

Tucson Mountains ASSOCIATION SINCE 1934

Spring 2011

PO BOX 86117, TUCSON, AZ 85754-6117 • www.tucsonmountainsassoc.org • TMA@TucsonMountainsAssoc.org

President's Column Ed Verburg



Membership is the lifeline of our organization, and we are proud to represent your interests related to the west side in many forums! Please take a moment and fill out the enclosed membership form and stay a part of our wonderful organization!!

It has been a pleasure to work with the Board over the last year to address many key issues, including zoning code matters, Painted Hills, the City's water policy, proposed cell tower locations, a fiscal agreement with the Sky Island Alliance to allow for tax deductible donations, and our first electronic newsletters. Our Board is working diligently to represent the west side in many forums!

We are pleased to let you know we expressed our views, along with other members of the conservation community, related to dedicating a share of the wastewater available each year for riparian habitat in the metropolitan area. The Conservation Effluent Pool (CEP), as it is known, was an idea that was developed ten years ago. The CEP sets aside 10,000 acre feet of water per year for the environment. The CEP was included as a recommendation in the Joint Water and Wastewater Committee's Phase 2 Report and the City's Action Plan for Water Sustainability. We had a lead role in developing the letter signed by 12 conservation groups supporting the adoption of the CEP, which was recently approved by the County's Board of Supervisors and City Council. This will mean more vibrant environmental ecosystems in our area now and in the future.

Tucson environmental leaders are spearheading the formation of a Community Water Coalition whose membership includes representatives from conservation organizations, businesses, and citizens concerned with the sustainability of our community for current and future residents. The Board decided in December to join the Community Water Coalition. Over the years we also have been a member of the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection. These groups have missions and visions that parallel our adopted strategic plan for TMA.

We also have been meeting at the Correctional Officers' Training Academy on Trails End Road the third Wednesday of each month to encourage more participation (not in March or April due to K-9 training). One session in particular was highlighted as a meeting where we would welcome comments and input, and some members attended and shared their ideas. The Membership Committee will be contacting members to seek their input on a number of topics in the coming months.

Action Alert — Sweetwater Canyon

The Tucson Mountains Association supports the recent proposal by the County to extend the Sweetwater Preserve by the purchase of a 187-acre property adjoining the Preserve. This property is known as Sweetwater Canyon. It was part of the original proposal for the Sweetwater Preserve, but could not be bought at that time. There are very good reasons for extending the Preserve with this proposed new purchase. These 187 acres have very important conservation and recreational values.

Please attend the Board of Supervisor's meeting on March 1 to strongly urge them to approve the purchase of the 187 acres.

Location and Time: 130 West Congress Street, First Floor, 9:00 a.m. Consider these points:

- The property extends into the lower reaches of the Sweetwater Wash and becomes highly vegetated, and thus serves as an excellent corridor to the Santa Cruz River, a critical regional wildlife corridor.
- The rolling landscape is less steep than the majority of preserve areas of the eastern Tucson Mountains, and rainfall has more opportunity to infiltrate, allowing better soil development, and more productive plant communities.
- The southern part of the 187 acres adjoins a natural amphitheater in the Sweetwater Preserve, and is favored for nesting, courtship, and roosting by the lesser nighthawk. The same wash supplies water to rock holes on private land further east, which provide important semi-permanent water offering the few annually reliable breeding sites for the red spotted toad.

Continued...

- The property, which is crossed by ridges, provides outstanding hiking, horse riding, and mountain biking trails used by local residents and visitors, which enhances recreational opportunities in the Sweetwater Preserve.

Transportation Improvements

Learn how transportation dollars could be spent over the next five years on roadways, buses, aviation, bike, and pedestrian facilities. Pima Association of Governments invites you to review and comment on the following plan: FY 2012-2016

Transportation Improvement Program. Dates for public hearings include March 7, 8, and 9. See www.PAGnet.org or call 792-1093 for meeting locations and times.

What is a Bioblitz?

A BioBlitz is a two-day, round-the-clock event where scientists, naturalists, families and students work together to discover, identify, learn from, and celebrate the flora and fauna that live in the Saguaro National Park. The Saguaro BioBlitz will be held on October 21-22, 2011.

