



## Saguaro National Park News Release



*For Immediate Release*

December 26, 2007

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### January Programs Offered at Saguaro National Park

Saguaro National Park is offering a series of programs this winter that will explore the wonderful natural and cultural history of the park. Many of these programs will also celebrate the park's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, coming up on March 1, 2008. Join naturalists for an evening walk in the park or join a local expert for a presentation in the visitor center. Programs will be offered at both districts. There is no charge for interpretive programs, but park entrance fees apply.

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

**January 4      7:00 p.m.      75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Night Walk**

This year Saguaro National Park celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday. To celebrate, the park is offering a special series of programs highlighting important park themes. Join Park Ranger Josh Boles for this 1.5 hour hike through the Sonoran Desert at night and discover how important dark nights are to the plants and animals of Saguaro National Park. Bring water and a flashlight. Space is limited, so call the visitor center at (520) 733-5153 to reserve your spot. ***This program will also be offered on January 18.***

**January 5      10:00 a.m.      1933 to Today: Saguaro National Park**

Take an easy, 1 mile walk back in time to learn how and why Saguaro National Park was created. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water. Advance registration is recommended and can be made by calling (520) 733-5153. ***This program will also be offered on January 12, 19 and 26.***

**January 8      8:30 a.m.      Desert Bird Walk**

Bring your binoculars and join the quest for desert birds. This easy 2-hour, 1-mile walk will introduce you to some of the birds that call Saguaro National Park home. Reserve a space on this walk by calling the visitor center at (520) 733-5153. ***This program will also be offered on January 15, 22 and 29.***

**January 8      9:00 a.m.      Desert Morning Hike**

Join a park naturalist for this 3-hour, 4-mile exploration of Saguaro National Park. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring water and a trail snack. Advance registration is recommended; call the visitor center at (520) 733-5153 to sign up. ***This program will also be offered on January 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29 and 30.***

**January 8      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. Advance registration is required and can be made by calling the visitor center at (520) 733-5153.

**January 11      11:00 a.m.      Little House on the Desert**

Join "Viola Freeman" on a one-mile, two-hour walk and find out what life was like here 75 years ago. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water. Advance registration is recommended and can be made by calling 733-5153.

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**January 12 8:00 – 11:30 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 be meeting at the Visitors Center and then carpool to the Javelina picnic area work site. Please park in the Administrative Parking Lot (1st right after entering the park, follow around to lot just south of Visitor Center Parking Lot). Wear sturdy hiking shoes, long pants and a hat. Bring water and gloves (if you have them); tools and gloves will be provided. Following the event, we will relax over snacks and beverages. RSVP to 733-5187 or sign up at the Visitors Center so we can get a general head count. We look forward to seeing you there!

**January 16 2:00 p.m. Sunset/Moonrise Hike**

This strenuous seven-hour, seven-mile hike climbs 1100 feet into the Rincon Mountains for views of a desert sunset and a walk down under the full moon. Wear sturdy hiking boots, dress for the weather; bring a trail dinner, water and a flashlight. Space is limited and reservations are required. Call (520) 733-5153 to register. Participants will be mailed directions and more detailed program information.

**January 17 10:00 a.m. Prehistoric People in the Sonoran Desert**

Join Volunteer Walter Coe on the visitor center patio for an exploration into the prehistory of this area; learn who lived here over a thousand years ago and what they used for food, clothing and shelter. ***This program will also be offered on January 31.***

**January 19 3:00 p.m. 75 Years at Saguaro National Park: An Illustrated History**

Come along with Park Ranger Laura Bolyard in the visitor center auditorium for a trip down memory lane as Saguaro National Park prepares to celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This presentation, which includes many historic photos, takes a look at the events that helped shape Saguaro National Park. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling the visitor center at (520)733-5153.

