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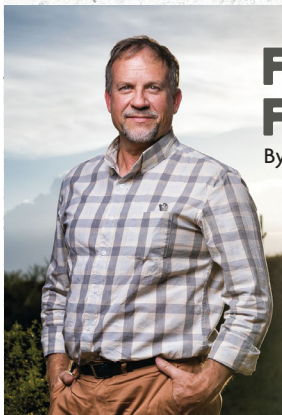
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Desert Museum
Discovery
SPRING 2025



NEW BEGINNINGS

2025 BRINGS CHANGE TO THE DESERT MUSEUM



FAREWELL FROM CRAIG:

By Craig Ivanyi, Executive Director, Emeritus

Dear Friends,

I'll never forget my first day as a Desert Museum volunteer in 1984. After a bit of training, I was left to clean a set of frog habitats in the amphibian "room" (actually, it was a walk-in closet). I opened up a small container that held five canyon tree frogs and, as soon as I removed the lid, several of them jumped out of the enclosure. I remember thinking that I might have just lost my volunteer position, because I expected all of the frogs to quickly hop away, and I doubted that losing them would go over well with the Curator. Instead of leaving the

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FAREWELL FROM CRAIG:

area, each frog clung to a different object – a roll of paper towels, the side of the sink, a windowpane, and one even hung from my T-shirt. As I put them back in the container, I was struck by this amazing feat. Like Spiderman®, tree frogs could spring from one place to another, land on vertical surfaces, and just hang there, as if gravity didn't apply to them. This really piqued my curiosity!

A couple years later, after becoming a (paid) animal keeper, I had another formative event wherein I was supposed to clean a snake enclosure that required I move the three resident Arizona black rattlesnakes out of the way. In the end, I wound up with one in a bucket, one on the floor, and one refusing to go anywhere. Still not that comfortable with snakes, especially venomous ones, I seriously began to rethink my choice of becoming a reptile keeper. But, when I stepped back and looked at what the snakes were doing I realized they weren't really going anywhere, and they certainly were not pursuing me. This event shifted my perspective from fear and timidity to curiosity, respect and awe, forever changing my relationship with rattlesnakes. Little did I know that these events would be so incredibly transformational – opening both a window into the natural world and a door to a professional career. Of course, since that time with the black rattlesnakes, my snake handling skills have greatly improved and I came to realize that working with venomous snakes was one of the easier parts of my job!

Looking back at the past 40 years, I know that I didn't really plan on a career in natural history, working for the Desert Museum, let alone becoming its Executive Director. Though it might not have been my plan, having such a long career with

and being selected to lead this renowned organization has been an incredible honor and I enter the next chapter of life with a variety of memories and a sense of accomplishment. In my 15 years as ED, I've worked with a number of you to develop a dozen new exhibits, steward projects that created hundreds of endangered species who were born/hatched in our care, (many of which were released into the wild), grow and support the staffing needed to provide programs for thousands of school children and visitors, along with securing restricted support that got the Museum through the Great Recession, the COVID pandemic, and established a \$10 million Conservation and Science Reserve.

I've enjoyed working with and learning from you – the staff, volunteers, donors, trustees, and members of the Museum. I feel good about where the organization currently is and where it is headed. I'm pleased to have helped develop its new strategic and master plans, as well as the talented Leadership Team that will work with the incoming ED, Hollie Colahan, and the Board of Trustees as they turn these plans into reality. I am confident everyone involved with the Museum will continue to take it to new heights while maintaining its reputation as a unique industry-leading organization. The Museum is in great shape and the time is right for a new leader to take on its future challenges and opportunities and it's time for me to dive back into what got me into this field to begin with – working with and understanding reptiles and amphibians and sharing what we learn with others! As I transition to Executive Director, Emeritus, I'm excited about the future – mine and the Museum's – and I look forward to the new adventures that await us all. With incredible gratitude,

Craig D. Q.



Accomplishments During Craig's Tenure as Executive Director

Note: These accomplishments are a result of the entire Museum team's collective effort, not just my leadership or work. My role ranged from leading projects to championing initiatives, securing funding, and supporting collaboration.

