

NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

ARIZONA  
**WILD**



**History Lives in Western Maricopa County**

**Little B&B, Big Heart**

**Pathway of Spots: Ocelots**

**Protecting the Black and Blue**

**Ethics of Leave No Trace**

FALL/WINTER 2010-2011

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#### Mission Statement

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition's mission is to permanently protect and restore Wilderness and other wild lands and waters in Arizona for the enjoyment of all citizens and to ensure that Arizona's native plants and animals have a lasting home in wild nature. We do this by coordinating and conducting inventories, educating citizens about these lands, enlisting community support, and advocating for their lasting protection.



Cover Photo: *Mystifying petroglyphs adorn rocks near Sears Point, along the banks of the Gila River, but have recently suffered vandalism, according to the BLM. Photo: Elias Butler, www.eliasbutler.com*

Design by Mary Williams/marywilliamsdesign.com

# From the Director's Tent

The light was fading as we pulled into the make-shift campsite strewn with antique trash—the kind that invariably makes one scratch his head. Two wild burros immediately made their presence known, huffing and puffing from 20 yards away. They looked hungry, so we placed bets on their likeliness to raid camp while we slept. The moon was full, and the desert hills on the north side of Hummingbird Springs Wilderness shone with a resonance that made us smile and laugh into the evening. Silent flares from the latest military exercises acted as our proverbial campfire; we fixed our eyes northward as we conjured up explanations for the different arrangements of light.

Earlier that day, and the one to follow, a small group of AWC staff and volunteers meandered through the mountains taking inventory of roads, routes, old mines, and anything else notable to better inform new protections for these Sonoran Desert lands as wilderness. I've done hundreds of "inventory trips" over the years, but never here, never like this. We worked with a sense of urgency – a sense of eminent importance. We worked to finalize wilderness area recommendations for the United States Congress, hoping that our efforts would soon culminate in lasting protections for a vast swath of intact wildlife habitat, cultural sites, and scenic wonder in western Maricopa County.

Within days, our staff would be in Washington D.C., meeting with lawmakers about those desert hills awash in moonlight. Operating from a small, cheap hotel base, AWC staff descended on "the Hill" for three days, going from office to office and meeting to meeting with oversized maps and photos packed in their bags. Adrenaline raced through their veins, and band-aids stuck to their blistering feet after "hiking" around the Capitol's marble floors all day. They talked about

the importance of Arizona's natural heritage, the value of wilderness, and the fact that it's been 20 years since we protected a single new acre of wilderness. Twenty years ago, I should note, Arizona had less than half the residents it does today.



Walking the wilds one day, walking the halls of Washington the next: that's about as accurate of an explanation I can think of for what AWC does on behalf of wilderness (though we certainly spend more time in the wilds!). Either action is hollow if not connected to the other. Your involvement – as a member and possibly a volunteer – is critical to the success of wilderness initiatives now

under way. We want you in the field, in our office, in our meetings. We're always a fun bunch and we hope to see you soon! Thank you for your support.

Matt Skroch  
Executive Director

P.S.. I hope you've recognized the changing (and improving) face of AWC lately. We very much want to deepen and strengthen our commitment to **you**. If you get a chance, send us an email and let us know what you'd like to see more of!



Courtesy, Dave Petersen, Trout Unlimited

# Two Centuries of Western Maricopa County Farms, Immigrants, Mines, and Massacres

by Aleah Sato

It is no accident we begin stories about early Arizona with the quest for water. Standing on the ridges above the Gila River floodplain, it is easy to recognize signs of past life along the landscape. Petroglyphs appear among the basalt boulders above and in the surrounding ridges. Rusted bean cans, nails, and other historic litter tell of early mining camps. All along the Gila, there are stories: in the neglected walls of early homesteads to the prehistoric metates and manos (mortars and pestles) found throughout the region.

As humans, ill-equipped to manage the arid realms for long, water remains the single greatest theme that dominates our fears and concerns about spending time in the desert. This was the case during the Spanish explorations of the 1500's to the historic settlers of the past two hundred years. The western valleys that once supported the Hohokam and later, the Pima, now appear as dry expanses that, without the modern conveniences of air conditioning and 4wd, would seem impossible to cross.

by Yuma and La Paz Counties, and on the north by Yavapai County. Prior to the Gadsden Purchase of 1854, the land south of the Gila River was a part of New Spain (ie Mexico). Some of the better recognized landmarks of the region include the Eagletail Mountains, Harquahala Mountains, Woolsey Peak and Saddle Mountain, easily seen from Interstate 10, and the Maricopas and Gila Mountains to the south.

The stories that compose the region's history are sometimes rife with perilous desert crossings and attack. But we must remember that these are just some of the events that took place in the struggle to form the state of Arizona. Truths were stretched and twisted according to who documented them. Many other unknown tales stay untold.

## The Trappers

During the last two hundred years, the Sonoran Desert was a place of fervor, fear, and promise. The importance of the Gila River in shaping the upper Sonoran Desert can best be explained by how vast its expanse was and how its tributaries once drained into an area larger than France. At one time, it was considered one of the most important rivers in the Southwest and is still a utilized water source in the production of food, fiber, and residential use.

Some of the first Anglos to cross into this part of the desert were the trappers, who arrived from Europe and the Northeast. The trappers, whose relentless pursuit of beaver- and otter-rich waterways had significantly impacted the eastern states, continued to move west to dominate a market greedy for



Pima ki, or primitive house. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.



Papago woman winnowing wheat. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.



Arizona's colorful history, and its future, are inextricably tied to our ability to source water. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

But that hasn't been the case. This land has seen thousands of prehistoric and modern Native Americans, miners, ranchers, and farmers leave their dusty imprint, in search of a place to hunt and farm, put down roots, or turn a quick buck.

Western Maricopa County is bounded on the south by Pima County and on the west

pelts. One of the best known American trappers to the region was Sylvester Pattie, who, during the winter of 1826-1827, returned to Arizona with a group of French trappers. These pelt-seekers, like the homesteaders to follow and the Spanish who preceded them, would visit to trade with the AkimelO'odham (river people) or Pima Indians. Considered peaceful and generous, the Pima often gave desperate travelers food they themselves could not afford to spare, the corn, squash, and melons had grown along the Gila for hundreds of years.

In the mid-1820s the heyday of trapping along the Gila came to an end, when beavers were getting scarce and silk began to replace beaver as the desired fashion. Unfortunately and tragically, a new enterprise developed in its place when the Spanish government of New Spain made scalp-hunting a lucrative endeavor and the former trappers became hired killers.

The unfortunate result was attacks, battles, and general unrest for the state in the quest to "tame" the desert land.



Maricopa Wells mule train. Courtesy Casa Grande Historical Society

### The Gold Rush and the Homesteaders

Although the Gila River served as a navigational route to California for thousands seeking fortune, Arizona had its own Gold Rush during the 1850s. Wickenburg's Vulture Mountains produced more than \$200 million in gold and the Belmont Mountains north of Tonopah, have been mined for silver.

The famous Butterfield Overland Stage Route and its Butterfield stage coaches, which supplied mail to California, made its way through this perilous terrain. Maricopa Wells, at the base of Pima Butte, was a stage route stop and the main military telegraph post with numerous legends attached to it. Travelers headed west through central Arizona would have stopped here for water and supplies before moving on through one of the most challenging stretches of Sonoran Desert before reaching Gila Bend.

