

Maturango News

Preserve, interpret and develop an appreciation for
the natural and cultural history of the Northern Mojave Desert.

100 E. Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555

Open Monday – Saturday 10 am – 5 pm, Sunday Noon – 4pm 760.375.6900 www.maturango.org

Death Valley Tourist Center Northern Mojave Visitor Center

Museum Director's Notes

Debbie Benson, Museum Director

I told someone today that I was ready for a bit of sun, even while knowing that soon there will be plenty of it to go around. This has been an interesting winter and a more wet spring than we've seen for a while. The Museum grounds are greening and our garden volunteers have spent much time with rakes and hoes to keep it from getting out of control. The cooler weather has kept some of the flowers held back a bit but this too will happen soon enough!

The rains have also made sure we know of every repair or adjustment that needs attention. We have volunteers who are helpful and resourceful in fixes, repairs and installations of safety features. They are also more than helpful with many improvements and the research that goes along with it.

The change of seasons also brings many guests into the valley as they travel to some of our featured landscapes. Our Museum Store staff and volunteers are helpful with making sure they have information and helpful narratives about travel. With the changing weather this is even more important to our visitors as it often includes travel tips in a shared conversation.

Many aspects of the Museum are dependent on the volunteers who keep it functioning and moving forward. If you would like to try something a little different and be a part of the volunteering please come by and talk to any of us and find out why it matters. There are a variety of skills needed every day and many of them are learnable and interesting. Contact us at info@maturango.org or come by.

Docent Doings

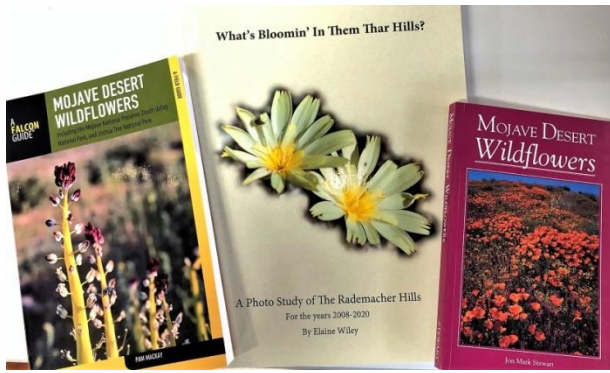
By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

The docents are very excited about the increase in requests for programs. We are feeling renewed when we can share our knowledge with the children and adults in our community. We were able to help with tours for Sierra STEM (about 60 8th graders), the Panamint Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a Girl Scout troop, and the Daytrippers.

We appreciate the donations from these various groups. We also appreciate the donations that have been left by numerous people who attend Free Saturdays and Children's Hour.

Our next Free Saturday, April 8, will feature Zoe Stephens, BLM Biological/ Resource Intern, presenting "Mammals and Predators". We will also host a craft activity to accompany that theme.

Children's Hour on April 14, 10:30am, will feature "Desert Wildflowers". Celebrate the beauties of wild and garden flowers. With magnifiers the amazing interiors of blossoms will be revealed, possibly even with a real bug crawling around! Wouldn't that be something? Through story and pantomime, a journey from seed to flower can be imagined with its adventures along the way. Choices of crafts will be available to suit each child's interests and capability. Adults can have fun, too, alongside their children doing the activities. It'll be a "blooming good time" at the Maturango Museum! Sign up in advance for this free docent program by calling the museum 760-375-6900.



Many wildflower-related items can be found in the Museum Store. Books, t-shirts, candles, jewelry and children's projects...

Natural History News

By Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator

Northern Flickers are a medium sized (pigeon size) woodpecker with bright coloration on the flight feathers of the wings. These birds were once called Red-shafted Flickers. But the shafts can also be yellow or gilt in color. The body feathers are brown with dark spots and black bars on the tops of the wings.

The coloration of the shafts is caused by carotenoid pigments of yellow, orange, and red that are produced by plants, algae, bacteria, and fungi that the birds eat. Color variation between eastern and western flickers depends on the processing of the foods they eat. Eastern flickers produce yellow shafted feathers while the western flickers have red shafted feathers.



Even though Flickers are a woodpecker they do not act like woodpeckers. They mainly feed on the ground pecking at the dirt and leaves for insects in the soil; a large part of their diet is ants. The trees have to have soft bark for them to peck for insects. A flicker will sometimes rub ants into its feathers so the formic acid in the ants will ward off mites.

Flickers in our area are winter residents. They move to higher elevations to nest and tend their young.

Audubon Society Traveling Photographic Exhibit Sylvia Winslow Gallery: April 19 – May 10

This photo exhibit, sponsored by Kerncrest Audubon Society, allows the viewer to appreciate the wonder of birds and the places they inhabit. This is the 13th annual competition for the Audubon Society. Photographs are selected by a group of 8 professional photographers and videographers. This year the categories for monetary prizes are: Grand Prize, Professional, Amateur, Youth, Plants for Birds, Fisher Prize, Female Bird, plus four honorable mentions. The winning photos, videos and honorable mentions were selected from 2,416 entrants from all 50 states, Washington D.C. and 7 Canadian provinces and territories.