Exhibits & Other Projects

2011:

Amphibian Exhibits – Relocation and renovation for the Warden Aquarium

2012:

Garden Classroom & New Library – Library relocation, new office space for science staff, large classroom for Art Institute

2013:

Warden Aquarium: Rivers to the Sea

2015:

Woven Words: Poetry at the Desert Museum – 32 installations

Vulture Culture – Interpretive displays of caracara, black, and turkey vultures

2016:

Stingray Touch – a hands-on interactive experience focused on the Gulf of California

Docent office renovation

2017:

Haag Cactus Garden renovation

2018:

Packrat Playhouse – An indoor interactive packrat experience and play place

Graphics, Botany, & Security staff area renovations

2019:

Art Institute Classrooms – Four new classrooms and staff offices

Exhibits and Maintenance work area renovations

Guest House renovation & development of Artist-in-Residence space

2022:

Boojum Hill Garden – renovation & expansion

Wilder Kingdom Symposium – hosted by the Desert Museum, leading to a book on the future of zoos and aquariums as "wild" places.

2023:

Long Range, Strategic, and Master Plans

2024

New Interpretive Plan

Dinosaurs in the Desert – the Museum's first large-scale, outdoor temporary exhibit

Water storage – installation of a 350,000-gallon tank to support the Museum during water supply disruptions

Near Future

Spadefoot Splash: a Riparian Adventure – an interactive desert water story, opening in 2026.

Mexican Wolf Exhibit – Expanded exhibit for animal wellbeing, opening in 2027/28

Programs

2019: Artist-In-Residence – Program launch

2020: DEAI – long term effort to create a more diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive organization

2021: Conservation and Science Reserve – Created a reserve to protect conservation staffing and programs

2022: Retail Transition – Brought retail operations in-house to boost revenue

2024: Reptile behavioral research – developed first phase of major focus on animal wellbeing (in planning & preparation)

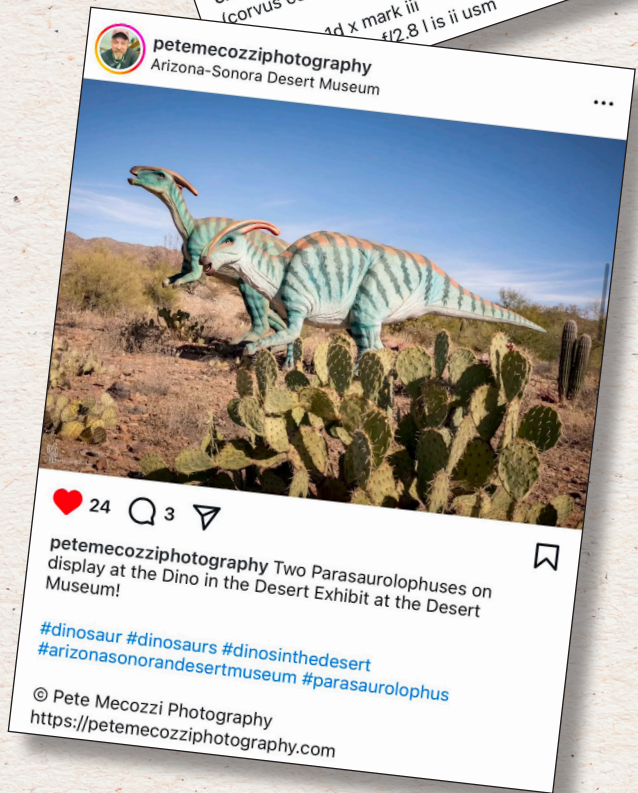
Free admission for Native Americans established – one of many efforts to come, demonstrating our commitment and desire for deeper engagement with Native American communities

“The Museum is in great shape and the time is right for a new leader to take on its future challenges and opportunities and it's time for me to dive back into what got me into this field to begin with – working with and understanding reptiles and amphibians and sharing what we learn with others!”

We love seeing the Museum through your eyes! Tag @desertmuseum for a chance to be featured!

