

McDowell Sonoran Conservancy

Activity Guide



FREE
FAMILY
FUN!

The New Tom's Thumb Trailhead!

Bring a Friend to the Preserve
Family Friendly Events



McDowell Sonoran
CONSERVANCY™

People Preserving Nature

September-December, 2012

More to Explore!

The hot summer is coming to an end so it's time to start hiking again. With new trails opening, there is more to explore in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Get your friends and family off the couch and check out all that is new in the Preserve at events hosted by the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy.

Bring a Friend to the Preserve

Bring a friend (or two!) to the Gateway Trailhead on Saturday, November 3 and Saturday, November 17 anytime from 8 a.m. to noon and get a free photo taken! A Conservancy photographer will be there to help you remember a great day outdoors. We'll send you a copy and post the photo on our Facebook page so you can inspire more of your friends to experience the Preserve. More information on our website www.mcdowellsonoran.org

If you enjoy hiking Pinnacle Peak, you'll love the new trails at Tom's Thumb Trailhead!

Tom's Thumb Trailhead and Marcus Landslide Trail Grand Opening

Tom's Thumb Trailhead, 128th Street, south of Ranch Gate Road

Thursday, October 18th through Sunday, October 22nd

Join us! Tom's Thumb Trailhead provides access to the northernmost tip of the McDowell Mountains and to the Marcus Landslide Trail, a 4-mile hike around the second-largest landslide in Arizona.

Interpretive signage is posted along the trail.



Opening Activities include a breakfast with the Mayor, volunteer-led hikes around the area, rockclimbing demonstrations and a scavenger hunt with prizes. For a full description of opening events, visit www.mcdowellsonoran.org



There's More to Explore!

Wings Over the Preserve

Scottsdale Center for the Arts - 7380 East Second Street, Scottsdale
Thursday, September 27 - 5:00 p.m. reception, 6:00 p.m. video



You're invited to a free video premiere featuring extraordinary aerial footage of Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve. "Wings over the Preserve" takes place on Thursday, Sept. 27, at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts. The event not only features a unique "bird's eye" view of the preserve's scenic landmarks and trails, it also brings together experts to discuss the hiking, biking and other adventures available in the area. A reception and informational open house begins at 5 p.m. The video and discussion

program begins at 6. Video highlights include the preserve's southern mountains and the new trails and trailheads opening this fall. The event is presented by the Conservancy and the City of Scottsdale and serves as a prelude to October's McDowell Sonoran Preserve Month. For more information on the event, contact Linda at linda@mcdowellsonoran.org.



WALK, RUN & ROLL

OCTOBER 14, 2012
MARKET STREET - DC RANCH
6:30 a.m. start



Happening in conjunction with the 9th annual Tour de Scottsdale, the Walk, Run & Roll features a 5K course along trails at DC Ranch for walkers, runners and bike riders to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Sonoran Desert. Kids get an activity sheet to use on the course and win a prize when they finish, and an educational expo with activities all about the desert is offered for children between ages 4 and 12. Registration fee is \$20 per family. For more information and to register, visit www.mcdowellsonoran.org

Free Family Fun!

Get your family outdoors to get some fresh air with the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. Round up your kids for guided hikes, interactive learning and holiday season fun! We have a variety of programs for everyone in your home!



Tour de Scottsdale

Market Street at DC Ranch - 20645 North Pima Road
(at Thompson Peak Parkway)
Sunday, October 14 - 6:30 a.m. start

The 9th annual Tour de Scottsdale returns with the traditional 70-mile citizens' ride and popular 30-mile ride. Both courses wind through Scottsdale, Cave Creek, Carefree, and Fountain Hills. Spectacular views of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve underscore to riders that they are contributing to a great cause. Register at www.active.com

Family Friday Sunset Series - First Friday of Every Month

Gateway Access Area Amphitheater - 18333 N. Thompson Peak Parkway
Programs start at 4:30 p.m. and last 45 minutes to one hour

November 2 Owls Are a Hoot!

 Liberty Wildlife's education ambassadors reveal the beauty and the secrets of owls in the Sonoran Desert. Learn how to protect these magnificent birds and other wildlife for future generations.

