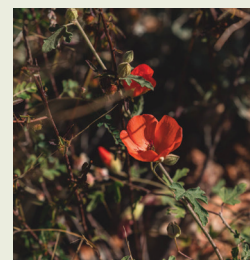


From Paul Marques, President of Friends of Sabino Canyon

Dear Donors & Friends

The plant and animal life of Sabino Canyon has awakened following record-breaking rain in the valley and snowfall in the high country. Now, to the soundtrack of surging water in 2019, abundant expressions of life have returned to Sabino and Bear Canyons.

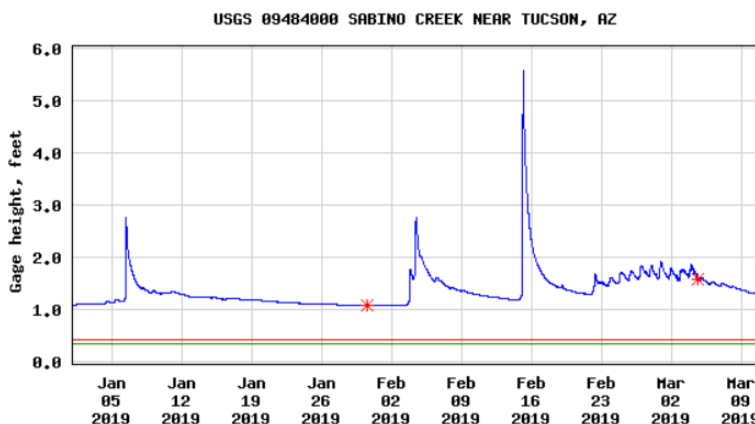


During the high-water periods of February and March, hikers could not cross either Bear or Sabino Creeks without risk. The intersection of these water barriers, combined with the absence of a Shuttle service, led recently to more people hiking up Esperero Trail to Cardiac Gap than I have ever seen. Esperero is the only major trail that does not require crossing a significant waterway.

In the fall 2018 FOSC Newsletter, we included a chart that showed that the Flood Stage for Sabino Creek is 3 feet. The chart below depicts the gauge height of Sabino Creek from January 1 to March 10, 2019. The biggest surge in water to 5.5 feet occurred in mid-February. Snow melting and then refreezing account for jagged pulses from late February to early March.

In the context of all of the wet excitement in 2019, Sabino regulars are aware that the new Shuttle operation by the Regional Partnering Center (RPC) has begun its temporary Shuttles. By mid-March, drivers were hired and they began conducting training runs on the Sabino and Bear asphalt roads while testing the new onboard audio narration.

Installation of ticketing kiosks, both in the Visitor Center and in a renovated booth outside, is progressing daily. The five fully electric Shuttles will begin arriving this spring, and these flagships of the new Shuttle service will be available for public rides in late summer or early fall. The warehouse area is working to get ready for them. The power to recharge them requires an upgraded electrical supply line. Progress on these and other enhancements is underway.



SHUTTLE STOP 9 RAMADA IS COMPLETE

Very significantly from the perspective of Friends of Sabino Canyon, our Shuttle Stop 9 Ramada is now complete. FOSC commissioned its design and construction beginning in 2017. Work was completed on March 9, 2019. Your donations over the years helped make this shade structure possible. The picture at right shows the arcing structure complete with a bicycle rack adjacent to it.

The Forest Service becomes the owner of the structure and it cannot commit to maintenance costs. So, we could not add protective paint coating to the steel frame. So, let there be rust! However, this is no different from our seven smaller ramadas in lower Sabino.

We are very pleased to have completed this our eighth and most significant shade ramada, and we hope to make progress on other projects this year.

IMPROVED SIGNAGE PROJECT

The improved signage project has been crawling forward for two years, and recent conversations suggest it might begin soon. Our motive for requesting better waypoint and orientation signage is to reduce the number of lost, thirsty people who failed to notice the small aluminum plate signs. Other new signs may help educate the public on preparation for wilderness hiking. This project has been a collaboration initiated by the Patrol (SCVP), Search and Rescue (SARA), and Friends (FOSC). Our direct liaison with the FS, Sarah Corning, just returned to Sabino on March 19 after a 4-month training stint in Oregon. We expect Sarah's return will help facilitate our progress.

HISTORIC REPAIRS AGREEMENT

Another area where we hope to make progress in 2019 is with the Historic Repairs agreement that we completed with the Forest Service in 2018. The FS asked FOSC to help with repairs to the stonework on the Shuttle Road. We agreed and have received funds from the Patagonia Environmental Grant program to support about half of our expected costs. Currently we cannot proceed with that effort until Sabino Creek dries out during late spring or summer.

Our plans to renovate the stonework on the historic Sabino Dam steps are under consideration by the Forest Service.



The new ramada at Shuttle Stop 9 is now complete.
(Photo by Caylor Design & Construction)



We hope you will help us to refill our coffers, now somewhat depleted by the cost of the Stop 9 Ramada. Thanks for thinking of FOSC! See you in the Canyon!