social media SPOTLIGHT

ARIZONA-SONORA
DESERT
MUSEUM



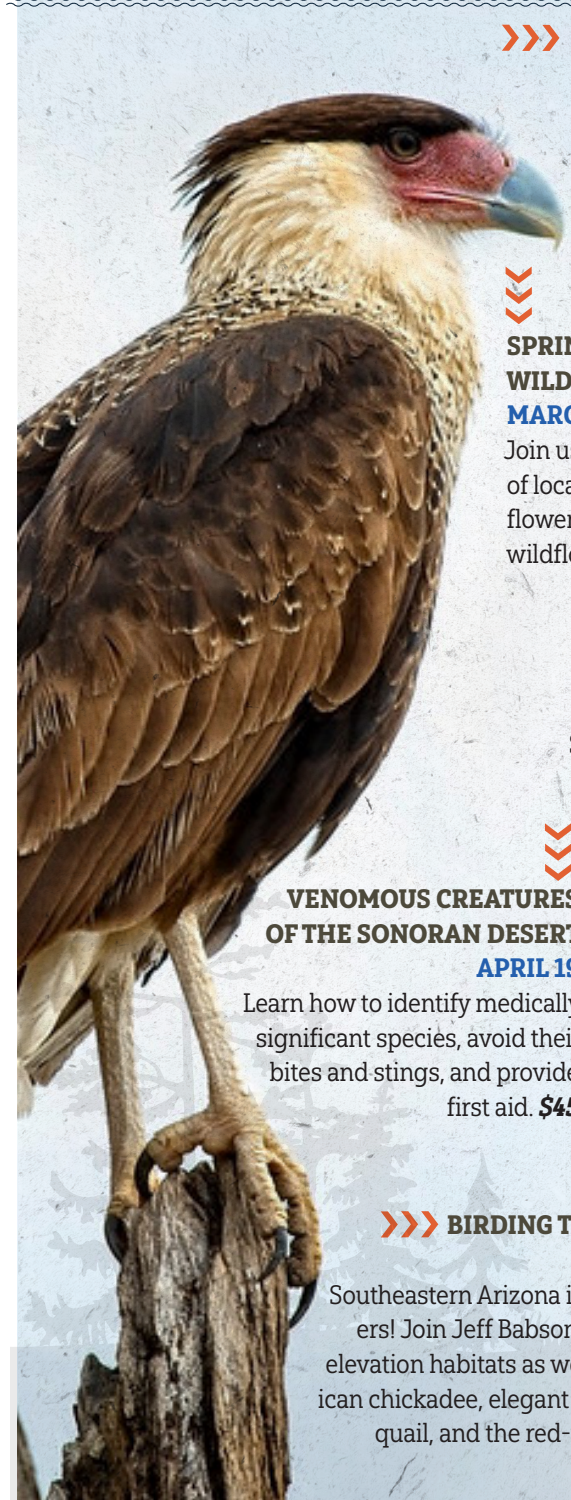
➤➤➤ **MAMMOTHS OF THE SAN PEDRO VALLEY**
FEBRUARY 27
Visit a mammoth kill site, learn about the Clovis Culture and the megafauna that roamed Arizona 12,000 years ago. **\$98**



Take a class! Take a trip!

Adult Classes & Trips with the Desert Museum!

For more details and to register for classes and trips: 520-883-3025 or desertmuseum.org/adultclasses.



➤➤➤ **BIRDS OF PREY**
MARCH 12 & 15
With twenty-eight species of raptors in Arizona it can be helpful to learn which traits are most reliable in identification. **\$45**

➤➤ **SPRING PLANTS & WILDFLOWER WALK**
MARCH 19 OR 29
Join us for a walk identifying dozens of local canyon shrubs, grasses, flowering plants, and of course wildflowers! **\$45**

➤➤ **CHOLLA BUD HARVEST**
APRIL 13
Participate in the centuries-old Sonoran Desert springtime ritual of harvesting cholla buds. **\$65**

➤➤ **VENOMOUS CREATURES OF THE SONORAN DESERT**
APRIL 19
Learn how to identify medically significant species, avoid their bites and stings, and provide first aid. **\$45**

➤➤ **ARIZONA'S HUMMINGBIRDS - JEWELS OF THE SOUTHWEST**
APRIL 22
A miracle of evolution: Learn about the bird with the highest metabolic rate and the greatest range of any vertebrate. **\$45**

➤➤➤ **BOBCATS OF ARIZONA**
MARCH 12 & 20
Beautiful close-up photography followed by a fieldtrip teaches us about the elusive *Lynx rufus*. **\$45**

➤➤ **NEW!**
POLLY ANN & THE ROUND ROCKS
MINERAL COLLECTING AND CAMPING IN SOUTHEAST ARIZONA!
APRIL 8 - 10
Visit old mines and hard-to-reach sites in the New Mexico borderlands and Dragoon Mountains. The Polly Ann Mine, Round Mountain Rockhound Area, Cochise Stronghold and the Ligier Quarry will produce green fluorite, chalcedony eggs, marble, and blue lace agate. **\$558**

