

- OW Fun Fact
Page 2
- Critter of the Month
Page 3
- Desert Plants
Page 6-7
- Don't Bust the Crust
Page 10
- School Program
Page 11
- OW Birthdays
Page 13
- Critter Cam
Page 14
- Visitors of Interest
Page 16
- Meet Jordan & Temet
Page 17
- Word Search
Page 18
- Weather Log
Back Cover

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Heber Maintenance | 4 |
| OW Maintenance | 5 |
| Biological Resources | 8-9 |
| Heber Dunes Report | 12- 13 |
| Visitor Services | 15 |
| Interpreter's Corner | 19 |

Blowsand Reader

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 5 & 6

MAY/JUNE 2008

Superintendent's Notes

By Kathy Dolinar, District Superintendent

The fiscal year closed with a flurry of activity throughout the district. I would like to thank our entire staff for meeting all of their deadlines as the fiscal year came to a close. Your continued support and dedication to our park and the district is greatly appreciated. Each of our departments completed various project documents and made numerous purchases to ensure that our visitors will continue to be served, even in the absence of a state budget. The Administrative Services staff is to be commended for keeping us inline with our budget. After putting in many long days closing out the fiscal year, we came out closer to the mark than ever before. This accomplishment is the direct result of the hard work and dedication of our Administrative Officer Leda Seals and her entire staff. **JOB WELL DONE, THANK YOU!**

Maintenance continued to work outside in temperatures that approached 118° with winds up to 40 mph. The day they poured cement for the block house walkway was possibly the hottest day of the year so far. On that same day, our resource staff diligently trekked cross-country counting flat-tailed horned lizards. Despite the heat, I continue to see all of you giving 100%. Thank you.

I was able to help with the heat in a small way by securing two THINK vehicles for use in our park. These vehicles had been placed in "out of service" status by DPR and were in need of repairs. Thanks to our Heavy Equipment Mechanic David Edman, the vehicles are now back in working order. These vehicles will soon display the new "Cool Parks" logo! The THINK is a four seat electric vehicle that will be used to transport staff, boxes and other materials around the office complex. For those of you accustomed to a cooler climate, even traveling short distances in temperatures pushing 120° can be stressful.



Kitty Gravett and Linda VanStaaveren cruise the OW district complex in our new THINK mobile.

(Continued on next page...)

Superintendent's Notes *continued...*

Speaking of thinking green and slowing global warming, meetings with geothermal continue. I am working with developers, various agencies, and our stakeholders to ensure that we do the best job we can in meeting the need for renewable energy in our state while staying true to the State Park Mission. In the near future, I will be doing a presentation on geothermal to our staff.

The Visitor Services staff has been reduced for the slow season. However, the staff members that did remain behind continue to provide crucial and much needed information and services to the few visitors who come to our park this time of year. An unusually cool Memorial Day weekend led to a large number of visitors over the holiday weekend. However, our ranger staff stepped up to the challenge and handled the increased business flawlessly.

During the month of May, the Freeman Acquisition facilitation group made an on-site visit to the project area. The visit gave the group an opportunity to tour the property collectively and address issues of concern from both the Conservation and OHV communities. During the first week of June, the same facilitation group also met to review the interim management proposals for the upcoming season made by specialist staff members from both the Ocotillo Wells SVRA and Anza-Borrego Desert SP. A team will be going out in July to begin the on-the-ground work for the finalization of our interim management measures. A thumbs up and a special thank you goes out to Julia Richards, who has now completed all of the Freeman Acquisition contracts and has sent them off to DPR in Sacramento for encumbrance. While the contracts on these are now complete, the work on them has just begun...

Again, I want to thank each of our staff members for your hard work and dedication. We continue to make progress- -some days like the tortoise, some days like the hare, and some days like the bird who keeps flying into the window! But remember, as long as we have a clear vision and a united team, we will continue to move ahead and overcome any challenges we may face!

Ocotillo Wells Fun Fact...

Have you ever noticed any mysterious, volcano-like, bubbling mud pots in the park?

