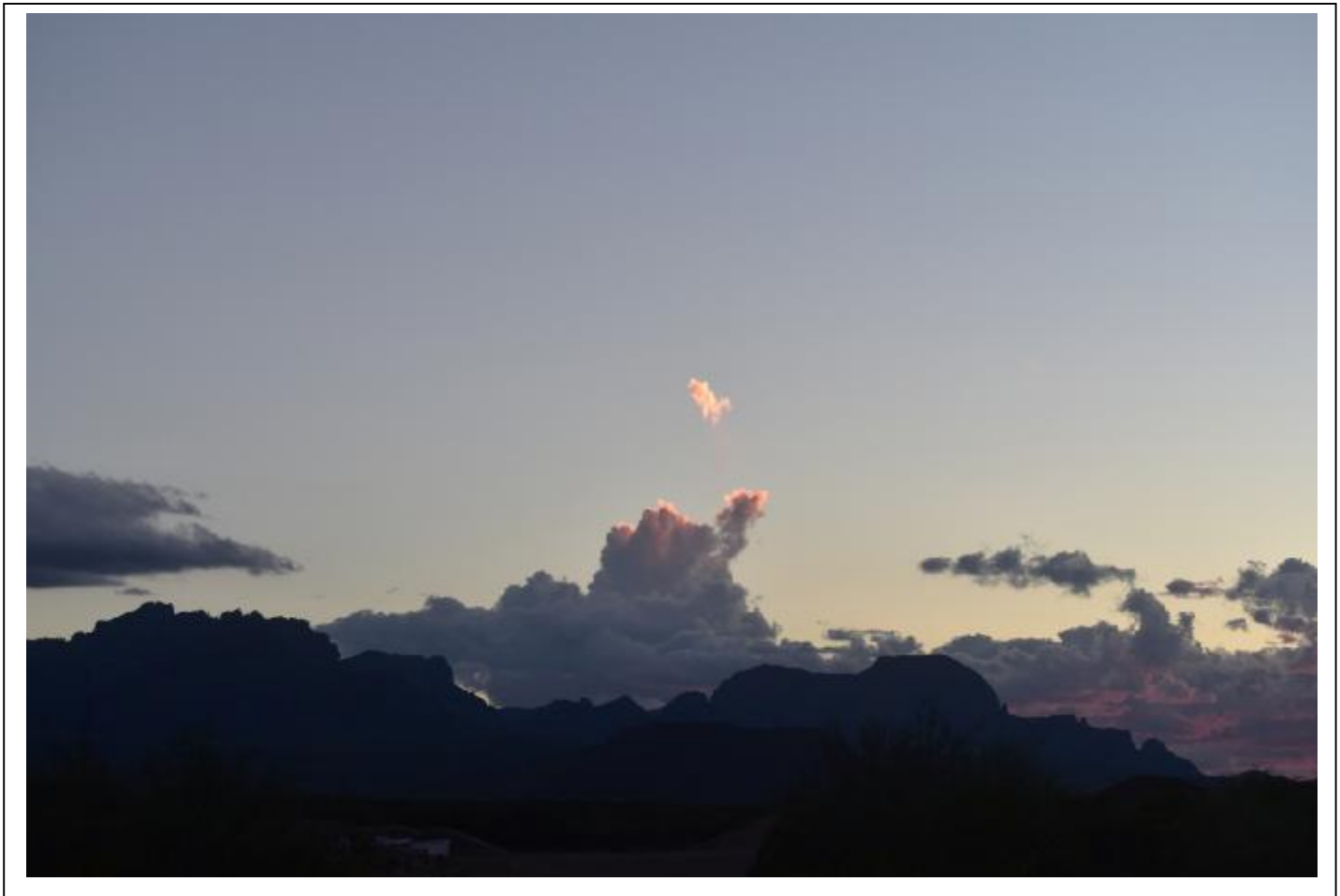




An old abandoned windmill and a still functioning one built in 1913



What's left of the adobe home built here by Sam Nail



Caught this one a little late. Moments before it looked MUCH more like a two humped camel.

As you can tell by the date I am actually putting this together and sending it out on the 9th. I am currently at a campground in Artesia, NM. It's 9:30 p.m. and I still have the 8th and 9th to try and finish and send out tonight. Although I am in no rush since I gained 2 days today. I will explain how in the 9th Newsletter.

For those of you not paying attention to the weather, Hurricane Michael is going to hit the Florida panhandle Wednesday morning. Could be cat 3 or 4. I am already scheduled to go back to Florida after my horseback ride in Tombstone. I will be back for Christmas, but other than that I am not sure.

Sorry again Kevin. Those darn hurricanes keep getting in the way of our golf games.

Goodnight
