

USERY MT. REGIONAL PARK

MARCH, 2019 Programs



Maricopa County

Parks and Recreation Dept.
Usery Mountain Regional Park
3939 N. Usery Pass Road
Mesa, AZ 85207
(602) 506-2930



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

PARK HOURS:

Sunday – Thursday: 6 am – 8 pm
Friday – Saturday: 6 am – 10 pm
365 days a year

NATURE CENTER HOURS:

SUMMER (05/07 - 10/08)
Monday thru Saturday: 8 am – 3 pm
Sunday: Closed
WINTER (10/09 – 05/06)
Sunday thru Saturday: 8 am – 4 pm

ADMIN. OFFICE HOURS:

Monday – Friday: 8 am – 4 pm

📄 PARK FEES:

\$7 per vehicle day-use entry fee (no additional fees for programs, unless otherwise noted)

📍 DIRECTIONS:

From central Phoenix, I-10 east to US 60 east. Exit Ellsworth Road north to the Usery Mountain Regional Park entrance.

💻 WEBSITE:

<https://www.maricopacountyparks.net/park-locator/usery-mountain-regional-park/>

✉ EMAIL ADDRESS:

userypark@mail.maricopa.gov

📘 FACEBOOK PAGE:

<https://www.facebook.com/UseryMtnPark/>

STAFF:

Park Supervisor: Shayla Gunn
Interpretive Ranger: Brennan Basler
Office Asst. Andrea Despotides
Maintenance: Robert Mansfield, Ray Martin and Sharon Richards
Contact Station Assistant: Aldo Gonzalez

Sonoran Stroll

Date: 3/1/2019 **Time:** 8am

Description: Enjoy this casual 1-2 mile stroll in our beautiful Sonoran Desert with our Park Ranger. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at Trailhead Staging.

Core: Health & Fitness

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Wag 'n' Walk Dog Adoption Hike

Date: 3/2/2019 **Time:** 9 a.m.

Description: Don't have a dog? No problem! Maricopa County's Animal Care & Control and Parks and Recreation Departments have united to bring you this program. You can "test drive" potential canine hiking partners to see how they behave on leash and get along with other dogs, while learning about trail etiquette and safety. Owned, friendly, leashed dogs that are at least six months old and current on their vaccinations are welcome to join this one-mile trek on our scenic, groomed, Merkle Trail. Please bring water, closed-toe shoes, and an open heart for a possible new best friend, or two. This program will be held on the first Saturday of each month from October through March. Meet at Area 6.

Core: Animals

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Wild for Wildflowers! Walk

Date: 3/2/2019 **Time:** 2 p.m.

Description: Wild for wildflowers? This spring should reward us with an explosion of colorful wildflowers! Join us for this casual stroll along our scenic 1-mile Merkle Trail in search of these desert delights. You will learn about our local wildflowers and be

awed by the beauty of our desert! Meet at Area 6.

Core: Plants

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What is that? You gotta see this!

Date: 3/6/2019 **Time:** 12 p.m.

Description: While exploring the park, we've all said "What is that?" and "You gotta see this!" iNaturalist is an application that allows anyone to learn more about the plants and animals that they see and share their observations with park management and visitors. In this interactive program, you will learn about iNaturalist and how to submit observations. Feel free to bring a lunch for the classroom portion of this program. Please bring your own smartphone or digital camera, if you have one, as well as water and closed-toe shoes for the (optional) outdoor portion of this class.

Core: Outdoor Skills

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All About Desert Birds

Date: 3/7/2019 **Time:** 12 p.m.

Description: What makes birds so special and unique? Which are the most common birds found in our area? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? Discover the answers to these questions and more in this informative one-hour presentation! Feel free to bring your lunch with you inside our Nature Center as local bird experts, Jim and Judy Taylor, deepen our understanding and appreciation for our feathered friends. After their presentation, Jim & Judy will lead a short bird watch on the back porch of our Nature Center.

