

Desert Institute

at Joshua Tree National Park



Course Catalog Fall 2020



Welcome to Desert Institute at Joshua Tree National Park

Our commitment to you is to provide a safe learning environment. We have implemented a number of policies and procedures to help reduce the impact of the COVID-19 virus in our programming. You can find descriptions of these new policies and procedures on page 4.

One of those policies is reducing class size by as much as one third, to accommodate physical distancing in the classrooms, parking lots and trails. We understand that having smaller class sizes may impact the ability of some loyal participants to join our programs, but a safe environment is paramount. Despite reducing class size and the resulting impact on registration income, the Desert Institute has not increased registration fees.

Now is the time to think about your participation in Desert Institute classes and do your part to create a safe and enjoyable experience for all, with social distancing and respect of others.

Now is also the time to reevaluate your personal needs as you participate in our programs.

1. Always carry a first-aid kit. This is a good time to update it with pandemic-specific supplies, like gloves, an extra mask, and extra hand sanitizer.
2. Always carry and wear a mask. There are some places with a lot of different trails but only one parking lot, which means all trails converge and funnel into that one area. There is a decent chance that you'll end up closer to people than you'd like to be, so make sure that you have a mask with you.
3. Always carry hand sanitizer. People used to give me strange looks because I clip a small bottle of hand sanitizer onto my backpack and have for years. It used to signal me as paranoid, but to me, it just signals good hygiene.

I want to introduce you to our new "suite" of Wilderness Wellness programs. Sydney Williams will be conducting three camping and hiking programs dedicated to exploring healing through nature. We will be camping at the reserved Lost Horse Campground far from public campsites so you can revel in the silence and safety of these workshops. You can find the descriptions of these new programs on page 5.

Look, I get it. We're all sick of being stuck indoors. Parks are reopening, and many of us are itching to get back out there. We simply need to extend the Leave No Trace principles so that we minimize our impact on the trails we explore, the people we encounter and the communities we pass through to get to them.

We can't predict when the global outbreak will pass, but we take comfort in knowing that gathering together for live experiences is a staple of society. Together, we will move through this turbulent time to see our students and instructors gather again. Countless live experiences will happen, and the Desert Institute will be there to enable you with efficiency, innovation, and heart.



Kevin Wong
Director, Desert Institute

*Nature in her green, tranquil woods heals and soothes all afflictions.
Earth hath no sorrows that earth cannot heal*

John Muir

Fall 2020 Calendar

September 19		Drawing the Natural World with Charcoal and Pastel	pg. 13
September 20		“How-To” Identify Animal Burrows	pg. 6
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September 27		Desert Snakes: Mystery & Intrigue*	pg. 7
October 9 - 11	NEW	Hiking My Feelings: Stepping into the Healing Power of Nature 	pg. 5
October 9 - 11		Insects and Arthropods of the Morongo Basin*	pg. 7
October 10		Geology of Amboy Crater	pg. 7
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October 17 - 18	NEW	Plein Air Painting Workshop in Joshua Tree National Park 	pg. 14
October 17 - 18		Desert Invertebrates: A Macro Photography and Microscopy Primer*	pg. 7
October 17 - 18	NEW	Sensing Nature: The Alchemy of Connecting to the atural world through custom-made field journals	pg. 14
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October 25	NEW	Art History of the Coachella Valley	pg. 11
October 30 - November 1		Beginning Backpacking for Women in Mission Creek Preserve 	pg. 6
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November 14		Photographing the Hi-Desert	pg. 16
November 14 - 15	NEW	Wilderness Cooking School: Campsite Cooking 	pg. 6
November 14 - 15		Biological Soil Crusts of Joshua Tree National Park*	pg. 9
November 15	NEW	Contemporary Art of Joshua Tree	pg. 11
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November 27 - 29	NEW	Blaze Your Own Trail To Self Love: Tell Your Inner Critic To Take a Hike 	pg. 5
November 28		History and Legends of the Joshua Tree Music Scene	pg. 11
December 5		Geology and Cultural History of Cottonwood Spring	pg. 9
December 5		Discover the Wonderland of Rocks	pg. 12
December 5		Winter Light: Photographing Desert Preserves	pg. 17
December 5 - 6		Night Sky Photography Workshop	pg. 17
December 11 - 13	NEW	Hiking My Feelings: Using Mindful Movement to Open the Flow of Creativity 	pg. 5
December 12		Summit Lela Peak 	pg. 12



CAMPING OPTION

* OFFERED FOR UNIVERSITY CREDIT

Safety Protocols and Our Promises to You

- Class sizes have been reduced to allow for social distancing. When possible, we will eliminate some classroom lectures and replace them with pre-recorded lectures that you can access and view from the safety of your home prior to the field component.
- Classrooms will be disinfected and hand sanitizer stations will be available.
- Face coverings for all participants, volunteers and instructors will be required for both indoor and outdoor programs. This is not negotiable.
- Social distancing will be required. Please be respectful to your neighbors in our programs.
- We have eliminated the penalty for cancellation. If you feel ill prior to any class, please cancel to protect our instructors, volunteers and the other participants.
- We will no longer encourage carpooling. You may drive your own vehicle for personal safety.
- Our instructors and volunteers will have the authority to enforce these protocols. If these rules are not acceptable to you, please don't register. We reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.

Of course the future is unpredictable, so we will monitor the situation and these protocols will be reviewed and changed as needed for your safety and for the safety of our instructors and volunteer team.

Registration

The Desert Institute accepts registrations year round for special programming. Registrations for fall field classes start in June and registrations for spring field classes start in November. If you wish to enroll with the registration form on page 20, please enclose a check payable to **Joshua Tree National Park Association**. Of course, you can contact the Desert Institute for enrollment and for any questions about our programs:

Phone: 760-367-5539

E-mail: desertinstitute@joshuatree.org

On-line: joshuatree.org

Mail: please use the form on page 20

Please honestly assess your fitness level by reviewing the hiking level descriptions on this page and in the course descriptions.



EASY - Leisurely to moderate pace up to 3 miles per day through relatively flat terrain with frequent stops.



MODERATE - Moderate, steady pace up to 6 miles per day with some elevation gain and loss through some loose, rocky or uneven terrain.



STRENUOUS - Longer rigorous hikes at a moderate to brisk pace up to 12 miles per day with significant elevation gain and loss up to 3,000 feet through steep terrain, with possible rock scrambling.



EXTREME - Course includes rock scrambling throughout a significant portion of route. Good balance, full range of motion, and three points of contact while scrambling are necessary.

The images and written content used within this website or document are intended to represent offered courses; however weather, landscape and other conditions during the actual course may be different. Certain catalog and course content may be in the public domain and some content, such as photographs, may have been contributed or licensed by third parties and may be protected by copyright. Desert Institute course descriptions may contain links or URLs to third party websites. These sites are not under the control of the National Park Service, Joshua Tree National Park or the Desert Institute, who provide them as a convenience only and their use shall not be construed as an endorsement of, sponsorship of, or affiliation with the website; and they are not responsible for the contents.

Course dates, instructors and class content are subject to change. Contact the Desert Institute at 760-367-5539 for the most up-to-date information.

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

Wilderness Wellness

NEW

Hiking My Feelings: Stepping into the Healing Power of Nature

Date/Time: Friday, October 9, 3 pm – 8 pm
Saturday, October 10, 8 am – 8 pm
Sunday, October 11, 8 am – 2 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$170 JTNPA member, \$180 non member
Instructors: Sydney Williams
Hike Level: Moderate



Have you ever spoken unkindly to yourself? Do you even realize when you do? Are you ready to make changes but find yourself completely paralyzed by the choices in front of you? We live in a hyper-connected, “always-on” world, and frankly? It’s exhausting. Let’s make time to disconnect from the distractions and reconnect with yourself. Join Sydney Williams, author and founder of Hiking My Feelings®, as she unpacks her “trauma pack,” sharing the story of how hiking helped her reconnect to, and heal, her mind and body—kicking her limiting beliefs and Type 2 Diabetes to the curb in the process. Hiking My Feelings: Stepping into the Healing Power of Nature is more than a collection of trail tales—it’s a guide to aid (or begin!) your healing journey, helping you do the work to step up into the best version of yourself. Learn how to connect the dots between trauma, how it manifests in our minds and bodies, and how the outdoors can help us heal.



