

The River's Who's Who

In Texas, surface water (creeks, rivers, lakes) is owned by the State. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regulates pumping permits. The Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) monitors the river's water quality in Kerr County. Texas Parks & Wildlife Department issues fishing license and oversees wildlife protection.

City of Kerrville's RIVER TRAIL:

Opened in 2010, Kerrville's ADA hike-bike trail links Kerrville-Schreiner Park (east) through Louise Hays Park in the middle to Dietert Center (west) with access points to Butt-Holdsworth Library and Downtown, and the Riverside Nature Center. There are trailheads also at G-Street and Lowry Street. The 6-mile trail provides a unique opportunity to view the Guadalupe River in downtown Kerrville.

Can you walk to the sea?

The Guadalupe River's journey to the Gulf of Mexico is 431 river miles (or 200+ map miles).

Walking just 1.18 mile a day for a year would equal the distance of the river's total run. However, the elevation drop would be much less! The river bed drops 35 feet over 6 miles in downtown Kerrville.

NOTE: For your safety, please do not go around barricades during flood warnings. Kerrville is 40 miles and 800' from the top of the watershed, that creates velocity for run-off.

Learn more about the Guadalupe's journey:

"Paddling the Guadalupe" by Wayne McAllister
(Texas A&M Nature Guides)

"Four Boys, Two Canoes, and the Guadalupe River"
by Mae Durden-Nelson (Eakin Press)

What we can do to preserve & conserve

Protecting the river's water quality is everyone's responsibility. Run-off always moves down hill and the river is the bottom of the bowl. Hence, anything on the land can rinse down to the river, be it oil spills, animal droppings, litter, trash, cigarette butts, pesticides and fertilizers, even seeds.

Native riparian plants that grow along the river's edge (in the riparian zone) anchor the soil of the banks to reduce erosion and help filter run-off. Mowed plants do not provide the same level of protection. Native plants also provide habitat for many different wildlife, particularly songbirds.

Join UGRA's annual River Clean-Up 4th Sat. in July!

For more information:

- ☑ Riverside Nature Center: collection of native plants plus info on animals of the Texas Hill Country & topo-model of the Guadalupe River basin.
- ☑ Upper Guadalupe River Authority: www.ugra.org
- ☑ Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (river guide): www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/water/habitats/rivers
- ☑ Texas Commission on Environmental Quality: www.tceq.state.tx.us
- ☑ Field Guide to Texas Riparian Plants: www.remarkableriparian.org/pdfs/yrr2.pdf

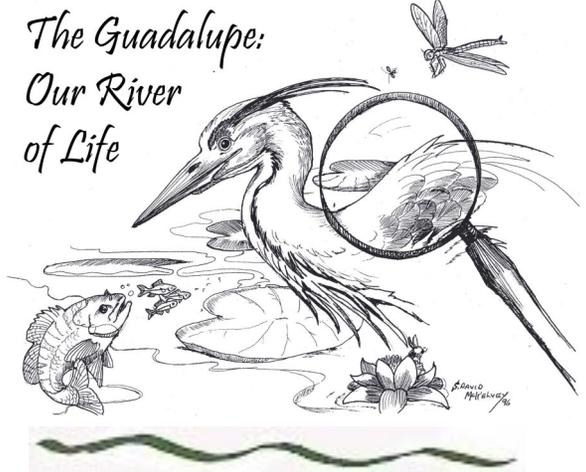
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The Guadalupe River has been carving through limestone in Texas for millions of years.

More than 50 springs in western Kerr County contribute to the base flow of South & North Forks and Johnson Creek. Run-off from heavy rain events cause flash-flooding.

Kerr County drains into 5 river basins: Llano, Frio, Pedernales, Medina and Guadalupe (the largest watershed). The North Fork and South Fork converge in Hunt to form the main river channel of the Guadalupe. Johnson Creek joins it in Ingram. Town and Quinlan creeks drain most of Kerrville to the river.

By the time the Guadalupe River reaches the Gulf of Mexico it has traveled 431 river miles and dropped 2,400 feet in elevation from the highest point in Kerr County.