These are the Gas Domes!

Cool to the touch, this gray murky water releases large bubbles of gas into the environment. Over the years, they have built up mounds or domes from the sediment that is deposited on the surface as the water evaporates.

Stop by and see this incredible geologic feature of the park along the Gas Dome Trail east of Pole Line Road.



The Sidewinder... Our Critter of the Month

By Steve Quartieri, Environmental Scientist

The sidewinder is another signature species of the Desert Southwest.

The sidewinder gets its name from the method of locomotion it uses to travel across the desert floor. Sidewinding is an effective method of moving across areas of loose, hot, sandy soils where traction is difficult. Did you realize that when a sidewinder is sidewinding across the desert floor, only a small portion of its body is actually in contact with the hot surface at any one time? Think of that the next time you're curling up your feet as you run barefooted across the hot pavement!



Photo by Bruce Edley

Sidewinders, like other rattlesnakes, are called pit vipers because they have a pair of infra-red sensing devices located on the side of their heads called "loreal pits." These pits allow the snake to pinpoint the location of their prey in total darkness by detecting subtle differences in the temperatures of various objects (differences as little as 0.2°F).

Sidewinders are a vital component of a healthy desert ecosystem. They help keep the small mammal population in control by feeding on pocket mice, kangaroo rats, and other small rodents. Imagine how many rodents would be running around without them to keep their population in check. Sidewinders themselves are also an important food source. They are regularly eaten by such predators as coyotes, and badgers, as well as roadrunners and other birds of prey.



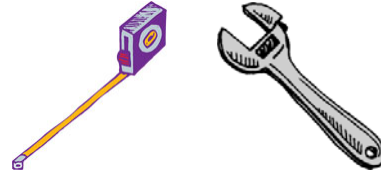
Recently, a mating pair of sidewinders was observed outside the backdoor at the district office. It was the talk of the week around the water cooler. But don't worry; these snuggling sidewinders were safely relocated to an area outside Kathy Dolinar's office window.

We've asked Kathy to keep her eyes open, because sometime during the late summer, somewhere between five and eighteen baby sidewinders will be slithering around outside her office window!

Sidewinders are an incredible member of the desert ecosystem and I challenge you to discover more amazing facts about this highly misunderstood desert reptile.

Heber Dunes Maintenance

By Alfredo Jacobo, Park Maintenance Worker I



May was an exciting month for Heber Dunes SVRA. Charlie Spratt and I have been busy installing fire rings at many of the shade ramadas in the park. The recently added shade ramadas, picnic tables and now fire rings are a wonderful addition to our park and are sure to be enjoyed by our visitors.



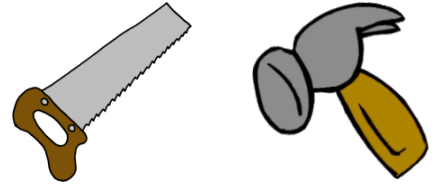
Also in mid-May, we worked with 16 corps members from the California Conservation Corps based in San Bernardino County. They did a five day stint in the park, helping

with salt cedar (tamarisk) reduction project on the north side of the park.



We at Heber Dunes would like to thank Dan Christensen for bring down his heavy equipment and for his special operational skills which allowed us to finish the salt cedar project.

Ocotillo Wells Maintenance



By Brian Woodson, Park Maintenance Worker I

Hello again from the Maintenance Department here at Ocotillo Wells. The last couple of months have been a blur of activity as we've undergone several changes both in staffing and work-shop.

We've downsized our seasonal staff for the upcoming summer season as no one in their right mind wants to come visit us here in the "heat of the moment." I want to personally thank all the seasonal employees for a job well done and I am looking forward to seeing those of you returning for work next season.

Our workshop/office remodel is drawing to a close. We've expanded one office to encompass the new "interpretive department" and have remodeled two small, non-ADA compliant restrooms into one restroom that meets ADA specs. During this phase, we discovered substantial termite and dry rot infestation along with visible moisture damage in



New Interpretive Office



New Maintenance Workshop

the adjoining wall between the two bathrooms that was a direct result of a decayed cast iron pipe drain system. We've also placed new linoleum tiles on the floor to replace worn out carpet and to assist with the upkeep in the high traffic area between our new workshop and our staff breakroom.