**January 22 7:00 p.m. The Changing Cactus Forest – A History of Saguaros at Saguaro National Park**

Since Saguaro National Park was established in 1933, there have been visible changes in the plant community. How healthy are the park's saguaros? How has the park's famous "Cactus Forest: changed over time? Join park biologist Don Swann as he reviews more than 75 years of research on the saguaro and discusses what we know about the past, present and future of this magnificent cactus.

**January 29 7:00 p.m. Finding Meaning in Wilderness**

Saguaro National Park is more than just a desert park. For inside the park's boundaries there lies tens of thousands of acres of designated wilderness. That wilderness, which is as diverse as it is large, is rarely visited due to its rough terrain, steep slopes, and long trails. Join park ranger Josh Boles for this one hour PowerPoint program as he shares some of his images, stories, and reflections of his trips into the Wilderness of Saguaro.

**Special Programs offered at the Tucson Mountain District (Saguaro West) include:**

**January 5 8:00 a.m. Bird Walk**

Join experienced birding guide John Higgins to see some of the twenty five species of birds that are year-round residents of Saguaro National Park. Meet at the Red Hills Visitor Center, 2700 N. Kinney Road. The group will caravan to several nearby locations. The walking is considered easy, on flat but dirt and rocky trails. Persons of all ages, with or without bird watching experience, are welcome. Participants are encouraged to bring water and sun protection, and binoculars and bird guides if you have them. The walk usually lasts two hours. For more information call 733-5158.

**January 7 1:15 p.m. Wandering up the Wash Hike**

Every Monday, at 1:15 p.m. for 1.5 hours enjoy wandering up the wash while a naturalist takes you back years to experience Saguaro's natural and cultural heritage. You will learn some of the early mining and CCC camp history, learn about the plants that have survived in the desert for centuries, see Petroglyphs that were carved into the rocks between AD300 and AD1450. Participants should bring water and sun protection. Closed toed shoes are recommended. We will meet on the Patio of the Red Hills Visitor Center. ***This program will also be offered on January 14, 21, 28.***

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**January 12                      3:30 p.m.                      Twilight Hike**

These hikes are 2 to 2½ miles and 2 to 2½ hours in length. They are scheduled to begin approximately one hour before sunset. The terrain is sandy, with some rock outcroppings. Some of these can be skirted, but some must be climbed. We will return to the parking area in the fading light after sunset on an alternate trail or along a rocky old mining road. As space is limited, advance registration is required and can be made by calling the visitor center at (520) 733-5158. ***This program will also be offered on January 26.***

**January 19                      3:30 p.m.                      Sunset Hike**

This hike climbs 700 feet to a ridgeline for the sunset, and descends the trail solely under the light of the moon. The hike takes 3½ to 4 hours, and is 3½ miles in length. Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 733-5158.

**January 20                      4:15 p.m.                      "Moon Take Night Make Day" Hike**

This gentle, relatively flat, 2½ mile hike travels up a desert wash during the transition from day to night. The hike takes approximately 3 hours. Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 733-5158.

**January 22                      6:45 p.m.                      "Moonrise Over the Mountains" Patio Talk**

This campfire style talk on the patio of the Red Hills Visitor Center allows a relaxing view of the full moon, as it rises above the cactus forest. No reservation is needed, but a lawn chair is desirable.

**January 27                      3:00 p.m.                      "75 years at Saguaro National Park: An Illustrated History"**

Join our special guest speaker Park Ranger Laura Bolyard in our Red Hills Visitor Center Theater for a trip down memory lane during our 75<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary Celebration. It includes many historic photos and takes a look at the events that helped shape Saguaro National Park.

## **Visitor Center Locations/Phone Numbers**

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

For more information about Saguaro National Park and some of its partners, Friends of Saguaro National Park and the Western National Parks Association, visit these websites:

[www.nps.gov/sagu](http://www.nps.gov/sagu).

[www.friendsofsaguaro.org](http://www.friendsofsaguaro.org)

[www.wnpa.org](http://www.wnpa.org)

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