When it was completed in the late 1800s, the Southern Pacific railway line, built by Chinese laborers who faced extreme temperatures and dangerous working conditions, allowed passengers a faster way to travel across the desert. Legend has it, one man traveling across during the summer quite lost his mind from the effects of the constant sun and heat. Somewhere along the route, he jumped out of the train and ran bewildered into the desert west of Maricopa Wells, never to be seen again.

One of the most documented tragedies that occurred along the route was the Oatman Massacre. Many books have been written about the day in 1854 when Royce Oatman, an impatient and willful man, decided to risk everything and continue on a journey with his family west, despite the pleas of his fellow Mormons who stayed behind with the Pima. There had been a severe drought in the area and many in the region were starving. Some believe, out of desperation, attacks that would not have occurred before the draught became crucial for survival. The Oatmans, who would not share their food with the attackers, became the unfortunate party to such an attack. Most of the Oatman family was killed and 16 year-old Olive and her younger sister were taken hostage. Later traded to a band of Mohaves (it has been speculated that they sympathized with her and took her in) along the Colorado River, Olive alone survived and lived with the Mohave for a few years before her brother, who managed to narrowly survive the attack, was able to procure her through a trade with the help of a man named Granger.

Travelers can see parts of the Butterfield Stage Route and a monument off of Agua Caliente Rd, referred to as the Agua Caliente Scenic Drive by the BLM.

With the coming of the Homestead Act of 1862 and Desert Land Act of 1877, the West became the destination for farmers and ranchers and later, those who struggled to survive the grip of the Great

Depression. Families arrived in droves to try their hand at farming the fertile area around the Gila River, and some of their homesteads still remain in various states of decomposition.

Many of the families to move into the area were Mormon settlers who came down through Utah and over from Missouri into Arizona. The Mormons were some of the first settlers to utilize the irrigation tech-



Portrait of Olive Oatman with Mohave tribal tattoos. Source unknown

niques they saw being used by the Pima. Unfortunately, the more families that came to settle and eventually build dams, the greater the toll it took on the Pima Villages' ability to sustain their own farms.

One of the best sources of the impact of the damming of the Gila River is from George Webb in *A Pima Remembers*.



A relic cowboy camp, nestled in the Sand Tanks range. Courtesy, Aleah Sato.

"A dam was put across the Gila River, upstream from the Pimas. The purpose of this dam was to hold the waters of the rainy season and let it out for irrigation use in the dry times. It took a long time for that dam to fill up, and when it did, the water no longer came down the Gila. The Pimas were left without any water at all, to irrigate their farms or water their stock or even to drink. They dug wells. The wells dried up. The stock began to die. The sun burned up the farms. Where everything used to be green, there were acres of desert, miles of dust, and the Pima Indians were suddenly desperately poor."

A pinnacle icon on the map, Woolsey Peak, named after King S. Woolsey, a pugilistic and legendary figure in the development of Western Arizona, is a prominent landmark near one of Woolsey's ranches near the Gila Bend Mountains.

Woolsey, associated with the creation of the Democratic Party in Arizona Territory, led a tempestuous life as a rancher, prospector, and politician. Stories of Woolsey's eccentricities and reputation as a revenge-exacting, ill-tempered man were prominent throughout his life. Somewhere around 1864, he hanged a man who took part in stealing some of his cattle and let the corpse remain in the tree on his Agua Caliente ranch.



The remains of a 20th century homestead near the Belmont Mountains. Courtesy, Aleah Sato.



The Gila Bend Mountains are a Sonoran Desert gem and many of the peaks, surrounding canyons, and bajadas offer a wilderness glimpse of what Arizona's first settlers encountered. Courtesy, Aleah Sato



Floodplain of the Gila River. Courtesy, Aleah Sato

If these stories seem grim, they are a reminder of the prejudices, politics, and social realities of the time. Many of the state's earliest white settlers arrived with a notion of land "easy for the taking." This attracted many of the "characters" mentioned. However, it is just as important to remember the thousands of people who traveled along the Gila corridor simply en route to the promised green land of California. For every Woolsey, there were dozens of modest individuals who simply wanted to find a better way of life.

#### Modern Times

Like many of Arizona's wild lands, the Sonoran Desert of Western Maricopa has stories to tell of the state's rich and colorful history. While our state has seen its share of brutality, the land itself has held its balance through centuries of human hope and despair.

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is working hard to launch the Sonoran Desert Heritage Campaign to help preserve places such as the ones mentioned in this article. We owe a great deal of our lifestyle and identity as Arizonans to the early pioneers, the Native Americans who taught and continue to teach us how to live in the desert, and to the many species that make their home here.

"One of the biggest challenges to gaining greater protection for Western Maricopa's fragile lands is sim-

ply a lack of understanding and connection," says Craig Weaver, a longtime resident of Tonopah and Phoenix. "We have lost our knowledge of Arizona's history and geography. Most locals know the Superstition Mountain range, but haven't any clue where Woolsey Peak is."

"I remember when we learned about Arizona history and its constitution as school children," says Weaver. "These were required classes. I believe we now suffer from a lack of education that inevitably disconnects people from the land."

With towns such as Buckeye, Arizona faces a big challenge in determining how a city can grow while lessening the inevitable impact on the surrounding desert and historic landmarks.

Unlike some of the richer soils and denser vegetation areas of the eastern United States, land use in the Sonoran Desert has an immediate and lasting (and sometimes fatal) impact on local flora and fauna, cultural resources, and the health of the soil itself, as we have seen con-

tinuously irrigated agricultural fields. This impact naturally extends to our own health, as air and water quality are linked to our remaining wild places.

Losing the rich biodiversity of the Sonoran Desert and the history it holds would be a tragic loss. With proper planning and wilderness designation for those areas that qualify, we ensure the health of this region for many years to come. By gaining greater protection for the mountain ranges, the bajadas, the great sentries of saguaros and ocotillos, the cultural artifacts, and diverse history, we honor those who came before us and those who will come to this desert's protected edges in awe and reverence.

*Aleah Sato is AWC's membership coordinator based in Phoenix. She is also a published poet and desert wanderer.*

#### Sources:

AWC member and volunteer, Craig Weaver

Arizona Trappers: [http://www.thegeozone.com/treasure/arizona/history/az\\_history2.jsp](http://www.thegeozone.com/treasure/arizona/history/az_history2.jsp)

McNamee, Gregory — *Gila: The Life and Death of an American River*

Murrbarger, Nell — *Ghosts of the Adobe Walls*

Trimble, Marshall — *Roadside History of Arizona*



Ian Dowdy brings a unique perspective to the Sonoran Desert Heritage campaign as AWC's Conservation Outreach Associate. An urban planner by training and member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), he brings an effective blend of land policy, public outreach, and sustainability skills to the conservation arena.

Born in Missoula, Montana, he was raised with a love for the outdoors, spending time both in Montana and Arizona camping, fishing, and hiking in a variety of environments. As a persuasive communicator and public speaker, Ian's skills will be well utilized in the coming months as outreach increases on the Sonoran Desert Heritage (SDH) campaign. In preparation, Ian has been developing a public outreach strategy that will guide his efforts throughout the coming months, evaluating stakeholders and formulating a winning message about the benefits of wilderness to local communities.

Ian will be working in collaboration with other members of the SDH coalition, focusing primarily on outreach to cities and towns, the development community, and faith-based organizations. Ian lives in Buckeye, where he worked as a planner; he spends his spare time reading, singing in his church choir, and writing.