That about sums it all up for these last two months. Stay tuned for our next visit into the Land O' Maintenance sometime in August.



New Employee Breakroom

Smoke Trees

By Peggy Hurley, Park Maintenance Assistant

Smoke trees are the reward to those hardy souls who stay past tourist season and into the heat of summer. The last of the major plants to bloom each wildflower season, they brighten up June or July days with their dark purple blossoms. They are in the pea family and their heady fragrance is reason enough to search out a smoke tree in bloom. While the intoxicating aroma is one reason the smoke tree is one of my favorite plants and the grayish-green color of the branches another, perhaps the biggest reason I enjoy this tree is because of the ongoing artwork that occurs beneath its boughs as it blooms. The spent petals pile up beneath the branches like miniature purple snowdrifts. The wind swirls them into intricate patterns: a mosaic of sand, pebbles and purple. The harvester ants hurriedly collect the fallen blossoms to take back to their mound and then create still more art by discarding them around their holes as purple circles.



These trees may look like a puff of smoke from a distance, hence the name. Since the leaves are small, seasonal and practically nonexistent, photosynthesis occurs through the stems of the thorny grayish-green branches. Naturally occurring in washes, smoke trees rely on the abrading action of churning sand and water during flash floods to perforate the hard seed covering, allowing it to sprout.

(Continued on next page...)

Smoke Trees *continued...*

The smoke tree is known as smokethorn in other areas, and “smoke tree” can refer to several unrelated species... Thus proving to me, once again, how confusing common names can be. However, now I am getting confused about the Latin name too! *Psoralea spinosa* is not as easy to pronounce, nor is it as pretty of a name, as the synonym *Dalea spinosa*, by which it is also known. So now there are two names to remember?

Dalea spinosa seems much more refined, like a stage name for an exotic headliner. She is onstage now, after waiting in the wings, to close the wildflower show. As the other spring beauties fade in the oppressive early summer heat, *Dalea spinosa* is just donning her elegant wardrobe. *Dalea* is flashy and wears too much perfume, attracting hoards of busy bees- a humming soundtrack to her performance.



As *Dalea spinosa* takes the final bow at the end of an incredible wildflower season, inhale her perfume and feel the hum of life surrounding her while pausing to admire the mosaic of jewel-like petals at her feet.

Biological Resources

By Joe Hopkins, Environmental Scientist

For Biological Resources, spring means reptiles. In May, we ran three weeks of pitfall trapping. We put in four more sets for a total of 22, thus completing the changeover begun last fall. Changing to more pitfalls for a longer time period was a success, with a significant increase in both number of captures and species. Significant plots were Palo Verde with six different species; several plots with four different species, including Barrel Springs which had its first flat-tails ever found inside the enclosure; Eastridge that had three flat-tails in the same bucket; and Heber Arrow with 17 total lizards-although 15 were the same species, the side-blotched. Significant species observations included a record number of flat-tails (21) and the large number of banded geckos (11), a species usually not seen until later in the summer. Rangers Adam Borello and Sasha Wessitch were able to ride along on a few of the surveys and got to see some very nice animals. Sasha showed quite an eye by spotting a sidewinder through the fencing next to which it had coiled up to bask.

Although the pitfalls are for reptiles, you never know what is going to be in there! This spring was no disappointment. One capture was a desert shrew, only the second time one of those had been found in our traps. We will run its picture next issue, along with a few other interesting invertebrates. For this issue, we've selected one of the two pocket gophers, an animal never before seen at either OW or Heber, and an iron-cross blister beetle. Both of these were captured at Heber.



This is a Botta's pocket gopher right after it had gratuitously bitten Eric's shoe.



The bright colors of the iron-cross blister beetle carry a warning for potential predators.

(Continued on next page...)

