



The Bear Claw



The Sandia Mountain Natural History Center Newsletter

The mission of SMNHC is to work within New Mexico communities to develop an ecologically literate citizenry.

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Sandia Mountain Ecosystem Monitoring Program Appeals to Different Grade Levels

We've been busy! Our staff is operating at full capacity this spring with so many students doing bio-monitoring, in addition to our regular programs.

This semester, students from the Academy of Trades and Technology, Native American Community Academy, and four Valley Cluster Elementary Schools will monitor plants and arthropods in our meadow and forest research sites. Fourth graders from Alameda, Alvarado and Cochiti Elementaries are getting a head start for their fifth-grade experience next year by learning about the food web here, and doing hands-on identification and classification. We will be looking for relationships between plant and arthropod populations in each site, as well as correlations between these populations and the air and soil tem-

peratures. Duranes third and fourth graders are really getting into being real scientists by coming up three times to study different topics, including snakes and lizards!

Francis Vigil's 9th graders from Native American Community Academy will also be testing the water quality at our Mud and Paradise Springs, as well as at nearby Cole Spring. They will visit four times this semester to compare the pH, temperature, and microorganism content of the springs.

It's not too soon to start thinking about participating next school year... We will offer our bio-monitoring program on a first-come first-served basis. We can also work with individual teachers who would like to bring students here to do an independent project. So drop us an email or give us a call at 281-5259 to get involved!
-Amy White

Free First Saturdays!

If you haven't made it to one of the Sandia Mountain Natural History Center's (SMNHC) First Saturday programs yet, this is your chance. Normally set aside for school groups the SMNHC opens to the public a few select days of the year. Take advantage of the 5 1/2 miles of trails, wildlife observation deck, picnic grounds and exhibit rooms. Each month features an education session allowing visitors to gain knowledge on a specific topic relevant to the SMNHC and the Sandia Mountains.

Gates are open 9:00 a.m. to 3:00p.m. The education session will take place from 10:00-11:00. For directions or more information check our website or call. If the National Forest is closed the SMNHC trails will still be open.

In the spotlight...



We are excited to welcome Rosie Emeny who will be joining the SMNHC in August as the newest intern!

Rosie grew up in New Mexico and spent a lot of time camping and hiking in the Jemez and Sandia Mountains. After a year at UNM she transferred to Oregon State University to pursue a degree in Natural Resources. Rosie graduated in June 2008 and spent the following months exploring the natural areas in New Hampshire. While in New Hampshire Rosie worked and volunteered for Project Learning Tree and took their curriculum training. She is returning home to New Mexico to work for Fenton Ranch, where she worked for two summers in high school.

Rosie is very excited to begin working at the SMNHC: sharing her knowledge of ecology and natural resources with students, and once again spending time in the areas she loved as a kid.

Please register by the Tuesday before the workshop

All workshops have a \$10 materials fee
To Register or for more information contact Susie Davis at susan.davis@state.nm.us, 281-5259 or visit our website, www.nmnaturalhistory.org/smnhc

Upcoming Events:

First Saturdays 2009

April 4:

SMNHC Wildlife Research

May 2:

Fire Thinning & Forest Health

June 6:

Medicinal and Edible Plants

July 4:

Compass Use and Geocaching

August 1:

Animal Signs

September 5:

* Fall Guided Hikes

* *reservations required: please call the office beforehand*

Teacher Workshops

April 18, Sat. 9:30-3:00pm

Wild Sandias!

SMNHC's Short Course:

Where: Sandia Mountain Natural History Center

Who: All teachers and pre-teachers (also open to non-teachers) Many activities aimed at a 5th grade audience

What: Experience the Sandias and discover ways to integrate the multi-dimensional experience of nature into your teaching! Hike with us and learn hands-on activities and fascinating facts about local plants and animals to engage your students and demonstrate ecology principles. Local ecosystems help students learn and retain ecological principals!

Get tips on using the outdoors as a teaching tool, even your schoolyard! Free ecology curricula CDs available to participants.

Materials: Participants receive the SMNHC's ecology activity guides ("Ecosystems Everywhere Curriculum")

The Sandia Mountain Natural History Center (SMNHC) is a natural history & environmental education facility located on the east side of the Sandia Mountains in Cedar Crest, New Mexico. The SMNHC is owned by Albuquerque Public Schools and operated by the New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science.



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For more information about the Center, visit our website at: www.nmnaturalhistory.org/SMNHC

