

FLOWPATHS

A Newsletter of the Edwards Aquifer Research and Data Center

In this newsletter:

- Aquatic Field Days for School Groups
- Aquatic Science Adventure Camp Update
- Research Spotlight: Aquatic Dispersal in the Rio Grande
- Analytical Lab Hours

Aquatic Field Days for School Groups

The school year and the summer have quite different feels about them in the education office. While the school year has a slower pace, the EARDC is kept busy planning for camp, providing field trips, and taking part in events and learning opportunities. Aquatic Field Days is a long-running program of the EARDC and while it has undergone changes, we are still offering great, affordable field trips for school groups. Our most popular field trip offering is our Aquatic Ecology program, where we take students out to the San Marcos River and look for macroinvertebrates to take back to the lab and identify. Students can then use the organisms they identify to determine the health of the water ecosystem. Students learn a lot while having an amazing time out in nature. If your student's class is looking for a fun field trip this fall or spring, send them our way!

Aquatic Science Adventure Camp Update



ASAC 2026 Sessions

Wow, can you believe camp is just seven months away? Camp dates have been set for next year and can be found below. Due to feedback from some enthusiastic campers, we have decided to open up an Overnight Expedition Camp session for 14 – 16 year olds. This session will include the same fun adventure activities that campers know and love, while incorporating new science programming. Check out the dates and descriptions below and make sure to mark your calendar for Monday, January 12, 2026 when registration will open at 8am.

Overnight Expedition Camps (Registration Deposit-\$250)

Dive into an adventure like no other! Join us for experiences like river rafting, scuba diving, and wild cave exploration! Campers will also engage with our expert staff to delve into scientific investigations related to water. Set on the vibrant Texas State University campus and University Camp, our campers get to explore university spaces and beautiful San Marcos. Camps run from Sunday afternoon to Friday afternoon and there are sessions available for 9 – 16 year olds. Don't miss out on this epic adventure!

Total Cost: \$1,199.

Explorer Day Camps (Registration Deposit \$150)

This is a week of action-packed activities, running from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Campers will conquer the rapids during river rafting, uncover hidden secrets in caves, learn about life in the river, and so much more! Each Explorer session is open to 9 – 14 year olds, once all spots are filled, campers will be put in A or B group based on age. Lunch is **NOT** included. Total Cost: \$549.

Nature Adventure Half-Day Camp

Calling all young nature enthusiasts! Nature Adventure Half-Day Camp is tailor-made for curious minds aged 6-8 who crave exploration and adore the outdoors. Get ready for a whirlwind of science and nature activities that are all about fun. Join us as we go critter-hunting, craft new creatures, and embark on exciting outdoor escapades. Camp runs Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Total Cost: \$150.

Do you love ASAC? If so, consider supporting us. Camp expenses continue to rise, so we have entered a new phase of fundraising with a long-term vision of establishing a permanent support fund to make ASAC affordable to everyone. [Donate HERE](#) and type or copy/paste **Aquatic Science Adventure Camp Support Fund** into the program search.

For questions, contact Kellie Donajkowski at EARDC_education@txstate.edu or 512-245-6176.

Dates	Camp Session	Ages
May 31 – June 5, 2026	Overnight Expedition Camp 1	9 – 12
June 7 – 12, 2026	Overnight Expedition Camp 2	12 – 14
June 14 – 19, 2026	Overnight Expedition Camp 3	9 – 12
June 21 – 26, 2026	Overnight Expedition Camp 4	12 – 14
June 28 – July 3, 2026	Overnight Expedition Camp 5	9 – 12
July 5 – 10, 2026	Overnight Expedition Camp 6	14 – 16
July 13 – 17, 2026	Explorer Day Camp 1	9 – 14
July 20 – 24, 2026	Explorer Day Camp 2	9 – 14
July 27 – 31, 2026	Nature Adventure Half-Day Camp	6 – 8

