



Exploring the Brazos River: From Beginning to End (River Books, Sponsored by The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, Texa)

Jim Kimmel PhD

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From its ancient headwaters on the semiarid plains of eastern New Mexico to its mouth at the Gulf of Mexico, the Brazos River carves a huge and paradoxical crescent through Texas geography and history. Its average flow is the largest of Texas rivers, but its floods, low flows, silt, and natural salt have often frustrated human desires. It is one of the most dammed of Texas rivers, but its lower four hundred miles constitute one of the longest undammed stretches of river in North America. In *Exploring the Brazos River*, Jim Kimmel follows this long, changeable river from its rocky “arms” in West Texas, through the stretch made famous by John Graves in his classic book, *Goodbye to a River*, to its lumbering presence as it flows, undammed and mostly untouched, down the Brazos Valley and into the Gulf of Mexico. Exploring the entire river system, Kimmel first sets the context of climate and geology that determines the characteristics of the Brazos. He then explains the ecological processes that define the Brazos watershed before focusing on four reaches of the river, from the headwaters to the mouth. Each chapter features the captivating photography of Jerry Touchstone Kimmel and includes maps, charts, and descriptions of the water, land, ecology, and people. To encourage readers to explore on their own, Kimmel closes the chapters with tips on where best to experience the river and the surrounding countryside. Amateur and professional naturalists and outdoor enthusiasts of all stripes will find *Exploring the Brazos River* a practical and inspiring guide for the introduction of—or re-acquaintance with—one of the most important, historic, and diverse natural resources in the Lone Star State.

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