

Friends of PINNACLE PEAK PARK Newsletter

Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park • PMB 288, 8711 E. Pinnacle Peak Road • Scottsdale AZ 85255 • www.pinnaclepeakpark.com

Javelina

By Kelly Marcum

Just about all Arizona children are familiar with the book “Don’t Call Me a Pig,” but this is not necessarily the case with out-of-state visitors. Upon learning about our native animal the javelina, many assume it is a pig

Javelinas migrated to North America from South America and are a New World animal which means they originated in the Americas. They are believed to have moved into Arizona sometime in the 1700’s. Pigs, on the other hand, descended from Africa, Europe, and Asia, and were known to Europeans before contact with the Americas. Javelinas are not pigs!

Javelinas are also commonly thought to be rodents. Rodents have large incisors and need to gnaw to keep their teeth trimmed down. This is not a characteristic that javelina share. Javelinas are not rodents! So if they are not pigs and not rodents, then what are they? Javelinas are in the Cetartiodactyla animal order. This classification also includes camels, hippopotamus, ruminants, dolphins and whales. Specifically, the javelina is a peccary! The javelinas in Arizona are collared peccaries distinguished by a cream-colored “collar” or band behind their neck and shoulder area.



By Randy Babb

Many times, people will smell a javelina before they see it. This is because each javelina has a scent gland on their lower back. Every herd has the same scent. Just as some people wear different perfumes such as Chanel or Ralph Lauren, each javelina herd has its own distinct perfume. A javelina greeting is referred to as the “javelina handshake:” two javelinas stand facing one another and rub their head on the other javelina’s backside near the scent gland. In doing so, they are confirming membership in their herd. They will also use this scent gland to mark their territory, rubbing this scent on rocks and tree stumps.

There is no specific breeding season for javelinas. Females can give birth at any time of year. Javelinas are fiercely protective of their babies, which are called “reds.” As you may have guessed, reds have a rusty red tint to their coat. Adult javelinas will protect their reds and the rest of the herd against predators such as mountain lions, coyotes, or (more importantly) domestic dogs. If you are walking your dog and encounter a javelina herd, it is advisable to leave the area calmly and slowly. If a javelina is agitated, the bristly hairs on its back will stand on end and it will clack its jaws together. With very prominent canine teeth that resemble tusks, a javelina can inflict severe injury if it is threatened. The worst javelina bites typically occur when people are feeding them (which is illegal in Arizona) or when people are reaching down to pick up their dogs.



By Randy Babb

The javelina diet mainly consists of prickly pear, mesquite beans, agave, and other native plants. They are well known for digging up roots and tubers for a meal. In residential areas they are notorious for rummaging through trash bags and devouring perfectly carved Halloween jack-o-lanterns. While they are considered herbivores, there have been some reports of javelinas consuming small animal carrion - usually lizards, birds, or rodents.

Javelinas are common in central and southern Arizona, with sightings as far north as Flagstaff. Javelinas also live in the deserts of southeast Texas, New Mexico, south Mexico, and Central America, and into northern Argentina. If you are lucky, you might see one in the wild - perhaps while hiking Pinnacle Peak trail, but it would most likely be at dawn or dusk. They are crepuscular, meaning they are active during dawn and twilight. If you do encounter or see a herd, please remember to respect their space and keep your distance. Most importantly, do not call them pigs!

Featured Volunteer: Domenica Corbo

By Greg Paulsen

One of the highlights of visiting Pinnacle Peak Park during a special event or fundraising effort is beholding the beautiful calligraphy on the signs and banners used for those events. But who is responsible for those wonderful designs? Pinnacle Peak Park volunteer Domenica Corbo is the amazing artist who created them all!

A professional calligrapher by trade, Domenica has loaned her talents to the design and production of countless display items ranging from sandwich board signs and anniversary banners, to calendar sales displays and personalized holiday gifts for visitors. She is always willing to donate her time and talent to keep park visitors informed in a beautiful way.

Domenica joined the volunteer crew a year and a half ago, but has been a regular hiker of Pinnacle Peak for the past ten years. She can be found at the park almost every day, either volunteering or hiking on her own. She knows the Pinnacle Peak trail inside and out, even in the dark: Domenica frequently assists with Pinnacle Peak Astronomy Evenings and Moonlight Hikes.