NEW

Blaze Your Own Trail To Self-Love: Tell Your Inner Critic to Take a Hike

Date/Time: Friday, November 27, 3 pm – 8 pm
Saturday, November 28, 8 am – 8 pm
Sunday, November 29, 8 am – 2 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$170 JTNPA member, \$180 non member
Instructors: Sydney Williams
Hike Level: Moderate



This Thanksgiving weekend, skip the lines at the stores and #OptOutside with Hiking My Feelings and the Desert Institute for a retreat that brings us back to the important part of this weekend—gratitude—and centers wellness in the wilderness. Join author and founder of Hiking My Feelings®, Sydney Williams, to learn how to start a meaningful gratitude practice and how doing so can enrich all aspects of your life, increase resiliency, and aid in processing complex emotions and situations. Over the course of the retreat, you’ll learn about limiting beliefs and discover how to develop a healthy relationship with your Inner Critic to overcome adversity and bring your whole self to life, love, and work. This weekend camping retreat is a combination of guided self-discovery exercises, hiking, wilderness wellness practices, and community support.

NEW

Hiking My Feelings: Using Mindful Movement to Open the Flow of Creativity

Date/Time: Friday, December 11, 3 pm – 8 pm
Saturday, December 12, 8 am – 8 pm
Sunday, December 13, 8 am – 2 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$170 JTNPA member, \$180 non member
Instructors: Sydney & Barry Williams
Hike Level: Moderate



2020 has been one for the record books. Regardless of how you were affected by quarantines, lockdowns, and sheltering in place, it’s been a lot to process. Have you been taking time for yourself to reflect on what you really want? Are you stuck in a creative rut? Are you ready to make 2021 your Year of Creative Exploration? Sydney and Barry Williams have been hiking and brainstorming for years and it has revolutionized the way they live their lives and the way they do business. By combining mindset techniques acquired as a Division 1 athlete, competitive skydiver, and corporate executive, incorporating playful techniques from improv (“yes, and!”), and encouraging mindful movement, they’ve developed a personal reflection format to help you unlock your best ideas, open the flow of creativity, and improve your mental, spiritual, and physical health. This weekend camping retreat is a combination of guided self-discovery exercises, hiking, wilderness wellness practices, and community support.

"How-To" Classes

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

["How-To" Identify Animal Burrows](#)

Date/Time: Sunday, September 20, 9 am - 1 pm
Meet at: Black Rock Nature Center
Fee: \$35 JTNPA member, \$45 non member
Instructor: Candice Weber, Professor, College of the Desert
Hike Level: Easy



Have you ever taken a walk and noticed a hole in the ground and wondered what animal made it? Holes abound in the desert as animals seek refuge from climatic extremes and predators, or hunt for food. Candice Weber will shed light on ground holes, elevated holes, divots and mounds in this field class. Participants will learn how to identify holes and what clues can help discern which animals are living in which holes in the classroom session, and then put their knowledge to the test in the field. Curious visitors as well as seasoned naturalists will enjoy peeking into the secret lives of these subterranean dwellers and discover who's behind all of that digging!

[Beginning Backpacking for Women in Mission Creek Preserve](#)



Date/Time: Friday, October 30, 5 pm
Saturday, October 31, all day
Sunday, November 1, back to car by 3 pm
Meet at: Mission Creek Preserve, Desert Hot Springs
Fee: \$120 JTNPA member, \$130 non member
Instructors: Pam Kersey, Hiking & Backpacking Instructor
Robin Balch, Hiking & Backpacking Instructor
Hike Level: Moderate



Spend a weekend in the Mission Creek Preserve back country! This is a perfect opportunity for women who want to learn how to backpack and camp overnight to get away from the noise of car camping, but may be afraid to go backpacking alone. This class is for women interested in backpacking. We will carry everything we need for an overnight adventure in our backpacks. You will enjoy the company of other women who love exploring the outdoors. You will learn new ideas for what to eat while camping on the trail. Your instructors will also go over trail safety, backpacking gear and how to set up and tear down camp efficiently. You must be able to carry approximately 30 pounds of weight in your backpack while hiking approximately 5 miles per day in the desert with the group. If you are able to hike up to 7 miles with a daypack then you should be fine. The class will include two days of hiking and one night on the trail. We will camp near our cars on Friday night then start the overnight backpacking trip on Saturday morning and hike out on Sunday. There will be an intermediate level backpacking class in the future for those who want more experience and may want to move at a faster pace than this beginning class. **Class size limited to 6**, so sign up early!

[How Not to Get Lost and a Moonlight Hike](#)



Date/Time: Saturday, October 31, 3:30 pm - 8 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$35 JTNPA member, \$45 non member
Instructor: Amanda Lopez, Desert Institute Staff
Hike Level: Moderate



The ultimate goal of survival training is to prevent survival situations from occurring in the first place. However, when survival is unavoidable, mindset, skills and improvisation are key. Learn the essential considerations needed to safely explore the sometimes harsh and often challenging desert landscape of Joshua Tree National Park. This workshop will provide an introduction to the fundamental thought processes, skills and knowledge needed to survive in desert regions and the hazards associated with desert travel. After a 2 hour presentation on desert survival, we will have a dinner break. After the dinner break, we will travel into the park to the trail head where we will hike under a full moon, on Halloween! The hike is approximately 2 miles round trip.

[Wilderness Cooking School: Campsite Cooking](#)

NEW

Date/Time: Saturday, November 14, 9 am - 4 pm
Sunday, November 15, 7:30 - 2 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$180 JTNPA member, \$190 non member
Instructors: Alexis Grinbold, Campfire Cuisine Instructor
Scott Klinger, Photography Instructor
Hike Level: Moderate



Have you ever noticed that when you are out in the wilderness, everything tastes better? Back in the days of the Wild West, Dutch ovens were like gold. They were that important. Nowadays, the mere thought of trying to survive in the wild sends shivers down people's spines. The thing is, pretty much anything you make at home in the traditional oven and on the stovetop can be made in the wild in a Dutch oven. Bread? No problem. Pie? Absolutely. Stew? A no-brainer. The curriculum includes lessons on meal planning and culinary techniques with an emphasis on cast iron, campfire and propane stove/oven cooking. You will also learn basic baking, grilling and survival food preparation skills. Meal ingredients for Saturday dinner, Sunday breakfast and Sunday lunch are included in the course fee. Learn how rewarding it is to cook in the refreshing air of Joshua Tree Park. After dinner, professional photographer Scott Klinger will cover the basics of night photography to enable you to document your campfire creations and outdoor adventures.

A group hike will be conducted on both Saturday and Sunday.

[Desert Snakes: Mystery and Intrigue*](#)

(Biology x414.51, 0.5 unit)

Date/Time: Sunday, September 27, 9 am - 4 pm
 Meet at: Black Rock Nature Center
 Noncredit Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
 Credit Fee: \$120 JTNPA member, \$130 non member
 Instructor: William Hayes, Ph.D., Zoology, Physiology
 Professor of Biology, Loma Linda University
 Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



Feared and respected by many for their potential to inflict harm, snakes have long captured the fascination of humanity. William Hayes will introduce participants to a remarkable variety of venomous and non-venomous snakes that inhabit southern California's deserts in this all-day field class. Starting in the classroom, Dr. Hayes will discuss the many adaptations that are essential for snakes to survive in the desert ecosystem including unique morphological, physiological, behavioral, and ecological traits. Snake venom will also be discussed in detail providing answers to the following questions: What, exactly, is venom? How is it made and how is it delivered? Can venoms be beneficial? The class will explore the surrounding desert to identify reptile habitat and hopefully see some snakes!

