

A Few Texas Wildflower Trails

1. There are many driving routes (known as bluebonnet trails) throughout the state but a good place to start is near the city of Burnet, which is known as the Bluebonnet Capital of Texas. Burnet is roughly 40 miles northwest of Austin. Follow TX Hwy 29 west out of Burnet for 3-1/2 miles, then turn right (north) on Ranch Road 234 and follow it about 6 miles. Turn left on Graphite Mine Road, which will eventually meet TX Hwy 29. Turn left to return to Burnet.

2. A variation of this drive will give you different but equally spectacular views of bluebonnets as well as of Lake Buchanan. Follow TX Hwy 29 west and again turn right on RR 234. If you stay on this road, you'll have 15 miles of vistas before it finally dead-ends. You can return via the same route or make the turn on Graphite Mine Road.

3. If you want to see even more of the Hill Country, simply stay on TX Hwy 29 west all the way to Llano, a distance of about 30 miles. In Llano, turn left (south) on TX Hwy 16 and follow it to Fredericksburg (39 miles). In Fredericksburg turn left (east) on U.S. Hwy 290 and follow it 32 miles to Johnson City, then follow U.S. Hwy 281 north 37 miles to Burnet.

4. Another beautiful bluebonnet drive leads west from Brenham on U.S. Hwy 290 to Giddings (35 miles), south on U.S. Hwy 77 to LaGrange (20 miles), then north on TX 159 and 237, which will get you back to U.S. 290 in the city of Burton, about 15 miles west of Brenham. Brenham lies midway between Austin and Houston.

Each April 24, Texas celebrates State Wildflower Day, and many cities have pageants, parades, and other celebrations. A partial listing of cities includes Mason, Chappell Hill, Keney, Glen Rose, Ennis, and Hughes Springs. The best way to learn what is scheduled is to contact the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Avenue, Austin, TX 78739, (512) 292-4100.

Each year is different so check to see when they are blooming. During March, April, and May, the Department of Transportation also has a telephone hotline with information on where bluebonnets are blooming: (800) 452-9292.

Enjoy the Scenic Texas views!