December 7 Wile E Coyote

The coyote, a "Super Dog of the Desert" and "Trickster," is one of the most fascinating mammals in the desert. Want to know more about this clever desert creature? Join Ranger Brennan Bassler from Usery Mountain Regional Park for a fun and interactive presentation.



January 4 Superheroes of the Desert

 Southwest Wildlife returns to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve with new animal friends to meet.

For more information or to reserve a space for your youth group, contact Judi Irons, Conservancy Naturalist, at 480-947-8814.

Free Family Fun!

October is a great time to get your family hiking — even your four-legged family members!

Family Passport to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve:

Friday through Monday mornings, you can pick up a free Family Passport at any Preserve trailhead. Get your passport stamped by a volunteer steward at each trailhead you visit. Visit four different trailheads — **Gateway, Lost Dog, Sunrise and Tom's Thumb** — and your four stamps earn you a free Preserve bandana.



Dog-Gone Appreciation Day

Gateway Trailhead, 18333 North Thompson Peak Parkway
November 10, 2012 – 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Sponsored by: MilkBone Trail Mix for Dogs



In appreciation of our four-legged visitors to the Preserve, we'll have a special treat for your hiking buddy. Come out with your dog and receive a doggy bag of goodies that you're both certain to love. We'll also be taking photos of you and your dog for a display featuring our canine visitors to the Preserve.

Free Family Fun!

Discovery Hikes

Discovery hikes are an ideal blend of fun, exercise and learning and are perfect for all ages and abilities. Bring your whole family and enjoy stories from McDowell Sonoran Conservancy volunteer hike leaders who bring to light what makes the Preserve so unique. All hikes are free, so get your family and friends together and join us for a fun and educational outing.

See Page 6 for trail map and trailhead locations.



Sunday, October 7 – Bird Walk Join us on this monthly walk that follows the Quartz trail up Ironwood Wash and allows for seeing and hearing a variety of desert birds. A bird check-list will be provided. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the parking lot on the west side of 104th Street, just south of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road, by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Sunday, October 21 – Medicinal Plants

Discover how Native Peoples used the healing and restorative properties of desert plants. New to our Ethnobotany Series, this hike takes a moderate 3-mile loop on Ringtail Trail. Allow 2.5 hours. Please arrive at Lost Dog Wash Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Saturday, November 3 – Geology This 4-mile hike to and around the Marcus Landslide, the second largest landslide in Arizona, includes an elevation gain of about 400 feet with moderate inclines. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at Tom's Thumb Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Sunday, November 4 – Desert Ecology

Discover the ecology of our desert on this 4½-mile roundtrip hike through a tree-lined wash to a mountainside quartz outcropping. This hike includes an elevation gain of about 500 feet with moderate inclines. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the parking lot on the west side of 104th Street, just south of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road, by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Dogs are welcome in the Preserve but only service dogs are permitted on guided hikes. Please wear appropriate shoes and bring plenty of water! **For up-to-date information about times and meeting places, please visit our website, www.mcdowellsonoran.org.**

Saturday, November 10 – Bird Walk Join us on this monthly walk that follows the Quartz Trail up Ironwood Wash and allows for seeing and hearing a variety of desert birds. A bird checklist will be provided. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the parking lot on the west side of 104th Street, just south of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road, by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Saturday, November 17 – Desert Treasure Hunt

Join us for a treasure hunt along a 2-mile hike of the Horseshoe and Saguaro Loops to see who can find the most desert plants, mammals, reptiles and birds. Allow 2 hours. Please arrive at Gateway Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 8 and older.

Saturday, November 24 – Ironwood Wash

This is a 7-mile hike through a deep wash lined with ironwood trees, with an elevation gain of about 650 feet, and continuing into a beautiful canyon deep in the McDowells. Allow 4 hours. Please arrive at the parking lot on the west side of 104th Street, just south of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road, by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Saturday, December 1 – Bird Walk Join us on this monthly walk that follows the Quartz Trail up Ironwood Wash and allows for seeing and hearing a variety of desert birds. A bird check list will be provided. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the parking lot on the west side of 104th Street, just south of McDowell Mountain Ranch Roads by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Saturday, December 08 – Architecture in the Desert

This 3-mile hike will show how certain animals create homes for themselves in the desert and how we could learn from them in designing our houses. This hike has one sustained incline, but gentle grades otherwise with a total elevation gain of 300 feet. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the Lost Dog Wash Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Explore

Dust off your boots or bike and hit the trails!