Courtesy, Ian Dowdy

## BUSINESS FOR WILDERNESS

# A Little B&B with a Big Heart for Wild & Scenic

by Sam Frank

Late in 1863, a group of government officials came into the recently declared Arizona Territory with the intentions of establishing a territorial capitol. Governor John M. Goodwin was directed to set up the capitol at a military post located near a butte shaped like a thumb. When Goodwin and his party reached Camp Clark at Del Rio Springs, they noted a butte that resembled a thumb and assumed



Ann Harrington's Little Thumb Butte B&B draws visitors who seek close proximity to a variety of recreation along the Verde River and surrounding wilderness areas. Courtesy, Matt Skroch

they were in the right place. The Governor and his party began the process of building the first territorial capitol here at Camp Clark, which was located in today's Chino Valley. It wasn't until soldiers who were sent south to find timber returned and reported a much larger thumb shaped butte along the upper reaches of Granite Creek. Realizing their error, Goodwin ordered the outfit to move 25 miles south to the present day location of Prescott, where in 1864 he established Fort Whipple and declared it to be the official Territorial Capitol of Arizona.

People interested exploring the historic 'first' territorial capitol of Arizona can find a charming place to spend the night at the Little Thumb Butte Bed & Breakfast. Perched on the rim of the Verde River canyon in Paulden, the Little Thumb Butte Bed & Breakfast offers visitors the chance to discover some of Arizona's most beautiful landscapes and to search for signs of Arizona's early inhabitants—both historic and pre-historic. Owned and operated by Ann Harrington, this quiet and comfortable B&B has three rooms to choose from, all of which offer stunning views of the surrounding countryside, such as Granite Mountain Wilderness, the Verde River, Granite Creek, and of course Little Thumb Butte. For daytime excursions, try hiking down the trail that begins at the property and leads to Granite Creek. A short trip down Granite Creek leads to the enchanting upper Verde River (from Sullivan Dam down stream to the Verde

Valley), which the Arizona Wilderness Coalition and other partner groups are proposing for Wild and Scenic River designation.

"The headwaters of the Verde River are deserving of protection to maintain the flow of water in this magnificent riparian area," says B&B owner Ann Harrington. "The Wild & Scenic designation will accomplish this. These kinds of open spaces are much needed in this world of people crowded together."

The Verde River, stretching approximately 150 miles from Sullivan Dam to Horseshoe Reservoir, is one of the most biologically diverse waterways in the American Southwest. Unfortunately, it faces some significant threats like water depletion, water quality degradation, trash dumping, sprawl from outlying areas, and non-native invasive species. A lower portion of the Verde River is already designated Wild & Scenic (from Beasley Flat just south

of Camp Verde to the confluence with Red Creek), but the future of the upper Verde, though deserving of such protections, remains uncertain.

Little Thumb Butte Bed & Breakfast also accommodates horse enthusiasts and their animals with a full-sized roping arena, covered stalls, pipe fence paddocks, washracks, and plenty of parking spaces for trucks and trailers.

"Riding horses along the Verde is like entering a world far away from desert living," says Harrington. "Abundant springs flow into the river, creating a clear water flows trickling over rocks. The trees provide homes for numerous birds such as herons, flycatchers,



Horseback riding is a popular recreational pastime along the Upper Verde, and from Little Thumb Butte B&B. Bigstock.com



The Upper Verde is a birders' delight, bringing significant revenue to central Arizona. Courtesy, Mark Miller.

robins, and cuckoos—giving visitors the impression they could be in a jungle. Deep pools allow horses to swim and riders the joy of playing on their mounts."

Visitors spending time at the Little Thumb Butte Bed & Breakfast can expect to see and hear lots of wildlife drawn by the lush riparian areas of Granite Creek and the Verde River. Quiet and observant hikers or horse riders might catch a glimpse of beavers, bald eagles, elk, belted kingfishers, bobcats, badgers, pronghorn, peregrine falcons, gray fox, osprey, endangered fish such as razorback suckers and spinedace, and if you're really lucky, maybe even southwestern river otters. Bird watchers will appreciate more than 200 species migrating through at different times of the year.

Staying at the Little Thumb Butte Bed & Breakfast is a great way to recharge your body, mind, and soul. With so much to discover right out the back door, visitors might forget that they are centrally located to many other great places to visit such as the Grand Canyon, Sedona, or the numerous wilderness areas in the Verde Valley, such as Sycamore Canyon, Granite Mountain, or the Kachina Peaks. Whether you choose to hike, ride horses, search for wildlife or simply kick back and soak up the authentic western feel of the accommodations, one thing is for sure: once you stay at the Little Thumb Butte Bed & Breakfast, you'll be wanting to come back again and again.

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Housekeeping: LTBBB does not provide meals. However, visitors may bring in food to cook and may use the refrigerator, grill, and prep areas. Non-alcoholic beverages are available. To make reservations or to find out more, visit their website: [www.littlethumb.net](http://www.littlethumb.net). 928-636-4413.

Sam Frank is AWC's Central Arizona Director working out of our Prescott office to protect the Verde River and its watershed.

## DID YOU KNOW!

# Leave No Trace, An Ethic for Wild Places

by Tim Craig

Most people have heard of Leave No Trace (LNT). “Yeah of course, pack it in, pack it out, we’ll be sure to do that,” is the response I get from most folks I ask about LNT on the trail.

I’ve met a lot of people in the wilderness this summer and I’m almost certain everyone knows it’s not OK to litter. But I’m always asking myself how much they really know about the other LNT principles. I wanted to share a few of my favorite LNT practices that will help minimize your impact while improving your travels through our public lands.

One of the best ways to enjoy being outside is to camp and take breaks well away from the trail. On the way up Granite Mountain on the Prescott National Forest, for example, I take lots of breaks, but I always find a nice little spot—I’d say about 100 feet off trail—to sit down and re-energize. However, in some places, such as desert regions, people are required to stay on trails because of microbiotic soil crusts. But if you happen to be in an area where you are allowed to go off trail to find wilderness solitude, it can also provide a better experience for other hikers who pass by. They’ll feel as though they have the whole place to themselves, and so will you.

There is nothing better on a cool night than the warmth of a cozy fire. For many years, I had deprived myself of this luxury in the name of LNT. I didn’t want to leave a nasty burn scar or fire pit, revealing my passing to other wilderness users. Now, however, it’s a rare night that I don’t have the warm glow of a fire dancing across my face. My methods have improved so I don’t leave a trace of my passing. My favorite ways to enjoy an evening fire include: a twiggy fire dug approximately a foot deep into a sand beach, the always trustworthy fire pan, or the always classy tea candle fire. Just remember, a camp fire is for warmth, light, and occasional s’mores, but it should never be used for burning trash.

I enjoy my job the most when I am required to hike off trail, exploring backcountry areas and getting away from busier parts of the forest. Usually I’m inspecting a wilderness boundary, or getting ready to repair or remove old fence segments. Often times I travel in these areas with groups.

“Twelve people off trail—that’s a LNT nightmare,” is what you might be thinking. “How the heck are we



### Leave No Trace Guiding Principles

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors

For more information about Leave No Trace and more about these principles, visit [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org).



going to travel on a durable surface?” The wonderful part of hiking off-trail with a group is that everyone gets to choose their own path. One set of feet instead of 12 hardly makes any impact at all. We take breaks together, of course, on the best durable surface we can find, but then we all go back to weaving our own individual routes to the final destination.

As you explore wilderness in Arizona, I invite each of you to try as best you can to develop your LNT ethic a little more. How can you make your wilderness experience better, both for you and the landscape? Most importantly, have fun—that’s what wilderness can help you find.