[Insects and Arthropods of the Morongo Basin*](#)

(Entomology x405.1, 1.5 unit)

Date/Time: Friday, October 9, 6:30 pm - 9 pm
 Sat, Oct. 10, 8 am - 2 pm, 6 pm - 8:30 pm
 Sunday, October 11, 8 am - 12 pm
 Meet at: Black Rock Nature Center
 Noncredit Fee: \$145 JTNPA member, \$155 non member
 Credit Fee: \$245 JTNPA member, \$255 non member
 Instructor: Kurt Leuschner, M.S., Wildlife Ecology
 Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



This class is sponsored by the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

Did you know that insects can survive in temperatures over 110 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade with little or no water? Kurt Leuschner will explore the lives of the largest group of animals in the world through a study of insect anatomy, survival traits, habitats, and behaviors. Participants will learn to identify and distinguish insects from other arthropods and then practice their skills in the field. Field observations will include desert, dune, and riparian habitats, as well as a special night session with black lights at the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Leuschner will share amazing stories of insects like the yucca moth, the ant lion, and the world they inhabit.

[Geology of Amboy Crater](#)

Date/Time: Saturday, October 10, 9 am - 3 pm
 Meet at: Amboy Crater National Natural Landmark
 Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
 Instructor: Alessandro Grippo, Ph.D., Geological Sciences
 Hike Level: Moderate/Strenuous



Volcanoes of southern California? We are famous for faults, and earthquakes, and maybe for other geologic phenomena, but not volcanoes. Still, when we look to our landscape we find evidence of volcanic activity, some of it quite recent. In this class we will learn basic concepts of geology and explore Amboy volcano and the surrounding lava fields to understand why they formed, and if they could become active again! Designated a National Natural Landmark in 1973, Amboy Crater was recognized for its visual and geological significance. There are a number of dormant volcanoes in the Mojave Desert, and Amboy Crater is a perfect example of a cinder volcanic cone very similar to the volcanoes throughout the region. Join Professor Alessandro Grippo on this all-day field trip.

Suggested Reading: *Roadside Geology of Southern California* by Sylvester and Gans, found in the Visitor Centers or order at joshuatree.org/store.

[Desert Invertebrates: A Macro Photography and Microscopy Primer*](#)

(Biology x412.19, 1 unit)

Date/Time: Saturday, October 17, 9 am - 4:30 pm
 Sunday, October 18, 9 am - 4 pm
 Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center
 Noncredit Fee: \$145 JTNPA member, \$155 non member
 Credit Fee: \$195 JTNPA member, \$205 non member
 Instructor: Paul DeLey, Ph.D., Zoology, UC Riverside
 Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



Participants will be introduced to the major groups of respectively macroscopic and microscopic invertebrates found in southern California's deserts, where and when to find them, and how to observe and identify them with the aid of online tools after taking digital macro photographs in the field (in the case of insects and other animals visible to the naked eye), or with the aid of a compound microscope in the lab (for smaller animals). The first part will include an outline of basic techniques for approaching and photographing different macro subjects with a compact camera or an interchangeable lens/SLR camera. In the second part we will demonstrate simple techniques for isolating microscopic invertebrates from different materials, how to transfer them to microscope slides and how to operate a compound microscope to observe them. **Class size is limited, to 6,** please sign up early!

Natural Science Courses

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

Birds of Anza Borrego*

(Biology x404.9, 1.5 units)

NEW

Date/Time: Friday, October 23, 7:15 pm - 9 pm
Saturday, October 24, 7:15 am - 5 pm
Sunday, October 25, 7:15 am - 12 pm
Meet at: Borrego Desert Nature Center, Borrego Springs
Noncredit Fee: \$145 JTNPA member, \$155 non member
Credit Fee: \$245 JTNPA member, \$255 non member
Instructor: Kurt Leuschner, M.S., Wildlife Ecology
Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



This three-day weekend class explores the oases in and around the Anza Borrego Desert, which is home to a surprisingly wide variety of bird species. This habitat also provides the perfect resting place for migrants such as warblers, flycatchers, grosbeaks and other tired travelers on their way south for the winter. After a short lecture Friday night, the class spends Saturday and Sunday in the field, studying both migrant and resident bird species. Participants will learn about: conservation, ecology, natural history and special adaptations to the harsh desert environment.

Participants will need to make their own weekend accommodations. We have acquired a group campsite at Anza Borrego State Park for those who wish to camp and for those that wish to reserve a motel room, please contact us for a list of accommodations in Borrego Springs.

Geology: Creation of Joshua Tree Landscape*

(Geosciences x460.4, 1 unit)

Date/Time: Saturday, October 31, 9 am - 5 pm
Sunday, November 1, 8 am - 12 pm
Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center
Noncredit Fee: \$145 JTNPA member, \$155 non member
Credit Fee: \$210 JTNPA member, \$220 non member
Instructor: Tor Lacy, M.S., Geology, Professor, Cerritos College
Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



Investigate the natural architecture and origin of Joshua Tree National Park's landscape with Tor Lacy, geology professor, Cerritos College. Starting in the classroom participants will be introduced to basic geologic principles including major rock groups, plate tectonics, mountain building, and the impact of weathering. Lacy will discuss how these processes worked together to form the fantastic desert landscape of the park. The class will venture into the field on two excursions to observe and identify monzogranite, gneiss, aplite, and more. For those new to geology or experienced geologists, Lacy will make learning about this complex and unique landscape comprehensible and fun.

Suggested Reading: *Joshua Tree National Park Geology* by Trent & Hazlett, found in the Visitor Centers or order at joshuatree.org/store.

Geology and Geomorphology of Death Valley*

(Geosciences x453, 2 units)

Date/Time: Friday, November 6, 9 am - 5 pm
Saturday, November 7, 9 am - 5 pm
Sunday, November 8, 9 am - 3 pm
Meet at: Furnace Creek Visitor Center
Fee: \$225 JTNPA member, \$235 non member
Credit Fee: \$355 JTNPA member, \$365 non member
Instructor: Alessandro Grippo, Ph.D., Geological Sciences
Hike Level: Moderate



In this below-sea-level basin, steady drought and record summer heat make Death Valley a land of extremes. Yet, each extreme has a striking contrast. Towering peaks are frosted with winter snow, but the valley bottom can reach almost 130°F in summer. While rainstorms maybe uncommon, they bring many dramatic changes to the landscape. Join instructor Alessandro Grippo in the exploration of the geology and landscape of Death Valley. This course takes the students through the geologic highlights of Death Valley National Park. The class meets at Furnace Creek Visitor Center on Friday morning and, after an introduction to the geology of the Basin and Range desert and its natural physical processes, students will travel south by car to hike the Natural Bridge trail. They will then head back to the valley bottom to explore the playa lake at Badwater, with further stops during the day at Devils Golf Course and Artists Palette. On Saturday the class will meet at Stovepipe wells, from where the students will visit Devils Cornfield and then wander through the Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes. After lunch, students will hike and explore Mosaic Canyon. Finally, on Sunday the class will drive to the westernmost part of the park by entering the Panamint Valley and later go for an easy hike at Darwin's falls to complete their exploration. Participants will need to acquire lodging within Death Valley as soon as possible. We have reserved campsites for those who wish to camp. Non-camping accommodations include Stovepipe Wells Village Hotel. **Don't wait to make your reservations!** Please contact us for more information. **Class size limited to 12 participants!**

Military Scholarships

Through a grant provided by the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Military Spouses' Association, the Desert Institute offers a limited number of scholarships for our educational programs to active and retired Marines and their family members on the 29 Palms MCAGCC. For more information and qualification requirements, please call 760-367-5539.

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

Natural Science Courses

Geology of the San Andreas Fault

Date/Time: Saturday, November 7, 9 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Coachella Valley Preserve
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Ted Reeves, B.A., Professor of Earth Sciences, University of the Pacific
Hike Level: Moderate



California is a state defined by plate tectonics, motion, continental drift, and subduction zones. Join Ted Reeves as he explains the origin and effects of the San Andreas Fault system. Reeves will unfold the geologic story of the Indio Hill, the Mecca Hills and the Salton Trough in this all-day field class. Participants will meet at the Coachella Valley Preserve and walk a short distance to see fault features. We will then travel to Box canyon and Painted Canyon and observe spectacular faults and folds where the Pacific plate is forcing up the Mecca Hills. Reeves will illuminate fault-related features in the field with special emphasis on physical deformations of the landscape. Don't miss this unique opportunity to explore the San Andreas Fault zone and the palm oases!