➤➤ **ALL ABOUT OWLS**
APRIL 22
Arizona is home to both the smallest, the elf owl and the largest, the great horned owl. **\$40**

➤➤ **NEW!**
BORDERLANDS CATS
APRIL 25
The Northern Jaguar Project teams up with La Tierra del Jaguar to give you the latest in big cat news! **\$40**

➤➤➤ **BIRDING THE CHIRICAHUAS**
MAY 20 - 22
Southeastern Arizona is a paradise for birders! Join Jeff Babson exploring different elevation habitats as we search for the Mexican chickadee, elegant trogon, Montezuma quail, and the red-faced warbler. **\$900**

➤➤➤ **THE DINOSAUR TOUR** **NEW!**
MAY 28 - JUNE 6
The Museum's inaugural Dinosaur Tour takes us to Utah and Colorado as we follow the Jurassic spoor left by these creatures. Explore trackways, quarries, museums, and learn about the paleo environments that these animals inhabited. **\$2600**



Wine Down
WITH WILDLIFE

WINE DOWN

Saturday, March 22, 2025

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm.

VIPs get early access at 5:00 pm.

Explore Arizona wines while discovering dinosaurs across our grounds! Live music, food trucks, fun entertainment, and a magical Arizona sunset, all with wine in hand?! Say less! *Tickets available at desertmuseum.org*



BIODIVERSITY PARTY

Saturday April 12, 2025

Gather your friends, family, and fellow nature nerds for a day of searching, scouting and documenting the Wild species at the Desert Museum! We will Party in a day — what surprise animals or plants can you find? *Included with Museum admission.*

- BioBlitz the Museum and add sightings to our iNaturalist Project
- Enjoy talks and walks highlighting the flora and fauna of the Museum
- Meet local organizations that celebrate diversity in all its forms

FIND YOUR ADVENTURE

WITH THE MUSEUM!

ARIZONA SONORA
DESERT MUSEUM



SUMMER CAMPS

To the desert and beyond!

Our engaging camps will explore the Sonoran Desert region's diverse land, sea, animals, and plants. Campers will explore every nook and cranny of the Museum as they use **science** to make their own desert discoveries, observe **live animals** up close, **create art**, and chill out in our Packrat Playhouse.



PLAY, CREATE, AND DISCOVER THE DESERT AS YOU MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND MEMORIES AT DESERT MUSEUM CAMPS!



NEW THEMES!

Packrat Explorers:
What are YOU made of?
(Grades 1-3)

Sonoran Scientists:
The Science of Senses (Grades 4-6)
Colors of the Desert (Grades 6-8)

DATES:

Elementary Grades:
June 2-6: Session 1
June 9-13: Session 2
July 7-11: Session 3

Middle School:
June 30th- July 3rd



DONOR RECOGNITION

October 1, 2024 – December 4, 2024

MAJOR DONORS +\$10,000

- Arizona Office of Tourism
Paul and Alice Baker
- Priscilla & Michael Baldwin Foundation
- Elisabeth Dudley Guilford Fund
- William E. Hall Foundation
- Estate of Janet Hollack
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services
- John Munier and Dorothy Fitch
Pima County
- John E Soule Funding Trust
- Kevin and Michelle Stoelson
- Jay and Martha Tejera
- Torrance-Potter Family Fund
- Woodrow Trust
- Vera E Milz Charitable Remainder Trust
- USDA, Forest Service Southwestern Region

IN HONOR OF

In honor of Sedona Wolf Sanctuary
Anonymous

In honor of Catherine Bartlett
Robert and Anna Heyer

In honor of Kathy Goepfert
Wanda and Ed Eichler

In honor of William Horne
Corinne Lightweaver

In honor of Adrienne and Peter Hurley
Amy Hurley

In honor of Reijo Kemppinen
Krista Kemppinen

In honor of Jo and Jim Martin
Mary Hayden

IN MEMORY OF
In memory of Huppy, Wind, Foster, Dude, and Meagan
Rebecca and George Rose

In memory of Kerry Baldwin
Will and Laurie Danforth
Project WILD-Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