Photo by Yvonne Massman

Domenica loves Pinnacle Peak Park with all her heart and says she "would do anything for the park." True to her word, Domenica also serves on the Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park Board as its Secretary and regularly assists with Board fundraising events on behalf of the park. In case you were wondering, Domenica does not record the board minutes in calligraphy!



Photo by Yvonne Massman

well as

Domenica has been a professional calligrapher for the past 30 years. She has mastered more than 40 letter styles using Latin characters (the alphabet used in the English language), as Japanese, Chinese, and Hebrew characters. Her clients include numerous household-name retail and service corporations, and she has even designed logos for some of these well-known clients. You can get a feel for the full range of capabilities at her website: www.writtenletters.com.

Though she uses the trail to renew body and mind, hiking at the park is also an ideal interval-training regimen to support Domenica's bodybuilding. She has been bodybuilding competitively for about 30 years and has won an impressive collection of trophies.



Photo by Yvonne Massman

Don't Forget Your Water!

By Yvonne Massman

Dehydration is a very common condition and often one that many people are not even aware they are experiencing. Some of the more typical signs and symptoms are headache, low energy, unsteady balance, shaking, muscle cramping, dry skin, agitation and even bad breath! These conditions are clearly not desirable, they may indicate proper kidney function is compromised, and your safety can be at risk if they persist.

Those who live in the Sonoran Desert have the hydration thing down! No hike, outing or activity is done without a water bottle in tow. Desert Dwellers also know the skill of pre-hydrating when an activity is in the plan.

There are two telltale signs that you can look for yourself to see if you are indeed dehydrated. Check the color of your urine. It should be almost clear with a tinge of yellow. The darker your urine, the more dehydrated you are. "Tent" the skin on the back of your hand. Grab the skin with your thumb and first finger and pull up. If your skin bounces back immediately, you are in good shape! If the skin remains in a tenting position and retracts slowly, you need to drink more water!

Water is essential to all aspects of life, even our plant life. If you see water jugs along the side of the trail, that water is not "potable" which means, do not drink it! The jugs are not sanitary, and the water isn't either. The jugs are for "hydrating" the plants we've put in over the years that need supplemental water to help get them established. The drinking fountain with a chiller near the Park office offers potable and delicious water for you to enjoy at the trailhead!



By clipartpanda.com

Scheduled Activities at the Park

Feb 2016 - Dec 2016

03/11/16 6:30PM Wildlife Program:
Snakes of Arizona, Arizona is famous for its rich diversity of interesting and unique reptiles. Many of these are found nowhere else in the United States. Snakes are not the least among these. Our own Sonoran Desert is a focal point for snake diversity. In this presentation, you will learn about some of Arizona's more singular snakes along with those species that inhabit the Sonoran Desert. We will discuss the role these serpents play in the overall ecological picture and how they are vital to our desert ecosystem. Learn about their habitat, feeding habits and life history and improve your chances of spotting one of these fascinating creatures.

03/20/16 10AM-12PM Southwest
Wildlife

03/23/16 6:45PM Full Moon Hike

04/09/16 7:15PM Astronomy Night

04/16/16 10AM-12PM Liberty Wildlife

04/21/16 7:15PM Full Moon Hike

05/06/16 7:45PM Astronomy Night

05/14/16 10AM-12PM Phoenix
Herpetological Society

05/21/16 7:45PM Full Moon Hike

Scheduled Activities at the Park, Continued

06/20/16 8PM Full Moon Hike

07/19/16 7:45PM Full Moon Hike

08/18/16 7:15PM Full Moon Hike

09/16/16 6:45PM Full Moon Hike

09/30/16 6:45PM Astronomy Night

10/15/16 6PM Full Moon Hike

10/29/16 6PM Astronomy Night

11/14/16 5:45PM Full Moon Hike

12/02/16 5:45PM Astronomy Night

12/13/16 5:30PM Full Moon Hike

12/30/16 6PM Astronomy Night

*Reservations are required a week ahead of all events except the Liberty Wildlife and Southwest Wildlife Events, please contact the park. Astronomy Nights have a minimum age of 8 to attend and must be booked two weeks in advance. Please call the Park's main number at 480-312-0990 for more information, or to make your reservation. Pinnacle Peak Park is located at 26802 N. 102nd Way, Scottsdale 85262.



**This Newsletter is published by
the Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park
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Send newsletter feedback and input to:
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Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park

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