Biological Resources *continued...*

As soon as the general reptile survey was completed, we started on our flat-tail surveys. Expectations ran high because of all of the flat-tails that had been captured in the pit traps and that had been encountered on the vegetation surveys in March and April and while driving from place to place. Our expectations crashed considerably when the first 21 occupancy plots resulted in only one flat-tail being found. On top of this, the extended survey done on the first sentinel plot, a survey that is supposed to find approximately 18 flat-tails, resulted in only two. After that, though, circumstances did improve. We had five positive plots (meaning a flat-tail was found) out of our next 16 occupancy plots. The second sentinel plot was abandoned with three days to go when our scanner ceased to function; however, we had found ten flat-tails up to that point. For scientific purposes, though, this has not been as useful as it could have been because only three were adults that could have a sensor implanted in them. The seven lovely babies certainly raised our morale though.



Two of the baby flat-tails found on the second sentinel plot. It took sharp eyes to find these needles-in-a-haystack.

Joining our department in time for surveys (once her stint in the office was completed) was a new addition, Park Aide Sarah Wessitsh. As a rookie, she went out and found the first flat-tail on the occupancy surveys and then patiently waited for the rest of us to catch up! Returning to us as June ended was Environmental Services Intern Donna Hopkins who worked on the second sentinel plot and is going to be assisting in preparing some interpretive panels on plant and animal life in the desert.

Senior Environmental Scientist Eric Hollenbeck and ES Joe Hopkins breathed a collective huge sigh of relief as the last of the Freeman contracts were awarded. They will get a brief respite until the end of the summer when they start monitoring the work of the winning bidders. Eric also finished up the last two weeks (one in May and one in June) of his training class, Supervisory Practices, at Marconi. Joe and ES Gary Slattery attended the flat-tail meeting in Yuma in June, a meeting that Eric missed because he was at a General Plan meeting in San Diego.

We ended the month of June by installing the wildlife cameras at various water sources throughout the park. Some of our resident fauna captured on camera appear in a new feature called *Critter Cam* which appears for the first time in this issue.

Don't Bust the Crust!

Adapted from an article appearing in the Joshua Tree National Park Visitor Guide, Summer 2008

What has tentacles creeping through the ground around you, is composed of several living things, resists whipping desert winds, and is invisible to the untrained eye?



Cryptobiotic Crusts, otherwise known as “desert glue”.

These crypto- (*meaning hidden*) biotic (*meaning life*) crusts are a community of organisms that live within the top few inches of the soil. In arid regions, they are dominated by cyanobacteria (blue-green algae), but they also include lichens, mosses, green algae, fungi, and bacteria.

Cryptobiotic crusts are not only cool to check out, but they are also vitally important to the health of a desert ecosystem. Soil crusts cement loose soil particles together and thus reduce soil erosion from both wind and water; they contribute nitrogen and much needed organic matter to an otherwise sparse ecosystem; and they reduce rainfall runoff by slowing the flow of the water, thus, allowing the rain to soak in. Collectively, all of these benefits create a microhabitat which is conducive to germinating plant seeds (*remember the desert wildflowers we marveled at a few months back*).



A new seedling sprouting amongst the cryptobiotic crust layer.



Scanning electron micrograph of cyanobacterial sheath material sticking to sand grains.

Cryptobiotic crusts are vital to a healthy desert ecosystem, and they truly are another incredible member of the desert around us.

Remember to do your part and keep this fragile community strong and healthy by remaining on trails when you're exploring the desert.

Make sure you visit our new cryptobiotic crust interpretive panel titled “It's Alive”. It will be unveiled this fall as part of our interpretive panel expansion project.

Andy & Urban Visit Area Grade School

By Andy Ahlberg, Supervising Park Ranger

Each year, our ranger staff conducts numerous outreach and interpretive programs for various schools and organizations. This month, Supervising Ranger Andy Ahlberg conducted an outreach program at Abby Reinke Elementary School. Over fifteen grade school students attended the program. The children and parents spent time with Ahlberg and his canine, Urban, learning about how to enjoy the outdoors safely and how to leave the outdoors cleaner and healthier than they found it.