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow. Audubon works throughout the Americas using, science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation. State programs, nature centers, chapters, and partners give Audubon an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire, and unite diverse communities in conservation action. A nonprofit conservation organization since 1905, Audubon believes in a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Learn more about how to help at www.audubon.org and follow us on Twitter and Instagram at @audubonsociety.

2023 Wildflower Exhibit
Friday March 31 – Sunday April 2
Admission - \$2.00

Each spring the Maturango Museum hosts the annual Wildflower Exhibit. Visitors can see the wide variety and abundance of wildflowers that grow in the Indian Wells Valley and surrounding canyons. Collectors with the proper BLM permits spend multiple days gathering the wildflowers which are placed into bottles or vases and displayed according to their family.

The exhibit features annuals and flowering shrubs - from the tiny white cryptantha (forget-me-nots) to the bright and showy coreopsis (bright yellow wildflower) to the common desert creosote bush. Each species is identified by a group of professional botanists and labeled with its common and scientific name.

Local artists from the Desert Artist's League will be drawing and painting wildflowers throughout the weekend.

With the winter rains, this spring promises a colorful and fragrant display of wildflowers for this exhibit!



Nina House
Guest speaker at the Annual Wildflower Exhibit
Saturday, April 1 at 3 pm

Nina will give her presentation “A Vascular Flora of the Manter and Salmon Creek Watersheds in the Southern Sierra Nevada, Tulare County, CA”. Her study area encompassed a 51 square mile section of the Kern Plateau including 25 square miles of the Domeland Wilderness area. Conducting a systematic floristic inventory of this under-documented region provided an opportunity to record rare plant locations, new county records, species at the edge of their range, and disjunct plant populations. Documenting this diversity is vital, as there are several ongoing impacts from land use and climate change. Cattle grazing, off-highway vehicular use, logging, severe drought, and an altered fire regime were all documented during the study. These disturbances will have lasting impacts on the flora. Throughout the project, Nina completed a total of 24 field trips, totaling 90 field days, and resulted in the collection of 1,412 herbarium specimen records.

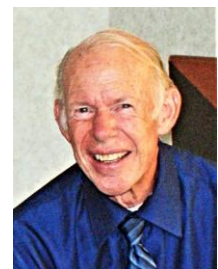


Nina received her Biology B.S. degree in 2017 before working toward her Master's degree in Botany from Claremont Graduate University. She is currently a Museum Scientist at the UC and Jepson Herbaria, at the University of California Berkeley. She works on coordinating the Jepson workshop program and revising the Jepson eFlora.

Glenn Harris
Guest Speaker for the Annual Wildflower Exhibit
Sunday, April 2 at 3 pm

Glenn will give his presentation “The Changing Floristic Landscape Through Time”; how plants have changed or migrated since the ice age.

Glenn is retired from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); he specialized in Botany, Soils, Water Resources, Hydrology, Air Quality, Range Management and Fire Management. Since retirement, Glenn has been a docent with the Maturango Museum and is a BLM volunteer. He has volunteered for the Annual Wildflower Exhibit as both a collector and an identifier of specimens for many years.



**Cheryl McDonald's Art Exhibit
"Mystic Dreams of Transformation"**

In the Coso Room through May 31.

This exhibit is a collection of surrealistic scenes created in graphite and colored pencil with accompanying poetry.

There is also a book and prints that can be purchased.



MYSTIC DREAMS OF TRANSFORMATION

Art & Poetry by Cheryl McDonald

Inspired pencil drawings and poetry that personify transformational, spiritual, and experiential dreams.

Presented by Maturango Museum

March 11- May 31, 2023
Opening Reception
March 19th, 2023
12-3pm

100 E. Las Flores Blvd.
Ridgecrest, CA
93555



Foliás Duo

Thursday, May 25, 2023, 7 - 8 pm

Tickets \$20 adult, \$12 Youth

The Foliás Duo are “facile players who draw on tango rhythms and melodies sometimes, at other times they write with a scenic sensitivity” (Fanfare Magazine). They are “daring in self-written music” (American Record Guide).

Flutist Carmen Maret and guitarist Andrew Bergeron of the Foliás Duo are a married couple whose unique interpersonal performer-composer collaboration of twenty years breathes new life into classical music. The Foliás Duo melds characteristics of European classical music with jazz, world music, and improvisation into the rhythms, contours, and textures of their meticulously crafted and scenic music. As composers and performers, they continue to test the technical and sonic possibilities of the intimate flute and guitar combination. “These two artists are top talents, almost singular within contemporary flute and guitar ensembles” (Flutist Quarterly).