The Red Hills Visitors Center in the Tucson Mountains District of the Park will serve as the “Base Camp” for the event, although field studies will be held throughout both the east and west districts of the park. The BioBlitz is a joint venture of the National

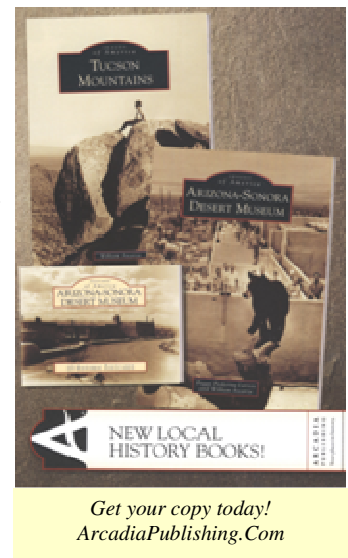
Book on Tucson Mountains

The TMA Board was privileged to have William Ascarza as a guest speaker at our January meeting. Mr. Ascarza discussed his newest book, *Sentinel to the North*.

Subtitled, “Exploring the Tortolita Mountain Range,” the book is both a compilation of exquisite photographs, narratives of the past and descriptions of the flora of the Tortolita Mountains as they exist today.

For the past ten years, the author, who works in the library field of government at the University of Arizona, has been exploring the mountains surrounding Tucson. He holds a master’s degree in the field of Information Resources & Library Science and is a member of the Tucson Gem & Mineral Society. His other books include: *Zenith on the Horizon*, “An Encyclopedic look at the Tucson Mountains from A-Z;” and, from the Images of America series, *Tucson Mountains* and *Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum*, which is co-authored by Peggy Pickering Larson.

Mr. Ascarza’s books may be purchased at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, where he is a docent.



Geographic Society and the Saguaro National Park.

A BioBlitz is a unique combination of taxonomic inventory, public outreach and science education. At its core, the BioBlitz is a species inventory in which teams of volunteers — each led by an expert scientist — find, identify, and map as many species as possible within a 24-hour period.

While the inventory is not systematic, it can nevertheless yield valuable biogeographic information. Recent BioBlitzes have revealed previously unknown species of insects and other invertebrates in the middle of

urban parks! New county records and other indices of species distribution are also common.

Concurrent with BioBlitz inventory, we will host a Biodiversity Festival which will include public presentations about biodiversity, structured field exercises with K-12 classes and teachers, demonstrations of field technology, and exhibits ranging from global biodiversity to local nature photography. A BioBlitz is a wonderful opportunity for scientists to involve the public in hands-on field work while collaborating with other scientists and land management agencies.

For further information, contact:

Carol Seitz:
carolcseitz@gmail.com or

Andy Fisher:
Andy.L.Fisher@nps.gov.

REMINDER.

Send dues at the beginning of each calendar year.

Use the attached membership form!



The Tucson Mountains Association operates on a limited budget, funded by membership dues and tax free contributions. We would like to thank the following persons for their generosity in 2010 and 2011:

- Joe and Mindy Marshall
- Ernest and Marie Calkins
- Gerald and Mary Beth Radke
 - Briggs and Pat Ackert
 - Jill and Jeffrey Dean
- Judith and Dr. Richard Meyer

TMA would also like to thank members who have opted to receive this newsletter electronically, significantly reducing the cost of printing and mailing! Please share the newsletter with your neighbors, and encourage them to become members of TMA!



Election of Officers

Continuing* and new** Board members were elected by a special mail ballot sent to all members in November. Officers then were elected at the Board meeting on January 20 as noted below:

Ed Verburg*	President	eaverburg@yahoo.com	743-7728
Ivy Schwartz*	Vice President	Ischwartz3211@cox.net	743-4251
Debbie Hicks*	Treasurer	debhicks@mindspring.com	743-3906
Peter Chesson*	Recording Secretary	pchesson@u.arizona.edu	743-7223
Paul Eckerstrom*	Board Member	ecker2@cox.net	743-1350
Victoria Falcome*	Board Member	tucsonvictoria@gmail.com	305-9367
Lissa Gibbs*	Board Member	lissa.gibbs@gmail.com	
Kurt Luscombe*	Board Member	kluscombe@qwest.net	887-5767
Judith Meyer*	Board Member and Immediate Past President	judithmeyer@msn.com	743-8058
David Slutes*	Board Member	david@hotelcongress.com	247-4141
Alan Tonelson**	Board Member	alinintucson@q.com	743-5093

*Sponsorship Levels: \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500, and \$750+ Anything over the annual membership fee is now tax-deductible!

Save Trees & Postage: Receive TMA newsletters via email? Yes ___ No ___

___ Renewal ___ New

Dues: \$20 for one year \$40 for two years Other \$ ___ *

TMA Address: P.O. Box 86117, Tucson, AZ 85754-6117

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____ (Home) _____ (Cell) _____

Name: _____
Address: _____

Www.tucsonmountainsassoc.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM



Tucson Mountains
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