

### Things to remember:

- No experience is necessary, but all volunteers must be able to hike 2-3 miles off-trail, on rough desert terrain, and able to work outdoors for approximately 6 hours.
- The desert is hot and dry! Please bring at least 2 liters of water and a lunch or snacks to stay hydrated.
- Protect yourself from the sun by wearing sunscreen and a hat along with other protective clothing.
- Wear sturdy boots or shoes.
- Wear long pants instead of shorts to protect your legs from cactus spines and sun exposure.
- RSVPs are required so that we can match the Census area with the number of volunteers.



### Directions

#### Rincon Mountain (east) District:

Head east on Broadway or Speedway Blvd to Freeman Road, then go right (south) on Freeman Road 3-4 miles to Old Spanish Trail. Turn left on Old Spanish Trail and go 0.25 miles southeast to the Park entrance on the left side of the road. Proceed 200-300 yards to Visitor Center.

#### Tucson Mountain (west) District:

Head west on Speedway Boulevard, which will change names to Gates Pass Road. Drive west on Gates Pass Road until it ends at Kinney Road (turn right on Kinney Road). Drive north on Kinney Road. The Visitor Center is about 2 miles past the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum on Kinney Road.

For reservations and more information, contact Don Swann or Kim Diamond:

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# 2010 SAGUARO CENSUS AT SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK Volunteer Opportunity



## What is the Saguaro Census?

Every ten years (coinciding with the U.S. population census) Saguaro National Park conducts its Saguaro Census, where the giant cacti are counted and measured. Although the Saguaro Census started in 1990, some areas are included that were first surveyed as far back as 1941. This long-term monitoring data is used to assess the health of the park's saguaro population. It provides information for visitors and helps the park preserve this giant cactus.



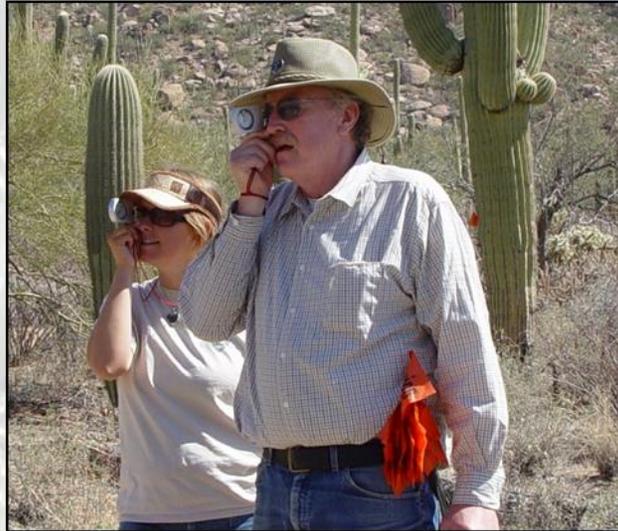
*Saguaro forest at Saguaro National Park (East) 1935*



*Saguaro forest at Saguaro National Park (East) 1998*

## What are the results so far?

Research and monitoring of saguaros began soon after the park was established in 1933 because many large cacti were dying. Saguaros declined in some parts of the park for several decades, then began increasing in the 1970s. Census results in 1990 and 2000 indicate that saguaros increased in number in both the Rincon Mountain (east) District and Tucson Mountain (west) district. In the 2010, we will see if this increase is continuing. Data from the 2010 Census will be compared to previous results and posted on the park's website ([www.nps.gov/sagu](http://www.nps.gov/sagu)).



*Volunteers using a clinometer to measure a tall Saguaro.*

## What are some of the Census activities?

Joining the saguaro census is a great way to help the park, learn about saguaros, and be a "citizen science" in locations in the park that are off-trail and somewhat remote. After hiking to a plot, we count and measure the Saguaros within each 200 by 200 meter plot. Each small saguaro is measured with a tape measure. Heights of large cacti are



estimated using a clinometer (an instrument that measures percent slope) and high school math. All participants work in teams and are trained in the field.

## How can we participate?

Everyone who enjoys hiking and working in the desert is welcome to join the Saguaro Census. No experience is necessary. We especially encourage groups of 12-18 people on Saturdays, but days of the week and group size are flexible. We can also use individual volunteers.