*Tim Craig is the lone wilderness ranger for the entire Prescott National Forest. He oversees 8 wilderness areas that encompass more than 105,000 acres. Most days Tim spends out in the field, but you’d never know he was there because of his LNT practices.*



20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Arizona Desert Wilderness Act  
Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail

### Join Us to Celebrate

**Sonoran Desert National Monument  
and the National Landscape  
Conservation System**

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**Arizona Desert Wilderness Act and the  
Juan Bautista de Anza National  
Historic Trail**

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Exhibitors • Historic Re-enactments •  
Guest Speakers • Nature Walks • Local  
Artisans • Music—all FREE!!

> > >< <<

**December 4th, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field  
SR 85, 3 miles south of Gila Bend

## WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

# Pathway of Spots

by Jessica Lamberton

The air carries a crisp early morning scent I've come to associate with the smell of black coffee and wet leaves. The cottonwood-cloaked cienega of Rio Cocospera lies directly below us, where last night leopard frogs echoed in the dark. Beyond extends the rolling hills, jagged Sierra Azul mountains, and Madrean oak woodlands of northern Mexico. To the north, a twenty-five mile chain of rugged wilderness connects the mountain ranges of Arizona. A pathway of spots.

The Sky Island region of southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico is situated at the confluence of the Rocky Mountains, the Sierra Madre Occidental, and the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts. This vast area, where deserts and grasslands surround isolated mountain ranges, is known for its unique biodiversity and natural beauty, and is incredibly important for its connective characteristics at a continental level. Four species of wild cats are found here – jaguar, mountain lion, bobcat, and ocelot.

Sky Island Alliance has documented ocelots on camera in the Sierra Azul Mountains at Rancho El Aribabi since 2007. The presence of ocelots is exciting: it proves that these wild lands sustain sensitive species, and that some wildlife corridors still allow the free movement of wildlife that have occupied this region historically. Ocelots, jaguars and other top predators are also a living testament to successful land stewardship and health of the ecosystem.

Privately owned by Sr. Carlos Robles Elias, Rancho El Aribabi is one of the premier ranches in northern

Mexico, hosting thirty-two threatened, endangered, or protected species. The ranch boasts 165 species of birds, including parrot-like elegant trogons and rose-throated becards. Green rat snakes and Gila monsters patrol the riverbanks where javelina and ocelots come to drink. Troops of coati, a long-snouted mammal that looks like a cross between a raccoon and a spider monkey, root in the undergrowth for grubs and tubers. And Coue's white-tailed deer strip mosses that coat the streamside hackberry trees.

This morning, I was here to check four new cameras carefully stationed in a canyon where we were frequently finding mountain lion and jaguar tracks. These remote motion and heat sensing cameras allow us to take a quick view of real animal life. Back at the ranch, we flipped through the digital images with growing excitement...white-tailed does and their fawns, large groups of coatis and javelinas, and a solitary mountain lion. And all of a sudden, spots. A blurry image: a slender figure, ears back, tail held horizontal. An ocelot! Snow covered the canyon bottom, and the delicate paws of the tropical cat maneuvered over the ice.

Ocelots are small to medium-sized felines weighing around 35 pounds, about the size of a cocker spaniel. They require dense vegetation for cover and live in a variety of habitats, from dense thorn scrub in their northern range to tropical forests of the Amazon Basin, and the mountainous regions of Central America and the Andes. An ocelot in snow! A rare occurrence – and I wondered if the young male took it all in stride, or was confused by the foreign weather.

*According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, crucial steps for the recovery of ocelots include protecting prime ocelot habitat in continuous blocks connected by corridors, and determining ocelot population sizes, distribution and status in the northern states of Mexico.*

Ocelots normally prey upon small to medium-sized mammals, birds, reptiles, frogs, fish, and crabs. They have been known to be picky eaters – de-feathering their catch before breakfast. Here, where tropical species and habitats begin to blend with temperate, their diets match the prey available to them. They are nocturnal, hunting at night, and are most active at dawn and dusk, a behavior biologists call crepuscular.

Ocelots are solitary animals with ranges of about 20 square miles. They mark their territory with urine and other scent markings, updating their status as if signing onto Facebook. Male ocelots avoid other male ocelot territories, but they will overlap with female ranges. Although individuals roam and hunt separately, research indicates that ocelots will frequently contact one another and probably maintain a network of social ties.



By forming unique alliances with landowners in northern Mexico, Sky Island Alliance is able to monitor ocelot movement and create corridors of protected private lands, like Rancho El Aribabi in northern Sonora. Credit: Jessica Lamberton





An SIA camera caught this ocelot gingerly making his way across snow in northern Mexico, a rare sighting for a subtropical feline species. Credit: 2008 Sky Island Alliance/Rancho El Aribabi



Ocelots may be reclaiming their historic habitat in southern Arizona, where the cats have not been documented since the mid 1960s. Credit: 2008 Sky Island Alliance/ Rancho El Aribabi

Ocelots are listed as endangered on the U.S. Endangered Species list. Poaching and habitat fragmentation are its greatest threats. There are only nine historical records of ocelots in Arizona, dating from fossil records in the Holocene era ten thousand years ago to an ocelot killed on the road in Oracle in 1967. In the United States, ocelots once ranged throughout the southwest from Arizona to Louisiana; now threatened throughout their entire range, ocelots are becoming exceedingly rare. For ocelots, and the vast diversity of other wildlife in the region, protected habitat blocks and wild corridors are essential to their survival.

Sky Island Alliance, Arizona Wilderness Coalition, The Wilderness Society, and Campaign for America's Wilderness of the PEW Environmental Group are making progress in Arizona: the proposed Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness and a new Land of Legends Wilderness effort in Cochise County will help protect needed habitat for wild cats and hundreds of other species. Federally designated wilderness, in particular, offers some of the safest and most resilient habitat for wildlife, largely because of the restraint of motorized and mechanized uses and other permanent human intrusions like roads within its designated boundaries.

On April 21, 2010, U.S. Representatives Rush Holt (NJ-12) and Jared Polis (CO-2) introduced the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act to identify and protect wildlife corridors in the United States. The Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act would create a national wildlife corridors information program within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, establish a Wildlife Corridors Stewardship and Protection Fund to provide grants for the management and protection of essential wildlife corridors, and it would require the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and Transportation to consider the preservation of these wildlife movement areas in their management plans.

As a biologist, I feel the urgent need for connected landscapes for our wildlife and wild places, with every gaze into the mountains and every click of the camera. Through education, science, and advocacy, we will continue to achieve conservation action – to protect and restore the movement and dispersal of native plants and animals and reduce threats and barriers on the landscape. Your effort will help make this happen, through volunteer work, membership, and the active support of new wilderness designations in Arizona.

In the face of increasing threats to our Sky Island wild lands, from new transmission lines, politically charged borderlands, border infrastructure, rapid



urbanization, and increasing irresponsible off-road vehicle use, we have a challenge ahead of us. And yet, it was a cloudless afternoon on April 12th, one week before the introduction of the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act, when I saw the first image of an ocelot captured on camera, over 40 miles north of the international border, in the mountains of Arizona. They are back. The pathway of spots is still open—a sign, and symbol of hope, of what we seek to protect – and what we stand to lose.

Jessica Lamberton is a wildlife biologist and Wildlife Linkages Program Coordinator with Sky Island Alliance. [www.skyislandalliance.org](http://www.skyislandalliance.org)

An ocelot's native range runs from dense thorn scrub in the American southwest to the tropical forests of the Amazon Basin and mountainous regions of Central America and the Andes. Bigstock.com



By connecting key habitat and wildlife corridors, wilderness designations can help give Arizona's iconic animals a more certain future. Credit: Sky Island Alliance

# WILDERNESS (AND WILD AND SCENIC!) TO WATCH

## Protecting the Black and Blue

by Don Hoffman

**T**he Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968 provides conservation advocates with a wonderful tool for protecting some of America's most beneficial and popular wild places. When Congress designates a Wild and Scenic River, it ensures that the river will remain free flowing, and it provides the managing agency with clear direction to permanently protect specific outstanding values associated with that river. The Act defines three different classifications that allow for a range of uses and for various levels of access and development.