Maturango Museum of the IWV

100 E. Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555

Open every day (except major holidays)

10 am – 5 pm Monday – Saturday

12pm-4pm Sunday

Staff

Debbie Benson, Museum Director
Maureen Goff, Store Manager/Buyer
Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA, Archaeology
Curator
Elaine Wiley, History Curator
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator
Julie Stephens, Finance Manager
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator,
Newsletter Editor
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator
Linda Saholt, Petroglyph Tour Coord.,
Membership, Donations
Leslie Layfield, Accounting Bookkeeper
Kelly Goff, Museum Assistant
Deanna Stewart, Museum Assistant
Nora Nuckles, Museum Assistant
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant
Jacque Ahlin, Curation Tech

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Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning

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District
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Warren's Automotive



Donations in February 2023

Donations

Linda Anderson
Debbie Benson
Dan and Brenda Burnett
Rolland Harper
Patricia Wharton
Ken Whetzel
Peter and Elaine Wiley

Curation Building Pathway

Mick Benton

Building Fund

Esther Hart
Robert Westbrook

Docent Education Program

Neal and Emily Fox

Paleontology Exhibit

Anonymous

Wildflower Exhibit

Peter and Elaine Wiley

New Members

Ken and Bev Ewbank
Sue Krout
Terry McGuire
Teresa Moffatt

Maturango Field Trip Visits Manzanar National Historic Site

Twenty five Maturango field trippers traveled north to the site of a WWII Japanese internment camp near Independence CA in mid-March. We spent the morning at the Manzanar Visitor Center, a refurbished camp gymnasium and now a state of the art interpretive center exploring the context of national paranoia that led to widespread detention of Japanese Americans across the west, the camp lives of the detainees, the decorated "Go For Broke" 442 Division of Japanese American soldiers, and the bewildering aftermath of relocation for released detainees. The artifacts, photos, and films in the moving exhibits are over 70 years old now, but resonate in modern America: the calls by some to detain AIDS sufferers in the 1980s, Muslim-Americans after 9-11, and the current institutional mass incarceration of families and children crossing our southern border. There is also a striking exhibit honoring the Native American inhabitants of Owens Valley, a colorful series of portraits of modern Tribal elders and younger activists.

After lunch in a rebuilt camp mess hall, we toured the grounds with NPS Archeologist Jeff Burton, a national expert on the archeology of WWII internment and detention camps. Burton showed us various archeological sites uncovered by his volunteer crews after decades of flood silt and brush overburden: a barracks garden, children's orphanage, and Pleasant Park community garden. Combining exploratory excavation with old photos and oral histories, the volunteers have been able to find and restore some of the outdoor features built by camp detainees between 1942 and 1945. Due to historic legal restrictions on job choices and land ownership, the camp contained over 400 former landscapers and gardeners as these were occupations open to Japanese Americans. At Manzanar, they poured their spare time into creating green spaces from barren surroundings for the detainees.

Today the landscape is open and relatively clear with a stunning view of the Eastern Sierra range, but in WWII, the camp was home to over 10,000 detainees and staff on 540 developed acres. Burton's detailed narration helped us see the landscape as it was then: row upon rows of tar papered barracks, mess halls, bathhouses (one toilet for every 30 women, one toilet for every 60 men), small food gardens between the crowded barracks, and a few community open spaces where all could walk among the Japanese-style landscaped pools and gardens. The gardens provided a small respite from long mess hall lines, bad water, dust, guard towers, and menial camp jobs.

If you haven't visited Manzanar in the last few years, I urge you to stop by this Spring season and venture out beyond the Visitor Center to see the grounds. The Park Service has built a number of re-creations of original structures, restored some garden areas, and is planting new pear orchards. Quite a change from the first time I walked unimproved Manzanar in the early 90s. I see new work and new interpretation every time I visit, always prompting reflection on where we were as a country and where we're going.





Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser

All day Wednesday April 12.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum

You must mention this fundraiser when ordering.



Upcoming Events

- Mar 31 – Apr 2: Annual Wildflower Exhibit.
- Free Saturday, April 8: "Mammals and Predators". 11am – 2pm with craft activities.
- Children's Hour, April 14, 10:30am, will feature "Desert Wildflowers".
- April 19: The Audubon Traveling Exhibit featuring the 2022 Photography Award Winners will be on display in the Sylvia Winslow gallery for one month.
- Thursday, May 25: Folias Duo – Guitar and flute duet, 7 - 8 pm

Janet Westbrook's Field Trips Planned for Spring 2023 Details in May newsletter...

Kern Foothills, Walker Basin, Tehachapi Loop – April 29
Southern Owens Valley – Little Lake to Lone Pine - May 2
Meadows - Bonita et al – June 3
Meadows – Beach – June 24 (or June 17)

Possible Field Trip to Trona with Terry Mitchell on May 13

How do you like our new electronic sign?

Want to post a brief appropriate message for an event or personal endearment?

Come in to the museum store for details. We suggest a donation to support our programs.

We were very pleased to receive two checks from the insurance company covering the entire cost of the new sign! During this last year we have received personal donations for the sign. After paying the deductible and any related bills incurred by the incident, we have put the remaining funds into the Operating Fund. If you donated to the sign and have any questions or concerns about the designation of your donation, please contact Debbie (debbie@maturango.org) or Julie (julie@maturango.org)

Many thanks!