Core: Animals

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All About Rattlesnakes

Date: 3/8/2019 **Time:** 6 a.m.

Description: How dangerous are rattlesnakes? What should you do if you encounter one? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? Discover the answers to these questions and more in this exciting one-hour presentation! Join us inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares amazing facts about these misunderstood reptiles. Watch us feed our snakes after the program at 7pm. Then join our "Animal Flashlight Walk" at 7:30pm at no extra cost!

Core: Animals

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Animal Flashlight Walk

Date: 3/8/2019 **Time:** 7:30 p.m.

Description: We're the nocturnal animals of the desert and we like to hide. Help Ranger B find us if you can! If you would like to learn about us and enjoy a night walk in the desert, then join Ranger B as he takes you on this exciting 1-mile/1-hour walk along the Merkle Trail. This trail accommodates wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, a flashlight, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Meet at Area 6. As a bonus, join our "All About Rattlesnakes" program inside our Nature Center at 6pm, and our snake feeding at 7pm at no extra cost!

Core: Animals

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The Geology of the East Valley Walk

Date: 3/9/2019 **Time:** 9:30 a.m.

Description: Ever wonder about the fascinating mountains and rock formations in our area? Join geology professor, A. J. Lombard, as he shares a wealth of information about the geology of the East Valley on this 1-mile interactive walk. Bring your curiosities and questions to Usery Park and discover lots of amazing things about our local geology! Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at Area 6.

Core: Geology

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100 Miles in 100 Days Celebration

Date: 3/9/2019 **Time:** 2:30 p.m.

Description: For all participants who completed the "100 Miles in 100 Days" challenge, this is your day! Join us inside our Nature Center as we celebrate your accomplishment! A free limited edition tee-shirt will be given to each person who completed this challenge (the deadline was February 8 – prior registration was required). Location: Nature Center.

Core: Health & Fitness

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The World Beneath our Feet

Date: 3/10/2019 **Time:** 2 p.m.

Description: Our desert ground is full of holes! What makes all these holes? Each hole reveals clues about who lives in them. Join Ranger B on this quarter-mile walk in the desert as we explore the amazing world beneath our feet. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Nature Center.

Core: Animals

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Kid's Desert Scavenger Hunt

Date: 3/13/2019 **Time:** 10:30 a.m.

Description: Join us on this exciting scavenger hunt as we solve riddles and find things in our desert (using our eyes only). Not only will we have a lot of fun but we will also learn amazing things about our desert plants and animals! The 1-mile Merkle Trail accommodates wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at Area 6.

Core: Entertainment & Social Skills

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Three Mile Thursday

Date: 3/14/2019 **Time:** 8 a.m.

Description: Want to get in shape and stay in shape? Want to meet others who want to do the same? Join us for this fun 3 mile/1 hour brisk-pace hike through our scenic desert. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at Trailhead Staging.

Core: Health & Fitness

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Birding Meetup

Date: 3/14/2019 **Time:** 9 a.m.

Description: Interested in meeting other birders and heading out together in search of birds? Come to Usery Park for a birding adventure with like-minded people. Please bring binoculars, water, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Nature Center.

Core: Animals

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"Just for Kids" - Adventure

Journaling

Date: 3/15/2019 **Time:** 10:30 a.m.

Description: Bring your curious mind on a desert adventure in search of fascinating plants, animals, and rocks! Each kid will be given an adventure journal to draw and record their nature observations. Kids will also learn the principals of "leave no trace" to help keep the desert clean and safe for all wildlife and visitors. This 1 mile walk on the Merkle Trail is designed for children ages 5 – 12, accompanied by an adult. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at Area 6.

Core: Outdoor Skills

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Strange & Silly Saguaros

Date: 3/16/2019 **Time:** 7 p.m.

Description: When it comes to desert plants, saguaros are everybody's favorite! Like people, each one of them is unique. They even make us laugh! Ranger B has taken photos of some of the most strange and silly saguaros found in Arizona. What makes them look the way they do – with all those twists and turns? Join us for this entertaining and educational PowerPoint presentation and explore the special world of these amazing desert giants. As a bonus, watch us feed our snakes after the program. Location: Nature Center.

