

Results of 2020 Saguaro Census on Plot 26, Tucson Mountains

Individual Volunteers, February 5th, 2020



A big thank you to our hard-working individual volunteers. These are folks who want to help with the Census but are not part of any organized group. An intrepid group of these volunteers came out on February 5th and did a great job! They did about half of the plot which was finished a few days later by a second group of individual volunteers.

Plot #26 is very typical of many of our Saguaro Census study areas. The number of saguaros present today is dramatically greater than in 1990, when the Census began – an increase from about 375 in 1990 to nearly 700 today – yet there has been a slight decline in the total number of saguaros since 2010. The recent decline coincides with a long-term drought in the Sonoran Desert that has gone on now for more than 25 years and appears to be exacerbated by higher temperatures associated with climate change. While park staff are concerned about the slowdown in the number of young saguaros, we are not yet alarmed, because nature had many natural cycles, and saguaros can live and reproduce for many years. The Saguaro Census is the method the park uses to track these changes and keep an eye on the health of our namesake plant.

Saguaro Plot #26