In memory of Marcia Barclay
Dave Barclay

In memory of David Baumgartner
Lea Kennedy

In memory of Alexis Hope Becker
John Spano

In memory of Sally Burke
David Burke

In memory of Uta Campbell
Anonymous

In memory of Claudia Dalton
Debra and Bryan Dalton

In memory of Richard "Dusty" Evers
Joseph Kelso

In memory of Carlos Flores
Linda and Bruce Beeber

In memory of Vesper Hight
Kristie Hight

In memory of Autumn Joiner
Ruth Eilers

In memory of Dave Messing
Rhoda Messing

In memory of Janet and Lewis Miller
Noreen Geyer Kordosky

In memory of RJ & Kathryn O'Hair
Sheila O'Hair

In memory of Steve Posey
Denis Boon

In memory of Irma Sankman
George Lee

In memory of Jane Schurz
Wendy Cavanaugh

In memory of Kathleen Scott
Sarah Peel and Dean Ralston

In memory of Susan Small
Barbara Bickel
Jay and Sarah Allen

In memory of Donna Stewart
Donald Stewart

In memory of Peak Design Travel Tripod
Phil Travis

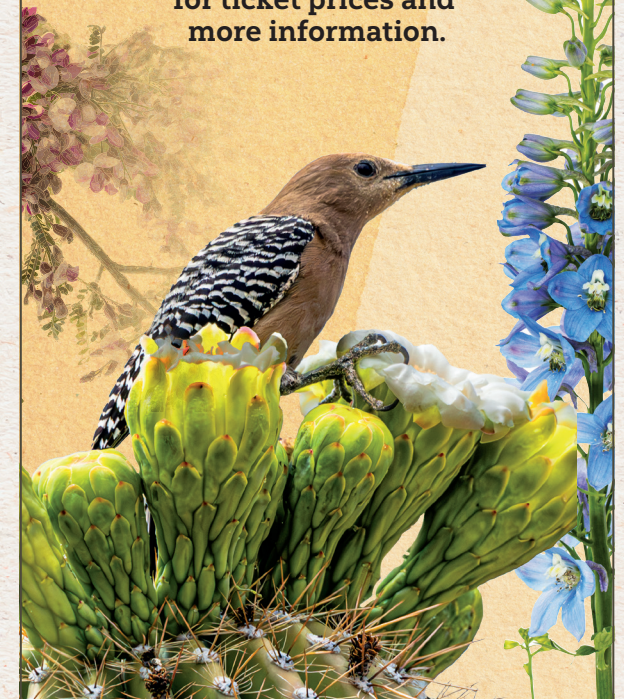
In memory of Patsy Wayne
Linda and Edgar Taylor

Please join us for the 32nd Annual Desert Museum Gala

THE 32nd ANNUAL **desertgala** 2025
New Beginnings!

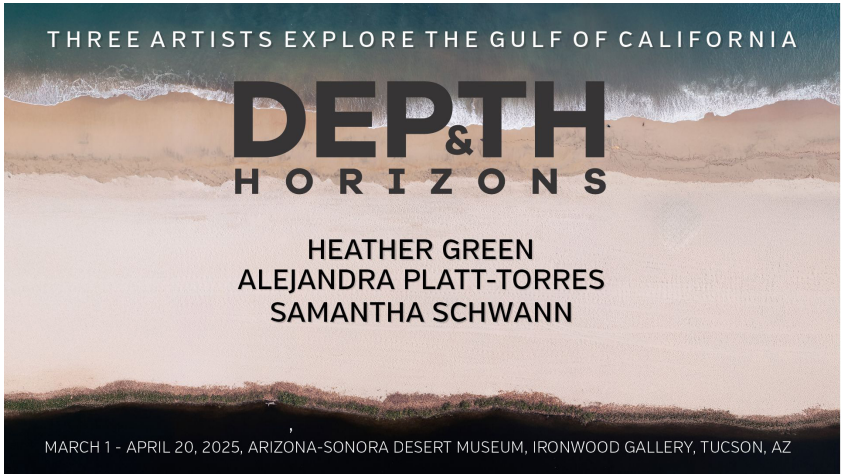
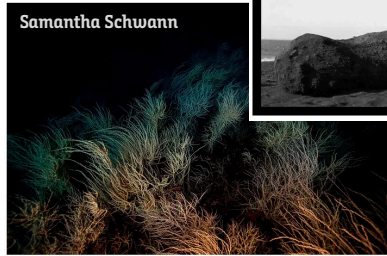
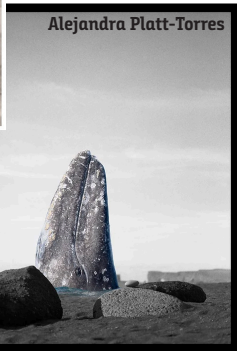
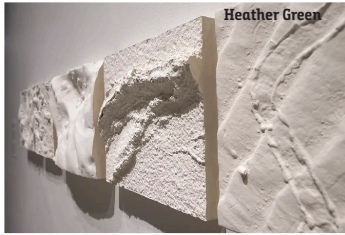
Sunday, April 27, 2025
5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
on the Desert Museum grounds