Research Spotlight –

Aquatic Dispersal in the Rio Grande

The scientific process takes time, culminating in peer-reviewed articles that sometimes come out years after an initial discovery. Such is the case with a publication in the scientific journal *Hydrobiologia* this month by EARDC researchers and colleagues. In an earlier edition of our Spotlight on Research, we highlighted an adventurous, 10-day canoe trip down the remote Lower Canyons of the Rio Grande back in 2020. The current paper looks at the invertebrates – snails, insects, worms, and crustaceans from deep within the gravel of the Rio Grande's river bottom that were collected on that trip. It turns out there are actually two different invertebrate communities down there. The first, mainly insects that also live in the river itself, tend to occur anywhere that river water flows down into the gravel: they like any areas where the temperature and oxygen levels match river conditions. The second community, mainly blind subterranean snails and crustaceans that never come up to the river itself, only occur in areas where deeper groundwater wells up from underlying aquifers. What's novel about the current paper is that the researchers were able to document *why* we observe this pattern. It turns out that the insects are better able to move around – a process that biologists call dispersal. They can swim in the river, crawl through the sediments, and some can even fly. So, they're able to move around in the river basin, colonizing any habitat that fits their preference. The subterranean species, on the other hand, are really poor dispersers. They come out of those deeper aquifers, but kind of just get stuck in place. Why does that matter? The research has implications for how these different types of animals – what biologists call *functional groups*—will respond to a changing environment. As parts of the Rio Grande start to dry up more regularly, those subterranean species might not be able to recolonize those sections of the river, especially if connections to the aquifer, at places like springs, become disconnected from the river. The full article can be viewed at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10750-025-06027-5>.

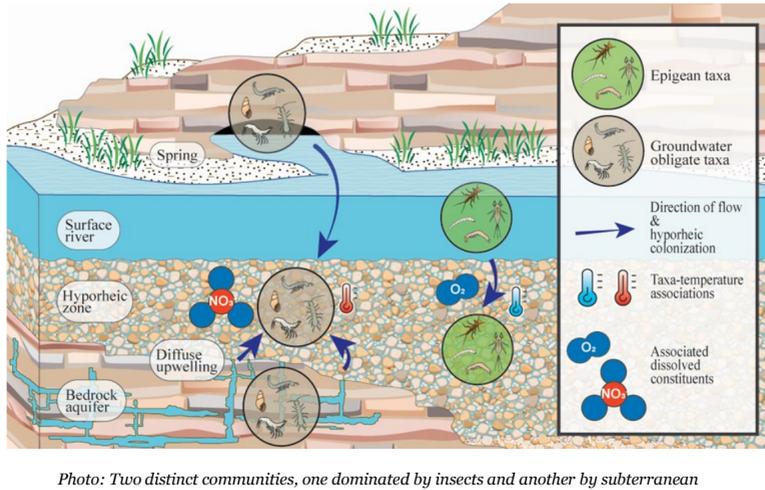


Photo: Two distinct communities, one dominated by insects and another by subterranean crustaceans and snails, occurs beneath the river bottom in the Rio Grande. The distribution of subterranean species is controlled by proximity to source populations in groundwater. The distribution of insects is controlled by environmental variables.

Analytical Lab Hours

Holiday Hours:

Closed: Wednesday, November 26 - Friday, November 28, 2025.

Bacteriological samples will only be accepted Monday, November 24, 2025.

No BOD/septic samples after Thursday, November 20, 2025.

Closed: Monday, December 22, 2025 – Friday, January 2, 2026.

The last day to submit bacteriological samples for the month of

December is Thursday, December 18, 2025.

No BOD/septic samples after Friday, December 12, 2025.

Regular business hours resume Monday, January 5, 2026.

Regular Hours:

Monday – Friday, 8am – 5 pm, closed for lunch 12-1:15pm

Bacteriological samples are not accepted on Fridays, only by special request.



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/aquaticsciencecamp>

Instagram: @aquaticsciencecamp

Website: <https://www.eardc.txst.edu/>

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please reply with the subject "unsubscribe".