



The discrepancy in climate between these contrasting environments is equally marked, with a 10 to 20-degree variation in temperature between the Chisos and the desert floor. Roaming these multifarious biomes are mountain lions, black bears, javelinas, coyotes, and bobcats. For all you cartoon fans out there, also keep an eye out for roadrunners (*Geococcyx californianus*)—beep, beep!

Almost all of Big Bend’s vast array of fauna and flora can be found on both sides of the Rio Grande. The region’s biological lifeline has existed since a time before record, and this environmental connection between countries has long been recognized by both the U.S. and Mexican governments. The notion of an International Peace Park bridging the shared ecosystem was first proposed by U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt in 1944, and the idea has never entirely disappeared. As recently as 2011 under the Obama administration, both governments announced a working plan for proceeding with “the next steps for the continued coordination between the two countries in the protection and preservation of the transnational Big Bend/Rio Bravo region—North America’s largest and most diverse desert ecosystem.” No one can predict the future, but in an ideal world not separated by contentious political boundaries, perhaps the “seamless flow of nature” will again unite us all.

- ↑ Grazing horses and towering cliffs.
- Big Bend’s impressive rock formations are best enjoyed as the sun is either rising or setting.
- ↓ Heading towards the Chisos mMountains, the only range in America to be fully contained within the boundaries of a national park.

