

# Deep in the Heart of Texas: A Search for the Perfect Swimming Hole

BARTON SPRINGS, TEXAS, USA

SARA AND BILLY JACK BRAWNER, ELLSWORTH (9), FLORA (8), BILLY JACK (7), PACE (7), AND JONES (3)



**A Texas family heads outdoors to explore the wonders of nature, create new memories, and grow closer together.**

Once upon a time—back when he was a university student—Billy Jack Brawner went backpacking in Morocco and, while exploring the baked deserts, rugged mountains, and dusty medinas of North Africa, he developed a personal mantra: “If I see water, I’m going to jump into it.”

Many years (and five kids) later, Billy Jack’s love for wild swimming has become a passion shared by his entire family—a passion that has inspired the Brawner clan to explore their home state of Texas in an ongoing quest to find the perfect summer swimming hole.

Although Billy Jack grew up in a place where wild swimming wasn’t really an option, Sara Brawner is from just outside of Austin, where a number of pristine, natural oases welcome adventurous swimmers throughout the year. “When we were dating, we would spend as much time as possible swimming in the nearby rivers and cliff-jumping into the springs,” says Billy Jack. “It’s genuinely our favorite thing to do together.” The couple’s long-standing love of swimming in nature has been passed on to their five children: Ellsworth, Flora, Billy Jack, Pace, and Jones. Both parents say there is something profoundly