School programs like this one are an important component to our district's interpretive program.



Supervising Ranger Andy Ahlberg and Canine Urban helping kids develop a love for the outdoors

The Heber Dunes Report

By Vic Herrick, Supervising Ranger

May:

Hot weather apparently decreased our visitation here at Heber Dunes. However, some hardcore folks still make it out here and ride, especially in the evenings. It has been a good time for wildlife, and the resource folks were here to monitor reptile and rodent populations. Heber Dunes provides some wildlife habitat in an otherwise very limited environment. It's an island of valuable cover, surrounded by busy roads, canals and intensely farmed lands. The abundant forage from the hay crops adjacent to Heber, combined with the cover and nesting areas here, make for abundant rodents, rabbits, birds of prey, coyotes and even bobcats. It is well known that land managers in the west are waging war on the invasive non-native tamarisk trees on several fronts, but the doves (mourning, white-winged and Eurasian) are using the tall Athel tamarisks as nesting sites, and perhaps that gives these trees some redeeming value in addition to the shade and windbreak they offer.

Habitat is where you find it...and some species will do well even with the inherent disturbance of a busy park. A pair of red-tailed hawks has successfully nested on the south SDGE transmission tower and dozens of doves nest in the tamarisks. The Gambel's quail are lying low, probably nesting in the nearby brush.

Some highly visible improvements were made here this month. CCC crews, under the direction of new arrival Worker I Alfredo Jacobo, did a lot of trimming of tamarisk trees and hazard elimination of fallen trees, branches, etc. This work was much needed. We will quite likely be dealing with such debris, stumps and logs for quite some time. The many fallen logs do provide good cover for wildlife and some will be used to help establish trails.

At our request, SDGE arranged to have some unsightly graffiti removed from the bases of the high voltage transmission lines at the south end of the park. (See hawk nesting above.)

June:

Summer is settling in, and we now enjoy 100° + days and quite warm nights. There are even fewer off-road users now, though there are some hardy souls almost every day, especially in the evenings at sundown. We had a few off-road graduation parties here, and the groups responded well to Ranger Vic's safety discussion.

With fewer visitors, there is more time to notice nature and the wildlife behavior. A bumper crop of cottontail rabbits is no doubt providing food for the coyotes, red-tailed hawks, and other predators here. The red-tailed hawks nesting on the SDGE tower bred successfully, and at least two fledglings were seen low on the tower (6/22/08). They should be flying competently in the next couple of weeks. The vigorous arrowweed plants along the west road perimeter prompted the farmer next door to grade the road and slow their rampant growth.

The Heber Dunes Report *continued...*

Walking around under the tamarisk groves reveals numerous neatly broken egg shells, evidence of a successful hatch of doves overhead. And the invertebrates abound—we have witnessed dozens of praying mantids and clouds of insects around the lights at night. Alfredo escorted a banded gecko from the restroom. No doubt it wandered in the night before as it sought grounded insect prey.



A surprising discovery was made on the southern boundary of our park, a deceased Virginia rail was found. The bird was sent to UC Davis for analysis. One must be wary about declaring what does and does not occur here, as we are continually surprised. For example, Alfredo recently confirmed what we had long suspected, that the Yuma-type California kingsnake occurs here. He found a big dark one by the dumpsters and another as it swam across the canal.

To our disappointment, someone vandalized the interpretive panel near our entrance. Alfredo immediately repaired it, and Ranger Vic said, “We will outwork these guys! We can build and create faster than they can destroy... we are here to stay, they will move on.” In general, vandalism as well as other crimes and accidents are way down, and the locked gates and presence of park staff have made this a fun and safe place to be.

Upcoming OW Birthdays...

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Steve Quartieri | August 15th |
| David Edman | August 22nd |
| Kathy Dolinar | August 27th |
| Kirk Shea | August 28th |



Critter Cam

By Joe Hopkins, Environmental Scientist



A coyote makes the dirt fly as it enlarges the access to the water at Barrel Springs.