Teachers

Our credit courses are designed to meet the professional development needs of educators for career and salary advancement. Come for a weekend of inspiration, education and fun in Joshua Tree National Park! Course credit is offered through UC Riverside Extension. Teachers may apply for Professional Career Development through their school district. Fall credit courses:

Insects and Arthropods of the Morongo Basin
Desert Snakes: Mystery & Intrigue
Desert Invertebrates: A Macro Photography and Microscopy Primer
Birds of Anza Borrego
Geology and Geomorphology of Death Valley
Geology: Creation of the JT Landscape
Biological Soil Crusts of JTNP

Biological Soil Crusts of Joshua Tree National Park*

(Biology x412.28 1.0 unit)

Date/Time: Saturday, November 14, 9 am - 5 pm
Sunday, November 15, 9 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center
Noncredit Fee: \$145 JTNPA member, \$155 non member
Credit Fee: \$210 JTNPA member, \$220 non member
Instructors: Nat Pombubpa, UC Riverside PhD student
Julia Adams, UC Riverside PhD student
Tania Kurbessoian, UC Riverside PhD student
Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



The desert floor may look like dirt and sand but it is full of living small and microscopic organisms vital to the park's ecosystem. Many of these organisms live in biological highly active soil crusts that cover the first inch of the desert soil surface. In this field class Nat, Julia, and Tania will introduce crypto-biotic soil crusts with an emphasis on fungi, soil algae, and lichens. Participants will study the secret life of these microscopic organisms as they demystify this thin layer of soil. This class will discuss the components of crusts such as cyanobacteria (one of the oldest known life forms on earth), green algae, diatoms, bacteria, fungi, and lichens. During the lab session, participants will see the biodiversity of the park's crusts up close through two different types of microscopes. On the second day, the class will go into the field to identify and assess the condition of several types of algal and lichen soil crust communities found in JTNP.

Geology & Cultural History of Cottonwood Spring

Date/Time: Sunday, December 5, 9 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Cottonwood Visitor Center
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Ted Reeves, Instructor, University of the Pacific
Hike Level: Moderate



Stretch your legs and enjoy the spectacular scenery of the Cottonwood Mountains with Ted Reeves in this all-day field class. Reeves will discuss the rocks and minerals of Cottonwood Mountains and tell stories of the people who eked out a living in the Cottonwood Spring area during the late 1800s. Participants will walk six miles through the rolling hills of the Colorado Desert to see mills, mines, and more. Along the trail, Reeves will share the history of the cowboys, miners, and teamsters who depended on Cottonwood Spring for their livelihood. The route will follow a portion of a prominent freight road built in the 1880s. Don't miss the opportunity to learn how geology is connected to cultural history at Cottonwood Spring!

Joshua Tree Master Naturalist Certificate

IF YOU LOVE observing nature and learning about Joshua Tree National Park, expand your knowledge through the Joshua Tree Master Naturalist Series. Comprehensive courses on key Joshua Tree topics are designed to broaden your understanding of the ecology, plants, geology, wildlife and history of the park. Through field-based excursions and lectures, you'll cultivate observation skills that are the hallmark of a good naturalist. When you complete eight courses, of your choice, you will receive your "Joshua Tree Master Naturalist" certification. Certification may be completed over time. These courses are approved for credit from UC Riverside Extension, but credit is not required for the certificate.

Complete eight courses to receive your Joshua Tree Master Naturalist certification.

<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Fall</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Biological Soil Crusts in Joshua Tree National Park		✓	
Birds of Anza Borrego		✓	new in 2020
Birds of Joshua Tree National Park	✓		
Birds of the Eastern Mojave: Spring Migration	✓		new in 2021
Citizen Science: Phenological Monitoring in Joshua Tree National Park	✓		
Desert Invertebrates: Diversity Great and Small - a Macro Photography and Microscopy Primer		✓	
Desert Snakes: Mystery and Intrigue		✓	
Desert Tortoise Conservation Biology	✓		
Ecology of Joshua Tree National Park	✓		
Flora of Joshua Tree National Park	✓		
Geology and Geomorphology of Death Valley		✓	
Geology: Creation of the Joshua Tree Landscape		✓	
Insects and Arthropods of the Eastern Mojave	✓		new in 2021
Insects and Arthropods of the Morongo Basin		✓	
Moss in Motion: Desert Moss Ecology and Diversity	✓		new in 2021
Rocks and Minerals of Joshua Tree National Park	✓		

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

Cultural History Courses

Art History of the Coachella Valley

NEW

Date/Time: Sunday, October 25, 9 am - 5:30 pm
Meet at: Living Desert, Palm Desert
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Steven Biller, Editor-In-Chief, Palm Springs Life
Hike Level: Easy



The opening of Southern Pacific Railroad service in the desert in the late 1800s brought with it a steady flow of artists from the East Coast who rode in exchange for their paintings and drawings of Western landscapes, which the railroad used to entice travelers to explore beyond the Mississippi River. By the 1920s, American and European impressionist painters were fixtures in southern California's deserts, mountains, canyons, forests, and coastlines—and especially in artist colonies like the one that emerged in the Coachella Valley. The workshop begins in this early California period, surveying the painters who came through the valley—and in some cases remained and became influential in the area. Next, the trajectory leads to modern art and artists who pioneered the movement in the desert—as well as key events, such as the opening of Palm Springs Desert Museum. The contemporary art segment introduces artists whose work is inspired by the conditions and culture of the Coachella Valley and has gained an international audience. This segment also covers the proliferation and contributions of commercial art galleries, fairs/festivals, and studio/gallery districts as well as public art and events such as Desert X and the Bombay Beach Biennale.

Contemporary Art of Joshua Tree

NEW

Date/Time: Sunday, November 15, 9 am - 5 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Community Center
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Bernard Leibov, Director of BoxoPROJECTS
Hike Level: Easy



Joshua Tree and environs are well known for the burgeoning artist community that has been drawn here. The local contemporary art scene is vibrant and a healthy companion to the music community that has flourished in the area. Bernard Leibov, Director of BoxoPROJECTS, takes us through his highlights of the local cultural scene. After an introduction and orientation in the classroom, Bernard will take us on the road to visit several of the interesting art sites in the area including:

- a docent-led tour of Noah Purifoy Outdoor Museum
- a visit to the public sculptures at A-Z West, the experiment in living by Andrea Zittel
- lunch and a tour at BoxoPROJECTS, home to a residency program as well as the Joshua Treenial
- studio visits with local artists
- experience one or two of the High Desert Test Sites projects being presented
- cap the day off with a stop at Art Queen and local art galleries

History and Legends of the Joshua Tree Music Scene

Date/Time: Saturday, November 28, 10 am - 5 pm
Meet at: Black Rock Nature Center, Yucca Valley
Fee: \$150 JTNPA member, \$160 non member
Instructor: Bruce Fessier, former Desert Sun music writer and Instructor, UC Riverside
Hike Level: Easy



The Joshua Tree area has attracted spiritual-seeking musicians, singers and songwriters since the 1940s, or less than a decade after President Roosevelt established the Joshua Tree National Monument. Songwriters Hall of Famer Allie Wrubel wrote the Andrews Sisters hit, "The Lady From 29 Palms," in his Twentynine Palms home near where Paramahansa Yogananda was writing his influential "Autobiography of a Yogi" in 1947. In the 1960s, a little-known singer-actor began bringing fellow actors and rock stars to Joshua Tree to share a recurring mystical experience. One companion was country rock progenitor Gram Parsons, who brought the Rolling Stones' Keith Richards to the monument. After that, a cosmic American music scene literally began to mushroom in Joshua Tree. In his class, Bruce will explore the music scene's origins and share stories of how psychedelic experiences in the high desert not only shaped pop culture, but led to a vibrant scene including music festivals, famous recording sessions and a lounge named after Donovan's 2004 LP, "Beat Café," where an open mic night was heard internationally via Internet radio, inspiring a documentary of the influential but seemingly invisible Joshua Tree music scene titled "Nowhere Now." In addition to the story-telling, Bruce will screen "Nowhere Now." Afterwards, a discussion of the scene that developed at the Beatnik Cafe will continue at that location, now called the Beatnik Lounge, co-hosted by Joshua Tree's "unofficial mayor," Ted Quinn. The class will feature special guests, including a girlfriend of Ted Markland, who hosted Timothy Leary's LSD-laced wedding in the then Joshua Tree National Monument, and Rick Nelson's manager, who befriended Gram Parsons at the genesis of the country rock movement. We'll also take a docent tour of the Joshua Tree Inn, where Parsons died and Donovan and other rock and "Saturday Night Live" stars stayed. Bruce will also share a special Spotify playlist of musical artists important to the Joshua Tree scene going back to 1947. More special features may be added as we get closer to the class date.



