

You Can Be A Community Scientist pages 1-2



Wildlife Cams: Get Started! page 3







COMMUNITY SCIENCE: Share what

by Julia Rowe Ph.D., Invasive Species Program Coordinator

Where have all the flowers gone? Why do birds suddenly appear? To answer questions about our environment, scientists require data. For centuries, people have collected observations, or run experiments to increase our understanding of the world.

Many people, not just formally trained scientists, are fascinated by these projects and are deeply involved in answering big questions. There is a plethora of projects that connect people with the natural world in ways that directly benefit their communities. One of these projects, the National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count, dates back to 1900, and is the longest-running community science project in North America! It takes place at thousands of locations where people observe birds. Results from the Christmas Bird Count have been used in over 300 different studies of bird migration, ecology, distribution, and population changes.

In the 1990s the term "citizen scientist" was coined to talk about the people who participate in these collective science programs. Recognizing that the word "citizen" is exclusionary, the term has evolved to the more inclusive "community scientist". Community science is currently being used to answer questions about monarch butterfly and bird migrations, air and water quality, and even the classification of galaxies. The best part? Anyone can participate!

Here are just a few of the projects focused on conserving biodiversity: Save Our Saguaros (SOS) Map-A-Thon

Each winter, the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum leads "Save Our Saguaros" month to beat back buffelgrass, an invasive, fire-promoting grass that can forever change our beloved Sonoran Desert landscape. Due to COVID-19, SOS has a different goal this year. Rather than hosting numerous buffelgrass digs around Tucson, the Museum is asking people to learn how to identify the grass and then contribute buffelgrass locations to a community map. If you see buffelgrass where you live, work, or play, record it! Visit buffelgrass.org for more information, including what prizes you can earn!

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Monarch Joint Venture

Monarch Joint Venture is a collaboration among multiple monarch-tracking programs, including Southwest Monarch Study, which is focused on monarch migration and breeding patterns in the Southwest. Monarch tagging has revealed that regional migratory patterns are complex, and that we still have a lot to learn about them. Like the eastern monarch population, southwestern monarch populations are struggling to survive, reaching record low numbers in recent years. The Southwest Monarch Study offers materials and training for people who want to create monarch habitats or tag monarchs so that their movements can be tracked. If you love monarch butterflies, consider joining this study. www.swmonarchs.org



Tucson Audubon Bird Count

The Tucson Bird Count is coordinated by the Tucson Audubon Society with wide participation by local birders. The goal of the count is to determine how different parts of Tucson are utilized by native birds, and use this knowledge to create better bird habitat. Using data from this study, Tucson Audubon created "Recipe Cards" that equip homeowners to bring birds to their yards by providing food, water and shelter. Any birder that can readily identify Tucson's common birds is invited to adopt a route to survey. Park counts are conducted once every season and other routes only take one morning of your choice between April 15 and May 15. To learn more, see tucsonbirds.org.

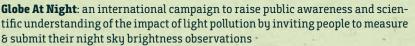


Sky Island Alliance Community Science Projects

Sky Island Alliance relies heavily on community scientists in their work to protect and restore the Sky Islands. Volunteers support wildlife and water programs – whether they are collecting data in rugged mountainous terrain, lending their expertise to identify species from wildlife camera photos, or pulling invasive species from canyons to promote native ones. Their Border Wildlife Study documents biodiversity along the U.S.-Mexico border region. The FotoFauna project encourages individuals to place wildlife cameras on their property and upload data monthly to help observe seasonal movements of wildlife across the region. For people who love being outside, projects such as Spring Seekers and Aravaipa Habitat Project could be a great fit! Check out their website to learn more: skyislandalliance.org.



You can be a community scientist too!



NestWatch: Find and monitor bird nests.

Project FeederWatch: Watch and record birds at your feeders in winter.

eBird: Track and share your sightings anywhere, any time.

Galaxy Zoo: To understand how galaxies formed, we must classify them by their shape. You can help by examining telescope images of distant galaxies. If you're quick, you may even be the first person to see the galaxies you're asked to classify.

Don't see anything here that fits your fancy? Check out scistarter.org to search thousands of Community Science projects.

by Catherine Bartlett

Education Program Manager

This is the real fun! Discovering what nature lives in and around your area!

At the Desert Museum, we use wildlife cameras (also known as trail cams or camera traps) in exhibits (to track health and activity of animals), in student research projects, and in partnership with the Sky Island Alliance's FotoFauna Project. You too can capture backyard biodiversity with these devices. Give it a shot!

