

Sports & Recreation

Brownsville, with its beautiful vegetation and year-round pleasant climate, has the ideal environment for nearly any sport or outdoor activity you can imagine. It offers a wide array of athletic facilities, parks, fields, courts, courses, and water venues. With all this readily available to us, a life of recreational activities has become embedded in our culture. Whether it's fishing, hunting, golfing, or football, soccer, and biking, in Brownsville you will find everything you need to participate in any sport or recreational activity in a leisurely or competitively manner.

Fishing is a major attraction for locals and tourists. Whether it's catfish, bass, or gar that you're after, or perhaps king mackerel, blue marlin, or sailfish, Brownsville has many fresh water "resacas" (reservoirs) throughout the city and is also in close proximity to the famous South Padre Island where you can partake in the wonders of offshore fishing and even join in on one of the many popular nation-wide fishing tournaments. Only a 30 minute drive away and you can delve into one of America's top beaches, South Padre Island, which offers every kind of water activity imaginable, from Schlitterbahn Beach Waterpark, the adrenaline-rushing jet skiing, windsurfing, kite boarding, and parasailing to the more relaxing horseback riding on the beach, dolphin watching, or sunset sailing cruises. South Padre Island gladly welcomes thousands of people year-round.

Other activities you can enjoy in Brownsville include golf, hunting, bike trails, and all kinds of ball games and tournaments. There are a number of beautiful golf courses to choose from, which you can find dispersed throughout our tropical environment. Brownsville Parks and Recreation operates a park system with athletic fields, pools, playground, picnic, and recreation facilities. The Brownsville Tennis Center, which opened in 2001, features 16 fully lighted courts where it conducts and sponsors junior and adult development programs and tournaments as well as tournaments of ranking and outstanding achievement. In 2006 the innovative premier sports park "Brownsville Sports Park" opened up and added new, fun, and exciting opportunities for everyone. The park offers 10 full sized lighted multi-sport fields, 1 full size lighted multi-sports turf field, 5 full-size lighted softball and baseball fields, 1 BMX bike track, 1 skate park concrete bowl (16,000 ft), 1 walking/jogging asphalt trail, 3 outdoor basketball courts, 2 lakes, 2 party pavilions, a playground area, and 5 sand volleyball courts. The Sports Park is proud to contribute towards a healthy and active lifestyle by welcoming anyone who wants to enjoy it leisurely, as well as by hosting local, state, and national level tournaments.

Brownsville's nationally recognized 31 acre zoo is another place that caters to people of all ages. Gladys Porter Zoo is a visitor-oriented zoological and botanical park with an average of 375,000 local people and tourists visiting the zoo annually. It is dedicated to the preservation of nature through education, conservation and research. With 26 acres of lush tropical plants and some 1,600 animals, the zoo is known for its dedication and successes in breeding endangered species of wildlife. The zoo is continually developing and finding ways to make it an even more valuable experience. Their most recent additions include the Giraffe Landing and the Butterflies, Bugs, & Blooms. With its natural encompassing beauty and its entertaining charm, it's no doubt another valued jewel for the Brownsville community.

Brownsville has come to be known as a well renowned birding destination, and as Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine puts it, "No matter what time of year you visit, birds and butterflies will be abundant here in this land 'south of winter.'" Brownsville's Resaca de la Palma State Park boasts the largest tract of native habitat in the World Birding Center network, holding one of the most spectacular convergences of birds on Earth. Its 1200 semi-tropical acres includes over 8 miles of trails, 4 decks that overlook the 4 miles of resaca, a 3.2 mile tram loop that winds through the park, and almost 500 species of birds.

Being a world class destination for birds, it's no wonder birders from all over the nation come here to see the bird species they can't find anywhere else in the country, from the Green Jay and the Buff-bellied Hummingbird to the Great Kiskadee and the Altamira Oriole. Just 20 miles northeast of Brownsville along the banks of the Laguna Madre, you can also find the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, the largest protected area of natural habitat left in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The unique south Texas landscape blending of temperate, subtropical, coastal, and desert habitats is an oasis for wildlife with few alternatives. The refuge's 45,187 acres is home to a mix of plants, birds, and other wildlife found nowhere else.