



## Spring Newsletter, 2019

### **Hello to all our members, visitors and volunteers!**

Tra la, it's spring! 'Weather' or not it feels like it!! Lots of rain has kept the river running, the grass growing and the wildflowers blooming. Now the birds are starting to nest and some are appearing to summer here or on their way through to their northern homes. It's a great time to visit! Not only has FoH been keeping busy with the programs we've always supported, thanks to your help we're adding new projects and expanding our commitment to this wonderful place. Read below to see what's happening!

### **Lucy's Warbler Nestboxes**

Among the returning birds this month is the perky, rusty-rumped Lucy's Warbler, one of many bird species that have declining numbers across their range. The Lucy's Warbler is one of only two North American warbler species that is a cavity nester, typically using cavities in larger trees and shrubs for their cup-shaped fiber and cobweb nests. One of the main factors impacting Lucy's Warbler is loss of mesquite and cottonwood woodland habitat through land conversion and aridification of the Southwest. To help the birds, Tucson Audubon Society (TAS) conducted experiments to determine which nest box the species preferred. They have now made the chosen design available to the public. HRP and FoH ordered 25 Lucy's Warbler nest boxes, which were set out in mesquite woodland along the Preserve trails by Ranger Eric, Charlie Sizer, and two volunteers, Bruce Brown (FoH Board member) and Dan Kuhl.

Ranger Eric will be monitoring activity and usage of these nest boxes each nesting season and submitting the data to TAS and Cornell University's Project NestWatch. For more information about the TAS program, please see the following two links:

<http://tucsonaudubon.org/lucys-warblers-and-nestboxes/>

<http://tucsonaudubon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/LUWA-factsheet.pdf>

## ANNUAL MEETING

**When: Saturday, March 30, 2019, 12 noon**

**Where: The picnic area**

All FOH members are invited to attend and bring a dish to share at the potluck lunch. Eric Hough, Interpretive Ranger, will take us for a walk to learn more about the history and biology of the Preserve. Meet and elect officers, learn about upcoming plans and socialize with other members.

### **Current Board Members and Titles:**

**Debra Keiser, President**

**Bruce Brown, Vice President**

**Sandy Dolter, Secretary**

**Barbara Smith, Membership**

**Mary Raver, Treasurer**

**Bernadine McCollum**

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### **Candidates for the Board:**

**Glenda Simmons**

**Sue Dolpin**

**Suzi Minor**



All of the nest boxes have been numbered and a map will be created, so HRP visitors can help with our monitoring efforts by reporting bird activity they observe to staff or volunteers at the Visitor Center. We will also have information on the program and FoH's contribution posted in the Visitor Center.

We are excited to be contributing to this important conservation program and introducing another educational feature to the Preserve! Look for the boxes on your next visit!

### **Jody Anderson Memorial Project**

Shortly after Jody Anderson's passing on September 22, 2018, the Friends of Hassayampa board voted to allocate funds to establish a memorial at the Hassayampa River Preserve in Jody's name. Jody had been a founding member of the Friends of Hassayampa (FoH), a long-time board member and volunteer, and tireless supporter of The Nature Conservancy and the Hassayampa River Preserve. John Carr, another founding member of FoH is working along with the FoH board, Andy, Jody's husband, and Jessica Bland, Maricopa County Park Supervisor to create a fitting memorial for a special person in the preserve's history. We will keep you up to date with their progress here.

### **Hassayampa River Preserve Oral History Project**

Jessica Bland, Park Supervisor, knows that keeping track of our history is important. She should, she majored in archaeology! So, she is 'digging' into the history of the HRP, reviewing archives, and (with our financial help) building an Oral History. "I want to capture the fascinating stories of the Preserve and the area before they disappear with the passage of time. These personal recollections are what give a sense of place and bring history to life", she stated. Information collected through the project will help manage the Preserve and will be available to be used in interpretive exhibits. Jessica has recently completed training through Baylor University's Institute for Oral History and is purchasing the equipment needed to undertake this project. Already on her list of interviewees is Jean Arrowsmith, a longtime volunteer at the Preserve and at least 20 others. Jessica is seeking volunteers interested in assisting with collecting and transcribing oral history interviews as well as variety of tasks related to the project. If you would like to help Jessica or have a suggestion of someone who should be interviewed, please contact her at the Preserve.

## The Therapy of Nature

Many recent studies have shown how simply being out in nature can improve our overall well-being, whether it is meandering through a forest, or taking on a challenging mountain hike. When we are being mindful in nature, we create an opportunity to release stresses from our daily routine and reconnect to simplicity at a slower pace.



The next time you visit the Preserve, stop for a moment, feel your feet planted on the ground, close your eyes, listen to the sounds around you near and far, inhale the aroma, feel the texture of mesquite pods or the bark of a Palm tree, and begin to slow your pace. Soon you may notice things you hadn't noticed before. This simple practice is one way to experience nature's therapeutic benefits, quieting the mind, opening our senses, and fully experiencing being present in nature's presence.

Suzi Minor, who is accredited by The Association of Nature and Forest Therapy, is bringing the Japanese practice Shinrin-Yoku, to the Hassayampa River Preserve. It translates to "forest bathing" or immersing oneself into a deeper connection with nature by offering a series of invitations that encourage participants to slow down, open the senses, and allowing a quiet state of being to take root. Watch for programs coming up in the fall.

### How YOU can help carry on the work of Friends of Hassayampa

- Your donations are what keep FOH programs and outreach going! It's easy to donate at the FOH website (FOHarizona.org).

-Please bookmark the **AmazonSmile** URL and use it when shopping on Amazon this holiday season and beyond. Select Friends of Hassayampa as your charitable organization and Amazon donates .5 % of your purchases to our cause. <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-0940900>

-The best(!), become a member if you're not already. We'll keep you updated on activities at the Preserve and use your sponsorship fee for continued support of activities and projects. It is still \$35.00 to join. Membership forms are available at the Nature Center or at FOHarizona.org.

-Volunteer! We need your ideas and help! The company is good, and by volunteering we expand the ability of the staff to focus on their programs. We love getting new friends on the Board!

**Make the most of spring! Come join us at the Hassayampa River Preserve! See you there!**

**Friends of Hassayampa**

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