— PAUL MARQUES, President FOSC

Ready for a tour? Try a Sabino Canyon Shuttle!

By Jim DeGrood, Deputy Director, Regional Transportation Authority, Regional Partnering Center

If you need a ride to the top of Sabino Canyon, you can now hop on board the new Sabino Canyon Shuttle to view the spectacular landscape. The new service launched March 18 in the Sabino Canyon Recreation Area.

The transitional service is managed by the Regional Partnering Center, a Tucson-based non-profit. Shuttle operations are provided by Total Transit Enterprises (Total Ride).

Operating on the Sabino Canyon and Bear Canyon routes, the shuttles are gasoline-powered and carry up to 21 passengers and will remain in operation until the full fleet of zero-emission electric shuttles are manufactured and delivered for service at the Sabino Canyon Recreation Area.

Tucson Electric Power is helping the Regional Partnering Center to finance the electric shuttles, which are on order from Trams International and expected to be in service later this year. The 62-passenger electric shuttles will feature an audio narration and interpretive system available in English and Spanish.

- For the **Upper Sabino Canyon route**, shuttles will leave on the half hour every thirty minutes beginning at 9:00 a.m. The last shuttle will leave at 4:00 p.m. Ticket prices are \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for children aged 3 to 12, and free for children under 3
- For the **Bear Canyon route**, shuttles will leave on the quarter hour every 30 minutes beginning at 9:15 a.m., with the last shuttle leaving at 4:15 p.m. Ticket prices are \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children aged 3 to 12, and free for children under 3.

Shuttle tickets now may be purchased with credit cards or cash.



A Rare Sabino Canyon Visitor

By Mark Hengesbaugh, Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalist

On December 14, 2018, Marcia Tingley, a new trainee in the Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalist class spotted a female Elegant Trogon in the Sabino Canyon Recreation Area just above Sabino Dam. The Elegant Trogon is a rare bird that hadn't been seen here in 16 years. On December 15, I took this photo of it below Bear Bridge.

The Elegant Trogon is a species usually sighted in Mexico and Central America. They breed regularly in only four Arizona

borderland mountain ranges—the Atascosas, the Chiricahuas, the Huachucas, and the Santa Ritas. Sabino Canyon had not had a sighting since 2002.

Moving north may be a trend for the Elegant Trogon. “There is an abundance of evidence, both anecdotal and scientific, that the ecological influence of tropical Mexico has grown over the last century in Southeastern Arizona,” says Jennie MacFarland, the Arizona Important Bird Area Coordinating Biologist for Tucson Audubon. “Mammals such as Javelina and the White-nosed Coati have both extended their range out of the tropics into southern Arizona as part of this larger ecological system expansion. The expansion continues even today with the birding community, noting the recent increase in prevalence of Gray Hawks and rarities in general including the recent first-ever U.S. nesting record of the Tufted Flycatcher this past spring. Elegant Trogons are also part of this story with their United States range expanding over the last century and can be tracked with mainly anecdotal evidence and isolated incidents of collecting.”

Who knows? Maybe this pioneering female will nest in Sabino Canyon. Watch for a Robin-size bird with an extraordinarily long tail. Sightings have been sporadic, but the last was at Tram Stop 8 on March 6, 2019.



(Photo by Mark Hengesbaugh)

Another Beautiful Morning in the Canyon

By Josh Baylson, Member, SCVN Class of 2014 & Director, FOSC Board

One of our partner organizations, the Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalists (SCVN) hosts field trips for Kindergarten classes on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from October through April.



Upon the arrival of the children, SCVN volunteers conduct a puppet show to welcome the group to Sabino Canyon and provide an overview of the planned activities and safety guidelines. The group of up to 60 students plus teachers and parents, is then divided into smaller groups, each with five to ten students. Naturalists lead each smaller group for the rest of the day's activities including:

- **Mystery Box** – pelts and skulls from animals living in the canyon
- **Geology** – the most common minerals found in the canyon, including “magic” magnetite, and a demonstration of erosion
- **Predator/Prey** – using small models of local animals, the discussion focuses on the role of protective coloration for both predators and prey
- **Nature Walk** – hiking a short distance, the students try to find and identify ten animals (cardboard cutouts) that the Naturalists have placed in their natural habitats

Each field trip lasts about two hours and the classes can arrange to stay in the Cactus Picnic Area for lunch. The field trips are extremely popular and the slots fill up quickly.

In these days of tight state and local government budgets, many schools are unable to afford the extra costs associated with bussing students to field trips. Fortunately, SCVN has been able to obtain much needed contributions to fund the transportation costs for some Title I schools. A significant source of the funding has been Friends of Sabino Canyon (FOSC). Without FOSC's support, many of Tucson's “Kinders” would not have been exposed to the wonders of Sabino Canyon.

