

Asombro Insights

Science education for eager minds

A Quarterly Newsletter

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Asombro Brings Science to Libraries

By Rink Somerday

This summer, Asombro staff traveled more than 2,200 miles to 13 libraries in New Mexico and west Texas for their summer reading programs. It is a great opportunity to share Asombro's programs and the excitement of science with a larger audience.

Programs included Fossils at Capitan and Hatch libraries, Desert Animals at Columbus and Tularosa libraries, Amazing Arthropods at Bayard and Deming, and Bats! at Doris Van Doren Library in El Paso. Asombro was also part of the kick-off ceremony for the Summer Reading Program at the Ruidoso Library with more than 250 people learning about Amazing

Arthropods. For a complete list of programs, please see page 2.

Summer can be a hard time for parents to keep their children engaged and learning. Libraries help by encouraging children to read and expand their

horizons. By bringing guest presenters to the libraries, children and adults alike are able to meet professionals from outside of their community and find new interests. Asombro programs bring the excitement of science, often coupled with a science-based book to read aloud.

Programs were paid for by a grant from the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs and friends groups of individual libraries.

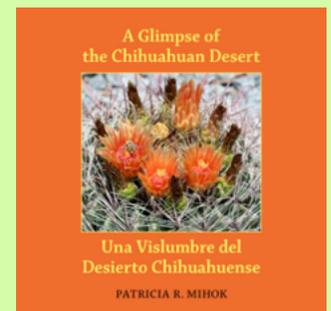


Young scientists get a close look at some Amazing Arthropods at the Bayard Public Library in May.

A Glimpse of the Chihuahuan Desert

Long-time Asombro volunteer, teacher, and desert enthusiast Patricia Mihok has written a bilingual children's book about the Chihuahuan Desert. With 60 pages of information, photos, and a helpful glossary, this book makes a fantastic gift for desert fans of all ages.

A Glimpse of the Desert is \$17.95, and a portion of the proceeds benefits Asombro programs. To purchase a copy, call or email Asombro (575-524-3334 or info@asombro.org). Pat will have a book signing at the Butterfly Flutterby on August 16 (see page 3).



Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park Improvements

By Stephanie Bestelmeyer, Ph.D.

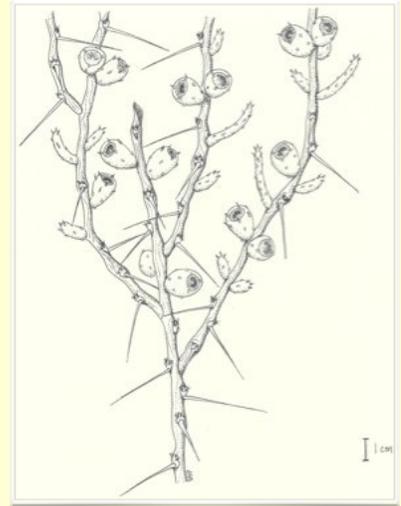
Many talented, dedicated volunteers have helped Asombro make improvements recently at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park.

Jane Smith and Justin Van Zee helped completely update our Self-Guided Tour Booklet, adding information and drawings of new plants that can be seen along the Desert Discovery Trail.

University of Illinois biologist Bob Schooley helped us design an interpretive sign based on his research on shrub removal and desert biodiversity. It is installed on the Desert Experience Mini-Trail.

Most recently, Justin Van Zee, Joe Ramirez, and John Roberts from the Jornada Experimental Range helped dig holes, install posts, and weld metal for our newest shade structure. The top reed screens will be installed soon.

Once again, we are sincerely grateful to all the volunteers who help Asombro grow and thrive. Head out to the Park to see these great additions. Remember, we are now open Tuesday through Sunday from 7am - 5pm.



This Christmas cholla drawing by Jane Smith is just one of the new illustrations in the updated Self-guided Tour Booklet at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park. Jane recently earned a Ph.D. in Biology from New Mexico State University.

Education Programs

Thanks to your support, Asombro staff provided 490 hours of science for 9,926 students so far in 2014!