Resources has installed its new remote wildlife cameras at various water sources throughout the park. Some of the shots obtained will be featured in a new *Blowsand Reader* section, Critter Cam. These pictures are a result of just a few days of placement.



A second coyote takes advantage of his cousin's nighttime excavation.



A kit fox warily approaches the water hole at Barrel Springs.

Visitor Services

By Andy Ahlberg, Supervising Park Ranger

Here are the stats for May and June 2008:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Arrest | 6 Traffic Collisions |
| 5 Major Medical Assists | 1 Minor Medical Assist |
| 3 Search and Rescue / Overdue Persons | 10 Assist Other Agencies |
| 1 Formal Outreach Program | |

As the temperatures started to rise in the desert, things began to slow down for the rangers. May started fairly quietly, a call here and there, but nothing very crazy. As the month continued, several calls for service went out, some citations were issued, and one man was arrested for Driving Under the Influence. Ocotillo Wells Rangers also assisted with patrol at Heber Dunes SVRA throughout the month.

The first TC (Traffic Collision) of the month occurred on May 10th. Adam Borello and Sasha Wessitsh responded to Holmes Camp and provided critical care to a juvenile female with head trauma. After Ocotillo Wells Fire arrived on scene, the patient was packaged for air transport to Palomar Hospital.

On May 14th, Jessica Murany spent her last day patrolling Ocotillo Wells SVRA-without incident. Jessica moved on to the San Diego Coast District for a brand new experience. Jessica's help could have been used on the 18th after a report of an At-Risk Overdue Person was received by SUR-COM. Supervising Ranger Ahlberg was awakened in the wee hours of the morning by dispatch requesting assistance. Ahlberg acted as the Incident Commander for the situation and had Ranger Wessitsh, Ranger Bier, Air Patrol, and San Diego Sheriff's Officers respond. The reason for the major response is that at 0700 hours, half an hour after the original call had been received, it was already 90 degrees-plus the overdue person was a diabetic and was last seen at 0100 hours, intoxicated and walking into the desert after a confrontation with friends. The man was finally located near camp after walking about five miles from where he had spent the night. The man reported that he only remembered leaving camp and then waking up to a sidewinder lying just inches from his face! After being checked by OW Rangers and Ocotillo Wells Fire, the man was released.

May came to an end, but not without a bang. Memorial Day was surprisingly busy for as warm as it was. Several Injury TCs occurred, many citations were issued, and Ahlberg arrested a male driving at the base of Blow Sand. Ahlberg stopped the vehicle because a male riding in the bed of the truck was nearly being thrown out as the driver raced over the "whoops" heading towards Blow Sand. Ahlberg stopped the driver, who denied drinking any alcohol. The driver did not perform well on the field sobriety tests and was subsequently arrested for DUI. A breath sample provided by the suspect was over twice the legal limit.

However, the most exciting incident that occurred over the last two months was the delivery of a healthy baby boy to Ranger Borello and his wife in mid May. Congratulations to the Borello Family!!! Make sure you *Meet Temet* on page 18.

Visitors of Interest

By Marcella Barker, Office Assistant

The peak season has truly ended and the heat is on. The desert seems desolate. But wait, I had more visitors in the latter part of May and all of June than I could have ever expected.



During the last week of May, I was visited by a giant desert hairy scorpion (*Hadrurus arizonensis*). At first I was scared, but then I learned that the scorpion's venom is not significantly dangerous to humans. This guy hid under the rocks during the day and came out at night to hunt the insects that occupied his desert surroundings. His stay lasted two weeks, then he was kindly escorted out by Ranger Ahlberg. In late June, his big brother arrived. This one proved without a doubt, the GIANT desert hairy scorpion is the largest scorpion in North America. They can reach a length of six inches. Boy, was I glad when he packed his bags and left!

In the beginning of June, there were several knocks at the window by a large black-and-white mottled bird with a distinctive head crest. His feet were long, and he had a white-tipped tail and oversized bill. He was immediately identified as a roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*). Needless to say, we did not let him in. He apparently spends his time scooting around the desert, knocking on park windows and eating reptiles and other critters. What a life!