Caylor Completes the Shade Structure at Tram Stop 9

By Pedro Gastelum, Caylor Design & Construction

Fans of Sabino Canyon have two big things to celebrate in the coming weeks: the return of the Sabino Canyon Tram AND a beautiful new shade structure that will heighten enjoyment of Sabino's natural beauty during Tucson's endless sunny days.

And Caylor Design & Construction has had a great deal to do with the shade structure.

Working in VERY close partnership with Friends of Sabino Canyon, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Regional Partnering Center, Caylor Design

& Construction was chosen to construct the beautiful new shade structure, designed by Evan Eglin of Eglin+Bresler Architects, in anticipation of the Tram service starting back up.

And while construction of a shade structure could never be considered a "big" job, it certainly is a big deal to the almost one million visitors Sabino Canyon sees every year, and so it was a project we took on happily and poured our whole hearts into. Working on a project like this, in what we consider to be one of the most beautiful places on earth, was an assignment we relished. Without a doubt, our biggest challenge was Mother Nature and our deep commitment to having as little impact on the Canyon as possible. The meticulous planning we put into every aspect of construction — especially getting our completely necessary heavy equipment, including backhoes and concrete trucks, back into the site — was rewarded with minimal or no impact to the environment. There were days where the creek was roaring and our crews couldn't even get back to the site!

For some companies, this project would have been too small and too demanding to be worth the effort. At Caylor Design & Construction, we are proud that we were trusted to be up to the task. And we're VERY proud of the results!



Summer Hiking Tips

By Scott Clemans, Vice President, Southern Arizona Rescue Association (SARA)

Now that we are well into Spring, we know that the heat is not far away. Every year SARA has many heat related rescues. Too often these are medical emergencies not only for the hiking public but also for our own members as we respond to hikers in distress. Most heat emergencies can be prevented by understanding how our bodies adjust to the heat and what we can do to minimize problems.

As the air temperature rises, our bodies adjust by sweating sooner and sweating more to compensate. When we sweat, we lose electrolytes, specifically salt. This means we need to drink water and eat salty snacks when we're hiking to help maintain our electrolyte balance. Adjusting really well to the heat takes several weeks of working or exercising in the heat every day which isn't always easy to do.

To help avoid heat problems, SARA recommends that you plan your hike carefully. Carry one quart of water for each hour you plan to be on the trail. Start your hike early and be done by 10 or 11 AM. Don't wait until you become thirsty... drink regularly. Eat some salty snacks as you hike, and before your water is half gone, turn around.



Thank You to Our 2018 Member Donors

Your donation of \$25 or more registers you as a member of Friends of Sabino Canyon for one year. Without your contributions, there would be no FOSC and no coordinated effort to protect, preserve and enhance Sabino Canyon. Your donations in 2018 helped us build the new shade ramada at Shuttle Stop #9 and enhance the funding base for educational, ecological and enhancement activities in our Sabino Community.

Without our volunteers from SARA, SCVN, and SCVP, Sabino Canyon would not be such a vibrant and engaged community. We would also like to give a special nod to those of you who have supported our efforts through AmazonSmile and employer matched gifts. Accordingly, we very much appreciate your contributions that help make Sabino very special to all of us.

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(Photo by Marty Horowitz)

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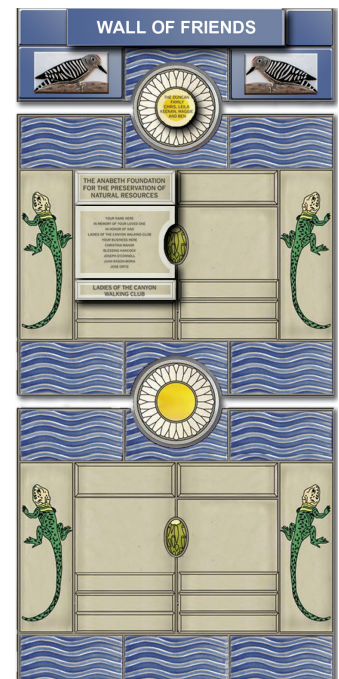
By Gretchen McFarren, Friends of Sabino Canyon

The Wall of Friends Tile Art Tributes and Memorials near the Visitor Center at Sabino Canyon provides a perfect opportunity to honor a loved one or to show respect for a friend, relative, business, or organization deserving special recognition.

A donation to Friends of Sabino Canyon of \$500 or more qualifies for the creation of an original ceramic tile to be installed at the entrance ramada of the Visitor Center Plaza. Your support of Sabino Canyon could be the beginning of the perfect gift from you, a personalized tile art memorial tribute.

For more information, go to our web site sabinocanyon.org and learn more about the Donor Recognition Program that includes the Wall of Friends Fresco and the Leave a Legacy Fresco.

Friends of Sabino Canyon is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.



If you'd like to update your contact information or advise us of your communication preferences, please email us at friends@sabinocanyon.org. Thanks!