Step 1 Determine How You Want to Use the Camera

Do you want to use a wildlife camera near your home and check it regularly? If so, you don't need Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or cellular capabilities-- a simple model with an SD memory card will suffice. Next, decide if you want photos, videos, or both and search for one with your media preference. Other features to consider: time lapse, lowglow night shots, viewing window on the device, and audio enabled.

Step 2 Scout a Place to Put your Camera

Your own property is the best place to begin your camera trapping adventure, but if you want to put it (or point it) elsewhere you'll need permission from the landowner or agency responsible for that land.

Step 3 Set a Budget and Shop Around

As with any purchase, do your research and read the reviews. Devices can run anywhere from \$40 dollars to a couple hundred. At the Desert Museum we use brands such as Browning and Bushnell which have proven quality over the years. Don't forget to get reusable batteries and an SD card. Helpful hint: Some cameras can only use SD cards up to a certain GB (gigabyte) capacity so check that your SD card is compatible with the camera you want.

Step 4 Unbox that Beauty and Set it Up

It really is a thrill to set up your camera (go step by step through its user manual) and get it outside. For best photos, pick a location that

is free of tall grass or branches to ensure you aren't getting hundreds of images of vegetation on a windy day. Set the camera near a known wildlife trail, a water dish, or anywhere you've noticed tracks or scat. Keep it low to the ground and use test mode to ensure activity is being picked up. Hint: most cameras have difficulty focusing at close range. Place your camera 4 or more feet away from the activity spot. Now, and this is crucial, turn on your camera before walking away. Many biologists (myself included) have learned the hard way!

Step 5 Check Your Camera's Memory Card

This is the real fun—discovering what nature lives in and around your area! If you're in Tucson you might see bobcats, hawks, javelina, roadrunners, and coyotes in addition to all the quail and doves. You might be surprised to learn that a skunk or a raccoon lives in your area, too!

Step 6 Share Your Pics

This amusing at-home STEM activity is fun for everyone and a great way to inspire your family to take notice of the biodiversity in their surroundings. Then, add your photos to community science projects such as Bobcats in Tucson and FotoFauna. Once you have a location you like, keep your camera there for an extended amount of time. It's fascinating to see seasonal variations, migratory species, or see those chicks, cubs, or pups grow up. Keep a running list of all species sighted—your area might be a lot wilder than you expected!

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ichelle4612 - Foliov



V Q V 27 likes

erinetichelie4612 Annual trip to the @desertmuseum I AZ and the desert so much we are beyond lucky to live amongst such beauty. - spikes and all. um I love



1 like carissa_sipp Desert Museum and Jesus Garcia and online classes for kids! This member thanks you so much!!!

WE LOVE SEEING THE MUSEUM THROUGH YOUR EYES!

Tag @desertmuseum and use #desertmuseum for a chance to be featured!





33 likes

krisvbendigo Happy Friday, everyone!

Finally got to get back out there and grab some wildlife photos for you ... some of you may know that I have one big dream ... to be published in National Geographic. Now, I know this is a HUGE, most likely unobtainable dream ... but I gotta get the practice in if I ever want a shot!

Feel free to share; this little burrowing owl is just too cute!



V 0 V 775 likes (klewis52 A male Anna's Hummingbird showing a little territorial display in the hummingbird house at the Arizona Sonora #desertmuseum. I love the beak action and the red gorget feathers!

> ...we are beyond lucky to live amongst such beauty spikes and all....'

ARIZONA-SONORA

DESERT

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QQ

18 likes corinnabybee the best view ad If you have a chance to check out this museum, highly



Join us for animal encounters, hikes, 🔅 native food 🕉 harvesting and more!

We have virtual and in-person experiences for youth and adults. Visit desertmuseum.org

INSTIUUTE Historic Medium for **Modern Times**

The Ironwood Gallery is hosting The show features pieces that an art exhibition by the Tucson Pastel Society until May 9, 2021 entitled "Historic Medium for Modern Times".