Guided Hikes in JTNP

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

[Hike to the Wonderland of Rocks Overlook](#)

NEW

Date/Time: Saturday, November 14, 7:30 am - late afternoon
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$35 JTNPA member, \$45 non member
Instructor: Kevin Powell, Author, Photographer
Hike Level: Moderate - 4 miles round trip



The Wonderland of Rocks Overlook is a high vantage point with fine views of the upper Queen Valley along with Quail Mountain, the park's highest peak. Mount San Jacinto and San Gorgonio can be seen as well. If luck is with us, Desert Bighorn sheep might be observed on some of the rocky outcroppings that are found along our infrequently traveled path.

[Discover Pine City](#)

Date/Time: Saturday, November 21, 8 am - early afternoon
Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center
Fee: \$35 JTNPA member, \$45 non member
Instructor: De Karlen, Naturalist, Desert Guide
Hike Level: Easy/Moderate - 4.3 miles round trip



This hike is just the hike for those still a little intimidated by Joshua Tree's vastness: easy, informative, and just the right length. Beginning at the Pine City backcountry board, this trail is less traveled and one of Joshua Tree's nicest "hidden" treasures. It's an architectural confection of Joshua Tree's famous high desert plants, its human history, and monster artful boulders, leading to an expansive view of the low desert. We'll have lunch in a nearby pinyon pine burst of greenery and shade, then take an additional side-foray to the Desert Queen Mine, with a tale of its dramatic mining past.

How Fit Do You Need To Be?

If you take part in a Guided Hike in JTNP, you will need to carry a backpack - with food, clothing, water and other essentials - that generally weighs up to 15 pounds. You will be exercising with either heat or cold, typical of the Mojave Desert and elevation gain. And, you may need to scramble over large boulders along the route. To help you decide on which course is best for you, take into account the "Hike Level" ratings. Please note that these ratings are only guidelines. What is labeled "strenuous" might be routine for a very fit visitor. For the most precise information about each activity or the effects of the desert environment, call us at **760-367-5539**.

[Discover the Wonderland of Rocks](#)

Date/Time: Saturday, December 5, 7:30 am - late afternoon
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$35 JTNPA member, \$45 non member
Instructor: Kevin Powell, Author, Photographer
Hike Level: Moderate - 5 miles round trip



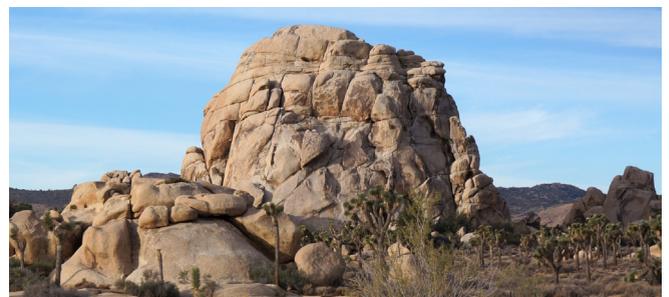
The jumbled mass of the Wonderland of Rocks covers twelve square miles of intriguing landscape. On this mostly off trail, cross country hike we will explore historical sites, be exposed to geologic oddities in the form of arches, patterns of patina rock patches resembling ancient figurines, a mosaic wall of quartz and the classic Astro Dome and "Fang Rock." Bighorn Sheep may be sighted as well. Please come prepared for some easy rock scrambling as we navigate through uneven, rocky terrain during the exciting exploration of this unique and special landscape.

[Summit Lela Peak](#)

Date/Time: Saturday, December 12, 7:30 am - late afternoon
Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center
Fee: \$35 JTNPA member, \$45 non member
Instructor: Kevin Powell, Author, Photographer
Hike Level: Strenuous - 5 miles round trip



This strenuous, five mile round trip hike leads to the top of the seldom-visited Lela Peak, elevation 4734 feet. Lela is the high-point of the northern Hexie Mountains and offers one of the best three hundred and sixty degree views to be found within the park. The hike begins at the Squaw Tank parking area, located five miles down a dirt road known as the Geology Tour Road. From here the hike passes through interesting geologic formations and into a classic desert wash. A strenuous climb leaves the wash and ascends up a rocky drainage to a large plateau. From here the actual summit is visible. The hike crosses the plateau and then ascends a moderate slope to the top. Once on top, the hiker will enjoy unobstructed views off to the east of the Pinto, Coxcombs and Eagle Mountains and, to the south, the terminus of the Little San Bernardino Mountains and parts of Pleasant Valley. To the west, down into Queen Valley and Malapai Hill and further west, Ryan and Quail Mountain. The upper portion of Queen Valley and Queen Mountain will be seen off to the north.



[Drawing the Natural World With Charcoal and Pastel](#)

Date/Time: Saturday, September 19, 9 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Monica L. Mahoney, Instructor, Artist
Hike Level: Easy



Join Joshua Tree based artist Monica L. Mahoney in an immersive field sketching walk-about in the heart of Joshua Tree National Park. Known for her expressive drawing style and knowledge of the native flora of the region, Monica will lead participants on a journey to capture the shapes, forms, and vistas of the natural world using graphite, charcoal, and neutral tone soft pastel. Sharing her wealth of knowledge, Monica will guide an easy and informative natural-history walk in a spectacular private location in search of the objects and vistas that students will choose to draw. Students will explore the power of line quality, shading techniques, and using foreground, middle ground, and background shapes for creating strong, believable compositions. The class is designed for all levels and students will be given one to one attention as needed. The goal of the workshop is to sharpen our natural observation skills while having fun and exploring how drawing brings us closer to Nature and ourselves. The skills learned in this class are complimentary to the upcoming watercolor painting workshop on November 21 (see page 17).

This class will be conducted at the reserved Lost Horse Campground.

[Field Sketching for Non-Artists](#)

Date/Time: Saturday, September 26, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Fran Calvert, Artist, Instructor
Hike Level: Easy



Would you like to enjoy the beauty of Joshua Tree National Park more fully? Are you a person who "could never draw?" This class will teach you the basics of field sketching, focusing on using the simplest most light-weight tools, methods and materials to streamline the process for non-artists. You will learn how to focus your natural powers of observation to complete a finished sketch that is accurate in detail, scale, and proportion using easy-to-learn skills that you can practice anytime and anywhere. **All materials are provided.**

[Capturing Joshua Tree Landscapes with Acrylics](#)

Date/Time: Saturday, October 10, 8:30 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Black Rock Nature Center, Yucca Valley
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Janis Commentz, Artist, Instructor
Hike Level: Easy



Spend a day painting in beautiful Joshua Tree NP. Few destinations offer a landscape as unique as Joshua Tree National Park. In this one-day class, you will focus on observation, setting an intention for the day, and learning the process of acrylic landscape painting.

Janis Commentz is known for her color-intense palette and loose brush strokes. The morning will begin with basic instruction on the process and introduction to materials. Topics include laying out your palette, color mixing, translating your observations into a painted image, tips for lights and darks, and planning a successful composition. Participants will move outdoors to observe, sketch, and learn what to look for in a potential landscape. Both group and individual instruction will help you develop your painting and explore new techniques.