1. Tom's Thumb Trailhead

128th St., South of Rio Verde Dr.



2. Gateway Trailhead

18333 N. Thompson Peak Pkwy.



3. 104th St. and Bell Road Trailhead

North Side of Bell Rd. at 104th St.



4. Quartz Trailhead

104th St. and McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd.
South of McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd. on 104th St.



5. Lost Dog Wash Trailhead

12601 N. 124th St.



6. Ringtail Trailhead

12300 block of N. 128th St.



7. Sunrise Trailhead

12101 N. 145th Way

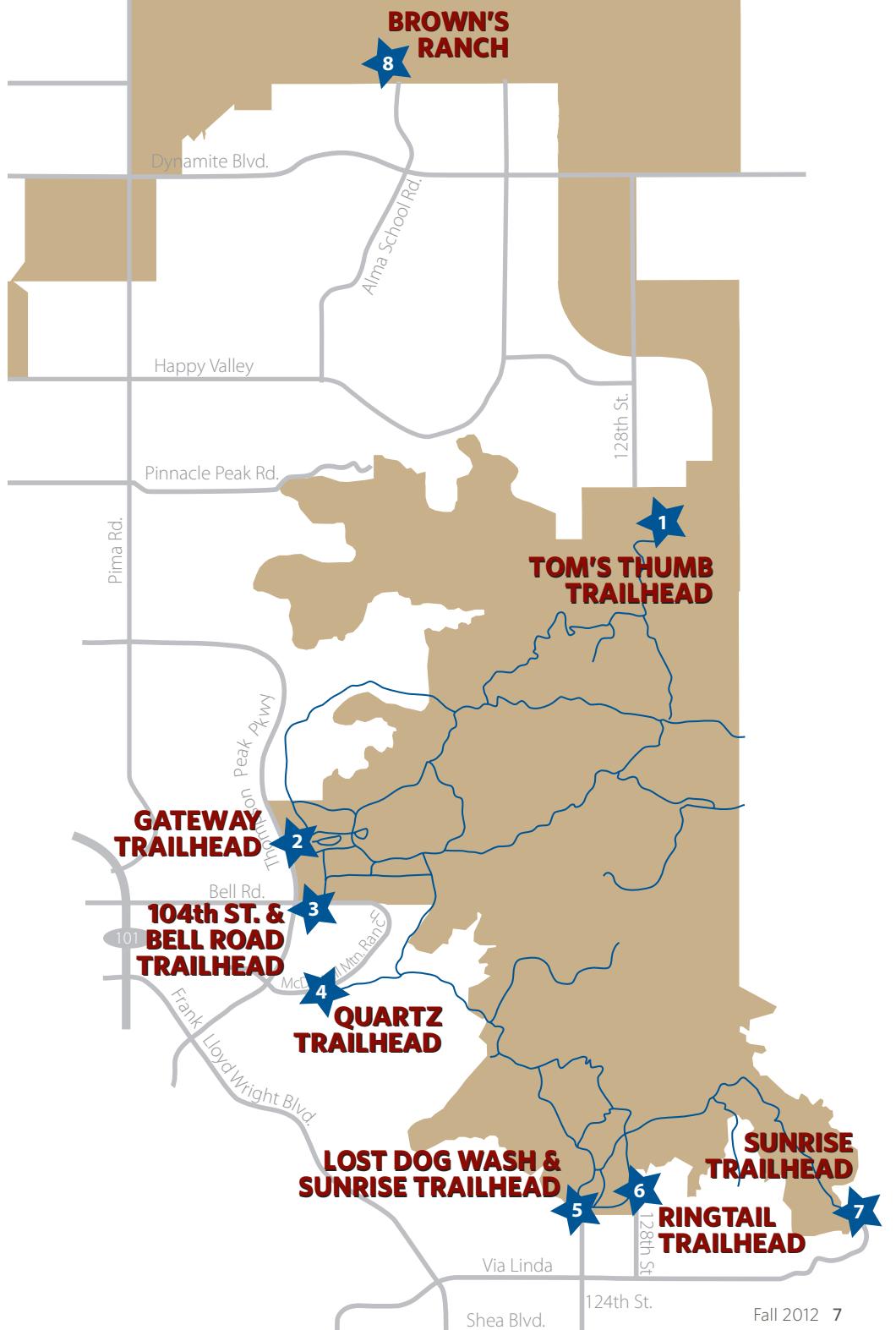


8. Brown's Ranch Trailhead

Alma School Rd., North of Dynamite Rd



Amenities: None



For detailed information about each trail and trailhead, recreation tips, maps and more, please visit www.mcdowellsonoran.org or <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/preserve>.

Tuesday, December 18 - Medicinal Plants

Discover how Native Peoples used the healing and restorative properties of desert plants on this moderate, 3-mile loop around Ringtail Trail. This hike is new to our Ethnobotany Series. Allow 2.5 hours. Please arrive at Lost Dog Wash Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Saturday, December 22 - Fire in the Desert

Learn about the impact of fire in the desert on this 5-mile hike with moderate inclines. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at McDowell Mountain Regional Park Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. (Go north on Shea Boulevard and turn left on Fountain Hill Boulevard; then follow the sign to the Park. Admission fee is \$6 per vehicle.) Appropriate for ages 8 and up.

Free Family Holiday Fun!

Holiday Hikes

The fall season brings many holidays and lots of delicious food. Join us in the Preserve for a little holiday-oriented fun and work off that Halloween candy or extra piece of pumpkin pie, too! Holiday hikes are perfect for the whole family, so bring your kids or out-of-town relatives on these fun-filled desert walks.

See Page 6 for trail map and trailhead locations.

Sunday, October 28 - Boo-Jada Trail

