



## Cultural Resources

### What are Cultural Resources?

Cultural resources can be defined as physical evidence of past human activity: site, object, landscape, structure; or a site, structure, landscape, object or natural feature of significance to a group of people traditionally associated with it.

Types of cultural resources often found in national parks include:

Archeological resources: The remains of past human activity and records documenting the scientific analysis of these remains.

Historic structures: A building or other structure (such as a bridge, mine, canal, ship, or locomotive) that is significant because of its link to an important period in the past.

Cultural landscapes: Settings humans have created in the natural world.

Ethnographic resources: Sites, structures, landscapes, objects or natural features of significance to a traditionally associated group of people.

Museum objects: Manifestations of human behavior and ideas

### Cultural Resources at Saguaro National Park

The archeological sites at Saguaro National Park span more than 8,000 years of prehistoric and historic-period occupation. The prehistoric sites are primarily Archaic (3500-2100 BCE [before Common Era]) and Hohokam (500-1450 CE [Common Era]) artifact scatters with low surface visibility and expression. The artifact scatters represent villages, campsites, farmsteads, and stone quarries. Other prehistoric sites include rock art (petroglyphs and pictographs), rock shelters, and bedrock milling sites. The one prehistoric site that is accessible to the park visitor is Signal Hill. This is a small but distinct hill with petroglyphs on the many boulders that cover the hillside. Access to the site is from the Signal Hill picnic area.

Historic-period sites include ranching related sites, mining



Spiral Petroglyph at Signal Hill, Tucson Mountain District.

sites, limes kilns, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) structures and features, and historic-period trash scatters. The Freeman Homestead and two of the six lime kilns are on the Arizona State Register of Historic Places. Many of the CCC historic structures are in excellent condition and are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Manning Cabin and the Rincon Mountain Visitor Center are listed in the National Register, as are all of the archeological sites in the Rincon Mountain District (RMD) below 4,000 feet, which are contributing elements of the Rincon Mountain Foothills Archeological National Register District.

Examples of the park's historic structures can be found along several of the park maintained trails. The visitor can view two lime kilns along the Cactus Forest Trail in the RMD. Also along that trail are the remains of the first permanent building in Saguaro National Park that served as both residence and contact station. The Freeman Homestead can be found along the Freeman Homestead Trail. The RMD Visitor Center is an example of Mission 66 architecture. Manning Cabin, dating to 1905, is only accessible to those hearty individuals who can hike the 12 miles up the mountain; this does requires a back country permit.

In the Tucson Mountain District historic CCC constructed picnic features can be found at all of the district's picnic

areas. These were constructed in the 1930s by the CCC prior to the area becoming a part of Saguaro National Park. Along the Sendero Esperanza trail can be found the remains of Gould Mine, one of the many mines that operated in the Tucson Mountains.

There is one Cultural Landscape at Saguaro National Park. The CCC-constructed Cactus Forest Drive in the Rincon Mountain District was designated a cultural landscape in 2009 as an expression of a government-sponsored work relief program of the Depression (New Deal era) and national park design philosophies of the 1930s.

The park hopes to add a second cultural landscape, the Tucson Mountain CCC Historic Landscape in the near future.

A Tohono O'odham traditional use area in the Tucson Mountain District is managed as an ethnographic resource for harvesting saguaro fruit (a goal of the park staff is to consult Native American tribes further regarding possible sacred sites and other traditional-use areas).

There are over 12,000 cultural resource objects in the park's museum collection. This collection consists primarily of archeology items, but also includes ethnology and history items. All of this material is stored in climate controlled conditions at the Western Archeological and Conservation Center located here in Tucson.



Saguaro Fruit



Anita Ahill gathering saguaro fruit in the Tucson Mountain District in the traditional Tohono O'odham way.



## Other Cultural Resource Briefs

- Amole Mining District
- Archival Conservation
- Cactus Ranger Station
- Cactus Forest Drive
- Camp Pima
- Civilian Conservation Corps
- CCC Dams
- CCC Picnic Tables and Benches
- CCC Ramadas
- CCC Restrooms
- CCC Road Signs
- CCC Serpentine Walls
- CCC Shelter Houses
- Cultural Resource Management
- Garwood Ranch
- Hohokam Shell Artisans
- Help Us Preserve Cultural Resources
- Lime Kilns
- Line Camps
- Mine Closures
- Mining Claims
- NPS Rustic Architecture
- Observatory Hill
- Obsidian Sourcing
- RMD Visitor Center and Mission 66
- Saguaro Fruit: A Traditional Harvest
- Signal Hill Petroglyphs
- The Hohokam

For more information contact:

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## Visting the Park

Remember, for both Districts there is no off trail hiking below 4500 feet! Artifacts and cultural features are protected by state and federal law and should not be removed or tampered with.

When viewing the petroglyphs please stay on the designated trail and do not touch the petroglyphs; oils from your hands can actually damage the rock surface. Stepping on the rocks can dislodge petroglyph boulders as well as the petroglyph panels themselves. We invite you to take lots of photographs, but please don't leave any fingerprints. Please do not scratch, write, or otherwise mar the petroglyphs or bare rocks on Signal Hill.