

Asombro Insights

Science education for eager minds

A Quarterly Newsletter

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Responding to Teacher and Student Needs in 2015

Asombro's 2015 activities centered around a common theme: meeting the changing needs of teachers and students. This theme will continue and shape our 2016 activities.

"Today I learned what a yucca plant looks like and we even learned how to add feet and inches together," said a 3rd grader in our Desert Stories Project. This innovative, multidisciplinary project was developed in response to teachers' requests for science programs that also cover standards in language arts and math. Thanks to funding from the Stocker Foundation and the New Mexico

Children's Foundation, hundreds of students are participating in hands-on lessons that teach them about the fascinating mutualism between the yucca and the yucca moth while also helping them better understand parts of speech and graphing. The project is so successful that we are now expanding it and creating new Desert Stories modules for 2nd and 4th grades.

Another example of meeting teacher and student needs is the publication of our Climate Change and the Water Cycle unit that we developed in partnership with the USDA's Southwest Regional Climate Hub.

This engaging, fun, and scientifically rigorous education unit for 6-12th grade students is now available for free online. It's being promoted widely throughout the six-state region covered by the Climate Hub. We are excited to know that students in Hawaii, California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico will all be learning about climate change effects on the water cycle thanks to Asombro lessons. Be sure to share it with science educators you know (use the link on the Asombro website).

Continuing to meet teacher and student needs necessitates the right team of people working together. We were delighted to welcome Libby and Ryan, our two newest staff members, in 2015. Their passion for science education

and their expertise in standards, assessment, and outdoor learning have been a perfect fit for Asombro. Together with Rink, Stephanie, and Steph, they are helping ensure that Asombro remains a leader in science education in our region.

2015 was a great year, and we have an even more exciting, ambitious list of plans and goals for 2016. With the support of our amazing donors and volunteers, we look forward to continuing to meet teacher and student needs with the goal of increasing natural science literacy.



A third grader drew one of his favorite parts of the Desert Stories lesson - measuring root lengths on a model yucca we set up in the schoolyard.

The Taking Flight Series

- Saturday April 23** 7:00 - 9:00 PM Bats
- Saturday May 7** 7:00 - 9:00 AM Birds
- Saturday May 21** 9:00 - 11:00 AM Pollinators and Plants

Take flight with Asombro educators this spring in a new series of free events at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park. Each 2-hour event will feature an introduction on flight, a walk with expert scientists, and a hands-on activity related to the day's theme. Please note the different starting times for each event. Join us for learning, fun, and free raffles. Come fly with us!

For more information: 575-524-3334 www.asombro.org

Other Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars now for other fun events taking place at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park in 2016.

Butterfly Flutterby

Saturday August 20, 9:00 AM - Noon

The butterflies are back! Enjoy new activities and old favorites to learn about these beauties in the desert.



Desert Dash Trail Race

Saturday November 12

Start training now for the 5K, 10K, half marathon or children's 1-mile race.

Holiday Luminarias

Friday December 9

Step away from the holiday hustle and enjoy hundreds of luminarias along the paths at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park.

Education Programs

Thanks to your support, Asombro staff provided 881 hours of science for 17,904 students in 2015! Here are the programs in the last quarter of 2015.