Adventure Learn about your favorite desert creepy crawlies and other ghoulish Sonoran characters on a spook-tacular guided hike on the Boo-Jada Nature Trail. Allow 2 hours. Please arrive at the Gateway Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. This is an easy half-mile paved, barrier-free trail and perfect for all ages!

Sunday, November 11 - Honor Our Veterans

An easy 3-mile loop on gently rolling terrain with an elevation gain of 300 feet, this hike is the perfect opportunity to honor a veteran in your life. We will hold a special ceremony at the trailhead at the end of the hike. Allow 3.5 hours. Please arrive at Lost Dog Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 5 and older.

Thursday, November 22 - More Pie Please

Bring family and friends for some morning exercise on this 3-mile loop around the Ringtail Trail. You won't feel a bit guilty about having that extra piece of pie after Thanksgiving dinner. Mild inclines only. Allow 1 hour. Please arrive at Lost Dog Wash Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 5 and older.

Tuesday, December 11 - Mistletoe and Holly

Hike Enjoy flora and fauna facts with a fanciful connection to holiday festivities on this 4-mile hike on the Marcus Landslide Trail. Allow 2.5 hours. Please arrive at the Tom's Thumb Trailhead by 7:45 a.m. Appropriate for ages 10 and older.

Dogs are welcome in the Preserve but only service dogs are permitted on guided hikes. Please wear appropriate shoes and bring plenty of water! **For up-to-date information about times and meeting places, please visit our website, www.mcadowellsororan.org.**

More to Explore!

Wellness Hikes

These days, we all spend too much time behind a desk, watching TV, playing video games or staring at computer screens. Wellness hikes help you and your family to get outside and get moving! Join McDowell Sonoran Conservancy volunteer stewards as they lead these guided hikes throughout the Preserve, an ecological treasure so close to home.

See Page 6 for trail map and trailhead locations.

Wednesday, October 3 - Gateway Loop

This scenic 4½-mile hike with an elevation gain of 600 feet wanders up to a low saddle before winding back to the trailhead, and is geared toward new hikers to the area. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the Gateway Trailhead by 7:45a.m.

