



Saguaro National Park News Release

14-24

For Immediate Release

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Saguaro National Park Program Schedule for March

Saguaro National Park is offering a variety of hikes and talks this spring that explore the park's wonderful natural and cultural histories. Program listings also are available on the park's website, www.nps.gov/sagu, or visit us on Facebook. Interpretive programs are free, but park entrance fees apply. Program schedules are subject to change; call the visitor centers for updates or reservations.

Naturalist Programs at the Rincon Mountain District (East, 3693 S. Old Spanish Trail):

Special Features include:

March 6 7:00 p.m. **Star Party** *Illustrated Program & Activity*
Join park naturalists for an introduction to astronomy and a look at the desert night sky. Telescopes and binoculars will be available. **Reservations required. Call 733-5153.** *Wheelchair accessible.*

March 7 & 21 7:00 p.m. **Night Walk** *1 mile Guided Walk*
Join a park naturalist for this easy two-hour hike to explore and experience the Sonoran Desert at night. Dress for the weather, wear comfortable walking shoes, and bring water and a flashlight. As space is limited, **advanced reservations are required**, and can be made by calling 733-5153

March 22 & 23 10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. **The Mata Ortiz Story** *Presentation & Demonstration*
Join us in the visitor center auditorium to explore the history and art of the Mata Ortiz pottery. After the presentation, meet in the parking lot to see a pot being fired. *Wheelchair accessible*

March 28 11:00 a.m. **The Expedition of Juan Bautista de Anza** *Presentation*
Join park ranger Al Watson in the visitor center auditorium to retrace the steps of Juan Bautista de Anza on his historic expedition of 1775 – 1776. What discoveries were made and hardships endured as these intrepid travelers made their way from Tubac, Arizona to San Francisco, California. *Wheelchair accessible*

In addition to these regularly scheduled programs at RMD (east):

March 1, 15, 22, 29 9:00 a.m. **Desert Morning Hike** *4-mile Guided Hike*
Join a park naturalist on this 3-hour, 4-mile hike to explore Saguaro National Park. Wear sturdy hiking boots and bring water and a trail snack.

March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 8:30 a.m. **Desert Bird Walk** *1 mile Guided Walk*
Join volunteer naturalist Vicki Powers for an easy 2-hour walk in search of desert birds. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water.

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 10:00 a.m. **Walk with the Saguaros** *1 Mile Guided Walk*
Join a naturalist for this 2-hour, 1-mile easy walk to discover the many fascinating facts about the Saguaro cactus. Sturdy footwear and water are recommended.

March 4, 11, 18, 25 2:00 p.m. **Reptiles & Amphibians of the Sonoran Desert** *Illustrated Talk*
Join park naturalist Bob Brandner for this 30-minute presentation to discover the fascinating world of reptiles and amphibians. **Wheelchair accessible**

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March 5, 12, 19, 26 10:00 a.m. **Desert Discovery** 2 mile Guided Walk

Join park naturalists on this two-hour, 2-mile walk to discover the secrets of the Sonoran Desert. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water.

March 6, 20, 27 3:00 p.m. **The Changing Cactus Forest** Presentation

Join us in the visitor center auditorium to see the changes that have come to the Cactus Forest in the 80 years of Saguaro National Park and to think about what the next 80 years will look like. *Wheelchair accessible.*

March 7, 14, 21, 28 2:00 p.m. **Drive-Thru Geology Tour!** One Hour Auto Tour

Hop in your car for a journey through 25 million years of earth history...in one hour! We'll observe the varied landforms of the desert – bajadas, washes, outcrops – and find out why geology students from around the world come to see the Rincon Mountain foothills. (Hint: it's the mylonitic gneiss!) *Wheelchair accessible*

Naturalist Programs at Tucson Mountain District (West, 2700 N. Kinney Road):

Special Features this month include:

March 12 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Meet the Author: Jennifer Ward *New book event*