The desert is a fragile environment and eco painting techniques will be used. Please note that the class will follow Leave No Trace principles and all painting and clean-up supplies must be removed from the park.

[Keys Ranch Nightscape Photography Workshop](#)

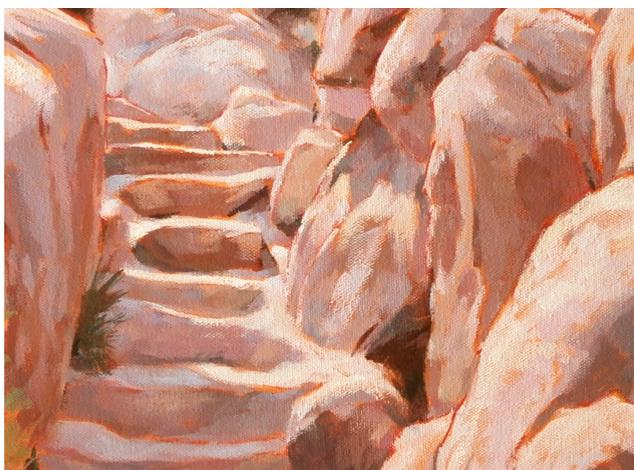
Date/Time: Saturday, October 17, 3:30 pm - midnight
Meet at: 29 Palms Visitor Center
Fee: \$160 JTNPA member, \$170 non member
Instructor: Scott Klinger, Nightscape Photography Instructor
Hike Level: Easy



Most photographers put their camera away after sunset but today's digital camera technology makes it easier than ever for photographers to take photographs of the night sky. And the night sky in Joshua Tree is beautiful. With long exposures, the camera will gather light from thousands of stars not visible to the naked eye. When we add light painting techniques of interesting foregrounds, you have an incredible and unique photograph to be proud of. This workshop will include classroom instruction about the night sky, necessary camera equipment, camera settings, focusing at night, light painting, field techniques, and an overview of post-processing. After everyone is comfortable with the concepts of night photography the class will go into the park and practice new skills during a unique private evening at Keys Ranch. This class is **limited to 8 participants**, so sign up early!

Creative Arts Courses

Register Now!
Click On Class Name



Painting by Jessica Schiffman

[Plein Air Painting Workshop in Joshua Tree National Park](#)

NEW

Date/Time: Saturday, October 17, 9 am - 4 pm
Sunday, October 18, 9 am - 3 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$170 JTNPA member, \$180 non member
Instructor: Jessica Schiffman, Artist, Instructor
Hike Level: Easy



Painting the landscape from life is thrilling and can be challenging as well. The world is filled with an infinite variety of color and value, and an overwhelming amount of detail. Patterns of shadow and light are changing constantly. This workshop will help you to simplify and organize what you see, and go on to create satisfying, dynamic paintings with strong, logical dark and light patterns. Topics will include composition, focal point, perspective, value (dark and light), underpainting, painting *ala prima* (layering wet paint without making mud), color theory, mixing paint, and more. Each session will start with a demo painting as Jessica explains her step-by-step method. Students will be given individual feedback and guidance. Some previous drawing experience will be helpful but not required.

This class will be conducted at the reserved Lost Horse Campground with the option to “car camp” with the instructor on Saturday night. Class registration includes camp site reservations (optional). For more information on camping with this class or a list of local accommodations, please contact us at 760-367-5537.

I am grateful for everything the Institute has given me and I rave about it to anyone who will listen. I am sure I will be back for more workshops as travel allows.

[Sensing Nature:](#)

[The Alchemy of Connecting to the Natural World through Custom-Made Field Journals](#)

NEW

Date/Time: Saturday, October 17, 9 am – 5 pm
Sunday, October 18, 9 am – 5 pm
Meet at: Black Rock Nature Center
Fee: \$170 JTNPA member, \$180 non member
Instructor: Brenda Littleton, Artist, Writer
Monica Lynne Mahoney, Artist, Writer, Naturalist
Hike Level: Moderate*



Join artists Brenda Littleton and Monica L. Mahoney in a collaborative hands-on journal making workshop in the heart of Joshua Tree National Park. The two-day course begins with an introduction to book making and ends with a field journal that holds the experience of being immersed in the striking landscapes of Joshua Tree National Park. Students will create their own glued accordion journal to contain thoughts, images, drawings, paintings and poetic incantations inspired by guided engagements in nature. This is both a hands-on workshop (indoors) and a field studies class (outdoors) open to all artistic skill levels. Moderate hiking will take place to observe, record, and experience the spirit of the park.

Celebrated for her richly textured and layered art books that take the reader on a journey into the mind of an alchemist, Brenda Littleton will guide students in the basic design and construction of a glued accordion journal, one which will document the weekend’s workshop of creative exploration and expression. Skills learned are transferable into book making for photography, poetry, drawing and fine art painting.

With newly created journals in hand, students will be facilitated by Monica L. Mahoney in completing a variety creative exercises to explore the power of nature as muse for self-discovery and one’s personal relationship to the land. Known for her deep connection to the desert through her expressive landscape drawings and paintings, and together with her rich knowledge of the native flora and ecology of the region, Monica will guide informative natural-history walks in spectacular locations as part of the creative process. Students will have the opportunity to choose what they are most inspired by—such as the shapes and forms, plants and animals, and vistas and horizons—while using watercolor, graphite, writing, and collage to include in their books. At the end of the course students will take home a hand-made and creatively curated journal that serves as a visual narrative of their experiences in one of the most beautiful and rare Joshua Tree woodland plant communities in the world.

The class is designed for all artistic skill levels. Students will be given one-to-one book making, drawing and painting instruction as needed. The goal of the workshop is to learn simple book making techniques and imaginative journaling methods to deepen our connection to Nature and ourselves.

*Please take note that we will be hiking over uneven terrain for up to three miles.

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

Creative Arts Courses



Painting by Diane Best

Brush Drawing the Iconic Joshua Tree

NEW

Date/Time: Saturday, October 24, 8:30 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Diane Best, Artist, Instructor
Hike Level: Easy



Come explore the Dr. Seussian world of the Joshua Tree. Capture it on paper with brush and black acrylic paint, thinned down to mimic Sumi ink. Sticking to just black paint is a way to simplify the complexity of the tree structure without having to also worry about the trees' subtle colors. While this is not a Chinese brush painting class, some of Diane's technique has been inspired by that. Diane will be giving demonstrations throughout the day, and will give each student personal instruction. The goal will be to create at least one finished painting on handmade paper from Nepal that Diane will provide. Each student should also bring their own paper to experiment with before we go to the handmade paper. The class will be going to the Lost Horse Campground area of the Joshua Tree National Park, a beautiful campground reserved for the Desert Institute. While there are many Joshua trees in that area (and shaded picnic tables to work on), Diane will also be providing photos of other interesting Joshua trees to work from. She will find trees with simpler structures that are easier to reproduce. All experience levels are welcome. There are so many different ways to approach drawing these trees—from very realistic to stylized and/or graphic. Diane will help you find your personal style and technique. There is no wrong way!

Bring lunch and beverages and a camp chair for comfort.



Painting by Diane Morgan

Watercolors with Bold Color and Impact

NEW

Date/Time: Sunday, November 8, 10 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Black Rock Nature Center
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Diane Morgan, Artist, Instructor
Hike Level: Easy



Get started painting in watercolor, or improve with solid basic skills for creating realistic watercolors that glow and pop. Learn to add drama and impact starting with a strong image and using good color choices to make the subject take center stage. Learn color mixing both on the palette and on the paper. Rather than boring exercises, techniques will be learned while actually creating a finished painting. Often called the most difficult of mediums, there are plenty of tricks and tips in watercolor to help correct mistakes and re-work an area that is less than the desired result. Class format is a step-by-step process that incorporates demonstrations of one small section of the painting at time throughout the class time. Photos of the subject matter are provided and every student will be painting the same painting. The class is interspersed with several demonstrations, then time to paint as instructed. Each student will receive one-on-one guidance along the way. Bring your enthusiasm and go home inspired. Supplies not included, but are available for purchase for an extra \$25 directly from the instructor.

