



Saguaro National Park (West)

Naturalist Program Schedule

Program schedules Programs meet at the Red Hills Visitor Center, 2700 N. Kinney Road, and last 30 to 45 minutes, unless noted otherwise. All programs are subject to change. Call the visitor center at (520) 733-5158 for updates. See www.nps.gov/sagu for other programs.

Dec. 1, 15, 22, 29 **2:15 p.m.** **Geology of the Tucson Mountains** *Patio talk: 45 min.*

The Tucson Mountains used to be part of the Santa Catalinas. A geologist explains how they were separated and how the Tucson Mountains are being shaped today.

Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 **3:15 p.m.** **Signs of Life in the Desert** *Easy ½ mile walk*

Watch for holes, hoof prints, scat, and other evidence of animal life as you enjoy an easy ½-mile walk around the visitor center.

Dec. 2, 11, 19, 31 **9:45 a.m.** **Neighborhood Characters** *Easy walk: 45 min.*

An easy morning walk in the Cactus Garden will bring you face to thorns with plants that remind you of people you know, friendly and otherwise. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 2, 30 **10:45 a.m.** **Saguaro: Not Just a Pretty Face** *Illus. Talk: 45 min.*

What has droopy arms, upward arms, no arms, multiple arms, serves as a hotel, and loves arid climates? Find out what's growing in Saguaro National Park. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 30 **11:45 a.m.** **Meet the Monster** *Talk: 30 min.*

Learn about this fascinating and colorful, yet rarely seen, desert inhabitant: the gila monster. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 30 **2:15 p.m.** **The CCC in Saguaro NP** *Illus. Talk: 45 min.*

The Civilian Conservation Corps was a Great Depression-era work program that had a great influence on national, state, and county parks. Saguaro's trails, picnic areas, and scenic drives were established during this program. Old photos and movie clips illustrate a brief history of the CCC in this area. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, 24, 26, 31 **3:15 p.m.** **Fast Food in the Desert** *Talk: 45 min.*

Arizona Desert indigenous people of centuries past looked to the natural world for sustenance, from the mammoths of olden days to the Three Sisters of corn, beans, and squash of more recent times. What other foods did indigenous people eat; and what's an atlatl, anyway? *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 4, 5, 12, 19 **10:45 a.m.** **A Hohokam Woman's Day** *Easy 100-yard Walk*

Discover how a Hohokam woman may have used plants for medicine and food for her family. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 7, 14, 21, 28 **2:15 p.m.** **Those Who Came Before** *Talk: 45 min.*

Learn about the Hohokam ("Those who are gone"), who inhabited this area from A.D. 300 to A.D. 1450. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 4, 12, 27 **3:15 p.m.** **Snakes** *Talk: 45 min.*

Learn about the communication skills, special adaptations, and defense systems of these often misunderstood creatures. A bit of folk lore also is shared. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 5, 19, 26 **2:15 p.m.** **Homesteaders** *Talk: 45 min.*

Enjoy the fascinating oral history surrounding Mexican American Homesteaders' adventures around Saguaro National Park communities. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 6, 20 **11:45 a.m.** **They're Mining Our National Park??** *Illus. Talk: 45 min.*

No, but they did before it became a National Park. If you are interested in the mining in this region and other local history, join us for this program. *Wheelchair accessible.*

Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27 **1:15 p.m.** **God's Dog & Desert "Pigs"** *Talk: 40-min.*

An introduction to two of our most common desert mammals: the coyote and the javelina.

Dec. 6, 13, 20 **3:15 p.m.** **Meet the Cuckoo of the Desert** *Illus. Talk: 45 min.*

Learn about the natural history, behavior, and other fascinating facts about this colorful creature: the roadrunner. *Wheelchair accessible.*

- Dec. 9** **3:45 p.m.** **Moon Take Night Make Day** *Hike: 3 hours.*
This is a gentle, relatively flat 3-hour, 2.5-mile hike up a desert wash during the transition from day to night. Enjoy the sunset and the moonlit desert. **Reservations required: 733-5158**
- Dec. 10** **6:00 p.m.** **Moonrise Over The Mountain** *Patio talk: 45-60 min.*
This campfire-type talk on the patio includes a relaxing view of the full moon as it rises above the cactus forest. No reservations are required; bring a lawn chair and warm clothing.
- Dec. 13, 27** **10:45 a.m.** **Adaptation: Recipe for Survival** *Easy walk, 45 min.*
Physical and behavioral adaptations necessary for plants to survive and thrive in the desert are pointed out during this 100-yard walk in the Cactus Garden.
- Dec. 13, 27** **11:45 a.m.** **Life Cycle of Saguaro: Seed to Giant** *Easy walk: 45 min.*
Few saguaro seeds germinate, let alone make it to maturity. The journey from seed to giant includes overcoming the odds and avoiding being stepped on, eaten, scorched, frost-bitten, or struck by lightning. Their tenacity just has to be admired.
- Dec. 17, 18, 26** **9:45 a.m.** **Life in an Arroyo** *Easy hike, 75 min.*
Want to get somewhere? Whether called an arroyo or a wash, this path for water runoff also provides a roadway, shelter, air conditioning, and food for plants, critters, and humans. Hike up a wash with a ranger – and be prepared for a surprise. No sandals, please!
- Dec. 20, 27** **10:45 a.m.** **Packrat Wandering** *.5 mile, 45-minute Hike*
Walk up a wash and search for a packrat home. They tell us about changes in climate, human history, and geology, as well as about the inhabitants.
- Dec. 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30** **9:45 a.m.** **Lost and Gone Forever** *Hike: 2 hrs-1 ½ miles*
Learn how species become threatened, endangered or extinct. What are the consequences of habitat loss or climate change to those that call this place home?
- Dec. 21, 28** **3:15 p.m.** **Also Dec. 31 10:45 a.m.** **Climate Change** *Talk: 40 min.*
Join us as we examine and explore methods used to determine past, present, and possible future climate change. What risks could a warmer planet pose to our native plants and animals in Saguaro National Park? *Wheelchair accessible.*
- Dec. 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 31** **3:15 p.m.** **Life on the Edge** *Walk: 100 yards.*
Adaptations to seemingly harsh conditions allow many species to survive and even flourish, but will desert plants and animals be able to weather climate changes? *Wheelchair accessible*
- Dec. 23, 30** **3:00 p.m.** **Silhouettes at Sundown** *Hike: 2 ½ hrs-2 ½ miles*
Trek along an arroyo as the setting sun magically silhouettes the Southwest's most famous icon – the giant saguaro. **Reservations required: 733-5158**

Visitor Center

The Red Hills Visitor Center is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except Christmas. A slide show is presented every half-hour through 4:30 p.m. As space is limited, for some of our guided programs **advanced reservations are required**, and can be made by calling the Tucson Mountain District Visitor Center 733-5158.