**Wild river areas** — rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.

**Scenic river areas** — rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.

**Recreational river areas** — rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

Regardless of classification, each river in the national system is administered with the goal of protecting and enhancing the values that allowed it to be designated.

### Thanks again, Mo Udall

Arizona's first Wild and Scenic River, a remote and wild segment of the Verde River, was designated as part of Arizona Wilderness Act in 1984. At that time, Arizona's own national conservation champion, the late Congressman Morris "Mo" Udall, insisted on including one Wild and Scenic river in what was predominately a wilderness bill. He specifically wanted the Verde River to serve as a starting point and inspiration for Arizonans to subsequently add other jewels to a statewide network of Wild and Scenic rivers. His challenge succeeded and Arizona Wilderness Coalition (AWC) remains inspired and empowered to protect more rivers in its programmatic work today.

In 2004, AWC's Prescott field office developed a Wild and Scenic river proposal for Fossil Creek and vigorously campaigned with a coalition of river advocates, community leaders, and the Yavapai Apache tribe to make Fossil Creek Arizona's second Wild and Scenic River. In 2009, with the leadership of Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick (D-Dist. 1) and Senator John McCain (R), Congress completed the task by designating Fossil Creek a Wild and Scenic River; it was signed into law by President Obama as part of the Omnibus Land Management Act of 2009. Work has now begun at the local community level to develop the creek's comprehensive river management plan, as mandated by all Wild and Scenic river designations.

### The Upper Verde

Momentum for river protection in central Arizona continues to grow. When the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) evaluated the Verde River for suitability as a Wild and Scenic River in the 1970s, the upper segment



*Wild & scenic designation, such as bestowed on the lower Verde River in 1984, can protect environmental amenities and drive economic revenue for local towns. Courtesy, Gary Beverly*

of the river was determined to be unsuitable because of local opposition. However, today local communities along the Upper Verde River have come to appreciate the Verde's perennial stream flows that protect fish, wildlife, and the outstanding recreational opportunities

that contribute to their local economy and quality of life. AWC, other river advocates, landowners, local businesses, tribal entities, and community leaders are now evaluating the Upper Verde as a potential new Wild and Scenic river.

### Eastern Arizona — the “Black and Blue”

Perhaps the best examples of how potential Wild and Scenic rivers can contribute to productive wild land systems are found in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona. The Black and Blue Rivers, where Aldo Leopold cut his teeth as a conservationist, flow through and connect a variety of inventoried roadless areas, wilderness areas, potential wilderness areas, and the last of its kind — Blue Range Primitive Area.



Old growth ponderosa pine lines the Black River corridor. Courtesy, AWC

Since their initial Forest Management Plan was adopted in the 1980s, the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest has recommended the Black River for Wild and Scenic River designation. AWC supports a more robust proposal that includes a mix of wild, scenic, and recreational classifications that collectively protects corridors linking the Blue Range Primitive Area, Bear Wallow Wilderness, Black River/Fish Creek Inventoried Roadless Area, East and West Fork of the Black River's developed recreation areas, and eventually to the base of Mount Baldy. These linkages protect key migration corridors for a plethora of wildlife, including the Mexican gray wolf, as well as preserve quiet trails for backcountry hikers, hunters, bird-watchers, horseback riders, and others seeking soli-

tude. In this way, Wild and Scenic river designations allow smaller, individual wildland units to function both ecologically and recreationally as part of a productive natural system.

As of October 5th, the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest just released a decision that recommends 27.5 miles of the Blue River and 11.3 miles of KP Creek (a tributary of the Blue River within the Blue Range Primitive Area) for Wild and Scenic River designation.

AWC is quite dissatisfied with one aspect of the forest supervisor's decision in that it eliminated from its recommendation the lower mile of the Blue River to allegedly allow the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to build a fish barrier near the mouth of the Blue River, with the long term goal of managing the entire watershed as a native fishery. AWC supports the fish barrier, particularly since BOR bent over backwards to design a structure and construction methods to mitigate the impacts on potential wilderness and Wild and Scenic river designations. The USFS decision to eliminate the lower mile sets a very poor precedent and, based on the placement of several fish barriers in other Wild and Scenic rivers including Fossil Creek, AWC feels this lower mile should be recommended as a “recreational” classification. Based on this concern, AWC is currently communicating with our allies to determine whether or not to appeal the decision.

AWC is also disappointed that a 25 mile segment of the river connecting scattered parcels of private land along the Upper Blue community (where I happen to live) was determined to be unsuitable as a “recreational” segment based primarily on local opposition.



A hiker and her dog enjoy the beauty and solitude along the Blue River. Courtesy, Sam Frank

Perhaps in the future, the local Blue River community will learn, as those along the Verde and in other Arizona communities have, to appreciate and protect river values through Wild and Scenic river designation.

The good news is that the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest now recommends Wild and Scenic River designation for the Black and Blue Rivers. The forest is now required to manage those river segments to maintain their eligibility for congressional designation. This, in turn, provides AWC with a great starting point for a future wildland campaigns in Eastern Arizona.

*Don Hoffman is AWC's Board Director and President. He lives near the Blue River and the Blue Range Primitive Area outside of Alpine, Arizona.*

## WILDERNESS PROFILE

# Mt. Wrightson Wilderness

by Rachel Martin

**M**t. Wrightson Wilderness is located just forty miles south of Tucson in the Santa Rita mountain range. Its focal point is its namesake, Mt. Wrightson—known to locals as Old Baldy—which rises up to 9,453 feet and is the tallest mountain in the region. Managed by the U.S. Forest Service, this 25,000+ acre wilderness was designated in 1984 under the Arizona Wilderness Act, a bipartisan feat of conservation championed in Congress by Rep. Morris K. “Mo” Udall.

The headwaters of Madera Canyon at the base of Mt. Wrightson are one of the most famous bird-watching areas in the southwestern United States.

More than 230 species of both rare and common birds have been spotted in this wilderness area, including the broad-billed hummingbird, sulphur-bellied flycatcher, elegant trogon, painted redstart, Mexican junco, and flammulated owl.

Another popular activity in Mt. Wrightson Wilderness is hiking the namesake mountain, which rises over 7,000 feet from the valley floor. The Old Baldy Trail is just over ten miles roundtrip, ascends more than 5,000 feet in elevation. This strenuous hike is best done in spring, summer, or fall, as snow and ice can accumulate on the top of the mountain in

winter. Common wildflowers seen along the trail include dwarf lupine, monkeyflower, and columbine. The higher elevations are dominated by ponderosa pines and Douglas firs. Much of this wilderness area was affected by the Florida fire that occurred here in June 2005, and many burned areas still exist.

For maps and other information about Mt. Wrightson, visit [www.wilderness.net](http://www.wilderness.net) or <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado/forest/recreation/wilderness/wrightson.shtml>

*Rachel Martin is administrative assistant with the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. She enjoys hiking all over the globe.*

# Short Takes

## AWC Goes to Washington, D.C.

At the end of September, a contingent of Arizona wilderness advocates descended on Washington, D.C., to take part in Wilderness Week, a national effort sponsored by The Wilderness Society and Pew Environmental Group's Campaign for America's Wilderness, meant to raise awareness in Congress about the importance of wilderness and wild and scenic river protection. Advocates from at least 17 states, including Arizona, took part in the week-long lobbying trip.