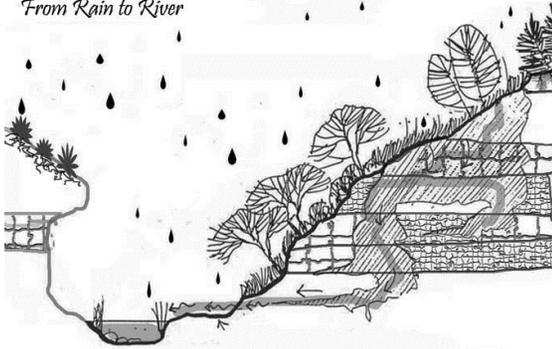
Throughout time the Guadalupe has been a bountiful habitat for wildlife and humans, providing water, food and shelter. It is as vitally important today as it always has been. Indeed, the Guadalupe is a *River of Life*.

The Guadalupe:

Rain is the ultimate source of the river.

Rain infiltrates topsoil, finds its way through cracks in limestone and resurfaces as springs and seeps. During a heavy rain, direct run-off can turn a placid river into a flash-flood. *Note: the Hill Country is one of the most flash-flood prone areas in the world due to our topography. Heed flood warnings!*

From Rain to River



The river is more than flowing water; its character and “voice” are shaped by the landscape it courses through. The river bottom can be flat limestone or cobbled with rocks tumbled and dropped during floods. There are runs, riffles and pools, and each provides a different habitat for the aquatic wildlife. The *riparian zone* adjacent to the river can be cliffs or floodplains with diverse plant communities.

Watershed is an area of land that drains to a common low spot, i.e. creek or river. Smaller watersheds join to form a *river basin*. The Guadalupe Basin starts with the headwaters in Kerr County and includes Kerr and 9 downstream counties.

Our River of Life

Habitat:

The Guadalupe River is habitat for a wide variety of wildlife starting with aquatic invertebrates (i.e. dragonfly larvae). Water quality can be assessed by the presence or absence of particular species (i.e. hellgrammites like clean water).

Who's who in the River



The Guadalupe River habitat is ancient—the bedrock is made of marine fossils, and dinosaurs left their tracks. Even now the river remains an important wildlife corridor.

Invertebrates: many start as eggs in the water and as adults take to the air (80 species of dragonflies in Kerr!)

Fish: approx. 40 species from tiny darters to spotted gar

Amphibians: 6 sp. frogs (bullfrogs are not native) + toads

Reptiles: 7 sp. of turtles including the Guadalupe spiny softshell. Not all snakes in the river are water moccasin—most are blotched water or diamondback water snakes.

Birds: 22 waterfowl sp. (mostly winter residents); osprey, 3 species of kingfishers, 6 species of heron fish the waters. Riparian trees (i.e. baldcypress) are important roost sites.

Mammals: beavers are native to Kerr County but nutria are not. Many mammals come to the river for water as well as a place to find food. Look for tracks!

Did you know—that the Guadalupe bass is the state fish of Texas? Two federally listed mussels (Golden Orb and Texas Fatmucket) are found in the upper Guadalupe.

The river and people

For at least 13,000 years humans have been camping and settling along the Guadalupe River as evidenced by the Gatlin site near the Spur 98 bridge. The river not only provided water for humans but also good hunting spots of the area’s wildlife too.

In 1846 towering baldcypress along the river banks beckoned Joshua Brown who saw the trees as raw materials for the first industry (shingle making) as well as needed lumber for dams, water tanks and buildings. The towns of Hunt, Ingram, Kerrville and Center Point were all settled along the Guadalupe.

Over time new people have been attracted to the area for health, summer recreation as well as retirement.

The Guadalupe River is also a vital part of the local economy. Summer camps contribute more than \$30 million in direct economic benefit. More than 33% of visitors fish or swim the clear waters.

Hundreds of residents and visitors now stroll/bike the River Trail, enjoying Tranquility Island under the baldcypress trees in downtown Kerrville.

People in Kerrville are River Recyclers as most of the City’s water supply is pumped from the Guadalupe River, treated, used, then treated again (to strict standards) for large-scale irrigation or returned to the river for users downstream (i.e. New Braunfels). *Water is the one resource that can be constantly recycled and reused!*