

“Rise and Shine in God’s Country”

What’s it like to see the sunrise at the top of Texas?

Here in God’s country we call that rise and shine—and here’s how it works.



First, set your alarm for 5.30am. I know, it’s really early! Sunrise in the summer is around 6.10am, so rising early is the key to rise and shine. Then set course for the Patriot Freeway and Trans Mountain Road. That’s the best hike in town.

To make it real easy, we created a new website called ‘Franklin Mountain Flora’ at www.franklinmountainsflora.com. Take a look and let us know what you think! We tried to pick out the ten best hikes and all the best plants that you will see. Jose

Ramirez who teaches over at Horizon High School got his National Honor Society students to help out. Canutillo and Coronado helped out too—so this website has all the latest gadgets like Google Earth.



Then, take off! Hiking in the morning is spiritual—a cool breeze blows at your back, song birds celebrate the day, and a sliver of the moon sets in the south, signaling the end of the night. Over the years, native Americans have risen to face the sun, palms up, to feel the heat of the dawning day.

Early morning is exciting. On many occasions, we’ve seen fox and ring tail cats cross the path ahead. Off in the distance, coyotes yip to one another after a good night on the hunt. Once I saw a herd of deer moving slowly up the eastern slope of the mountain right there at the Trans Mountain Cut.



In April, for a brief two weeks, the elusive [Texas Rainbow Cactus](#) puts out the most spectacular bloom. Some trails on the west side are known as the "Rainbow Trail" because so many of these little guys are scattered up and down the trail.



In August, during monsoons, all kinds of wildflowers, from [Feather Plumes](#) to [Birdbill Day Flowers](#) every trail.



Once, a young man from Canutillo Elementary, hugged his teachers leg and said "this is the best day of my life."

Last month, we hiked Trans Mountain trail with National Honor Society students from Horizon City High School. Here's what Gabriel Garcia said about the mountain: "This hike was so much fun, and the hike to the top of the mountain was worth every minute. I want to hike this mountain every day!"

Once, a group of University of Maryland Students came to study immigration. We hiked up and spent the morning talking about the great Camino Real though history—from the times of the Pueblo Indians to Onate, to the Battle of Brazito—all part of the rich history of our home in God's Country.



If you want, get a permit and camp out. Sleep out under the stars—there's nothing like being on the top of Texas, right here at home!