Arizona's group was made up of AWC staff members Kate Mackay, Deputy Director; and Ian Dowdy, Conservation Outreach Associate. They were joined by Ben Alteneider with the Arizona Wildlife Federation, Eric Gorseger with the Sonoran Institute, and Mike Quigley and Nicole Layman with The Wilderness Society's Support Center.

AWC met with staffers of Senator Jon Kyl (R) and Senator John McCain (R), and House member staffers from Raul Grijalva (D-Dist. 7), Gabrielle Giffords (D-Dist. 8), Trent Franks (R-Dist. 2), and Ann Kirkpatrick's (D-Dist. 1) offices.

The team discussed nuances and progress on AWC's campaigns to protect lands in western Maricopa County, safeguard the Upper Verde as Arizona's next Wild and Scenic River, and designate three unique and legendary mountain ranges in Cochise County as wilderness.

"It was a valuable experience to meet with representatives of our congressional delegation," says Ian, "especially to hear their insight on the Sonoran Desert conservation effort which is such a critical piece of our current mission at AWC. I have gained a new appreciation of responsibility of our delegates in Congress and consider it an honor to have been able to meet with their staff in person."

Getting back to their offices in Phoenix, Kate and Ian will be working over the next several months to accommodate new information gleaned from their DC visits into meaningful progress for new wilderness and wild & scenic designations in Arizona.

## AWC Urges Conservationists to Vote NO on Props 109 and 301

This November, voters will be faced with a number of important decisions affecting the future of Arizona. As a non-profit organization, AWC does not endorse or oppose candidates for office, although we chose to address two ballot propositions this year that have important implications for wildlife management and land conservation across our state. Please consider these perspectives as you enter the ballot box.

## Vote "No" on Proposition 109: Leave Politics Out of Wildlife Management

Proposition 109 gives politicians – not wildlife professionals – the responsibility for managing Arizona's natural heritage and wildlife. Science-based management and conservation efforts are exposed to political tampering, giving the Arizona legislature too much power to trump collaborative efforts and community-based consensus on wildlife issues.

Hunting, fishing and harvesting of wildlife are important and long-standing privileges under Arizona law today. Our state's constitution, which ensures basic rights such as due process of law and freedom of speech, is the wrong place to outline specific management direction for Arizona's wildlife. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission, which is already appointed by the sitting Governor – not the state legislature – should retain its ability to thoughtfully address the varied and complex issues associated with hunting, fishing, and wildlife management across our state.

Proposition 109 goes too far by prescribing a one-size-fits-all approach to how wildlife should be managed. It claims that ONLY hunting and fishing should be a preferred method of managing wildlife, even though the vast majority of these species are not currently addressed in hunting and fishing regulations. The proposition falls far short in addressing non-game species such as bald eagles, Sonoran pronghorn, and desert tortoises. It jettisons a science-based approach that has been a key underpinning to our nation's responsible stewardship of native species.



The Arizona Wilderness Coalition supports our state's hunting heritage – many of our members hunt and fish and we have long worked with hunters and anglers on conservation measures – but this measure goes too far. Proposition 109 is about the Legislature trying to grab more power, not about doing anything positive for wildlife. Our state's wildlife belongs to all citizens whether they hunt or not – Vote No on Prop 109 to keep politics out of wildlife management!

## Vote "No" on Proposition 301: Reject a Legislative Sweep of Conservation Fund

Proposition 301 proposes to raid a voter-protected fund for land conservation and sweep it into the General Fund, where the Arizona Legislature will determine how it is appropriated. The Land Conservation Fund was established by the voters in 1998 when they approved the Growing Smarter Act. The dollars in this fund provide a match for communities to acquire state trust lands for conservation, including lands that are part of the Pima County Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve, the Flagstaff Open Space Plan, lands near Prescott, and more.

By diverting dollars from the Land Conservation Fund, the legislature hurts both conservation efforts and education – dollars from the Land Conservation Fund go into the Trust to benefit the Trust beneficiaries. The primary beneficiary is public education. Some argue that these conservation dollars will not be used in a down economy, but land conservation continues in a down economy and in fact, much of the dollars generated recently for the trust, came from land conservation.

Arizona devotes limited dollars to conservation overall and the legislature has already raided most of the ones that did not enjoy the protection of voters. One need look no further than our State Parks to see how little this legislature values conservation. Don't let them do even more harm by sweeping these dollars. We encourage you to vote no on Proposition 301.

## BLM Event Celebrates Public Land Anniversaries, Historic Trails with Day-Long Family Event in Gila Bend

On Saturday, December 4, 2010, the Bureau of Land Management, Phoenix District and Lower Sonoran Field Offices, along with many local and national conservation partners, will celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM) and the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), and the 20th Anniversary of the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. The celebration, FREE and open to the public, will be an all-day family event at the Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, with numerous hikes and outdoor volunteer opportunities in the weeks before and after the celebratory event.

The event will offer attendees the chance to learn about their treasured wild landscapes by browsing exhibitor tables, listening to notable speakers, and enjoying family-oriented presentations and demonstrations focusing on the wildlife and wild lands protected by the NLCS and the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act. The celebration will also include reenactments of the Mormon Battalion and Juan Bautista de Anza expeditions, with a historic Wells Fargo stagecoach, wilderness presentations, more than 40 exhibitors, craft artisans, a variety of entertainment, food vendors, Native American crafts, and more.

BLM partners include the Anza Trail Coalition, Friends of the Sonoran Desert National Monument, the Audubon Society, The Wilderness Society, Mormon Battalion Association, Arizona Wilderness Coalition, the United States Air Force, Luke Air Force Base, U.S. Border Patrol, the U.S. Postal Service, Sonoran Institute, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and others.

The SDNM encompasses approximately 486,200 acres of magnificent and wild Sonoran Desert, which is the most biologically diverse of the North American deserts. The monument captures a significant portion of that diversity, including a unique and extensive saguaro cactus forest. The monument also contains three congressionally-designated wilderness areas: the North Maricopa Mountains, South Maricopa Mountains, and Table Top wilderness areas. These wilderness units, along with 31 others elsewhere on BLM lands in Arizona, were created by the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act, a bipartisan, citizen-led effort carried through the halls of Congress by former Reps. Morris "Mo" Udall and John McCain. The monument also contains many significant archaeological and historic sites, and remnants of several important historic trails.

So get outdoors and join us for this joyous event celebrating the Sonoran Desert National Monument and some of Arizona's amazing wilderness lands!

## CAMPAIGN UPDATES



### Land of Legends Campaign, Cochise County Deputy Director Kate Mackay, Phoenix

Much of Kate's work has been focused on cultivating media strategies and working on outreach tactics for our Sonoran Desert Heritage Campaign in western Maricopa County (see Ian's report) and the Land of Legends Wilderness Campaign in Cochise County.

In late September, she was part of the Arizona team who met with Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords' office in Washington, D.C., to discuss outreach progress in the county, goals for post-election and early 2011, and additional resources and information that would be helpful for the congresswoman to support wilderness in Cochise County in the coming year. Kate is also leading the subcommittee discussion on media planning and communications for this campaign, working with colleague Brian Geiger in the Pew Environmental Group's DC offices of the Campaign for America's Wilderness. Kate will be directing the compilation of media materials for the campaign and overall outreach strategy as the Land of Legends effort moves to garner support outside of southern Arizona. Find out more at <http://www.azwild.org/regions/skyisland.php>.

