

# ARIZONA STATE PARKS & TRAILS

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## Oracle State Park's Environmental Programs Scheduled February through March include the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dark Sky Celebration on March 18

**PHOENIX** – Hikes, walks and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dark Sky Celebration on March 18 are some of the featured events at Oracle State Park from February through April 2017. The park is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Weekdays, the park offers school programs and facility rental by reservation. Starting March 1, 2017 the park will be open 7 days a week!

Oracle State Park is a 4,000-acre wildlife refuge with over 15 miles of trails. Oracle State Park is an International Dark Sky Park, designated in 2014 by the International Dark Sky Association.

Except as noted, programs are free with park admission of \$7 per vehicle at the main gate on Mt. Lemmon Rd. in Oracle. Call the park office at (520) 896-2425 to make reservations, if needed.

**Saturday, February 11: Adventures with the Moon** begins at 7:30 pm. The moon, Earth's only natural satellite, with its mystery and intrigue continues to provide interest to Earth's humans. Join Oracle State Park volunteer, Dick Boyer, as he takes you to the moon and back through interactive family friendly activities and displays. Please call for a reservation. Arrive early or stay late for telescope viewing, courtesy of the Oracle Dark Skies Committee.

**Thursday, February 16: Annual Volunteer Training** - 9 am to Noon at the Kannally Ranch House. This first class is an introduction to the Oracle State Park Volunteer Program and park history, with a focus on recruiting environmental education school program guides to lead student field trips on the trail. The training is **9 am to Noon** at the Kannally Ranch House. Please call for a reservation. Program guide training will continue Thursday mornings for four weeks: February 23, March 2 and 16.

**Saturday, February 18: Arizona Trail Thru-Hike.** Join a Ranger-led Guided Hike from **9 am to Noon** for 6-7 miles crossing the park on the National Scenic Arizona Trail. A reservation is required.

**Sunday, February 19: Speaking of Ravens** begins at 1 pm in the living room of the Kannally Ranch House. Toni Kahklen-Hoffman and Bob Elder will team up to discuss Ravens and their

kin. Bob will present a short introduction to Ravens, including aspects of their natural history, their intelligence, and their role in folklore. Toni, a Tlingit Indian from Southeast Alaska and a member of the Raven Moiety, will talk about ravens from a Tlingit cultural perspective and the role that ravens play in their tribal society. Please call for a reservation.

**Thursday, February 23: School Program Guide Training for Volunteers, 9 am to Noon.**

Learn the Oracle Adventure Program, an environmental education program on the trail, designed for grades 1-3. Please call for a reservation.

**Saturday, February 25: Cattle and Grasslands: A History of Ranching in southeastern Arizona,** a presentation in the living room of the Kannally Ranch House, to begin at **1 pm**. Presenter, Robin Pinto, is a landscape historian at the University of Arizona. Her talk includes ecological, political and economic issues and events that influence the history of cattle and ranching. Reservation is required. Thanks to sponsorship by **Friends of Oracle State Park**.

**Saturday, February 26: Guided Bird Walk,** begins at **8 am** with guide, Craig Anderson. Please call for a reservation.

**Thursday, March 2: School Program Guide Training for Volunteers, 9 am to Noon.** Learn the Oracle Odyssey Program, an environmental education program designed for grades 4-6. Please call for a reservation.

**Saturday, March 4: The Photographers Eye – How to Compose Great Images,** begins at **1 pm** in the living room of the Kannally Ranch House, for approximately 90 minutes, with Bob Hills. Making great photographs requires both technical and artistic abilities. This class focuses on the artistic elements of photography. It will cover image composition techniques that the photo-enthusiast can do with most any camera from smartphones to DSLRs. Reservation is suggested.

**Sunday, March 5: Bear Necessities,** begins at **1 pm** with interpretive docent, Richard Boyer, in the living room of the Kannally Ranch House. Would you like to know more about the black bear of Arizona? Information about bears, an appearance from the "Everywhere Bear," and information about safety around Bears will be presented in this inter-active 30 to 40-minute program. You might even win a prize for your knowledge about the black bear! Reservation is suggested.

**Sunday, March 12: "Craig's Big Year."** Survey of 25 Arizona Important Bird Areas (IBAs). Learn about these unique and beautiful habitats and the birds that inhabit them. Join Presenter, Craig Anderson, in the living room of the Kannally Ranch House for a program beginning at **1 pm** for one hour. Craig is an Audubon Arizona IBA Volunteer and has birded Arizona for 46 years. Please call for a reservation.

**Thursday, March 16: School Program Guide Training for Volunteers, 9 am to Noon.**

The final session of the annual volunteer training concludes with an introduction to the plants, wildlife and geology of the park; also, safety protocol on the trail. Please call for a reservation.

