

WELLSPRING NEWS

Summer 2015

Published by the Friends of Agua Caliente (FOAC), Inc.

Tucson, Arizona

From the President:

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente,

At the Annual Meeting held this past February, the board welcomed me as the new President of the *Friends of Agua Caliente Park*. I am honored and look forward to continuing to support the park.

I would be remiss not to take this opportunity to thank Jim Knoll for his many years of dedication and support including leading the membership in all of its accomplishments as President since 2008. Jim's contributions during his tenure are numerous. Notably, under his leadership, the number of supporters grew from 92 to over 175. This support afforded the *Friends* the means to make many significant donations to the park over the years and provide support for the various educational programs that we as well as the entire community all enjoy so much. We are all glad that Jim plans to remain on the Board and continue to lead the Membership and Newsletter/Website Committees. Thank you Jim!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Lynda Nash. In February, Lynda resigned from the Board concurrent with her move to Oro Valley. Over the years, Lynda held many positions on the Board and many of you surely encountered her smiling exuberance on weekends as she tirelessly welcomed visitors to the park along with her dog Hoover.

We will all miss Lynda and appreciate her contributions to the *Friends* as well as the time she spent being a terrific park ambassador.



The 2015 approved budget includes continued funding of the History Lecture Series, Arizona History Day, Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation (NRPR) Educational Programs and support for any additional equipment or ad hoc requests made by NRPR.

The year is off to a very temperate start. Not only has the level of the water in the pond risen as a result of winter rains received and pumping in well water, but the spring has begun to flow again and water has extended over the length of the stream. I hope you all have a chance to visit and enjoy the park now and in the coming summer months. Thank you for your continued support!

Peggy Denny

Bond Initiative

On April 21, 2015, the Pima County Board of Supervisors approved a Resolution ordering a bond election to be held on November 3, 2015 consisting of seven ballot propositions. If all seven propositions are approved by Pima County voters, the County would be authorized to sell \$815,760,000 in general obligation bonds.

Parks and Recreation (\$191.5M) is one of those seven Propositions. Agua Caliente Park Pond Restoration (\$1M) is included under Parks and Recreation.

The Friends of Agua Caliente supports the restoration and believes it is the only way to maintain Agua Caliente Park as a beautiful contemplative destination for families and visitors for generations to come. We sincerely hope you will support this worthwhile endeavor as well. Stay tuned to our Website and Facebook page for updates. For more information, visit the Pima County Website (webcms.pima.gov).



Main Pond (June 2013)

From the Bunkhouse: History of Agua Caliente Park

The site known as Agua Caliente Park has been used by prehistoric man since 3000 BC and the Hohokam Indians lived on the site known as the *Whiptail Site* until 1450 AD. The first documented ranch on the property was established in 1873. Over 78 historic features and artifact sites have been identified on the property.

The site had a long tradition of use as a permanent source of water for the prehistoric Hohokam village located there, now referred to as the "Whiptail" ruin. The springs probably also were used by the Archaic people who preceded the Hohokam. There is no mention of early historical use of the spring, but undoubtedly it was known to the Apache Indians as well as to those living in Tucson during both the Spanish and Mexican periods.

Ranches in the mid-1800s were generally located near a permanent source of water. In reality, these ranches were small subsistence farms rather than traditional ranches.

Agua Caliente Spring had a perpetual flow making it a great place to establish a small ranch. In its original state, it was a pair of springs, hot and cold and fed a cienega (marsh) in the vicinity. In the mid-1900s, in an attempt to increase flow, the spring was dynamited, changing it from a dual hot and cold spring with a combined flow of 350-500 gallons per minute to a single lukewarm spring producing 200 gallons per minute. It was dynamited a second time in the early 1960s, which cut the water flow again, down to 100 to 125 gallons per minute. In July 2000, the spring stopped for the first time since its discovery, but did start to flow again once the monsoon began that summer. In 2003, the water flow from the spring fell as low as 14 gallons per minute, resulting in the drying up of ponds 2 and 3. Pima County dug a well and installed a pump to keep the main pond full.