**Elsewhere at AWC**, Kate is working on several projects to help raise awareness of AWC's wilderness advocacy experience in the state and partnerships that will elevate the organization's profile nationwide. Kate has participated in regular planning meetings with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in preparation for their large celebratory event on December 4th at the Gila Bend Auxiliary Airfield to honor the National Landscape Conservation System, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990, and the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (see Short Takes above). AWC will be tabling and offering local hikes and a wilderness presentation at that event.

She is also part of the planning team pulling together the first annual Women in Wilderness Conference, happening this year in Santa Fe, NM, where female wilderness advocates from all over the country will gather to network and share expertise on how to successfully protect new wilderness. The conference will be taking place December 6-9.



### Upper Verde River Campaign Central Arizona Director Sam Frank, Prescott

Sam has been busy participating in the development of the Fossil Creek Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) with the Coconino National Forest (CNF). The CRMP is in the beginning stages and the CNF is looking for public input; now is the time for everyone who cares about Fossil Creek to speak up on behalf of this jewel of a southwest stream. Sam has also been working with the Coconino and Prescott National Forests as they develop their new

Forest Plans and the new wilderness recommendations that go along with them. AWC has submitted numerous wilderness proposals to the two forests. Efforts on the upper Verde Wild and Scenic have been steadily moving along with great care being given to the local land owners along the river. Sam has been reaching out and meeting with parties that are directly involved with the future well being of the river and trying to incorporate their ideas into the Wild and Scenic proposal. Over the next few months, Sam will be focusing on more outreach along the upper Verde River to private land owners as well as managing agencies, continuing to work with national forests as they revise their forest plans, and hopefully getting some time out in the field.



### Sonoran Desert Heritage Campaign Conservation Outreach Associate Ian Dowdy, Phoenix

One of the primary goals of AWC in the coming year is to make significant progress on the Sonoran Desert Heritage (SDH) campaign which will include several hundred thousand new acres of wilderness and

Special Management Area land designations in western Maricopa County. In the past few months, AWC and other partner organizations have been inventorying the land to evaluate its merits and to ensure that it is both worthy of preservation and that its designation can withstand public scrutiny. This effort has involved many hours of walking, hiking, and driving throughout the rugged terrain to document every possible feature on the landscape. Ultimately the final boundaries and acreages of each proposed conservation area will be based upon this important field work, allowing maps and descriptions to be developed for the next part of the campaign.

The SDH campaign recently transformed into a public outreach phase and AWC brought Ian Dowdy on board to coordinate this important effort. He has just finished preparing an outreach plan, which includes the development of new collateral materials, including a high quality photo book which debuted just in time for their lobbying trip to Washington D.C. in mid-September. In addition, he is integrating new presentation material, contact lists, and implementing a winning outreach strategy that will ensure that key stakeholders are made aware of the importance of the Sonoran Desert conservation effort. Primarily, Ian will be focusing on outreach to cities and towns, Native American tribes, private businesses, and the faith community to develop a broad base of support for the campaign. Please feel free to contact him with specific recommendations on individuals or groups you would like to see involved in the outreach effort: [ian@azwild.org](mailto:ian@azwild.org).

## Take Action: Become a Wilderness Advocate

You are at the heart of everything we do to protect Arizona's wild lands and rivers.

Arizona Wilderness Coalition (AWC) is strengthened by its member base. When you join AWC, you become a member of a community of dedicated wilderness advocates, working to successfully ensure greater protection for our state's beautiful, unspoiled wilderness.

Become a member today: [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org) or by mail:  
Arizona Wilderness Coalition • P.O. Box 40340, Tucson, AZ 85717

### Members contribute by:

- volunteering at wilderness restoration events, tabling opportunities, and other activities;
- speaking to media, peers, and other concerned citizens about Arizona's imperiled wilderness;
- keeping conservation "top of the mind" during elections;
- providing the necessary funding for AWC to successfully run campaigns and programs;
- working on wilderness campaigns and projects as member leaders and experts;
- being passionate about wild places and helping generate spirited concern for all things "wild and free!"

### Member Levels

**Introductory members (free) receive:** e-alerts and access to member gatherings.

**Donating members receive:** newsletter, e-alerts, free outings, event discounts, access to member gatherings, and more!\*

**Student members (\$10 or more per year) receive:** newsletter, e-alerts, free outings, access to student gatherings and student-led events, and more!

**Business Sponsors receive:** advertising in newsletter and online, opportunities to host and sponsor gala events, outings tailored for employees, and more!

Contact [aleah@azwild.org](mailto:aleah@azwild.org) to discuss membership and sponsorship levels.

\*Regional Stewards (page 15) are eligible for all membership benefits.

*Be a part of the wilderness community – join us today.*

# Get Out There!

Join AWC for an exciting line-up of fall and winter events! As always, our electronic action alerts are the most up-to-the-minute way to get more details on each of these events and whether we need volunteers to help us out with tabling, outreach, phone banking, letter writing, and other important activities. Visit our website at [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org) to sign up for our action alerts, if you haven't already!

**Please Note: cancellations due to fire restrictions, weather, or agency policies are always possible. Please check with the trip leader on status before signing up.**

## **Saturday, October 30 Anza National Historic Trail Restoration Event, 8:30am - 2pm, near Gila Bend, AZ**

Would you like to spend a morning restoring a portion of a National Historic Trail, one of only 19 in the U. S.? Would you like to meet new friends, learn about the Anza Trail and the Sonoran Desert National Monument, and have a great time?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, join AWC, the Anza Trail Foundation, Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona, Friends of the Sonoran Desert National Monument, Sierra Club, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service on Saturday, October 30 at 8:30am, as we restore a portion of the Anza Trail in the Sonoran Desert National Monument. There is no cost to participants and no experience is necessary. Volunteers are asked to bring a water bottle, work gloves, wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, and rain jacket or poncho. Please wear sturdy shoes or boots and clothing suitable for working outdoors.

To register, contact Aleah Sato at [aleah@azwild.org](mailto:aleah@azwild.org) or phone 602-252-5530. Lunch and tools will be provided. Directions will be provided via email.

## **Saturday, November 6th U.S. Forest Service Fossil Creek Clean Up Day**

Organized by the Fossil Creek stakeholders and Northern Arizona University, this event will focus on cleaning up Fossil Creek and assessing the creek's condition as part of the official Resource Assessment that will help shape the creek's Comprehensive River Management Plan. Come out and enjoy the beauty of Fossil Creek!

For more information, contact Michele James, NAU Research Coordinator, 928-523-2995.

## **Saturday-Sunday, November 13-14th Upper Burro Creek Wilderness Weekend Members: Free; Non-Members: \$15**

Explore beautiful Burro Creek and participate in an optional overnight camp-out under the stars. This time of year is particularly lovely

with changing leaves and cooler temps. Catch a glimpse of the area's renowned wild burros; check out some fascinating geologic features; learn about the history of the land; or simply find a quiet spot and take it all in. Details will be emailed to participants. A carpool option will be available. Limited to 10 participants.

To RSVP, contact Aleah Sato at [aleah@azwild.org](mailto:aleah@azwild.org) or phone 602-252-5530.

## **Sunday, Nov. 21 Seven Springs Member Meeting, Fall Color Hike & Picnic, Seven Springs Recreation Area, Cave Creek Rd to FR 24, Tonto National Forest**

Optional Hike: moderate – runs 4-10 miles one way, depending on how far you want to go.

Bring: Tonto Day Pass (1 per car), which you can get online or at one of the Tonto offices. Click here for the website.

Picnic Style: BYOG - bring your own grub, but AWC will provide some beverages.