Visit: desertmuseum.org/gala for ticket prices and more information.



DESERT MUSEUM ARTS UPDATE

www.desertmuseumarts.com



DEPTH AND HORIZONS

Heather Green, Alejandra Platt-Torres, and Samantha Schwann

Ironwood Gallery

March 1 – April 20, 2025

Daily 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

This exhibition brings together three artists who uniquely explore the intricate connections between the natural world and human life in the Gulf of California, highlighting the delicate balance vital for our planet's future. Heather Green's immersive installations delve into the rich natural and cultural history of the Gulf's northern region. Alejandra Platt-Torres' The Five Elements project powerfully contrasts the four natural elements with the fifth—love—through striking black-and-white photography. Samantha Schwann's groundbreaking underwater multimedia project, Threshold, reveals the rarely seen depths of the Gulf. Together, these artists craft a compelling narrative that invites us to reflect on our impact on the environment.

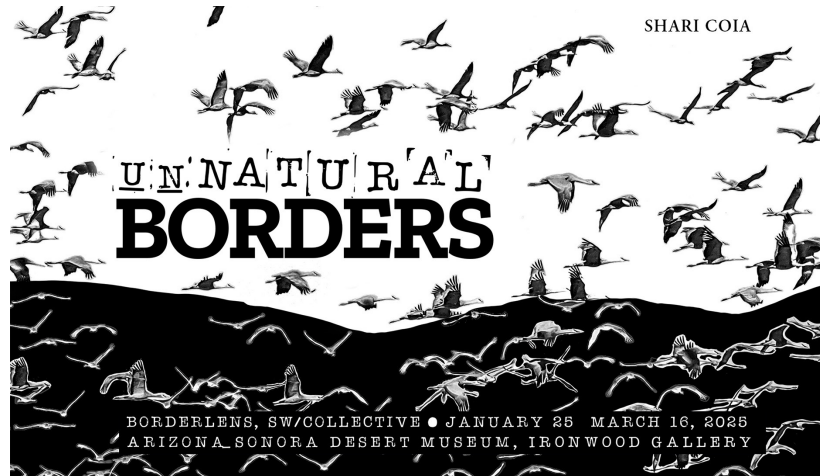
UNNATURAL BORDERS BORDERLENS/SW COLLECTIVE

Baldwin Gallery

January 25 - March 16, 2025

Daily 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

This exhibit explores the complex interplay between natural and human-imposed boundaries, offering a compelling visual narrative of how these borders shape and divide the world around us. Through diverse artistic interpretations, the works reveal how these boundaries impact ecosystems, species migration, and human movement, prompting questions about the balance between nature's organic borders and those created by human intervention. Founded in Tucson, Arizona, BorderLens/SW is a collective of women photographers and cinematographers, with work spanning from documentary to fine art, and from traditional to digital media. The collective also fosters connections with sister groups in Mexico, enriching cross-border dialogues.



WINTER CLASSES - JANUARY- MAY 2025

Immerse yourself in the beauty of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum while creating your own art! Whether you're interested in individual classes or pursuing a certificate in nature art, the Museum's stunning surroundings provide the perfect classroom. Choose from a variety of subjects, including drawing birds, mammals, insects, and desert botanicals. You can also explore a range of classes and workshops, such as oil painting, nature journaling, mixed media, and photography. Join us and let the desert inspire your creativity!



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www.desertmuseum.org

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Design & Layout: Nancy Serensky, Graphic Design Manager

The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum recognizes that it resides within the ancestral homelands of the Tohono O'odham and the multi-millennial presence of the Pascua Yaqui. We honor these tribal nations, and commit to equal-partner relationships as we unite to inspire all people to live in harmony with the Sonoran Desert region.