1-Oct White Sands MS -decomp.	28-Oct NM Wilderness Alliance	19-Nov Sierra MS - greenhouse effect
2-Oct Camino Real MS -decomp.	29-Oct Mesilla Elem - animals 2	19-Nov Optimist Club of LC
5-Oct Lynn MS - decomposition	29-Oct Silver City Library - bats	19-Nov NMSU AXED - Climate Hub
5-Oct Riverside Elem. - Earth 1	2-Nov East Picacho Elem - Desert Stories	20-Nov White Sands MS - greenhouse effect
6-Oct Riverside Elem. - Earth 2	2-Nov Mesilla Elem - animals 3	23-Nov Vista MS - Data Jam
6-Oct Lynn MS - decomposition	3-Nov Mesa MS - land cover & use	23-Nov Mesa MS - land cover and use
7-Oct Camino Real MS - decomp.	4-Nov Picacho MS - land cover	24-Nov East Picacho Elem - field trip
8-Oct Autumn Nature Walk	4-Nov Las Cruces Catholic - life cycles	1-Dec North Valley Elem. - Desert Stories
8-Oct J Paul Taylor Acad. - animal adaptations	5-Nov Picacho MS - land cover	2-Dec Picacho MS - Data Jam
12-Oct Riverside Elem. - Earth 3	5-Nov Mesilla Elem - animals 4	2-Dec North Valley Elem. - Desert Stories
13-Oct Riverside Elem. - Earth 4	5-Nov East Picacho Elem - Desert Stories	3-Dec North Valley Elem. - Desert Stories
13-Oct Sunrise Elem - field trip	6-Nov East Picacho Elem - Desert Stories	4-Dec North Valley Elem. - field trip
14-Oct Sunrise Elem - field trip	9-Nov Lynn MS - land cover and use	7-Dec Vista MS - greenhouse effect
14-Oct LC Catholic- numbers & counting	9-Nov Camino Real MS - Data Jam	8-Dec Vista MS - greenhouse effect
14-Oct LC Catholic- classification	9-Nov East Picacho Elem - food web	8-Dec Project GUTS - field trip
15-Oct J Paul Taylor Acad. - field trip	10-Nov Mesa MS - Data Jam	9-Dec Project GUTS - field trip
19-Oct Gadsden Elem - Desert Stories	10-Nov Lynn MS - land cover and use	9-Dec LC Catholic - plants
19-Oct NMSU Wildlife Science	11-Nov A-Team teacher workshop	9-Dec J Paul Taylor Acad. - arthropod identification
20-Oct Gadsden Elem - Desert Stories	12-Nov Camino Real MS - land cover	11-Dec Holiday Luminarias
21-Oct Gadsden Elem - Desert Stories	12-Nov J Paul Taylor Acad. - life cycles	14-Dec La Union Elem. - Desert Stories
22-Oct Camino Real MS - Data Jam	12-Nov Mesa MS - Data Jam	14-Dec J Paul Taylor Acad. - greenhouse effect
23-Oct LC Catholic - field trip	13-Nov Camino Real MS - land cover	15-Dec Picacho MS - Data Jam
26-Oct Mesilla Elem - animals 1	16-Nov Aldo Leopold HS - Data Jam	15-Dec La Union Elem. - Desert Stories
26-Oct Onate HS - arthropod ident.	16-Nov Zia MS - decomposition	16-Dec La Union Elem. - Desert Stories
27-Oct Gadsden Elem - field trip	17-Nov Zia MS - decomposition	16-Dec Picacho MS - science fair
28-Oct East Picacho Elem - field trip	17-Nov Sierra MS - greenhouse effect	18-Dec Picacho MS - Data Jam
28-Oct LC Catholic - animal adaptations	18-Nov Sierra MS - greenhouse effect	
28-Oct LC Catholic - See it Little/See it Big	18-Nov Camino Real MS - Data Jam	

Become Part of the Asombro Booster Club

We've reserved a spot for you in the Asombro Booster Club, a distinctive group of Asombro supporters who make monthly donations to support science education.

Asombro Board President Justin Van Zee explains why he became one of the earliest Asombro Booster Club members. He said, "Asombro benefits from receiving a predictable, year-round influx of funds, so there is steady cash flow during times of the year that are traditionally slow for donations."

He added, "Also, it's even easier than writing a check and mailing it in....it's automatic, paperless, secure, and I can forget about it for months if I'm busy."

Other benefits include:

- Set up your donations once and then take it off your monthly to-do list.
- It's easy to opt in and out to any single month's donation.
- A larger annual donation can be spread throughout the year, making easier monthly budgeting.
- Even \$10 per month makes a huge impact!

Becoming part of the Asombro Booster Club is simple. Visit our website (www.asombro.org) and click on the **Donate Now** button. You'll be directed to Network for Good's simple, secure donation page for Asombro. If you have any questions, please contact the Asombro office.

Our goal is 20 members of the Asombro Booster Club by the end of the year. Can you help us reach that goal in support of quality science education for our region's kids?

2015 Honors

Make room on the trophy shelf! Asombro and Asombro staff have been recognized with several awards and nominations:

Asombro Institute

2015 New Mexico Governor's Environmental Excellence Award



Stephanie Bestelmeyer

2015 Woman of Distinction Award from Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest

Stephanie Haan-Amato

Richard H. Becker Award of Excellence for Environmental Education from the New Mexico Association for Environmental Education

Rink Somerday

Nomination for Champion for Education from Ngage New Mexico

Asombro Garage Sale

Our first Asombro garage sale was such a success that the Board of Directors will hold another one this fall. Please keep us in mind as you do your winter, spring, and summer cleaning. All proceeds will support Asombro's education programs. Call the office (575-524-3334) for details.

THANK YOU!

We are grateful to the generous donors in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Asombro Booster Club (monthly donors)

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Join the Greatest Group of Volunteers

Asombro is looking for volunteers! There are many opportunities to help, including:

- Classroom programs
- Field trips
- Trail work days
- Education material preparation
- Public programs and more...

No experience with education or trail maintenance necessary. Call 575-524-3334 or email information@asombro.org. Together we can make a difference!



We love Asombro volunteers! Join these fantastic folks (and many more) by contacting us today.

YES! I want to support the
Asombro Institute for Science Education!

Quartz (\$15 +) Obsidian (\$250 +)
 Gypsum (\$50 +) Peridot (\$500 +)
 Jasper (\$100 +) Turquoise (\$1000 +)

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