I must not forget the visitor whose life ended in one of our blue "We Recycle" trash cans...the infamous *Eremobates pallipes*, the solpugid, also known as the sun spider or wind scorpion (though he is neither a spider or a scorpion). They say these critters run fast, like the wind. Though they have no venom, their jaws are strong. Frankly, I'm glad I haven't found one alive.

Last but not least, a little bitty Side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*) nearly lost his life trying to get into the Visitors Center. Lucky for him, Kitty's quick reflexes saved him from a very short life. This little guy was only two inches to begin with, and then after losing his tale in the ordeal, he was a mere inch and a half. I can see why he wanted in the Visitor Center so badly, these lizards are preyed upon by larger lizards, and only 10% to 20% survive each season. He now calls the native plant garden his "home sweet home."



Well, that's it for recent visitors. I'm looking forward to see who comes in next!

Meet Jordan...

Jordan Fenwick is Ocotillo Wells' newest State Park Ranger. Jordan recently graduated from the State Park Ranger Academy and he will be joining Ocotillo Wells upon completion of his 16-week field-training program which he is currently undergoing.

Jordan was born and raised in San Diego, CA. He attended San Dieguito High School and Mira Costa College. Jordan says he loves to travel. He states he has been to England several times to visit family and he has traveled extensively throughout California. One of his favorite areas in the state is the Eastern Sierra Nevada, with the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest and Bodie State Historic Park being among his favorite places. He also loves to backpack. In 2007 he completed a 25-mile backpacking trip through Yosemite which included climbing Half Dome. He enjoys photography and has taken many landscape and architectural photos during his travels.

Jordan joined the state park system in 2006 as a Park Aid at San Elijo State Beach. Jordan states he is looking forward to joining the OW team and we are glad to have him.



Jordan Fenwick, our newest State Park Ranger, is joined by Daphne Greene, Deputy Director OHV, and Phil Jenkins, OHV Division Chief, following the graduation ceremony held at the Mott Training Center.

Meet Temet...

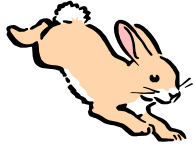
Hello Everyone -

Well, Cheyenne and I are the proud parents of a beautiful baby boy named Temet Sam Borello. Born on May 16th, Temet has been forgiving and patient with his first-time parents. He has given us great joy, and the experience has been thoroughly enriching and grounding. We look forward to sharing him with each of you in the future and hope all is well with you and your families.

Sincerely,

Adam and Cheyenne Borello





Furry Desert Animals



These furry animals are found in and around the Ocotillo Wells District. Their names never lie wholly in a straight line; they bend and twist in every direction to challenge your mind.

A 13x13 grid of letters with various animal paw prints around it. The letters are:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E | D | O | N | B | T | T | R | E | W | X | T | A | Y | W | C |
| S | P | T | C | O | J | H | O | N | T | E | R | O | P | O | Q |
| L | E | R | M | V | K | G | A | M | A | C | O | S | O | T | A |
| K | L | D | E | S | E | I | T | L | S | I | X | U | N | D | I |
| J | I | I | M | R | R | F | T | E | R | K | L | D | I | W | L |
| H | T | W | O | C | T | D | F | B | Q | R | A | F | U | E | K |
| R | T | D | Q | O | K | S | O | N | M | I | N | H | D | C | R |
| E | L | E | W | A | D | B | Y | X | U | G | Z | G | A | E | A |
| E | S | S | N | X | R | C | A | T | Q | A | L | R | J | R | B |
| P | T | E | G | A | R | O | O | E | S | V | R | O | O | D | B |
| O | A | R | T | Z | K | A | U | R | E | D | N | U | R | E | I |
| B | C | K | E | L | K | E | T | E | A | B | K | A | T | L | T |
| O | T | T | R | T | C | U | S | G | O | T | T | G | B | T | I |
| D | S | U | A | M | O | P | I | H | P | H | E | R | A | L | A |
| G | E | Y | R | S | P | U | O | B | R | E | W | D | Y | A | T |
| F | D | E | T | U | T | C | A | C | R | E | G | J | T | C | K |