Saturday, October 6 - Inspiration Viewpoint

A generally moderate 6-mile out-and-back hike on a wide trail with a few steep sections and an elevation gain of 900 feet, this hike leads you to a point off the main trail with expansive views. Allow 4 hours. Please arrive at Gateway Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Tuesday, October 9 - Marcus Landslide Trail

A 4-mile hike to and around the second largest landslide in Arizona, this hike includes an elevation gain of about 400 feet with moderate inclines. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at Tom's Thumb Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Tuesday, October 16 - Hiking for Your Health

This is a 3-mile loop hike on which fitness experts discuss the healthy effects of hiking. It includes mild inclines only. Allow 2 hours. Please arrive at Lost Dog Wash Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Wednesday, October 24 - Quartz Trail

A 5½-mile hike through a tree-lined wash to a mountainside quartz outcropping, this hike includes an elevation gain of about 500 feet with moderate inclines. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the parking lot on the west side of 104th St. just south of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road by 7:45 a.m.

Wednesday, November 7 - Sunrise Peak

This 4-mile hike climbs about 1,150 feet along steep inclines to Sunrise Peak and features long-range, 360° views of the Valley. This 3-hour hike is for hardy hikers. Please arrive at 135th Street and Via Linda by 7:45 a.m.

Tuesday, November 13 - Desert Park Trail

A scenic 6-mile hike around Horseshoe Mountain, this hike includes an elevation gain of about 600 feet over gradual inclines. Allow 3 ½ hours. Please arrive at the Gateway Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Tuesday, November 20 - Dixie Mine

A 7-mile hike to a former mining site on the east edge of the McDowell Mountains, this hike has little net elevation change, but lots of ups and downs. There will be a brief discussion of the mine's history when we arrive at the site. Allow 3 hours. Meeting place TBD, please check the website for updated information.

Wednesday, November 28 - Windgate Pass to Desert Park Trail

This 5 ½-mile hike on Windgate Pass Trail returns through the beautiful Silverleaf community and includes an elevation gain of about 600 feet. Allow 2 ½ hours. Please arrive at the Gateway Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Sunday, December 2 - Lookout Trail

This 5 ½-mile hike features steep and sustained climbs and an elevation gain of 1,150 feet through interesting rock formations to a spectacular point with sweeping views of the north and central valley, Fountain Hills and the Superstition Mountains. This 3 to 4 hour hike is for hardy hikers. Please arrive at the new Tom Thumb's Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Wednesday, December 12 - Sunrise Peak

A 6-mile hike with some steep sections and an elevation gain of about 900 feet, this hike features long-range, 360-degree views of the Valley from the peak. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at Lost Dog Wash Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Wednesday, December 26 - Taliesin Overlook

This is a 5-mile hike that climbs to a scenic saddle overlooking Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural complex. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at the Lost Dog Wash Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

Saturday, December 29 - Marcus Landslide Trail

A 4-mile hike to and around the second largest landslide in Arizona, this hike includes an elevation gain of about 400 feet with moderate inclines. Allow 3 hours. Please arrive at Tom's Thumb Trailhead by 7:45 a.m.

More From the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy!

Pathfinders

Are you planning to hike in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve? Find McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Pathfinders most mornings at the Gateway Trailhead, Lost Dog Wash Trailhead, Sunrise Trailhead and Tom's Thumb Trailhead. Pathfinders share information about the best hiking trail for your experience and how to have a safe, enjoyable visit in the Preserve.



Trailside Naturalists

Volunteer experts answer questions and share items that allow McDowell Sonoran Preserve visitors to touch, hear and even taste things that will enhance their Preserve experience. Find them at the Gateway Trailhead and Amphitheater every Saturday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., beginning in October.

Got a Group?

Get together and discover the desert.

Treasure Tours

Help encourage the next generation to explore the wonders of nature and learn about our community's heritage while you help pass along the importance for caring for the environment. Enhance your desert experience and learn about the wonders and hidden treasures of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve on private tours for families, school groups, scout groups, and more. Suggested donation: \$5 per person.

Traveling Talks

Need a speaker for your next group meeting? McDowell Sonoran Conservancy volunteers can share their expertise on the following topics: Plants and People, Hiking 101, History of the McDowell Mountains, and many more. Suggested donation: \$75 per group.

