Along the banks of rivers and streams, such as the Santa Cruz, San Pedro, Salt, and Gila Rivers, a unique and vital habitat type supports these desert oases, known as desert riparian habitat.

Riparian areas are found within every biome on earth and share a few fundamental characteristics: they are dynamic, frequently disturbed and flooded sites that support communities distinct from the adjacent environments and serve as transitional zones between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

Here in the Sonoran Desert riparian areas stand out! Rivers, streams, floodplains, cienegas, and arroyos are essential to supporting the desert's incredible biodiversity. Yet they are also critically degraded, many lost entirely, due to a variety of environmental stressors and human factors. The cottonwood-willow forests and mesquite bosques of the U.S. southwest and northern Mexico are increasingly rare.

In the desert southwest, riparian areas support the majority of the region's wildlife but only cover 2% of the total area. Populated with ash, walnut, sycamore, and Russian olive trees, these critical zones provide nesting, forage, cover, and water for songbirds, hummingbirds, hawks and falcons, deer, beavers, javelina, and many more. They improve water quality, recharge aquifers, and reduce floodwater runoff. They build healthy soil, reduce erosion, and stabilize stream banks. Additionally, they provide economic and recreational value to human communities. Benefits abound!

Thank riparian areas for much of the wondrous wildlife that sing, soar, and swim throughout this region. Find herons, egrets, kingfishers, and ospreys hunting in local preserves like Sweetwater Wetlands and the El Rio Open Space Preserve, where more than 300 and 240 species of birds, respectively, have been identified. The springtime bird migration in March and April is an excellent time to visit riparian corridors to catch a glimpse of the common yellowthroat, summer tanager, and Bell's vireo. The Anza...
Trail along the Santa Cruz River and the San Pedro responsibly! To enjoy and observe nature, remember to recreate between your ambling. No matter where you go in the desert, look for the amazing desert broom, creosote, and desert willows in riparian areas. Dry washes, or arroyos, only flow after heavy rainfall. Locals might also be familiar with a unique habitat type termed “dry riparian” or xeroriparian areas. Dry washes, or arroyos, only flow after heavy rainfall for a few hours or days a year, yet they retain many characteristics of traditional riparian areas. Stroll along your local arroyos and seek shady respite among the desert vegetation. No matter where you go in the desert, look for the amazing desert broom, creosote, and desert willows in riparian areas. Dry washes, or arroyos, only flow after heavy rainfall.

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These beautiful birds are charismatic indeed, but how do we know these birds are such good flyers? Their almost mystic reputation, many myths surround owls, but are they accurate? Join us as we sort through the facts and fiction of these silent hunters. $40/$44

THE HUMMINGBIRD’S TUNNEL

By Lynnae Wenker, Director of Philanthropy

A new interactive exhibit is in the works at the Desert Museum, which will bring an experience like no other to southern Arizona. Riparian Adventure will provide a multifaceted educational experience that will allow guests to explore water and aquatic organisms of the Sonoran Desert region. The term “riparian” loosely translates to streambank, and the Desert Museum’s Riparian Adventure will include major upgrades to the current riparian habitat including renovation of the otter exhibit and conversion of the Cottonwood Café into a herpetological conservation and education center as well as creation of a fun new streamside learning-through-play experience!

Similar to the concept of a “splash pad” play area in other organizations, but aligned with the Museum’s water conservation ethos, this interactive exhibit will feature a motion-activated simulated stream, surrounded by a nature riparian environment in which visitors can play. It will provide a cool natural oasis for kids and families to enjoy, especially in Tucson’s hotter summer months.

Beyond entertainment, Riparian Adventure will provide deep, interactive learning experiences about water in the desert. It will highlight the imperiled status of water, and the importance of conservation of streams, rivers, and other desert water sources for protecting all desert life. It will also educate visitors about the plants and animals whose existence relies on freestanding water in the desert. Simultaneously, the exhibit will showcase the incredible work the Desert Museum has done to save many reptiles, fish, and amphibians that depend on rivers and streams during all or part of their life cycles.

Riparian Adventure will increase visitor engagement while being directly in line with the Desert Museum’s mission. Once the Desert Museum has secured the funds to create this exciting new exhibit, it should take approximately 18 months to complete. It’s thrilling to anticipate a new addition to the on-grounds experience for guests! We hope that visitors will jump into the fun and make a splash at Riparian Adventure!
WE LOVE SEEING THE MUSEUM THROUGH YOUR EYES! Tag @desertmuseum and use #desertmuseum for a chance to be featured!

I think I Pan, I think I Pan, I think I Pan, I think I Pan.

WHAT YOU NEED:
• A baking pan
• Water
• A timer
• A ruler

INSTRUCTIONS:
• Fill the baking pan with an inch of water.
• Place baking pan in a sunny location and time how long it takes for the water to evaporate. Make sure there is not a drop left.
• Write down the amount of time it took for the water to evaporate entirely in the sunny location. Repeat in a shady location.

DESERTS ARE SUPER DRY—BUT HOW DRY?
Scientists can measure dryness with pan evaporation and you can do it, too!

SHADY LOCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LENGTH OF TIME TO EVAPORATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunny Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shady Location</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did it take longer for the water to evaporate in the sunny or shady location? Why?

CHALLENGE: Try the pan evaporation experiment on a windy day. What changes do you predict?

The amount of water the air is able to suck up can tell scientists how long water will stay in an area. This is very important in riparian areas where plants and animals depend on the water to survive!
NEW SUMMER HOURS: JUNE 1ST - SEPT. 30TH, 7:30 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.

COOL SUMMER NIGHTS ARE BACK! Experience the desert at night with themed events every Saturday from June 4th to Sept. 3rd, 2022. Open until 9:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M. JOIN US AND SPONSOR TODAY! DON’T FORGET TO REGISTER FOR THE ONLINE AUCTION! ALL EVENT DETAILS FOUND AT WWW.DESERTMUSEUM.ORG/GALA

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COLORS OF THE DESERT: GRADES 1-6
MOUNTAIN EXPLORERS: GRADES 1-6

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The mission of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum is to inspire people to live in harmony with the natural world by fostering love, appreciation, and understanding of the Sonoran Desert.

Artists for Conservation (AFC) is the world’s leading artist group supporting the environment and represents 500 of the world’s leading nature and wildlife artists from over 30 countries. AFC’s mission is to support wildlife and habitat conservation and environmental education through art that celebrates nature. Unique to this exhibit, each artwork is dedicated to a conservation organization of the artists’ choice, with at least 40% of the proceeds from the sale of each painting supporting conservation initiatives around the world.

IRONWOOD GALLERY HOURS
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Daily

SPRING STUDENT ART
through May 15th, 2022

Enjoy this exhibition of original works by the students of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Art Institute. These unique pieces interpret the magic of the desert through a variety of mediums including mosaic, oil, scratchboard, photography, with many available for purchase.

BALDWIN GALLERY HOURS
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Daily

SPRING ART CLASSES
This spring discover your talent as an artist while you enjoy the Desert Museum. The Art Institute offers individual classes as well as a certificate of completion program in nature art. The unique backdrop of the Museum becomes your classroom, while you draw, paint, or photograph an array of animals and desert botanicals.

For more information about exhibits or classes at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum’s Art Institute, visit www.desertmuseumarts.com, call (520) 883-3024, or email arts@desertmuseum.org.