- BADGER
- KIT FOX
- MERRIAM'S KANGAROO RAT
- DESERT COTTON TAIL**
- BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT
- LITTLE POCKET MOUSE
- DEER MOUSE
- ROUND-TAILED GROUND SQUIRREL

- COYOTE
- BOTTA'S POCKET GOPHER
- DESERT KANGAROO RAT
- BOBCAT
- DESERT POCKET MOUSE
- CACTUS MOUSE
- DESERT WOODRAT
- DESERT SHREW

The Interpreter's Corner

By Steve Quartieri, Environmental Scientist

The increase in temperatures and the subsequent decline in visitors have resulted in our shifting focus from “outdoor interpretive event” mode to “indoor project” mode here in the Interpretation Department. Over the course of May and June, we had the opportunity to start several major projects in our department. First, we began the process of hiring an interpretive staff; second, we started developing plans for our new interpretive office; third, we entered a more aggressive stage of our interpretive panel makeover project; and finally, we began the initial planning stage for our first-ever park visitor guide.

While all of the projects we embark upon in the Interpretation Department are fun and exciting, none to date has been any more exciting or potentially more significant than the addition of an interpretive staff to the district team. I am pleased to announce that the Ocotillo Wells District will be adding a State Park Interpreter I and two Park Interpretive Specialists to our team for the upcoming season. This is another significant step for our program. Not only will the addition of these positions enable us to implement many of the wonderful interpretive ideas you have suggested, but it will also allow us to substantially increase the number of interpretive programs being offered.

As part of our staff expansion, the Interpretive Department will also be undergoing an address change. Currently, our office is located in the district office building; however, thanks to the hard work and skill of the maintenance staff, we soon will be relocating to a much larger office that will be part of the newly renovated block house. Our new office will provide our interpretive staff a centralized location in which to develop programs, do research, work on projects, and store our ever-growing interpretive material collection. Watch for our ribbon-cutting article in an upcoming issue.

As you are probably aware, our district is also in the process of a complete interpretive panel makeover. In addition to replacing some of the weathered panels in various locations of the park, we are also planning to install up to 24 new double-sided interpretive bulletin boards as well. These displays will have various interpretive information on one side and a park map and safety information on the other. Donna Hopkins will be assisting us in designing several of these panels. As part of the process of developing these panels, I attended a two-day training course for Adobe InDesign software last month. This software will allow us to develop professional quality interpretive panels for use in our park. Between Donna's wonderful and creative ideas and excellent writing skills and my newly acquired software knowledge, we are hoping to develop interpretive panels that our park visitors will enjoy for years to come.

Another project we started this month is the development of our visitor guide. The visitor guide will be an effective tool for communicating information to our visitors as well as educating them about the incredible resources that are found in our park. I would like to thank all of you who submitted your ideas about what should be included in this, our first-ever park visitor guide.

It is an exciting time in the Interpretation Department here at Ocotillo Wells!



Ocotillo Wells District

Ocotillo Wells SVRA
 P.O. Box 360
 Borrego Springs, CA 92004
 Phone: (760) 767-5391
www.ohv.parks.ca.gov

The May & June Weather Log...



May

High Temperature

May 19th

113.2 degrees

Low Temperature

May 2nd

53.8 degrees

Average High Temperature

90.1 degrees

Average Low Temperature

66.7 degrees

Maximum Wind Gust

May 21st

40.0 mph

Rainfall for the Month

0.03 inches

June

High Temperature

June 21st

117.9 degrees

Low Temperature

June 5th

64.7 degrees

Average High Temperature

106.3 degrees

Average Low Temperature

66.7 degrees

Maximum Wind Gust

June 4th

43.0 mph

Rainfall for the Month

0.00 inches

Data recorded at the Ocotillo Wells Ranger Station, Ocotillo Wells, California.