Southwestern Desert Bats

DATES AND TIMES OF MEETING: October 10, 11, 12, 2014 beginning at 6:00 P.M. on Friday and ending at 2 P.M. on Sunday
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Patricia Brown-Berry

Bats are important components of the desert ecosystem yet because of their nocturnal nature they are usually difficult to observe. This course will introduce the participants to the world of bats and to some of the techniques used by scientists to study these amazing mammals. Nightly field work will allow participants to use ultrasonic bat detectors and night vision equipment and to observe the mist-netting of wild bats (unless it’s windy). Diurnal lectures and videos will supplement the field experiences.

(This course will be offered through the Maturango Museum, 100 E Flores Ave, Ridgecrest CA 93555-3654, Director, Harris Brokke, 760-375-6900 FAX 760-375-0479.)

Birds of the Mojave Desert: Natural History & Conservation

DATES AND TIMES OF MEETING: October 17, 18, 19, 2014 beginning Friday at 8:00 P.M. and ending Sunday at 3:00 P.M.
INSTRUCTOR: Kurt Leuschner

Oases in the Mojave Desert are used by a wide variety of bird species every fall as stopping points during their southward migration. You will be amazed by the numbers and kinds of species we will encounter at this time of year. Beginning on Friday evening we will examine the important role of these stopover areas in the conservation of neotropical migrant birds and learn the techniques used to identify the common families of birds found in the vicinity of the Desert Studies Center. As we observe both migrant and resident birds in their natural habitats, we will learn about their ecology, natural history and special adaptations to the harsh desert environment.

Playas to Pines: The Diverse Landscapes and Habitats of the Eastern Mojave Desert

DATES AND TIMES OF MEETING: October 17, 18, 19, 2014 beginning at 8:00 P.M. on Friday and ending at 3:00 P.M. on Sunday
INSTRUCTOR: Robert Fulton

The eastern Mojave Desert is characterized by great topographic relief, complex geology, and diverse habitats, yielding a species richness not found in much of the western Mojave. Explore this diversity, from the low-lying remains of Ice Age lakes (playas) to Pinion Pine forests on the slopes of the higher ranges. Highlights include the towering Kelso sand dunes, expansive Cima Volcanic Field with its cinder cones, lava flows (and even a subterranean lava tube), the largest and densest Joshua Tree forest in the world on Cima Dome, and the eerily eroded volcanic deposits at Hole-in-the-Wall.
Mammal Tracking in the East Mojave

DATES AND TIMES OF MEETING: October 24, 25, 26, 2014 beginning at 8:00 P.M. on Friday and ending at 3:00 P.M. on Sunday

INSTRUCTOR: Jim Lowery

Study mammal track identification and interpretation in a location with outstanding substrate and a wide variety of species including kit fox, gray fox, bobcat, badger and spotted skunk. Using the Desert Studies Center as his base, nationally known tracking expert Jim Lowery, author of The Tracker’s Field Guide, will lead this weekend workshop that develops skills in going beyond identification and rather seeing tracks as windows to the animals’ biology, mood, behavior and body language. Jim has trained many field biologists and served as a consultant for mammal studies; through his school Earth Skills he has taught outdoor skills and tracking since 1987. This clinic is a good review and practice for experienced trackers, but is appropriate for novices as well.