



AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

PLANTS

- **Blooms:** sacred datura, desert & tree tobaccos (both can bloom year-round in warm years), yerba mansa
- **Fruit:** figs, cacti
- Garden blooms again after monsoons & cooldowns
- **Blooms:** cowpen daisy, datura, tobaccos, seepwillow, desert broom
- **Fruit:** figs, CA fan palm fruit forms & starts to ripen by end of month
- Wet monsoons & tropical moisture '2nd spring'
- **Blooms:** lingering flowers through early fall
- **Fruit:** CA fan palm fruit ripens, hackberries
- **Fall color:** willows & mulberries at peak Oct-Nov
- Tropical moisture can cause '2nd spring' growth
- **Blooms:** lingering flowers from Sep, elderberries after wet seasons, seepwillow
- **Fruit:** palms, figs, elderberries (wet seasons)
- **Fall color:** peak for willows, mulberries, figs, cottonwoods (early)
- **Blooms:** tree tobacco, seepwillow
- **Fruit:** palms, figs, elderberries, mistletoe
- **Fall color:** cottonwoods usually peak late Nov-early Dec, sometimes late Dec
- Most plants bare

ANIMALS

- Most birds are done nesting by late Aug-early Sep
*Yellow-billed cuckoo, white-winged dove, Lucy's warbler, most flycatchers leave by end of month
- Fall bird migration heats up (hummingbirds, songbirds, shorebirds)
- More hatches of insects
- Tarantulas wandering
- Reptile babies
- Peak fall migration for vultures, hawks, insectivores; vermilion flycatchers leave mid-month
- Animal activity less restricted by heat
- More hatches of insects after wet monsoons, tropical moisture
- Reptiles & amphibians still common, young around
- Fall bird migration continues (waterfowl, late insectivores, sparrows, & blackbirds arrive)
- Rare eastern songbirds late Sep-early Nov
- Birds & mammals feeding on palm fruit (ringtails, etc)
- Reptiles & insects still common until cold snaps
- Late season dragonflies, butterflies
- Birds & mammals feeding on palm fruit (bluebirds, waxwings, ringtails, raccoons, foxes, skunks)
- Rare thrushes & northern finches possible during irruption years
- Fewer reptiles & insects with cooler weather
- Small winter population of monarch butterflies arrives
- Mud turtles at springs
- Pocket gophers actively digging after wet weather in late fall/early winter
- Bluebirds & waxwings feed on early mistletoe fruit
- Birds & mammals still feeding on palm fruit
- Insectivorous birds linger until leaves drop
- Deer, javelinas, foxes, coyotes, bobcat seen
- Insects rare

WEATHER

- Low temps: 60-80s
- High temps: 90-110s
- Extreme heat in hottest years, humid along the river
- Monsoon storms continue, irregular rain
- Low temps: 50-70s
- High temps: 80-100s
- Lingering summer heat gradually cools down
- Monsoons end, occasional tropical moisture
- Low temps: 40-60s
- High temps: 70-90s
- Can still be warm or hot, but usually cooling down
- Occasional tropical rains, storms from the north
- Low temps: 30-40s
- High temps: 60-80s
- Pleasant weather with cooldowns
- Irregular rain from the north, snow in mountains
- Low temps: 20-30s
- High temps: 50-70s
- Dec-Jan coldest season, Palm Lake can freeze during 'Arctic blasts'
- Possible rain, rare snow



Catclaw Acacia



Blue Palo Verde



Yerba Mansa



Sacred Datura



Tree Tobacco










Hassayampa River Preserve, Wickenburg, AZ

SEASONAL NATURE GUIDE



Hassayampa River Preserve
49614 U.S. Hwy. 60 89
Wickenburg, AZ 85390
Phone: (602) 506-2930 ext. 9
maricopacountyparks.net