The "ranch" had a variety of owners over the years, to include the Filiatrault family beginning in 1951. Pete Filiatrault is still a

member of the Friends of Agua Caliente. In 1984, a local businessman named Roy P. Drachman donated over \$200,000 toward the purchase of the property. This donation provided the incentive for Pima County to proceed with the acquisition. Agua Caliente Park, a Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation facility, opened on January 19th, 1985. Since then, the Ranch House, Rose Cottage, and Bunk House have all been renovated. The Agua Caliente Ranch was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on July 9, 2009.

In order to preserve the Park for future generations, major improvements are necessary to include reducing the size of the main pond and installing a liner to reduce water requirements.

*Jim & Susan Knoll
FOAC Historians*



Main Pond (2006)

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. Board of Directors

Standing Committee Chairpersons annotated in () below

Peggy Denny, **President**

([Website](#))

Maura Brackett, **Vice President**

([Fundraising](#), [Nominations](#))

Sylvia Olberding, **Secretary**

Peggy Denny, **Treasurer**

Pete Filiatrault

([Co-Founder](#))

Chuck Ford

([County Liaison](#))

Judy Gray

Vaughn Johnson

Jim Knoll

([Newsletter](#), [Website](#), [Membership](#))

Joyce Roughton

Sandy Sarah

([Co-Founder](#))

Linwood Smith

Board Member email addresses are:

FirstLast@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

Electronic Newsletter

Sending the newsletter to our members & supporters electronically saves FOAC postage and you receive it in color. If you did not receive an electronic version and would like to, please send an email to INFO@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org to be placed on the electronic distribution (we do not release our database to anyone).

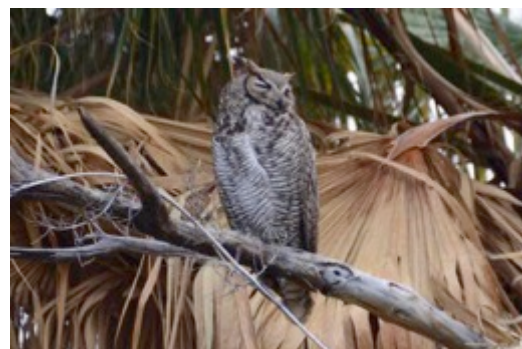


Photo by Susan Knoll

Great Horned Owl (2015)

Nature Corner by Judy Gray (Naturalist / FOAC Board Member)

American Badger

Size: 20 – 30” plus 6 – 8” tail.
Weight: 8 – 25 lbs.
Age: 3 – 10 years.
Color: Gray upper and yellowish-brown underside. Dark nose, white stripe from nose upward between eyes and nape. White cheeks and ears. Small gray tail.

Badgers are a member of the weasel and skunk family. They are known for strength, tenacity, and ferocity.

Habitat: Along roads, fields, woodlands, and all elevations.
Food: Carnivore. Eats gophers, all rats, ground squirrels, rattlesnakes, insects, bird eggs, rabbits, and carrion.

Makes loud snarls and growls.
Breeds July and August. Two to five babies are born in February and March. They live in a large den with tunnels. Sometimes they will sleep in a hole they have dug out hunting for food at

night.

Hibernation: A condition called torpor lasting only 20 – 30 hours at a time.

Badgers chased my husband and brother when they found two of them fighting. Stay away from them! Badgers can twist around in their hole and will bite and slash their victim.

Rock Squirrel

Size: 11 – 13” plus 6 – 8” tail.

Weight: 1 – 2 lbs.

Age: 1 – 5 years.

Color: Long body, brown to rust, mottled gray to tan. White rings around eyes. Short legs/ears.

Rock Squirrels live in underground burrows. They are the largest of our ground squirrels. Also adapt to houses, old buildings, tree roots, and any shelters they find.

Food: Omnivore. Prickly pear fruit, seeds, mesquite beans, palo

verde seeds, baby mice, bird eggs, baby rabbits, carrion.

