

## Texas Ecoregions: The High Plains

The **High Plains** ecoregion occupies the area we call the Texas Panhandle. This ecoregion is a level plateau that ranges in elevation from 3000 to 4500 ft. Because this area is so flat, it experiences some of the highest winds in the United States. It is a very dry ecoregion, prone to drought, and on average receives only 15 to 20 inches of rain annually. For the most part, the High Plains consists of short-grass prairies and very few trees.

The spectacular Palo Duro Canyon is located in this ecoregion and was formed by the weathering and erosion of rock by the flowing water of the Red River. The extreme dry conditions in this ecoregion can lead to wind erosion in areas with little vegetation. In fact, Lubbock, Texas, has made national news for the large-scale dust storms we have experienced! The lack of vegetation and moisture makes it easy for the wind to pick up and erode the sandy soil.

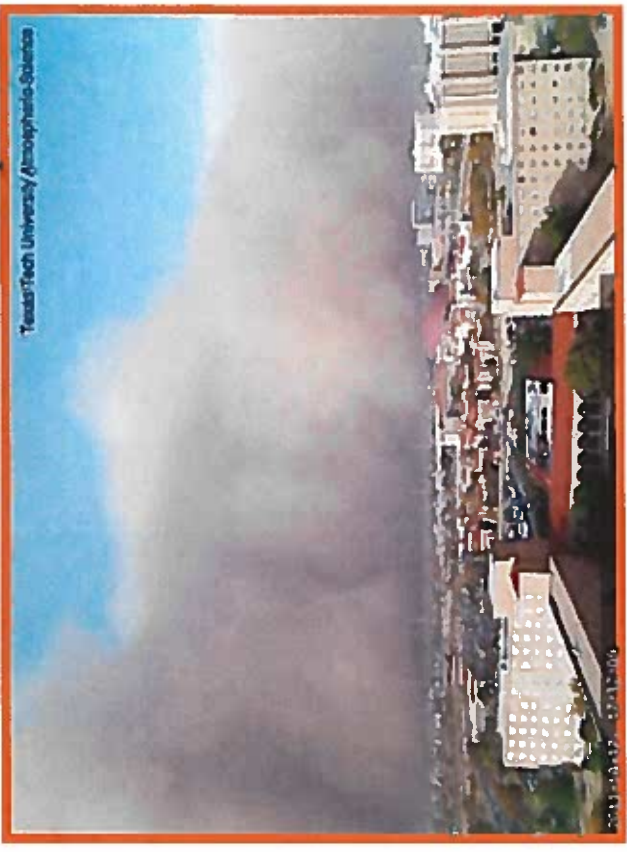


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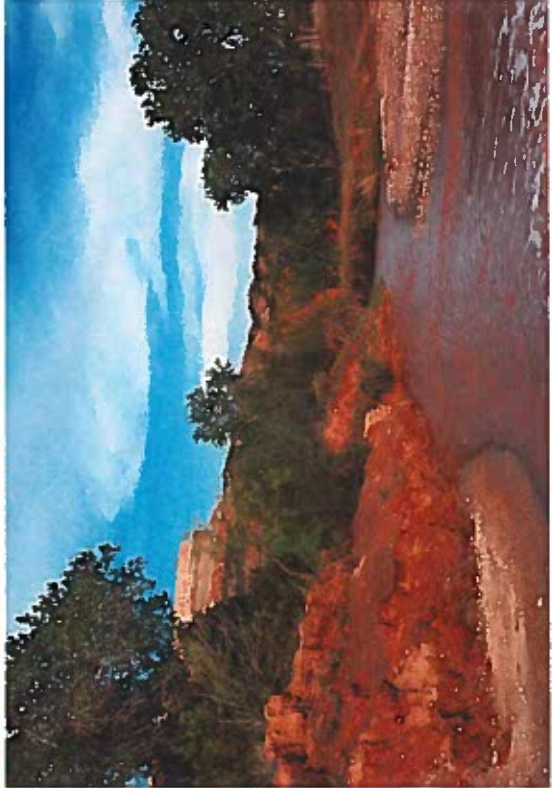
Palo Duro Canyon



Haboob Dust Storm Lubbock, TX



Texas Tech University / Atmospheric Sciences



Red River in Palo Duro Canyon State Park

Prairie Dog



Rattlesnake



Jackrabbit



Coyote