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY
PLANTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaf sprout: elderberry, cottonwood (early) & willow (early) • Most trees leafless by now • Fruit: mistletoe, CA fan palms (lingering) • Flowers rare • Duckweed along the river 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaf sprout & flowering: cottonwoods, yerba mansa, willows (early) • Full foliage on elderberries • Green understory with grasses & early wildflowers (wet winters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaf sprout & flowering: willows, yerba mansa, elderberries (flowering), mesquites (early) • Fruit/seed release: cottonwood 'fluff' • Native wildflowers begin blooming in the garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaf sprout & flowering: mesquites, elderberries (flowering), paloverdes, acacias, cacti, ocotillos, yerba mansa, wildflowers • Fruit/seed release: willow 'fluff' (early) • Garden blooms at the peak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blooms: saguaro and other cacti, ironwood, mesquites, paloverdes, acacias, desert willow, yerba mansa • Fruit/seed release: willow 'fluff', elderberries, mulberries • Grass and forbs dried out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blooms: desert willow, CA fan palms, mesquites (late) • Fruit/seed release: saguaro, mesquites, paloverdes, acacias • Understory plants dry • Drought stress leaf drop on cottonwood, elderberry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blooms: CA fan palms (continued), queen of the night cactus (late Jul-early Aug), sacred datura, yerba mansa • Fruit: mesquites, paloverdes, acacias, cacti, figs
ANIMALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pocket gophers active after rains (herons and bobcats hunt them too!) • Birds and mammals feed on lingering palm fruit & new mistletoe berries • Insects scarce • Woodpeckers territorial • Leopard frogs start mating • Anna's hummingbird usually only winter species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early butterflies, mayflies, bees, tree crickets, & other insects • Breeding season begins for hummingbirds, woodpeckers, thrashers, gnatcatchers, phainopeplas, sparrows • Phainopeplas, bluebirds, & waxwings still eating mistletoe fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return of hawks, vultures, hummingbirds, vermilion flycatcher, Bell's vireo, Lucy's and yellow warblers. • Hummingbirds, raptors, waterfowl, hawks, woodpeckers, verdins, wrens, sparrows nesting • More insects emerging • Early reptiles active (lizards, snakes, turtles) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return of lesser nighthawk, summer tanager, yellow-breasted chat, hooded oriole • Bird migration, nesting heats up; bats return • Lizards and snakes emerge, Apr-May best time to see Gilbert's skink • Butterflies, dragonflies, bees, tarantula hawk wasps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return of white-winged doves, SW willow and brown-crested flycatchers, tropical kingbird • Peak songbird migration (check mulberry fruit for rarities!) • More baby birds, insects emerging • The best time to see reptiles before the summer heat comes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow-billed Cuckoos last of breeders to return • Hawks and many songbirds have fledglings. Some songbirds doing 2nd nesting attempts • Animals active when cooler, desert species coming down to the river • Cicadas, giant mesquite bugs, fig-eater beetles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cicadas, fall webworms • Yellow-billed cuckoos nest everywhere • Baby lizards and birds • Monsoon toad species breed in puddles • 1st southbound/fall migrant birds (hummingbirds, songbirds) • Later season dragonflies emerge with monsoons • Animals still avoiding heat
WEATHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low temperatures (°F): 20-30s • High temps: 50-70s • Rain and rare snow in wet years • Palm Lake frozen during extreme cold snaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low temps: 20-40s • High temps: 50-70s • Occasional cold fronts with drizzling, steady rains. *Late winter rains & the late summer monsoons are the 2 main wet seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low temps: 30-50s • High temps: 60-80s • Rain and snow in headwaters may cause flooding in wet years • Generally pleasant weather from Mar-Apr 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low temps: 50-60s • High temps: 70-80s • Occasional rain continues • Side channels of the river dry up by end of the month, but the lake at the highest level • Generally nice weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low temps: 60-70s • High temps: 80-100s • Warm, dry weather • Rare rainfall • River and Palm Lake water levels start to drop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low temps: 70-80s • High temps: 90-110s • Hot, dry weather arrives • Rare rainfall from early monsoon storms • Water levels drop more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low temps: 70-80s • High temps: 90-110s • Hottest part of the year in the desert (June-August) • Irregular monsoon storms • Lightning and flashfloods
							
	Fremont Cottonwood	Goodding's Willow	Velvet Mesquite	Mexican Elderberry	White Mulberry	Seepwillow	Graythorn