If they spot a predator, they give a sharp whistle-like warning call. Encountering snakes, they stamp their feet, wave their tails, and throw dirt at the snake’s face with their front feet.

Breeds: April. 27 – 28 day gestation. Babies born April to May. 3 - 9 offspring. They hibernate for short periods. Remain active all year in warmer parts of Arizona. Fun to watch!

Facebook

FOAC is on Facebook.

Follow us to stay abreast on late breaking and current events. To find FOAC, search “Friends of Agua Caliente Tucson” within Facebook, access us from our FOAC website, or scan the QR Code.

We will post current events & pictures so please “like, comment, and share” to expand our following!



Membership in the Friends of Agua Caliente

Join Friends of Agua Caliente

We have almost finished another membership year and once again, I want to thank all our loyal supporters of *the Friends of Agua Caliente* and the Park! If you have not yet renewed, please consider supporting FOAC. Our ability to support NRPR with funding and items they cannot normally accomplish within their budget cycle is tremendous and we owe it all to you. Our membership and donor year is October through the following September. As of May 15, 2015 we have a total of 208 supporters (members and donors). Your generosity has raised over \$9,900.

It is not too late to join FOAC or renew your support. We would love to have you on our team. We also have some openings on the

Board of Directors if you would like to help shape the future of Agua Caliente Park.

The Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Corporation, therefore all donations are tax deductible. Membership is based on the following schedule:

Individual	\$15
Family	\$25
Organization	\$50
Donation (any amount appreciated)	

Please send name, address, phone number, and email along with a check to: Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc., PO Box 32005, Tucson, AZ 85751-2005 or contact Jim Knoll at INFO@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org. Additional membership information is also on the FOAC website listed at the bottom of

the newsletter.

Your dedication to the Park and FOAC is greatly appreciated. We hope you will choose to become involved in *the Friends of Agua Caliente* and Agua Caliente Park. If there is anything we can do, let us know. If you have ideas to improve the Park, we would like to hear that as well. We can’t do what we do without great members and donors!

Jim Knoll



Cedar Waxwing

Photo by Susan Knoll

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

P.O. Box 32005

Tucson, AZ 85751 - 2005

Tucson Audubon at Agua Caliente Park

The Audubon Nature Shop inside the Ranch House at Agua Caliente Park celebrates its 10th Anniversary this year. The shop is a great place for birding essential items, books, optics, natural history items, children's books and games, and jewelry. Next time you need the perfect gift, come check us out! We also carry local *Friends of Agua Caliente* postcards with great photos of the park and its birds and wildlife. Proceeds from the Nature Shop benefit Tucson Audubon programs.

Nature Shop volunteers provide a wealth of information to visitors. For the summer, the shop is only open Thursday from 9 AM to 1:30 PM. Join the weekly Pima County Wake Up with the Birds Bird Walk on Thursday mornings and shop afterward for a 10 percent discount on all items. In October, the shop will return to its Thursday – Saturday schedule.

Available in the shop is Tucson Audubon's current edition of *Finding Birds in Southeast Arizona*, which brings together all the latest information on finding birds in southeast Arizona. This is your best source for detailed information that will help in planning bird watching adventures throughout our region.

In August, join the fun at the Fifth Annual Tucson Bird & Wildlife Festival August 12 – 16. Get to know our friendly local birding and conservation community and the dazzling array of watchable wildlife experiences accessible from Tucson! Proceeds support Tucson Audubon's work to protect birds and the places they live. For more information visit tucsonaudubon.org/festival. We look forward to your next visit.

Liz Harrison
Nature Shop Volunteer

Website

FOAC website can be accessed by scanning the QR code here. The web address is also located on the bottom of page 2 & 3 of the newsletter.

The website has the key history of FOAC & Agua Caliente Park, current significant issues affecting the Park, and current events for the month. You can also send an email to any board member and find links to other related websites.



Postcards

FOAC sells Agua Caliente Postcards at the Audubon Shop in the Ranch House. This is a great way to take home memorable pictures of the Park. We appreciate your support of *the Friends of Agua Caliente*.