Instead of meeting indoors, this is a pretty little place with gorgeous fall colors for us to gather for our monthly member meeting. Access to the Cave Creek Trail is near the old CCC picnic area, and runs alongside Cave Creek. The sycamore, ash and cottonwood should be wearing their autumn colors. This is also a nice place to bring the family for a jaunt, if you are so inclined. This portion of the Tonto is not exactly wilderness-eligible; however, it will be a chance for everyone to be outdoors and see what kind of impact roads and easy access makes. Still, this is quite a lovely area with easy access from Phoenix.

Directions: Take Cave Creek Rd NE to its end at FR24. Continue for 9 miles until you see the CCC picnic area. Limited parking and a Tonto Day Pass make carpooling an optimal choice. If you are willing to drive, please contact [aleah@azwild.org](mailto:aleah@azwild.org)

## **Nov. 26th and Dec. 17 Feral Fridays: Wilderness-Themed Book & Film Salon, AWC's Historic Phoenix Office, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30pm**

Attention all wilderness-lovin' bookworms and film geeks. Dust off your salon style for a monthly film & book social. Let's grab some snacks and talk about our favorite subject: wilderness from the intriguing pages of the latest nonfiction titles to some of the more obscure films that portray the wild.

## **Saturday, December 4th BLM Anniversary Celebration for NLCS and Wilderness! Air Force Auxiliary Field, Gila Bend 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Join the Bureau of Land Management, Phoenix District and Lower Sonoran Field Offices, along with many local partners including the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM) and the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), and the 20th Anniversary of the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act. The celebration will be an all-day event at the Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, with numerous hikes and outdoor volunteer opportunities in the

weeks before and after the celebratory event. This event is FREE and open to the public. See page 12 for more details.

## **Sunday, December 5 Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Hike**

Difficulty: Fairly easy with minimal elevation gain

Distance: 7 miles

Fee: \$5 donation suggested for nonmembers of AWC.

To become a member, visit [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org)

Time: 3-4 hours (more if we feel like exploring)

We will be following the Ben Avery Trail to Indian Springs. The volcanic landscape offers fantastic opportunities for wildlife viewing and cultural resources, including many archaic and more recent petroglyphs. Geology buffs will love the distinct rock strata throughout these mountains, natural arches, high spires and monoliths, and jagged sawtooth ridges.

This is a wilderness area and we will be practicing "Leave No Trace" principles. I am sure between all of us, we can arrange a good carpool to minimize the number of vehicles parked in the area.

Aleah is open to camping the night of the 4th, if others are interested. Email [aleah@azwild.org](mailto:aleah@azwild.org) for directions and information about the overnight camping option.

Find more exciting events and join us by following us on:



## Thank You For Your Support!

Success! On one of the last days of March, your support allowed the Arizona Wilderness Coalition and its partners to successfully advocate and designate Fossil Creek as a Wild & Scenic River – Arizona's second such designation. As we move forward, we will build on this momentum and look to our next priority efforts, whether focusing on the Grand Canyon region, the Verde River Watershed, eastern Arizona's White Mountains, the low western deserts, or the beautiful Sky Island region. We have lots of work to do, and we can only do it with your help.



We are now asking you to financially support our work again so we can build on our recent success and momentum. By giving a donation this spring, you will help AWC expand our capacity to more effectively engage in wild land, water, and wilderness protections across the entire state. Right now we are completing a challenge grant from the Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation, which is helping us to raise \$125,000 in new support for our work. In these tough economic times your support for AWC is more important than ever. Please help us meet this challenge.

- If you are not a member, please join by giving at least a \$25 donation.
- If you normally give \$25, please consider giving \$50.
- If you normally give \$50, please consider giving \$100.
- If you can give more, please consider supporting our work at a higher level.
- **If you can, please become a monthly donor. It is one of the easiest ways to increase your support without having to write a check each month.**

THANK YOU. Your donation is tax-deductible. With your generous support, we can continue the work to permanently protect Arizona's wild lands and waters.



## You Have the Power to Choose: be a Regional Steward of Wilderness

*Are you ready to get "on the ground" with our campaigns? This program will allow you to choose how you want to support Arizona Wilderness Coalition and will give you the reins to help champion our campaigns—the ones you love most! Many of you expressed an interest in having more grassroots opportunities in your community. This is the way to bring your input immediately to the table.*

—Aleah Sato  
Membership Coordinator, Phoenix



### Sonoran Desert Guardian

As a Sonoran Desert Guardian you will be with us as we launch one of our largest wilderness programs to date! As Guardians of this desert region, you will have the chance to be face-to-face with some of the most beautiful, geologically- and historically-intriguing terrain in the country.

Opportunities include: restoring portions of the SDNM, hiking into the Western desert on various restoration treks, exploring the subtle differences between wilderness and wildlife refuges, tabling at relevant events, and being a spokesperson for the Sonoran Desert.



### Land of Legends Champion

Be a champion for our beautiful sky islands and help us protect the Whetstone, Dragoon and Chiricahua mountain ranges. These sky islands are home to more than 4,000 species of plants, 100 mammal species and more than half the bird species of North America.

Opportunities include: attending public meetings and collaborative events with AWC and its campaign partners, taking part in voluntary wilderness inventories, restoring portions of damaged areas, and serving as a public ally of the region.



### Upper Verde River Defender

Verde River Defenders will help AWC work toward gaining wild and scenic river designation for one of Arizona's few perennial rivers. Fed by the Big Chino aquifer in central Arizona, the Verde nurtures habitat essential to imperiled species like the desert bald eagle, southwestern willow flycatcher, and several native fishes.

Opportunities include: garnering community support to protect the Upper Verde River, networking with your fellow river advocates, and working restore damage to fragile riparian areas (while seeing some of Arizona's greenest areas).

**Want to be a regional steward? Here's how.** To begin, fill out the following form. You may also phone in your support by calling: 602-252-5530 or make a pledge online: [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org)

Yes! I want to be a:  Sonoran Desert Guardian  
 Land of Legends Champion  
 Upper Verde River Defender

Here is my gift pledge of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to this campaign made as a  
\_\_\_\_\_ one time or \_\_\_\_\_ monthly contribution.

Check enclosed  Please charge my debit or credit card

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please clip and mail to: Arizona Wilderness Coalition, PO Box 40340, Tucson, AZ 85717

*On behalf of Arizona's wilderness, thank you!!*



# ARIZONA WILD

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### What is Wilderness?

Wilderness is an area of undeveloped federal land that appears “to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of mans’ work substantially unnoticeable,” as written in the Wilderness Act of 1964. Unlike national parks, wildlife refuges, or monuments, wilderness designation from Congress provides the highest level of natural resource protection available in the world. The Wilderness Act created the National Wilderness Preservation System to preserve the last remaining wild lands in America. Currently, about 4.7 percent of all available land in the United States is protected as wilderness. In Arizona, wilderness designation protects approximately 6.2 percent of our land and wildlife habitat.



### What is a Wild and Scenic River?

To be eligible for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, a river must be free-flowing and contain at least one “outstandingly remarkable value,” i.e., scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar value. The Act mandates that selected rivers be preserved in a free-flowing condition and be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. Today, approximately 600,000 miles of once free-flowing rivers (approximately 17% of the America’s rivers) have been altered by 60,000 dams.

## ARIZONA WILD

### In this issue

FALL / WINTER 2010- 2011

History of Western Maricopa County	3
Little Thumb Butte B&B	6
Understanding Leave No Trace	7
Pathway of Spots	8
Protecting the Black and Blue	10