Creative Arts Courses

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

Mastering Landscape Photography

Date/Time: Friday, November 6, 7 pm - 9 pm
Saturday, November 7, 5 am - 6 pm
Sunday, November 8, 5 am - 3 pm
Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center
Fee: \$170 JTNPA member, \$180 non member
Instructor: Ralph Nordstrom, Photographer, Instructor
Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



What goes into making a great landscape photograph? You can find scores of articles that promise you will master landscape photography in 10 steps or take your photography to the next level in 5 steps or shoot like a pro in 7 steps. These articles keep on appearing. And most offer valid tips. But it's not that easy. We can't promise you that you will be a master landscape photographer at the end of this course. What we can promise is you will have a much clearer idea of what is involved in pursuing this journey. We will provide practical guidelines on the gear you need and how to get the most out of it, the creative use of exposure and sharpness, the use of composition and light to create a mood or convey what inspired you to take the photograph, the magic that happens in the digital darkroom and how to unleash the artist within you.

This class offers an optional but exciting camping experience in the pristine Lost Horse Campground. Call 760-367-5539 for more information on the camping option.

Photographing the Hi-Desert

Date/Time: Saturday, November 14, 8 am - 5 pm
Meet at: Big Morongo Canyon Preserve
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Craig Fucile, Photographer, Instructor
Hike Level: Moderate

This class is sponsored by the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.



Grab your camera and put on your hiking boots for this intensive all-day photo shoot in Joshua Tree National Park! Craig Fucile will guide the class in seeing the natural beauty of the park through the camera lens. The class will begin with early morning light at the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve followed by a mid-morning instructional program at Black Rock Canyon Visitor Center. The afternoon session will relocate to a special "photographers only" session at Keys Ranch, focusing on how to capture the buildings and historic remnants at this remarkable homestead. Fucile will share tips on how to record unique rock formations and vast views of the park. Participants are encouraged to bring a tripod with their camera(s). **Class size limited to 12 participants**, so sign up early!

Photographing Soda Springs and the Mojave

Date/Time: Friday, November 20, 1:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Saturday, November 21, 6:30 am - 9:00 pm
Sunday, November 22, 6:30 am - 11:30 am
Meet at: Desert Studies Center, Zzyzx
Noncredit Fee: \$255 JTNPA member, \$265 non member
Instructor: Craig Fucile, Artist, Instructor
Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



Join us for an opportunity to stay in an exceptional part of the California Desert and devote three days to making new photographs. The class is based at the Desert Studies Center, south of Baker, CA. The Center— also known as Zzyzx (zy-zix)— lies inside in the Mojave National Preserve and is a former health spa with interesting buildings, palms, ponds, springs, plus fine views of Soda Dry Lake and desert mountains. Special emphasis is placed on photography in the field to allow students to work with color, light, shapes, and textures of the desert at an unhurried pace. On one half-day field session we'll photograph lava beds and a Joshua tree forest. Two night photography sessions are scheduled to take advantage of dark skies over Zzyzx. Instructional topics include: exposure, making panoramic photographs, HDR photography, controlling image sharpness. Hiking on field sessions are easy to moderate. Participants are encouraged to bring a tripod with their cameras. The course fee includes two nights' lodging at the Desert Studies Center and five meals beginning with dinner on Friday. Enrollment is limited.



Desert Studies Center at Zzyzx
Photo by Craig Fucile

Register Now!
Click On Class Name

Creative Arts Courses

Watercolor Field Painting: Exploring a Sense of Place

Date/Time: Saturday, November 21, 9 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Joshua Tree Visitor Center
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Monica L. Mahoney, Instructor, Artist
Hike Level: Moderate



Join Joshua Tree based artist Monica L. Mahoney in a watercolor field painting immersion in the heart of Joshua Tree National Park. Known for her plein air watercolors of sweeping desert vistas and knowledge of the native flora of the region, Monica will guide participants in capturing the "Genius loci" or spirit of this special place. Students will tap into their natural observation skills and paint the landscape in field journals using basic watercolor and water-based pencil techniques. To warm up, Monica will guide students in recording sensory observations during informative natural-history hikes in a spectacular private locations. Students will then practice gesture and thumbnail painting as well as basic color mixing techniques while using value, tone, line, shape, and depth to capture the essence of the landscape. This workshop is perfect for artists, naturalists, campers, hikers and backpackers who are interested in developing their watercolor painting skills in the field. From beginner to intermediate and advanced, the class is designed to have fun and explore how painting, sketching and journaling in Nature helps us see the world with new eyes. Some previous drawing experience will be helpful but not required. All students will be given individual attention as needed.

Note that this class will be conducted in and around the reserved Lost Horse Campground and will involve the ability to engage in moderate hiking up to three miles on uneven terrain.



Painting by Janice Commentz

Winter Light: Photographing Desert Preserves

Date/Time: Saturday, December 5, 8 am - 4 pm
Meet at: Whitewater Exit off of Highway 10
Fee: \$85 JTNPA member, \$95 non member
Instructor: Craig Fucile, Photography Instructor
Hike Level: Easy/Moderate



Join us for a day of photography in two special desert places off the beaten track: Whitewater Preserve and Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve. From the Whitewater River to McCallum pond in an oasis of California fan palms, you'll experience the beauty of water in the desert. Winter is an excellent season to photograph the low desert, with its cool temperatures, longer shadows and views of distant peaks.

The day consists of photographic field sessions, group instruction and one-on-one assistance from your instructor. Your questions will be answered! You'll learn tips and techniques for controlling sharpness, exposure, making panoramic photographs, and using lenses, along with creative exercises in photographing the desert landscape. Class begins in the morning close to the rugged cliffs of Whitewater Preserve. After lunch, we relocate to Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve for afternoon field sessions among stately palms. Hiking at each preserve is easy-to-moderate; we'll be walking on trails that are mainly level. Participants are encouraged to bring a tripod with their camera(s).

Night Sky Photography

Date/Time: Saturday, December 5, 1 pm - 10 pm
Sunday, December 6, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Meet at: Oasis Visitor Center
Fee: \$120 JTNPA member, \$130 non member
Instructor: Dennis Mammana, M.S., Astronomy, Sky Photographer, Syndicated Columnist
Hike Level: Easy



If you enjoy photography and are fascinated by the desert night sky, this two-day hands-on workshop is for you! Noted TWAN sky photographer Dennis Mammana will teach participants how to use even the simplest of cameras to create magnificent celestial portraits without resorting to composites and fakery. The class will begin with tips for setting up and shooting the night sky including a few personal tricks of the trade. That evening, participants will head to the Live Oak Picnic Area to try out their new knowledge under the real night sky. The next morning, the class will look at images from the previous night, discuss their pros and cons, and try out some basic image processing techniques in Adobe Lightroom that will make your photos pop. Any camera, digital or film, will work, if it can be adjusted manually, used with a tripod, remote control, and can take exposures of 15, 30, or more seconds. Students should have a good working knowledge of their equipment prior to taking this class. Students need to provide their own camera, tripod, camera equipment, and dress in layers as the nights can be cold.

Customized Programs

If your group, large or small, is searching for a special Joshua Tree National Park experience tailored to your interests, the Desert Institute will design an educational class just for you. We'll ensure that the activity level and optional field component will perfectly match your needs for one-day or multi-day excursions.

Day with a Desert Naturalist

Learn the secrets of Joshua Tree National Park in an all-day field class with a desert naturalist. Groups will explore the unique landscape of the park focusing on an area of interest to them. Common topics to be covered are: geology, cultural history, flora, and ecology found in the vast valleys, rock mazes, desert cactus gardens, and Joshua tree forests. Most programs cover eight miles at a moderate pace with uneven terrain and moderate elevation gain. A sample day with a Desert Naturalist could include **Discover the Wonderland of Rocks**.