1-Apr	Monte Vista Elem. - Earth	1-May	Vista Middle School - field trip
1-Apr	Mayfield High School - Wildlife Plan Judging	1-May	Zia Middle School - Biodiversity Game
2-Apr	Valley View Elem. - field trip	2-May	East Picacho Elem. - field trip
3-Apr	Tombaugh Elem. - field trip	5-May	North Valley Elem. - Desert Stories #1
3-Apr	East Picacho Elem. - Matter	5-May	Sunrise Elem. - Matter
4-Apr	Sierra Middle School - field trip	6-May	Sunrise Elem. - Matter
8-Apr	Mesilla Valley Garden Club - nature hike	6-May	Sunrise Elem. (GISD) - Earth
8-Apr	Monte Vista Elem. - Earth	7-May	Tombaugh Elem. - Arthropod Identification
8-Apr	Las Montañas High School - Desert Data Jam	7-May	North Valley Elem. - Desert Stories #2
9-Apr	Sierra Middle School - Land Use	7-May	White Sands Middle School - Wildlife CSI
9-Apr	LC Catholic - Biomes	8-May	White Sands Middle School - field trip
9-Apr	J Paul Taylor Academy - Soil	8-May	Vista Middle School - Energy Audit
9-Apr	Mayfield High School - Desert Data Jam	9-May	White Sands Middle School - Biodiversity Sampling
10-Apr	Lynn Middle School - field trip	9-May	Mesa Middle School - Biodiversity Game
10-Apr	East Picacho Elem. - Matter	9-May	North Valley Elem. - Desert Stories #3
11-Apr	GFWC Progress Club of Las Cruces - Asombro	12-May	East Picacho Elem. - Arthropod Identification
11-Apr	Alameda Elem. - field trip	12-May	La Uñion Elem. - Desert Stories #2
11-Apr	Mesilla Park Elem. - Matter	12-May	La Uñion Elem. - Mineral Identification
12-Apr	Egg Trek	13-May	East Picacho Elem. - Animal Adaptations
14-Apr	Gadsden Elem. - Desert Stories #1	14-May	Zia Middle School - Biodiversity Sampling
14-Apr	East Picacho Elem. - Matter	14-May	East Picacho Elem. - Animal Adaptations
15-Apr	Gadsden Elem. - Desert Stories #2	15-May	Vista Middle School - Carbon Cycle
15-Apr	Sunrise Elem. (GISD) - Earth	15-May	Zia Middle School - Biodiversity Sampling
15-Apr	Lynn Middle School - Energy Audit	16-May	J Paul Taylor Academy - field trip
16-Apr	Gadsden Elem. - Desert Stories #3	19-May	La Uñion Elem. - Desert Stories #3
16-Apr	Tombaugh Elem. - I'm A Scientist, Too	20-May	East Picacho Elem. - Soil
16-Apr	Mesilla Park Elem. - Matter	21-May	East Picacho Elem. - Weather
17-Apr	Water Festival - Desert Animal Adaptations	22-May	White Sands Elem. - field trip
17-Apr	Tombaugh Elem. - field trip	23-May	Hatch Library - fossils
17-Apr	East Picacho Elem. - Matter	28-May	Columbus Library - Desert Animals
21-Apr	Sunrise Elem. - Matter	30-May	Bayard Library - Amazing Arthropods
21-Apr	Sunrise Elem. - Matter	2-Jun	Ruidoso Library - Amazing Arthropods
22-Apr	Monte Vista Elem. - Earth	2-Jun	J Paul Taylor Academy - Life Cycles
23-Apr	Zia Middle School - field trip	3-Jun	Tularosa Library - Amazing Arthropods
23-Apr	Mesilla Park Elem. - Matter	4-Jun	Deming Library - Amazing Arthropods
24-Apr	Camino Real Middle School - field trip	5-Jun	Socorro Library - Desert Animals
24-Apr	East Picacho Elem. - Science Fair	9-Jun	Capitan Library - fossils
24-Apr	East Picacho Elem. - Science Night	11-Jun	SC2 - field tour
25-Apr	Alameda - Career Day	11-Jun	T or C Library - Desert Animals
25-Apr	Camino Real Middle School - Natural Selection	18-Jun	Boys & Girls Club of LC - Desert Animals
28-Apr	La Uñion Elem. - Desert Stories #1	18-Jun	SC2 - field tour
28-Apr	Sunrise Elem. - Matter	22-Jun	Solar Cook-off - Position of the Sun
21-Apr	Sunrise Elem. - Matter	25-Jun	Rockhound State Park - Snakes
29-Apr	Sunrise Elem. (GISD) - Earth	26-Jun	WSMR Summer Camp - Desert Animals
30-Apr	Zia Middle School - field trip	28-Jun	Judge Marquez Library, El Paso - Desert Animals

Save the Date for Summer and Fall Events



Butterfly Flutterby - August 16

9 AM - noon at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park
Do you recognize this butterfly? It's one of the most common butterflies in our area, and you can learn about it and many other butterflies at our annual Butterfly Flutterby. The event will feature butterfly experts, crafts, games, a silent auction, and much more. Admission is \$3 per person.

Moonlight Taste of the Desert Dinner - Sept. 13

6:30 - 9:00 PM at Red Hawk Golf Club

We have a new venue for this popular evening under the stars. Live music, great company, a catered meal, and samples of desert food await attendees for this special fundraising event. Tickets available from Asombro Board members or by calling the Asombro office (575-524-3334). Tickets are \$50 per person.



Dog Days - September 20

10-11:30 AM at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park

The Nature Park has gone to the dogs! Bring your dog(s) for a desert hike with other dog lovers and their furry friends. Free.

Golf Tournament Fundraiser - October 11

Save the date for another round of golf to raise funds for Asombro. More details coming soon at www.asombro.org.

Desert Dash Trail Race - November 8

The first race begins at 8:30 AM at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park

Pick your distance (children's 1-mile, 5K, 10K, or half marathon) and pick your pace at this spectacular race. Early bird registration (with discounted fee) is open now. Find more information at www.asombro.org/dash



Desert Data Jam

Congratulations to Katie LaPage from Mayfield High School, winner of Asombro's 2014 Desert Data Jam! The competition challenges students to understand local ecological data and find creative ways to present the data trends to nonscientist audiences. Katie used watercolors of varying intensities to represent solar radiation, air temperature, soil temperature and precipitation in different years.

Data Jam, created by Asombro in 2012, is getting national attention and spreading to students around the country. This spring, science educators in Florida, Maryland, and New York hosted their own Data Jam competitions using ecological data from their own region.



THANK YOU!

We are grateful to the generous donors in the second quarter of 2014.

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Everyone is going “social,” and the Asombro Institute is no exception. Like us on Facebook and keep up to date on Asombro programs, find out what is happening at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park, see our Critter Cam photos, answer trivia questions, and more!

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Asombro-Institute-for-Science-Education/313063737697>



Photo by Will Keener of stars at the Nature Park, June 2014.

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