

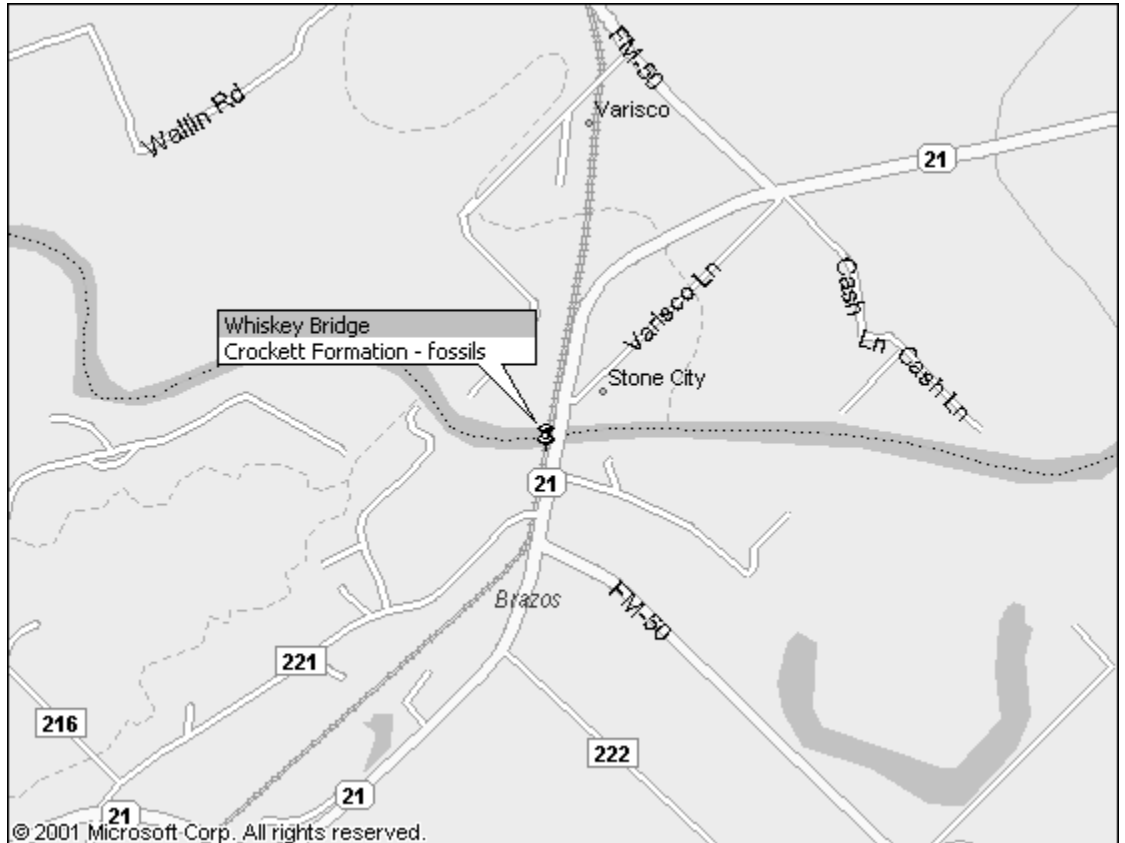
# Earth Science Week Field Trip

## Famous Locality – Stone City Bluffs on the Brazos River "Whiskey Bridge" – Crockett Fm, Eocene

*There are no facilities at this site. Bring water and dress for the weather. The nearest restrooms are in Cook's Point, about 15 miles to the south or in Bryan.*

"Whiskey Bridge" is the Hwy 21 bridge over the Brazos River. It got this name because the river once marked a boundary between "wet" and "dry" counties.

Park on the southwest side of the bridge. TDOT has put in a paved pulloff! We have parked school buses here during wet weather with no problems. To get to the collecting area go straight down the bank of the river. You will find cliffs on the west (left) side that are excellent collecting. I have never seen a



snake here but the striped skins are everywhere and almost friendly (or maybe just dumb). This site is public. You may visit it any time and collect invertebrate fossils. You will see Eocene gastropods, pelecypods, squids, shark teeth, crabs, dentalium, and lots of other things. Tools: gardening tools and a bucket are all that is required. Some of the fossils are fragile and I like to wrap those up in aluminum foil for protection.

For a brief guide to the 50 most common fossils found there see the Houston Gem & Mineral Society field trip web site for Whiskey Bridge and others at - <https://hgms.org/events/field-trips/>. A full book on this site with 200+ identified fossils can be bought from the publications page <https://hgms.org/publications/paleo-books/>. I suggest that you first pick out the fossils you can see and then wash the residue through a window screen to find the little stuff. The little coral *Turbinolia*, for example, is common but hard to see except in a washed sample

How to get stream flow data for the Brazos River: <http://tx.waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/current?type=flow>  
site 08108700 - <this is the Brazos river at Hwy 21 bridge>  
click on '08108700' you will get a new page  
select Gage Height and 30 days and gif and click on SELECT

NOTE - you can not get more than 31 days of data. A really good, low water level is 8 feet.

Neal Immega, HGS field trip leader

## Earth Science Week Field Trip to Whiskey Bridge near Bryan, Tx

**HGS Field Trip Leader:** Neal Immega, Ph.D. paleontologist. 100+ trips to the site since 1965.

**Where:** Highway 21 crosses the Brazos River near Bryan, Tx. The outcrop is on the southwest side of the river and has room for 100s of people. This picture is from the 1995 ESW field trip.



**Access:** The site is under and TDOT and Union Pacific bridges and is on what is called a navigation waterway and thus is public land in Texas, which means that it is open for access 24/365. People have been collecting there since 1850.

**Restrictions:** Texas Game Wardens are enforcing the new federal law against collecting vertebrate fossils and Indian artifacts. Some geology students have been told to put back all their vertebrate finds (including shark teeth). Invertebrate fossils are collectable.

**Services:** The town of Cooks Point with a gas station and restrooms is 5 miles south of the bridge. Bryan is about 10 miles north of the bridge on Hwy 21. No facilities on site. There is cell service even at river level.

**Hospital:** Bryan College Station Community Health Center 3370 S. Texas Ave, Bryan, Tx 77802 979-595-1700

**Police:** Bryan Police Department 303 E. 29th St, Bryan, Tx. 77803 979-209-5300

**Site Hazards:** Poison ivy is rampant except at the outcrop. There is an easy but steep path to the site. I have never seen a snake there but there are many Five Lined skinks for the kids to chase. Foolish always clime the steep banks and might slide down but I have never seen a kid hurt or end in the river. I have seen ticks there. Take the usual gear - water, sunscreen, hat, light digging gear, extra clothes if it is muddy. Water level should be below 15 feet - see <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/uv?08108700>

**Paleontology References:** The Houston Gem and Mineral Soc has extensive reference material on line (I wrote it) including collecting guides. The outcrop is the Stone City member of the Crockett Fm, Eocene.

<https://hgms.org/events/field-trips/>