

Spotlight On:

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

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www.desertmuseum.org

Where else can you go and in a solitary afternoon find out about adopting a turtle, witness the antics of prairie dogs, get up close and personal with a tarantula, sample regional cuisine and purchase a gift for yourself or a loved one, all in one place? The answer of course is our very own Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum!

Located 12 miles west of the Tucson Mountains on Kinney Road, the Desert Museum is not only known as a natural history museum, but is considered a world renowned zoo and botanical garden as well. Still operating at its original location, the Desert Museum continues to attract over 500,000 visitors every year.

Brainchild of William H. Carr, the road to getting the museum off the ground, was a rocky one. After moving to Tucson in 1944, Carr soon recognized the need for a regionally-focused exhibit. He was even more motivated when he discovered what little information was known or available to local residents. As he began to introduce the idea of a natural museum/zoo, he was met with heavy opposition. The deplorable conditions of most zoos at the time tainted the opinions of possible supporters. Not one to be easily deterred and having previously founded a museum in New York, Carr forged on.

Carr's friend, Arthur Pack, stepped in and put up the funds and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum was on its way. Carr's vision of having a place that allowed visitors to see the interdependence with both the desert and the animals in a natural habitat was finally a reality.



Since its opening day back in 1952, the Desert Museum has maintained Carr's original vision and continues to operate as a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of the Sonoran Desert. Besides conservation, the museum also supports ongoing research to advance scientific understanding of the desert and how that information can be used to shape people's sense of stewardship.

The Desert Museum continues its daily operations with the help of more than 100 staff members and approximately 500 volunteers. The addition of new exhibits, programs and facilities, continues to expand. Some of the more recent additions include the Mountain Habitat, the Hummingbird Aviary and a restaurant/gallery facility.



In the summertime, the museum offers an array of Saturday evening venues. Beginning in June and running through August, guests can attend an evening lecture on a variety of subjects including astronomy, bats, bees, frogs, volcanoes or story telling by a Native American.

Old and young alike are sure to find something of interest at this unique museum. Where else can you spend a day for less than \$35.00 if you're a family of four? Hands down, the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum gets our thumbs up for one of the best entertainment and educational spots in Tucson.

Written by Debra Howard for Tucson Home and Garden Spot www.tucsonhomeandgardenspot.com an online resource directory for the local home & garden industry. Debra is a former retailer and interior designer who now helps small businesses get maximum exposure on the web, through her company www.creativeedgemarketingco.com