

RUNNING SHORTS

Huntsville State Park offers many advantages

By Darren Grant

Let's finish our series on places to run with one of the most popular spots of all: Huntsville State Park, a jewel in our own backyard.

Runners are so common at the state park that they are part of the ecosystem. There is someone running out there almost anytime that there's daylight — and sometimes when there isn't.

A big reason is the miles and miles of trails in the park and the national forest next door. You could run for hours without ever retracing your steps. (And some people do.) Trails are soft on your feet, and the forest floor is a lot cooler than open asphalt.

The main disadvantage is that the laws of physics still apply. Run enough trails, and you will trip and fall. It comes with the territory. It hurts my ego more than anything else.

Here's a phrase no one has ever said: "Darren looked so graceful, tripping on that root and planting his face and chest in the dirt." And no one ever will.

The other possible concern is animals. I have never encountered in the park, only in town: chickens in the Avenues, deer in Elkins, horses on Rosenwall Road. Still, I keep my eyes open.

One person who enjoys running the trails is new park superintendent Reagan Faught. "I appreciate its simple nature," he says. "It requires little planning and, more importantly, not much stuff. All you need is a trail and a good pair of shoes."

Faught is not alone. For time out of mind, a steady group of half a dozen runners has met at the park every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, in the parking lot across from the Nature Center. They put in a few miles, then visit afterwards as the twilight sets in, giving both their legs and their jaws a workout. It counts as double the exercise! (The trail running group at Huntsville State Park welcomes newcomers of all abilities. It currently meets at 5:30 p.m., but the time changes with the season. To learn more, contact former Running Shorts columnist Ken Johnson, who also compiles the "Recent Race Results" section of this column. His e-mail address is 1941runner@sbcglobal.net.)

Recent race results:

Capitol 10K (6.2 miles), Austin, Apr. 23

Randall Kenyon, 24	49:25
Megan Kaltenbach, 22	1:30:21
Yoselin Rameriz, 25	1:53:49
Margarita Dominguez, 25	1:53:58
Erica Mejia, 33	1:53:58

Wine & Roses 5K, Bryan, Apr. 23

Cathy Bickford, 55	49:41
Cindy Pate, 56	49:41

Divas Half Marathon (13.1 miles), Galveston, Apr. 23

Macy Floyd 2:29:02
Caroline Cole 2:53:28

5K

Jadyn Justice 30:10
Laura Green 32:26
Laurie McLaren 32:30
Melanie Justice 35:41
Dianna Sarno 38:43
Tomeka Johnson 43:03
Bambi Kiser 43:47
Sue Slater 45:56
Natasha Davis 52:56
Jennifer Langley 55:48

Spring Fling Run, Huntsville, Apr. 22**5K**

Chase Foster, 33 22:03
Emily Garner, 36 22:20
Cole Schroeder, 11 25:44
Jesus Perez, 19 25:47
James Spencer, 36 26:22
Heather Schroeder, 44 27:35
Rachel Tatum, 43 28:24
Jeffrey Johnson, 61 29:48
Monica Lopez, 34 32:03
Jake Holland, 14 34:44
Victoria Betancourt, 23 35:41
Peta Taylor, 30 36:17
Gene Gaskins, 57 36:39
Ben Johnson, 33 37:36
Jan Parks, 60 38:39
Morgan Ashworth, 28 40:00
Ken Johnson, 75 40:41
Haley Torres, 21 42:11
Shellie Geer, 67 44:10
Sharon Holland, 12 44:29
Emilie Choate, 11 44:38
Jack Choate, 47 44:39
Kerry Spencer, 36 44:41
Courtney Chastine, 29 48:09
Patricia Capps, 63 49:06
Heidi Morse, 57 49:09
Lois Levingston, 62 50:08
Vicki Hogan, 62 50:16
Valerie Martin, 10 57:25

Ashlyn Mobley, 11	57:49
Jayci Martin, 12	59:07
Valerie Muehsam, 61	58:08

1-Mile

Dawson Garner, 12	8:09
Brady Garner, 9	9:05
Seth Brown, 11	9:06
Patrick Ramon, Jr., 37	36:05 (started late)
Patrick Ramon, III, 12	36:07 (started late)

Wildflower Trails 5K, Hughes Springs, Apr. 22

Steve Allen, 44 21:20

Red River County 5K, Bogata, Apr. 21

Steve Allen, 44 28:20

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

May 20 – Five-0 Color Run, 5K & 1-Mile

May 29 – Memorial Day 5K & 1-Mile, Timberwilde Sub-division

For more information about these races and others in the area, visit the Seven Hills Running Club website at <http://www.7hills.us> and click on Race Schedule.