

February 2022

Science, Education & Stewardship

For three decades, the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy has been an advocate for and champion of the Sonoran Desert. The Conservancy serves as an education and scientific research institution that protects, studies, and teaches communities to preserve and advance natural open space through science, education, and stewardship.



When you think of iconic species of the Sonoran Desert, the slow and steady Sonoran desert tortoise might come to mind. This species received a bit of good news recently when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that populations are stable enough that the desert tortoise doesn't warrant listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The Sonoran desert tortoise species remains protected in Arizona and is designated as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Yet, work still needs to be done to ensure that this species remains viable and that numbers do not decline. McDowell Sonoran Conservancy is thrilled to be able to assist those efforts through our tortoise project, where we seek to understand how human activities influence the population in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

[Click here](#) to learn more about our desert tortoise project and how you can make a difference in its conservation.



Building an Innovative Science Curriculum

The Conservancy and a group of teachers from Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) have joined forces in building a science curriculum to engage 7th-grade students in climate

change and invasive species projects.

During February and March, several schools, including over 600 students, will have an opportunity to engage in scientific studies that are being conducted in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, connecting their findings to natural sciences in a way that only direct experience allows—collecting scientific data and comparing it to larger datasets allows the students to see a much broader picture regarding climate change, invasive, and non-invasive species.

The Conservancy has several educational opportunities for children and adults. [Take a look at what's available.](#)



Participating in Scottsdale Community Fire Prevention Program

Seven Conservancy stewards have been trained and certified through the Scottsdale Fire Department to conduct Fire Wise assessments.

These stewards will be assisting the fire department in assessing defensible space in neighborhoods bordering the Preserve. This process involves walking the perimeter of properties and taking photos to help evaluate the work completed by the home owners and HOA groups to meet Fire Wise requirements. This assessment project leverages the talent and expertise of the stewards to help our community reduce the wild fire risk.

Learn how you can participate in wildfire readiness by visiting City of Scottsdale's [website](#).

February Activities

Hike / Bike / Nature & Education Programs

All of our activities are conducted by the Conservancy's volunteer stewards, with a mission of preserving and advancing natural open space through science, education, and stewardship.

[Activity Calendar](#)

As a leading volunteer organization, a committed partner in scientific research, and an indispensable educational resource for our community, we are grateful to those who support our mission. Unlike a state park, which can generate money from use of the land, we rely

solely on the generous support of people like you who care about nature and understand that the threats to our natural world have never been greater.

Make A Difference

Mountain Lines Winter Edition 2021



Follow the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy on Social Media!



For more information on volunteering
visit mcdowellsonoran.org/stewardship

Support us by donating today!
visit mcdowellsonoran.org/donate