Children's book author Jennifer Ward read from her new book, "Mama Built a Little Nest," at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. March 12 in the Red Hills Visitor Center. Book signings will follow 30-minute readings. The book will be sold in advance of its general release March 18. Western National Parks Association, which runs the Saguaro National Park bookstore and others in the West, is sponsoring the event. The Saguaro bookstore also carries five of Ward's other books: "The Sunhat," a recent release and a Southwest adaptation of "The Mitten"; "There Was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea"; "The Seed and the Giant Saguaro"; "Because You Are My Baby"; and "Way Out in the Desert." Admission included in park entrance fee. *Wheelchair accessible.*

March 15 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. **Tohono O'odham Art Show and Sale: Chiago and Cruz**

Michael Chiago, a nationally known watercolor artist and illustrator; and renowned basket weavers Fred and Della Cruz will demonstrate their artistic techniques during on-going presentations in the Red Hills Visitor Center. With the use of traditional prayer sticks, children will learn about the importance of family and respect for the saguaro cactus. No additional admission *Wheelchair accessible.*

March 18, 19 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. **Mexican Art Show and Sale**

Artists Jorge Quintana and Aide Gonzalez will be on hand during this two-day special sale of Mata Ortiz pottery, Oaxacan wood carvings, and Zapotec rugs in Red Hills Visitor Center. Special one-hour videos about the Mata Ortiz story will be shown at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., with each showing followed by one-hour firing demonstrations. No additional admission. *Wheelchair accessible.*

March 29 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. **5th Annual CCC Recognition Day -- Special Events All Day**

The highlight of the March program offerings for Saguaro National Park's Tucson Mountain District, 2700 N. Kinney Rd., is the 5th Annual Civilian Conservation Corps Recognition Day. A full schedule includes appearances by CCC historians; displays of newspapers, photos, and memorabilia of the day; book signings and conversations with authors; films and documentaries of the era; and guest speakers with a variety of programs. CCC alumni are among invitees. The CCC was a Great Depression-era work program that greatly influenced national, state, and county parks. Saguaro's trails, picnic areas, and scenic drives were established during this program. Park admission (TMD only) is free for this event. *Wheelchair accessible.*

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In addition to these regularly scheduled programs at TMD (west).

March 12 3:00 p.m. Wasson Peak Moonlight Hike *6½-7 hours, 8 miles*

Climb 1,700 feet at a reasonable pace to the highest point in the Tucson Mountains, enjoy the 360° sunset view, and descend by the light of the moon. The hike is considered difficult due to elevation gains and darkness. Reservations required; 733-5158

March 13 5:00 p.m. Twilight Glow To Moon Shadows *Hike: 3½ hours, 2½ miles roundtrip*

This easy hike bridges sunset and darkness. Hikers will experience the desert both in the twilight glow and in moon shadows. Reservations required; 733-5158.

March 14 4:15 p.m. Sunset Hike *Hike: 3¾ hours, 3½ miles roundtrip*

This moderate hike gains 700 feet with most of the rise in switchbacks near the ridgeline. Hikers will watch the sunset before descending under moonlight. Reservations required; 733-5158.

March 15 5:00 p.m. Moon Take Night, Make Day *Hike: 3 hours, 2½ miles roundtrip*

Visitors will enjoy the sunset before returning in the moonlight. This hike is considered easy but includes a few high-stepping rocky outcroppings in the wash. Reservations required; 733-5158.

March 16 7:15 p.m. Moonrise Over The Mountain *Campfire Talk: 45 minutes*

Listen to music while viewing the full moon rising over the mountains at the Red Hills Visitor center. Bring a lawn chair and warm clothing for this informal campfire program. No reservations required.

March 1 at 3:30 p.m. and March 29 at 3:45 p.m. Silhouettes at Sundown *Hike: 3 hours, 2½ miles*

Trek along an arroyo as sunset magically silhouettes the Southwest's most famous icon – the giant saguaro. Reservations required: 733-5158.

Visitor Center Locations/Phone Numbers

Both visitor centers are open daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, except Christmas Day.

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, Western National Parks Association, and the Rincon Institute, visit these websites:

www.nps.gov/sagu

www.friendsofsaguaro.org

www.wnpa.org

www.rinconinstitute.org