

FEBRUARY

ECO-BLITZ CHALLENGE



GILA WOODPECKER

PHOTO BY NIKKI BUNNELL



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GILA WOODPECKER



Gila Woodpecker
Photo by Nikki Bunnell

Did you know that the Gila Woodpecker, *Melanerpes uropygialis*, is a desert architect? Here are some fun facts:

- Gila Woodpeckers create most of the excavated holes you see in the trunks of giant saguaro cacti, which are used as nests.
- After nests are abandoned, other species, including American kestrel and western screech owl, will move in since they provide excellent protection from the elements.
- Males use their beaks to make a loud, rapid drumming noise by striking it against a hard object. This serves as a territorial warning or to attract mates.

Source:

[Arizona Sonora Desert Museum - Animal Fact Sheet: Gila Woodpecker](#)