**Saturday, March 18: Dark Sky Celebration - Second Anniversary!** It's been two years since Oracle State Park received designation as an International Dark Sky Park, recognizing dark skies as a limited resource needing protection, and celebrating Oracle as an exceptional place for telescope viewing! Call for a reservation and join a Beginner Digital Astrophotography Workshop from 2 to 4 pm with volunteer Mike Weasner. Workshop. Participants can stick around for Live Music and get some astrophotography playtime during the evening Star Party!

Enjoy Live Music from **from 4:30 to 6:30 pm**, by local favorites, the **Oracle Ridge Band**. The band will play a dancy 'americana' mix of country rock and blues favorites, featuring mandolin, steel guitar, bass and drums. Then from **7 to 9 pm**, **Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association will host** will host a Star Party with telescopes and interpretation of night-sky objects. Thanks to Friends of Oracle State Park for music sponsorship. No reservation is needed for the music and Star Party, just the workshop.

**Sunday, March 19: Bighorn Basics, 1 pm.** Join Arizona State Parks volunteer, Richard Boyer, at the Kannally Ranch House for a 35-minute talk to learn more about bighorn sheep. *What are they? Where have they been? Where are they now?* Many of the tools we use can be compared to the tools the Bighorn Sheep use to survive in mountainous areas of Arizona. For several years, Richard presented this Bighorn Basics program at Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado where he retired as a seasonal National Park Service Ranger. Reservation is preferred.

**Saturday March 25: Bugs of America, Noon to 4 pm.** Learn more about the world of bugs with Shane Burchfield out of Portal, AZ. He'll start with a formal talk, and stick around for an interactive opportunity with visitors. This Entomology Education Program can answer all your questions about Arizona's wildlife and in particular, its native invertebrates. Get close to his collection of live centipedes, scorpions, tarantulas and more. Thanks to **Friends of Oracle State Park** for sponsoring this program. No reservation is needed.

**Saturday, April 1: Birding Program with Kathe Anderson, begins 4 pm in the Kannally Ranch House** living room with a one-hour presentation, "Temporary Custody of a Rainbow." Learn the backstory of 10 colorful migrants, such as the yellow warbler, blue grosbeak, summer tanager, and others. The talk will be followed by a 90-minute Bird walk outside, ending about 6:45 pm. Bring a snack and wrap up about 7:15 pm with a bird list while watching the sunset from the patio. Reservation is suggested.

**Sunday, April 2: Birding and Breakfast: Kathe Anderson** returns to offer an early morning guided bird walk at the park, beginning at 7 am. Following the two-hour walk, participants will

be treated to a special breakfast offering on the patio of the Kannally Ranch House, courtesy of the Friends of Oracle State Park. The group will review the morning sightings while enjoying coffee, treats and great views. The \$10 fee includes the park entrance fee. Reservation is required.

**Saturday, April 8: The Photographers Eye – How to Compose Great Images**, begins at **1 pm** in the living room of the Kannally Ranch House, for approximately 90 minutes, with Bob Hills. Making great photographs requires both technical and artistic abilities. This class focuses on the artistic elements of photography. It will cover image composition techniques that the photo-enthusiast can do with most any camera from smartphones to DSLRs. This class is targeted at beginner or novice photographers, but may be of interest to more advanced amateur photo-enthusiasts as well. Reservation is suggested.

**Guided tours of the historic Kannally Ranch House** are scheduled for 11 a.m. every Saturday and Sunday for 45-minutes. The multi-level Mediterranean-Revival style house, built in 1929-33 by one of the earliest cattle ranching families in Oracle, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. An exhibit of impressionistic-style cowboy paintings by self-taught artist Lee Kannally is on display in the living room and dining room.

**Self-guided tours of the historic Kannally Ranch House:** Visit the park office/gift-shop and take a self-guided tour through the multi-level Kannally family home. The Mediterranean-Revival Style ranch house built 1929-1933, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Lee Kannally paintings exhibit** continues. An exhibit of impressionist-style paintings by self-taught cowboy artist, Lee Kannally, is on display at the Kannally Ranch House. Nearly 30 oils are included in the exhibit, thanks to the Oracle Historical Society and Friends of Oracle State Park.

### **Wildlife Slide Show**

See what's showing up at waterhole cameras in the park.

**The American Avenue trailhead parking lot** is open every day to access the National Scenic Arizona Trail, and to accommodate use by night-time stargazers. The park is an International Dark Sky Park, designated in 2014 by the International Dark Sky Association.

**WHAT:** Hikes and Walks at Oracle State Park

**WHERE:** Oracle State Park - Located in the northern foothills of the Catalina Mountains, northeast of Tucson.

**WHEN:** February through April 2017

*"Managing and conserving Arizona's natural, cultural and recreational resources for the benefit of the people, both in our parks and through our partners."*

For information about Arizona State Parks and the many recreational, historical and cultural programs call **1-877-MY-PARKS** or visit [AZStateParks.com](http://AZStateParks.com).

**PRESS CONTACT:** Monica Enriquez at (602) 542-6997 or (602) 228-8518 - Email: [pio@azstateparks.gov](mailto:pio@azstateparks.gov)