Eco-projects

Team-building projects in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve are good for the environment! Bring your small or large group to work with experts, from scientists to city planners, and enjoy the camaraderie of like-minded people while you contribute to the preservation of one of Arizona's precious natural resources. Suggested donation: \$10 per person.

To schedule these group visits, please call us at (480) 998-7971 or visit www.mcdowellsonoran.org.



Focus on Conservation Photography Contest 2012

Participate in the 2012 – 2013 Online Photography Contest!
Submit your favorite photographs taken in or of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve to the Online Photography Contest. The online contest will be judged twice per year to allow for a variety of photos and more chances to win. A Best of Show and a Youth Best of Show will be determined during judging, and the photographers will receive a prize.

For more information and for contest entry rules, please go to www.mcdowellsonoran.org.

Photography Workshop: November

Richard Buchbinder, professional outdoor photographer and expert instructor, will present his second photography workshop of the season. A comprehensive workshop complete with an informational classroom session on Thursday and a hands-on experience in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve on Saturday. Richard will provide individual attention and critiques on all participants' work. Registration fee is \$150 for both days.



For more information, please go to www.mcdowellsonoran.org.



Volunteer for the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy

Meet people, have fun, and make an impact on your community — volunteer for the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy! Go through orientation to become a Conservancy steward and help us steward the McDowell Sonoran Preserve while working with others who share your passion for nature and a desire to make our community a better place. We are looking for hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians.

Become a McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Steward

**Become a
McDowell Sonoran
Conservancy
Steward!**

STEWARD

Mention this ad
and take \$10
off the
registration fee!

Expires December 31, 2012

Combine your love of natural open space with volunteering, and make new friends while you work! We provide outstanding education that prepares you for steward service and offer you ongoing education opportunities throughout the year.

Orientations for adults and older teens are three sessions or two sessions each, depending on the class you choose. Upcoming dates are:

September 18, September 20 and September 22, 2012
October 27 and November 3, 2012
January 12 and January 19, 2013

For more information and to register, please call Jill Feinstein at (480) 998-7971, ext. 104, or register online at www.mcdowellsonoran.org.



Will you help? We rely on your support.

We are a non-profit organization that relies on our more than 400 volunteers to help protect and promote the Preserve. We do this in so many ways- from trail building and patrolling the trails to guiding hikes, sponsoring education programs, and conducting scientific research. Our goal is that future generations will enjoy this ecological treasure the same way we do today.

The current cost of recruiting, training, recognizing and retaining our more than 400 stewards, whose work protects the Preserve, is about \$500 per steward each year. Please help to sponsor a steward and make sure the Preserve is protected! Find out more on our website: www.mcdowellsonoran.org



Join Our **Circle of Friends**

As a community member who values the outdoors, and specifically the Sonoran Desert, you understand the importance of preserving and maintaining open space now to ensure its availability in the future. This shared appreciation of the desert is why we are inviting you to join us today by returning the membership form below.

McDowell Sonoran Society (\$1,500+)

- Steward Circle (\$1,000) Trailbuilder Circle (\$500)
 Pathfinder Circle (\$100) Hiker Circle (\$50)
 Please charge my credit card A check is enclosed

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date: _____

Name as it appears on the card _____

Name(s) by which you would like to be acknowledged _____

Address _____ Email _____

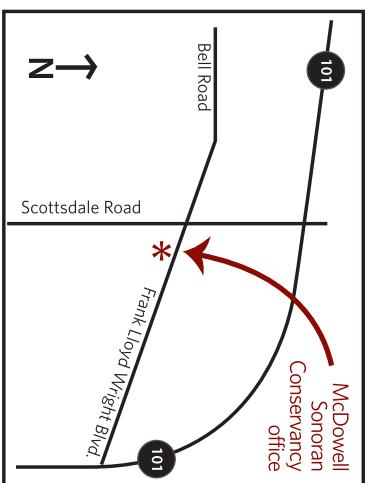
Phone _____



McDowell Sonoran C O N S E R V A N C Y_®

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