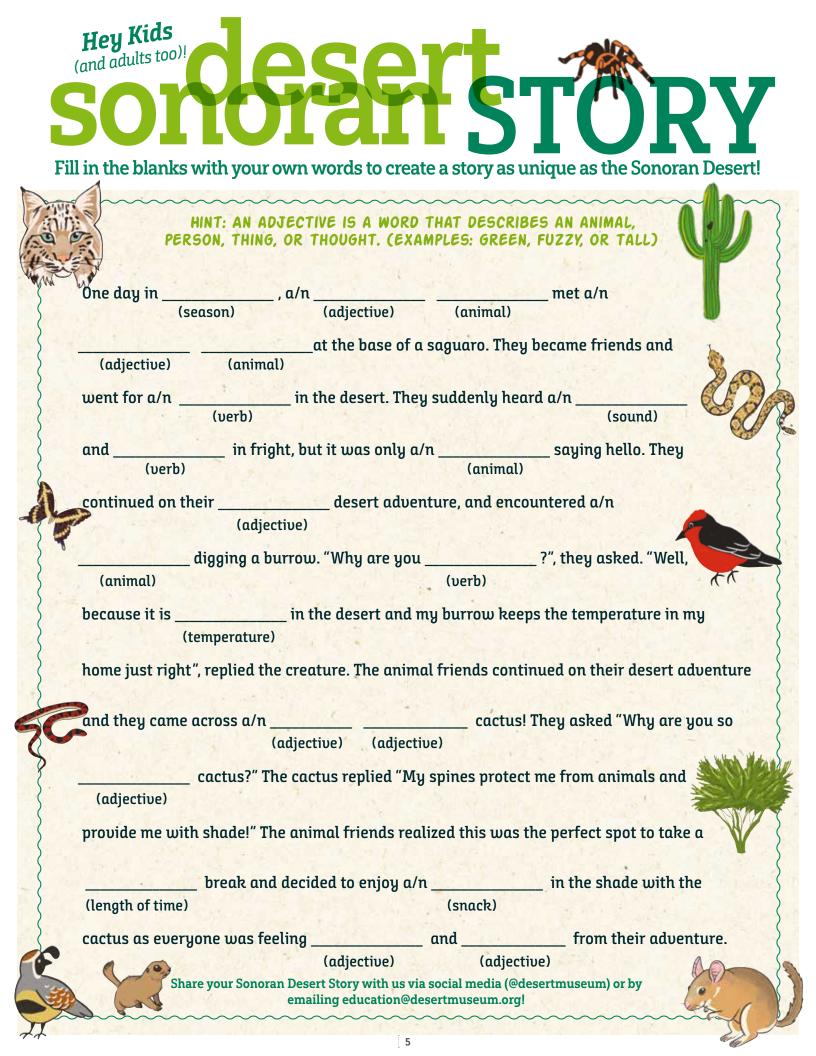


demonstrate the unique beauty of pastel painting. Highlighting diverse subjects, the works capture each artist's inspiration to create original art using a traditional medium in a modern world.

One final collaborative desert-themed piece will be featured and available for purchase during the show, with proceeds benefiting the Desert Museum and the Tucson Pastel Society.

CLASSES in SPRING!

Join us for in-person spring classes! We have implemented reopening and safety precautions in response to COVID-19. Measures include mandatory mask wearing, reduced enrollment, open doors, and a plexi- screen for instructors. Classes will be modified for safety for the foreseeable future.



Become a Desert Hero!

Gifts of securities are win-win situations for you and for a cause you care about! These gifts are one of many ways you can directly support the Desert Musuem.

A lot of people are choosing to give out of their investments in order to save on two types of taxes at the same time - while having an even bigger impact for the nonprofit. You can avoid capital gains tax, on top of receiving a deduction on income taxes by making a gift of stock. This type of philanthropy has incredible tax savings- up to 60% in some states, depending on income taxes.

Become a Desert Hero! It costs \$29,000 a day to run the Desert Museum, and you can make a significant impact to support our mission. Contact your financial or tax advisor to learn how beneficial stock giving can be useful to you and the causes you care about.

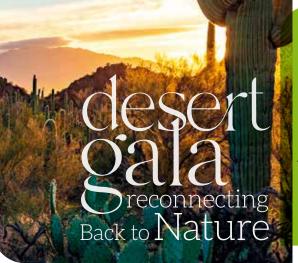
To receive stock donation instructions for the Desert Museum, contact lwenker@desertmuseum.org or 520-883-3005.

Arch and Laura Brown

The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum is so fortunate to have supporters like these who have pledged to sustain the organization's ongoing work. Thanks to them, and supporters like you, every bit helps.

"We have found that donating highly appreciated stock is a smart and effective way to support our beloved Desert Museum with major gifts every year. Sonoran Desert conservation and education is important to us, and there is no better feeling than getting outdoors to enjoy the beauty of the Museum.

We love to drive over Gates Pass and visit the Museum to recharge our batteries, and it's so inspiring to see the wide-eyed children and adults learning about the desert."



Join us virtually for an evening to celebrate the Sonoran Desert, showing your love and support for the Desert Museum!

Sunday, April 25th, 2021, 5pm

We are thrilled to announce David Yetman as the headliner! He will be joining the online celebration with a talk entitled: "Saguaros are weird and wonderful, but they aren't the only big cacti."

David Yetman

All details can be found at www.desertmuseum.org/gala Video presentations | Entertainment | Wildlife demonstrations Bid on one-of-a kind treasures & experiences at the online auction! MAJOR DONORS

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