Core: Plants

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Full Moon Hike

Date: 3/20/2019 **Time:** 7 p.m.

Description: Join us for this 2-mile hike under the glowing light of the full moon! This is a great opportunity to experience new sights and sounds of the desert at night. Bring your sense of adventure on this interpretive hike with our park ranger. Please bring a flashlight, water, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Carpooling is strongly recommended as parking is limited for this event. Meet at Trailhead Staging.

Core: Health & Fitness

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Cool Cactus Walk

Date: 3/22/2019 **Time:** 9:30 a.m.

Description: What are the names of the cacti that grow in our desert? How do they survive (and thrive!) in such a harsh environment? Discover amazing facts about these incredible plants when you join our Park Ranger for this scenic stroll along the quarter-mile Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Nature Center.

Core: Plants

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Find the Ranger on the Wind Cave Trail

Date: 3/23/2019 **Time:** 9:30 a.m.

Description: Hike the Wind Cave Trail and find our park ranger! This fun hike is challenging and gives great views of the Valley along the way. Ranger B will be somewhere along this 1.5-mile trail to answer any questions you have about the park, desert animals, and desert plants. Anytime between 9:30am-11:30am.

Core: Health & Fitness

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Eat the Desert

Date: 3/24/2019 **Time:** 2 p.m.

Description: How have people survived off the desert for thousands of years? Which desert plants are edible and when are they edible? Discover the answers to

these questions and more in this exciting quarter-mile stroll along the Desert Hawk Trail. Join our Park Ranger as he shares some useful information about our edible desert plants. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Nature Center.

Core: Plants

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Little Desert Explorers

Date: 3/27/2019 **Time:** 10:30 a.m.

Description: This 1-mile walk is designed for parents and caregivers with children ages 3 – 6 years. Using their senses, kids will discover lots of cool things about the plants and animals that call our desert “home.” Along with Ranger B, we will explore the desert on the scenic Merkle Trail, which accommodates wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at Area 6.

Core: Animals

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Birding Meetup

Date: 3/28/2019 **Time:** 9 a.m.

Description: Interested in meeting other birders and heading out together in search of birds? Come to Usery Park for a birding adventure with like-minded people. Please

bring binoculars, water, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Nature Center.

Core: Animals

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Eco-Tour of the Sonoran Desert

Date: 3/29/2019 **Time:** 9:30 a.m.

Description: What makes our Sonoran Desert such a special place? What are the close relationships that are shared between our unique plants and animals and the land on which they live? Increase your knowledge of our desert by joining Ranger B on this exciting one-mile stroll along the Merkle Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at Area 6

Core: Animals

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Stargazing for Everyone!

Date: 3/30/2019 **Time:** 7:30 p.m.

Description: Come and watch the night sky under the expert guidance of Tony La Conte! Look through telescopes and enjoy a slide presentation under the stars. Learn the names of stars, see the constellations, and listen to stories of the night sky. View the craters of the moon, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and the rings of Saturn. This is truly a fun night out! Please bring folding chairs or blankets for seating. No pets please. Location: Group Picnic D.

Core: Astronomy

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PARK NOTES:

What to Bring: Please wear sturdy shoes (closed-toe), dress appropriately for the weather and bring more water than you think you will need. See descriptions for specifics. Fees for guided hikes and programs are included in the park entry fee or with your annual pass. Reservations are not required unless specified in the program description. Hikes/programs are canceled if heavy inclement weather is imminent. If possible, canceled hikes will be posted on the website.

Media Partners: Thank you for helping us advertise Usery Mountain Regional Parks programs and events! Please include Ranger Brennan’s email address – BrennanBasler@mail.maricopa.gov - in your postings so park visitors can contact the park directly with general questions about programs, updates, and changes.

Other:



