



Saguaro National Park News Release

For Immediate Release

December 23, 2009

Contacts: Saguaro East - Melanie Florez (520) 733-5153
Saguaro West - Richard Hill (520) 733-5158

January Programs Offered at Saguaro National Park

Saguaro National Park is offering special programs this winter that explore the park's wonderful natural and cultural history. Come along on a naturalist-led evening walk in the park, or join a local expert for a presentation in one of our visitor centers. *Programs are offered at both the east and west districts.* Interpretive programs are free, but park entrance fees apply. Program schedules are subject to change – call the visitor centers for schedule updates or for reservations.

Special Programs at Tucson Mountain District (Saguaro West)

Jan. 16 **3:00 p.m.** **“Buffelgrass: Saguaro National Park’s Greatest Threat”**
Learn why it's a threat, how to identify it, and what you can do to help get rid of it. *Program is wheelchair accessible.* ♿

Jan. 16 **3:30 p.m.** **“Twilight Hike”**
Enjoy the desert as the sun goes down. This 2-mile, 2-hour hike takes place in a sandy wash. A couple of rock outcroppings are easily traversed. The return is along a rocky, old mining road as the sun sets. Reservations are required – call 733.5158.

Jan. 25 **2:30 p.m.** **“Wasson Peak Moonlight Hike”**
This 6½ to 7 hour, 8-mile round-trip hike climbs 1700 feet to the highest point in the Tucson Mountains, arriving in time to enjoy the 360 degree view of the sunset; the descent is by the light of the moon. The hike is at an easy pace but considered somewhat difficult. Reservations are required – call 733-5158.

Jan. 26 **4:30 p.m.** **“Twilight Glow to Moon Shadows Hike”**
This easy 3½-hour, 2½-mile stroll bridges sunset and darkness, letting hikers experience the desert both in the twilight glow and in moon shadows. Reservations are required – call 733-5158.

Jan. 27 **3:30 p.m.** **“Sunset Hike”**
A 3½ to 4-hour, 3½-mile round-trip route gains 700 feet (with some switchbacks) before attaining a beautiful ridgeline for sunset; the descent is by the light of the moon. Reservations are required – call 733-5158.

Jan. 28 **4:30 p.m.** **“Moon Take Night Make Day Hike”**
Hikers on this gentle, relatively flat, 2½-mile, 3-hour hike travel up a desert wash during the transition from day to night, enjoy the sunset atop a hill, then return under the moonlight. Reservations are required – call 733-5158.

Jan. 30 **7:15 p.m.** **“Moonrise Over the Mountains” Patio Talk**
Relax around a campfire on the visitor center patio as the full moon rises above the cactus forest. The program is 45 minutes long – no reservations required. Bring a lawn chair and warm clothing. *Program is wheelchair accessible.* ♿

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Special Programs offered at the Rincon Mountain District (Saguaro East) include:

January 3 & 24 **11:00 a.m.** **“People and Places of Saguaro’s Past”**
Join Park Ranger Arlo Ogden in the visitor center auditorium for this photo tour of the park’s historic past, focusing on the stories told by its historic structures. *Program is wheelchair accessible.* ♿

January 7 **7:00 p.m.** **“Star Party”**
Join park naturalists for an introduction to astronomy and a look at the desert night sky. Telescopes and binoculars will be available. Reservations are required – call 733-5153. *Program is wheelchair accessible.* ♿

January 9 **8:00 a.m.** **Buffelgrass Weed Pull (Rincon Mountain District)**
Volunteers will work with park staff to remove a patch of buffelgrass, an invasive non-native plant which threatens the Sonoran Desert. We will meet at the Rincon Mountain Visitors Center and then carpool to a work site near Javelina Picnic Area. Please park in the Administration Parking Lot (first right after entering the park, follow road to the parking lot just south of the visitor center parking area). Wear sturdy hiking shoes, long pants and a hat. Bring plenty of water and gloves (if you have them); tools and gloves will be provided. Following the event we will relax over snacks and beverages. Advanced reservations are recommended, so we can get a general participant count. Call 733-5187, or sign up at the visitor center.

January 10 & 31 **10:00 a.m.** **“1933 to Today”**
Join park ranger Arlo Ogden on a historic hike down the Shantz Trail. Learn who Homer Shantz was, and how he helped make Saguaro National Park the great attraction it is today. Dress for the weather, wear comfortable hiking shoes and bring water. The group will meet at the visitor center, then carpool to a nearby trailhead.

January 15 & 29 **7:00 p.m.** **“Night Walk”**
Join a park naturalist for this easy 2-hour hike to explore and experience the Sonoran Desert at night. Dress for the weather, wear comfortable walking shoes, bring water and a flashlight. Reservations required – call 733-5153.

January 21 **7:00 p.m.** **“Reptiles and Amphibians of the Sonoran Desert”**
Join naturalist Bob Brandner in the visitor center auditorium as he explores the fascinating lives of the reptiles and amphibians that call the Sonoran Desert home. *This program is wheelchair accessible.* ♿

January 23 **5:30 p.m.** **“Sunset and Crescent Moon Hike”**
Watch the sun set (along with the crescent moon) over the Tucson Basin, then follow a ranger into the evening darkness of Saguaro National Park’s Rincon Valley for an exploration of the lore of both earth and sky in our Sonoran Desert sanctuary. This is a 3-mile, 3-hour moderate hike. Bring a flashlight, snack, water, and rugged footwear. Reservations are required – call 733-5153

January 28 **7:00 p.m.** **“Death by Fire”**
Join park Fire Ecologist Perry Grissom for a discussion about buffelgrass and its impact on the Sonoran Desert, and what you can do about it. Buffelgrass is an introduced grass that is taking over the Sonoran Desert, and it is threatening not only the desert’s plants and animals, but its human residents as well. Learn the results of recent research into fire behavior in buffelgrass. *This program is wheelchair accessible.* ♿

Daily Programs

The park’s two districts offer many additional daily interpretive programs not listed here. Contact either of our visitor centers for updated schedules, or visit our website at <http://www.nps.gov/sagu/planyourvisit/things2do.htm>.

Visitor Center Locations/Phone Numbers

Both visitor centers are open daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, except Christmas Day.

Red Hills Visitor Center (Saguaro WEST)
2700 North Kinney Road
Tucson, AZ 85743
(520) 733-5158

Rincon Mountain Visitor Center (Saguaro EAST)
3693 South Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85730
(520) 733-5153

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