

# PIMA COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS AND RECREATION VOLUNTEER NEWS

ISSUE NO. 62

NOVEMBER 2014

## VOLUNTEER MEETING

### Hohokam Culture

#### Agua Caliente Park

Friday, November 21, 9:30 a.m. - noon

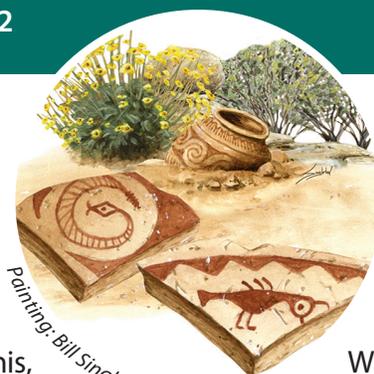
Be sure to attend this must see extended presentation and field trip with Linda Gregonis, an archaeologist involved in the excavation of the Whiptail Site. Linda will talk about Hohokam culture and the excavation of the nearby Whiptail Site, will walk us through the revamped exhibit and then guide us across the street to visit the Karrels' property situated atop a portion of the site.

The exhibit of Hohokam artifacts in the Agua Caliente Ranch House is getting a new look this fall. Three interpretive wall panels will be installed to add information and context to the relics held in the Whiptail Site display cases. Tags within the cases will also better communicate the story behind each artifact. This augmented exhibit will offer Ranch House visitors the opportunity to delve deeper, both in understanding and time, into the history of the area.

Interested in visiting the exhibit? The Agua Caliente Ranch House hours are 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., November through April.

## IMPROVED WATER LEVEL IN THE AGUA CALIENTE POND

Thanks to recent rains, cooler temperatures, and consistent pumping from the well on the back side of the pond, there is more water in the main pond at Agua Caliente Park. A new pump has been installed and conditions are gradually improving. A sustainable long-term solution will require a complete renovation and reconfiguration of the pond, something that will be proposed in the next Pima County bond election. The well is currently pumping about 70,000 gallons per day into the pond. The additional water is certainly more appealing to visitors and wildlife. In the past few weeks there have been more mallards pres-



ent and regular sightings of a great blue heron and belted kingfisher.

## GILBERT RAY VOLUNTEER NATURALISTS

Welcome back, Volunteer Naturalists! The Volunteer Naturalists at the Gilbert Ray Campground in Tucson Mountain Park are encouraged to attend a training session with Meg Quinn on Thursday, November 13 at the campground. We'll review procedures and interpretive materials for upcoming nature walks. A second date will be scheduled for those who are unable to attend the meeting. Nature walks for campers will begin in December or January depending on occupancy at the campground, and will continue twice weekly through April. Any volunteers interested in training to be a Volunteer Naturalist at Gilbert Ray should contact Meg at meg.quinn@pima.gov

## LOST CARNIVORES PROGRAM AT TUCSON MOUNTAIN PARK

The NRPR Environmental Education Team is working with Saguaro National Park (SNP) on a pilot project "The Lost Carnivores of the Tucson Mountains". SNP biologists have concerns about an apparent decline of small predators at the park (three species of skunk, raccoon, and kit fox). They are using wildlife cameras to collect data on the presences of the wildlife in the Tucson Mountains. The Lost Carnivores program was created by SNP biologists along with their education staff to engage middle school students in field study using today's technology. This intensive middle school program involves checking and setting up wildlife cameras, taking information on plants, animal signs and the habitat where the camera is located.

If funding comes through, we will be replicating this program at the Desert Discovery Center in Tucson Mountain Park and we will be in need of interested volunteers. Axhel Muñoz is assisting with the field study trips at SNP this school year. Contact axhel.munoz@pima.gov to learn more about this exciting and fun new project.

**Interested in Volunteering? Email us at [eeducation@pima.gov](mailto:eeducation@pima.gov)  
Call us at Environmental Education Office 520-615-7855**

## WILDLIFE AT HISTORIC HACIENDA DE LA CANOA

Canoa Ranch, located in the Santa Cruz River Valley, provides great habitat for a variety of wildlife species. We see abundant signs of wildlife (tracks, scat, etc.) and have captured wildlife 'in action' with cameras located on the property. Deer, javelina, bobcats, the occasional fox and other animals have all been caught on camera.



To help study wildlife at Canoa Ranch, a group of volunteers participated in a wildlife monitoring class led by Sky Island Alliance. Volunteers learned how to identify tracks and other evidence of wildlife that live in the area. The trained volunteers will work in teams to do routine wildlife tracking surveys. We'll keep you posted on survey results and interesting wildlife observations at Canoa Ranch.

## HISTORY AND WILDLIFE LECTURE SERIES

We'll be offering lecture series at both Agua Caliente Park and the Joyner-Green Valley Library this fall/winter (see schedule below). These lectures are an excellent opportunity to learn about Arizona history and wildlife, and we encourage volunteers to attend.

November 2, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Agua Caliente Park: *Water in the Desert: Birth of an Oasis*, presented by Kerry Baldwin, our Natural Resources Division Manager, who will discuss the story of the natural spring at the park and current efforts to stabilize the disappearing system.

November 5, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Joyner-Green Valley Library: *For God, Gold, and Glory: The Coronado Expedition*. Historian Jim Turner presents the 1540 expedition of Francisco Vasquez de Coronado.

November 16, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Agua Caliente Park: *For God, Gold, and Glory: The Coronado Expedition*. Historian Jim Turner presents the 1540 expedition of Francisco Vasquez de Coronado.

November 19, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Joyner-Green Valley Library: *Homesteading and Ranching in Southeastern Arizona*. Historian Robin Pinto discusses land use, cultural changes, and cattle ranching in Southern Arizona.

Stay tuned for more lectures in January and February.

## HOLIDAY PARTY

Everyone is invited to Agua Caliente Park for the annual Ranch House decorating party and cookie exchange on December 5 from 9:30-11:30 a.m.! We'll decorate all the rooms in the Ranch House using a wonderful collection of decorations that have been donated over the years. The cookie exchange is optional but if you'd like to participate just bring some cookies or treats, and you'll leave with a plate of samples cookies from everyone else. See you there!

## PIMA COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS AND RECREATION VOLUNTEER NEWS

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