



COMAL RIVER

COMAL RIVER. The Comal River, said to be the shortest river in the United States, rises in a number of large springs in New Braunfels in southeastern Comal County (at 29°43' N, 98°08' W) and flows southeast for three miles to its mouth on the Guadalupe River, also in New Braunfels (at 29°42' N, 98°07' W). It has a number of small islands in its upper reaches, and its course crosses an area of the Balcones Escarpment characterized by low relief surfaces and moderately deep to deep sandy and clay loam soils that support live oak and Ashe juniper woods. Most of the land around the river has been developed by the city of New Braunfels or has been converted to cropland. The Comal was called the Guadalupe by some early Spanish explorers, two of whom, Domingo Ramón and the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo,^{99v} knew the river in its lower regions. The name Guadalupe was still used as late as 1727, but after [Pedro de Rivera y Villalón](#) identified the longer stream as the Guadalupe, the shorter was given the name Comal, Spanish for "flat dish," for the landscape along the riverbed. The abundant and reliable flow of the Comal provided power for the early industry of New Braunfels—gristmills and sawmills as well as flour and textile mills. With the development of alternative sources of power after 1900, much of the property along the banks of the river was converted to municipal parkland, including [Landa Park](#) and Prince Solms Park.

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Mary H. Ogilvie and Daniel P. Greene

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