

HABITAT COMPETITION: The purpose of the habitat competition is to promote preservation, restoration and understanding of the natural habitats of the Tucson Mountains. By entering the habitat competition, you automatically contribute to its goals. Enter the competition to do your part in environmental education. Show pride in the natural values of your property, and in doing so help foster pride in our local environment.

GENERAL ENTRY CATEGORIES: You can submit an entry for one or more of the following categories.

1. Best preserved natural habitat, properties 3 acres and more
2. Best preserved natural habitat, properties less than 3 acres
3. Best habitat restoration
4. Best provision for wildlife corridors
5. Best provision for species at risk
6. Kids entry — see separate guidelines under “Habitat competition for kids”

ELIGIBILITY: Anyone not on the TMA board can enter property they own or manage that lies on the eastern side of the Tucson Mountains between crest of the mountain range and the Santa Cruz River.

Entries must consist of a brief description, address of the property, contact information, map of the property indicating the part of the property that is habitat, and photos.

Your description must state which categories you are entering. For each of those categories, briefly explain the features of the property relevant to that category. To see what to explain, consult the judging criteria below. Properties of finalists in the competition will be visited by Board members. Photos that you provide will be used in a slide show at the Annual Meeting.

General entries can be submitted at any time but are requested by October 1 in the year of entry so that photos can be displayed at the annual meeting. Kids entries are requested at the end of the summer school vacation. Entries can be submitted as zip files to the TMA email address (TMA@TucsonMountainsAssoc.org) with subject line, habitat competition.

Awards will be announced as soon as entries of sufficient quality have been received, and will be made at the annual meeting following the year of entry.

JUDGING CRITERIA:

- Preservation of the habitat
- Fraction of the property supporting vegetation native to the Tucson Mountains.
- Match between the vegetation on the property and in undisturbed nearby areas
- Condition of the vegetation and land: amount of disturbance from roads, paths, structures and previous use.
- Control of threats such as dogs and cats to native species, e.g. preventing pets from ranging freely over the preserved area.
- Habitat restoration
- Condition of the property prior to restoration
- Degree of recovery of the property to its natural state taking into account the time for the restoration
- Local sourcing of seeds and cuttings
- Wildlife corridors
- Location of the preserved areas on the property relative to washes and continuous vegetation in neighboring properties.
- Location of the property relative to significant wildlife corridors in the local area.
- Control of threats such as dogs and cats to native species, e.g. preventing pets from ranging freely over the preserved area.
- Species at risk
- Appropriate vegetation and landscape elements, for native species at risk.
- Use of the property by species at risk.
- Control of threats to species at risk.

KIDS ENTRY: see separate guidelines under “Habitat competition for kids”