

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK (CHISOS BASIN), TEXAS

LOCATION: Big Bend National Park is located north of the great bend in the Rio Grande in southwestern Texas. The Park includes almost all of the Chisos Mountain area, plus more than a hundred miles of the Rio Grande itself. Elevations in the Park extend from 1,800 feet above sea level at the lower end of the Rio Grande section, to some 7,835 feet at the summit of Emory Peak. This summary applies primarily to the Chisos Basin section, at an elevation of about 5,400 feet. Down on the river, it will be about ten degrees hotter and much drier.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	10:30	11:09	11:59	12:52	13:36	14:00	13:50	13:12	12:22	11:30	10:44	10:19
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5:46	6:35	7:25	8:09	8:20	9:01	9:19	9:08	7:59	7:35	6:23	5:26
AREA OF BLUE SKY	50%	51%	52%	51%	50%	54%	49%	52%	53%	58%	53%	50%
LOW FOR MONTH	17°	23°	28°	39°	45°	51°	51°	56°	49°	39°	29°	22°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	37°	39°	44°	52°	58°	63°	63°	62°	58°	51°	42°	38°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	60°	63°	70°	78°	84°	88°	86°	85°	81°	75°	66°	60°
HIGH FOR MONTH	72°	76°	84°	88°	94°	97°	95°	94°	89°	85°	78°	76°
FROSTY MORNINGS	27%	17%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	21%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	5%	27%	53%	37%	26%	14%	1%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	41%	36%	30%	32%	34%	34%	37%	40%	42%	39%	41%	41%
DRY DAYS	92%	93%	94%	94%	91%	83%	70%	70%	75%	88%	91%	91%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	96%	96%	98%	96%	93%	89%	82%	83%	85%	92%	95%	96%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.10	0.08	0.05	0.10	0.25	0.32	0.50	0.44	0.40	0.22	0.09	0.09
SNOWY DAYS	3%	4%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%
THUNDER DAYS	1%	1%	4%	10%	18%	17%	17%	17%	18%	8%	3%	1%
FOGGY DAYS	14%	12%	10%	10%	10%	10%	4%	10%	11%	13%	13%	12%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 62% of the year's daylight hours. This might range from a low of 53% in December, to a high of 69% in August. The year's lowest temperature should be close to 7°, and the highest should be near 102°. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you actually feel) will be up to 4° cooler than actual ones. Elevation and--to a lesser degree--slope orientation rule local climates. You can expect daytime temperatures to drop an average of 1°F for each 300'-increase in elevation--and vice versa going downhill. As in all mountains, the direction the slope is facing makes a tremendous difference in how much sunshine and how much rain the slope gets. Snow flurries can and do occur throughout the cold season, but are rarely heavy enough to cause problems, or to last past noon of the next day. Ground accumulations are rare in the Basin, but common enough on the surrounding peaks.