

STOP 1 Calera Chapel

The tiny church of Calera was built two miles east of the famous San Solomon Springs in Balmorhea State Park. The little structure served the community. Their website says it well: “Calera is a story of how humans migrate to areas with resources for life, a story of missionaries who follow the people and tend to their spiritual needs, and the modernization that comes with time and finally people moving on when the resources of life disappear.” Before the springs were contained and used for ranches, the native peoples relied on the water, and settled here. This church is a reminder of the healthy ecosystem and community that existed here before development.

www.caleratexas.org



STOP 3 City of Balmorhea

The City of Balmorhea (pronounced *Bal-more-ay*) is an amalgamation of Balcom, Morrow, and Rhea, the surnames of its founders.

This small town hosts a wide variety of birdlife. Birding opportunities are especially rich during the winter and during migration. The town's mature trees are a great place to spot unusual neotropical birds that pass through and take advantage of the habitats created by San Solomon Spring's water.



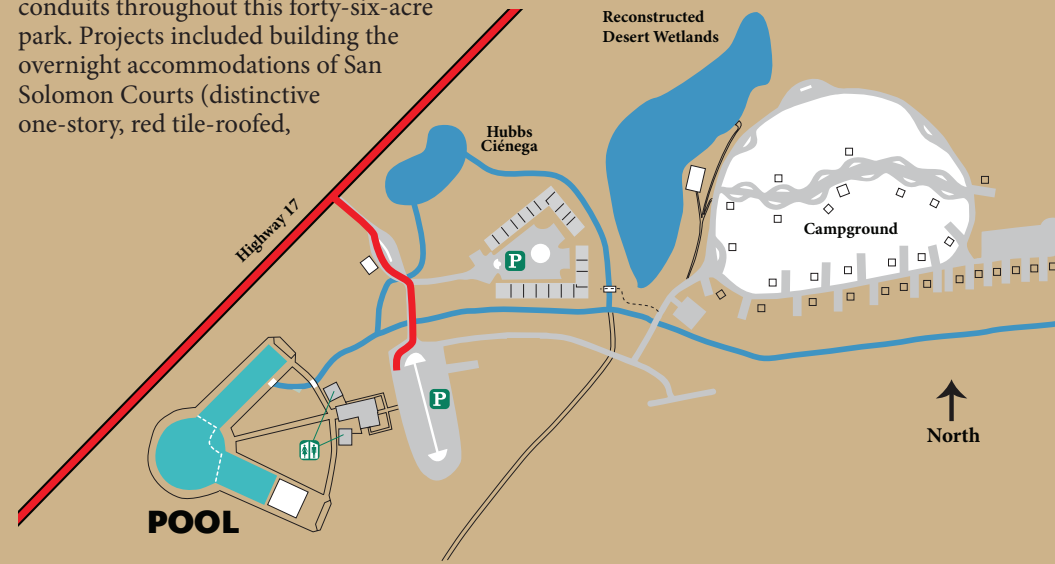
STOP 2 Balmorhea State Park



In the corner of this small state park is the largest in a series of artesian and gravity springs formed by subsurface geologic faults in the Balmorhea area: famous San Solomon Springs. About 20 million gallons of clear crystalline water flows from the spring each day. In a desert environment, this water is far more than utilitarian: it sustains a diversity of unique life forms that would not otherwise exist.

From 1934 to 1940, the enrollees of Company 1856, (the name of the group of Civilian Conservation Corps workers located here,) built roads, buildings, bridges, and irrigation conduits throughout this forty-six-acre park. Projects included building the overnight accommodations of San Solomon Courts (distinctive one-story, red tile-roofed,

white-plastered adobe brick cabins in each of the eighteen units) and the two-acre swimming pool. Unfortunately, when the projects were completed in 1935, the remaining desert wetland, or cienega, that originally surrounded the spring's headwaters were destroyed.



Restoration efforts today are recreating a cienega ecosystem, so after leaving the pool, spring waters now pass through the cattails, rushes and reeds in San Solomon Cienega. This desert wetland serves as a home for abundant aquatic life including two small, endangered desert fishes: the Pecos Gambusia and the Comanche Springs Pupfish. Occurring at no other place in the world, the sole remaining population of the pupfish relies upon the springs and canals of the Balmorhea area for survival. Other animals, including resident and migrant birds, depend upon this water and lush vegetation for food, water and shelter. Local farmers rely on San Solomon water to irrigate crops that would otherwise not survive the blistering desert summers.

Don't miss the opportunity to enjoy this wonderful West Texas treasure. The crystal-clear water is the world's largest spring-fed swimming pool. More than 15 million gallons of water flow through the pool each day, gushing from the San Solomon Springs. The pool is up to 25 feet deep, covers 1.75 acres, and holds 3.5 million gallons of water. The water temperature stays at 72 to 76 degrees year-round. Swim, scuba dive, or just relax under the trees at this historic park in arid West Texas.

tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/balmorhea



Green Heron



Herring Gull



Hooded Merganser



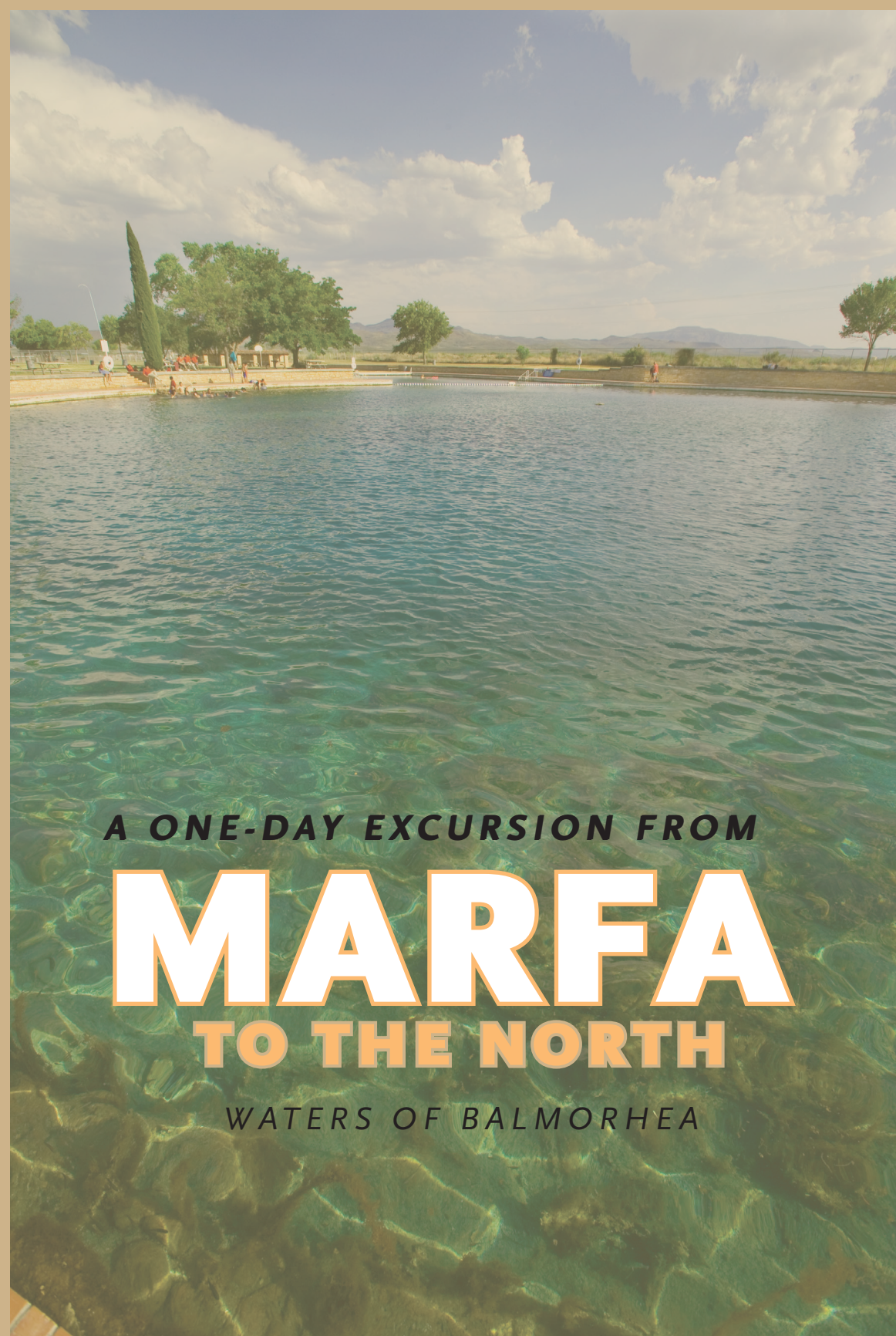
Vermillion Flycatcher

Photos by Mark Lockwood

STOP 4 **Balmorhea Lake**

Drive out to Balmorhea Lake, two miles east of Balmorhea, for one of the greatest bird watching areas around. This body of water attracts a rich variety, documented in the checklist available online or at the park's visitor center.

Watch for wading birds like the green heron, unusual pelegic migrants like the herring gull, a wide variety of ducks, like this hooded merganser, and colorful migrants and neotropical species, like the vermilion flycatcher. Since the lake functions as a storage facility, water level fluctuates greatly. The southern edge of the lake is excellent for shorebirds in dry years when water levels are low. This end of the lake is favored by loons, diving ducks and Clark's and Western Grebes in fall and winter.



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STOP 3
City of Balmorhea

Balmorhea

STOP 4
Balmorhea Lake

Toyahvale

STOP 1
La Calera Chapel

STOP 2
Balmorhea State Park
See detailed map on reverse side

Davis Mountains

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

REEVES COUNTY
PECOS COUNTY

Sheep Pasture Mountain

166

Sawtooth Mountain

McDaniel Mountain

Bear Mountain

Whitetail Mountain

Pine Peak

Brown Mountain

Mt. Locke

Casket Mountain

Short Canyon

Frazier Canyon

118

Limpia Mountain

Arabella Mountain

Scobee Mountain

Buck Mountain

Blue Seep Mountain

Brown Mountain

White Mountain

Blue Mountain

Fort Davis

Polks Peak
x 1599

Arkansas Mesa

Davis Mountains Scenic Loop

166

Mine Mountain

Carpenter Mountain

Blue Pasture Hills

118

Mano Prieto Mountain

Antelope Peak

Castle Rock

PRESIDIO COUNTY

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY
BREWSTER COUNTY

0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometers

BURRO DRAW
DUNCAN DRAW

Puertacitas Mountain

Twin Mountains

The Haystack

RYAN FLAT

90

BIG TREESTLE DRAW

FOURMILE DRAW

90
67

Marfa

Chinati Foundation

67

Marfa Lights Viewing Center

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

Alpine

90
67

Black Peaks

Paisano Peak

Lizard Mountain

Twin Sisters

Big Hill

LONG DRAW

Tinaja

ANTELOPE DRAW

Haley's Peak

Cathedral Mountain
6800 ft.

Ramsay Draw