The Wonderland of Rocks is a large labyrinth of granite formations and meandering corridors. It's an easy place to get lost, but it's also full of secret, picture-postcard settings, panoramic vistas, and any number of natural surprises. Spend an enjoyable day hiking and scrambling through this rare place, feeling the rough texture of its timelessness underfoot and in the finger tips. More than just a day of outdoor adventure, this Desert Institute hike includes introductory instruction in how the Wonderland formed, why it looks the way it does, and how this unique environment helps support a diverse and interesting community of plants and animals. Come prepared to hike seven to ten miles, depending on conditions, with occasional stops for rest, lunch and teachable moments. The route is cross-country and requires some scrambling and rock-hopping, none of it extended or technical.



Sunrise or Sunset Photographic Workshops with a Master Photographer

Let us show you where and how to take stunning sunrise or sunset images in Joshua Tree National Park! We can create a customized program to spend four hours in the morning or evening photographing the iconic boulders and Joshua trees. This workshop is perfect for those photographers looking to improve on composition and creating unique and original imagery. Working with our instructors will help you make sense of the landscape and begin to understand how to make effective images in this truly bizarre and wonderful terrain. If you're just a beginner, no problem! This workshop will provide you with beginning instruction in landscape photography, filter use, and sunset or sunrise silhouettes.



Photo by Dion Wong

PROGRAM COST

1/2 Day (up to 4 hours) \$300 for the first 4 people;
\$30 per person thereafter

Full day (7-8 hours) \$475 for the first 4 people;
\$45 per person thereafter

Joshua Tree National Park Association

Your support is critical to maintaining the beauty and integrity of Joshua Tree National Park's unique ecosystems. The Joshua Tree National Park Association has been the park's non-profit cooperating partner since 1962, with a mission to assist with natural and cultural resource preservation and educational activities of Joshua Tree National Park. Programs and projects that cannot be achieved through federal funds and personnel are made possible through the Joshua Tree National Park Association. We offer several ways for friends of Joshua Tree National Park to get involved and make a valuable contribution toward preserving this national treasure for future generations.

MEMBERSHIP

As a member of the Joshua Tree National Park Association, you will help the park achieve its education, interpretive and research goals. Your membership supports education materials for students, the park's library and historical collection, and scientific research.

Membership benefits include:

- 15% off merchandise at Joshua Tree National Park Association Visitor Center bookstores
- \$10 off Desert Institute classes
- Invitations to special events
- Reciprocal discounts at association bookstores at most other National Parks
- Membership sticker to show your support
- **Keys Views** newsletter

Additional premiums come with our appreciation for your support at Supporting, Patron, Contributing, Sustaining and Benefactor levels. Full details are available on our website and membership brochure, or by calling our office at 760-367-5535.

VISITOR CENTER BOOKSTORES

Joshua Tree National Park Association operates bookstores in each of the Park's four Visitor Centers. Sales in our stores account for a significant portion of the Association's revenues, and our non-profit mission means that proceeds from our sales support natural and cultural resource preservation and educational activities of Joshua Tree National Park.



Joshua Tree Visitor Center



Oasis of Mara Visitor Center



Cottonwood Visitor Center



Black Rock Visitor Center



Desert Institute Instructors

ROBIN BALCH is a Desert Institute lead volunteer and loves being around people. She has hiked several portions of the Pacific Crest Trail and is a Forest Service Fire Lookout at Black Mt. Fire Tower in Idyllwild, CA. She loves the outdoors, hiking and backpacking and has been mentored by the best, learning the ins and outs of backpacking. Robin is also a member of Joshua Tree Search and Rescue (JOSAR).

FRAN CALVERT has lived near Joshua Tree National Park for nine years. She enjoys sketching, riding horses, hiking, and backpacking year-round in the park. She is a retired technical writer with a B.A. in fine arts and art history from Columbia University. She has been a Desert Institute volunteer since 2014.

DE KARLEN is a naturalist, hiking and desert guide with Desert Adventures. Previously, she worked as an Interpretive Park Ranger in Yosemite National Park so she truly enjoys sharing her knowledge about the wonders and processes of our natural world.

JANIS COMMENTZ is a southern California native who grew up near the coast and began drawing and painting early in life. Janis moved to the Mojave Desert in 1977 to teach high school art and English. At the University of Redlands, she earned a B.A. in art and English. She holds an M.A. in Education from California State University at San Bernardino and teaches youth art classes at the 29 Palms Art Gallery and has facilitated life drawing in Joshua Tree for eight years.

PAUL DELEY obtained his Ph.D. in Invertebrate Zoology at Ghent University, Belgium in 1994 and moved to Riverside in 2000 to join the Department of Nematology at UCR as a faculty member. His research focuses on ecology, diversity and systematics of nematodes in arid ecosystems, using methods that combine light microscopy observations with DNA sequence analyses. He is an avid nature photographer with particular interest in macro photography as a tool for exploring biodiversity of southern Californian deserts and ranges.

BRUCE FESSIER has been a journalist and desert community leader since 1979. His family has owned property in Joshua Tree since 1958 and his 40-year career with The Desert Sun in Palm Springs has yielded awards for stories on Sonny Bono (2018), the history of the Mafia in the desert (2015), the new federal uses of the Annenberg Sunnylands Estate (2012) and long-form stories on presidents Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford. He received a Lifetime Achievement Award in Music Journalism at the CV Music Awards in June.

CRAIG FUCILE, B.A., Physical Geography, teaches photography for University of California, Riverside Extension. A longtime instructor, Fucile has taught

numerous photography workshops in western landscapes that he enjoys photographing including: Joshua Tree, Death Valley, Eastern Mojave, Owens Valley, Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Anza-Borrego, Kings Canyon, and Sequoia.

ALESSANDRO GRIPPO, Ph.D., Geological Sciences, has done research and taught geology, oceanography, stratigraphy, environmental geology and field classes at Santa Monica College and several California State University campuses. Alessandro has a keen interest for the geology of the American southwest and loves being out there exploring, learning, and sharing his passion for Earth and its history.

WILLIAM HAYES, Ph.D., Zoology and Physiology, Professor of Biology, Loma Linda University. Hayes specializes in the ecology of venoms and venomous animals, behavioral ecology and conservation of lizards, and behavioral ecology, taxonomy, and conservation of birds. He has published numerous works, taught and organized conferences and workshops, and has given multiple television interviews. Hayes currently teaches classes in behavioral ecology, herpetology, ornithology, and conservation.

PAM KERSEY, Ed.D., M.S.N, R.N. is the Dean of Science, Math and Engineering at Cuyamaca College in San Diego. She is an archaeological site steward, volunteers for the Desert Institute at Joshua Tree and has also volunteered as a camp nurse. She has completed three marathon hikes for children's cancer fundraising. She has camped, backpacked, and hiked for many years including summits over 14,000 feet 5 times.

SCOTT KLINGER received his first camera at the age of 7, a Kodak Instamatic, which he used to serially photograph naval warships in the San Diego Bay during the late 80's. Since then he has been exhibiting his work at galleries and film festivals for over ten years. His work is in the permanent collection of the Kiyosato Museum of Photographic Art and his most recent film *The Lover Who Doesn't Forget* was screened at the 66th Festival de Cannes and his film *Memento Mori* won Best Experimental Film at the Hollywood Reel Independent Film Festival. Scott holds degrees from UCLA and UC Irvine.

TOR LACY, M.S., is a tenured instructor at Cerritos College teaching: Physical Geology, Introduction to Earth Science, Geology of the Western National Parks and Monuments, Natural History of Southern California and Field Methods of the Earth Sciences.

KURT LEUSCHNER, M.S., Wildlife Ecology, is a Professor of Natural Resources at College of the Desert. Leuschner's specialties include: ornithology, entomology, and desert ecology. He has led hundreds of field trips both locally and as far afield as Africa. He teaches natural history courses

Meet Our New Instructors



JULIA ADAM received her Bachelor's degree from Wellesley College with a major in Biological Sciences. Then she became a short-term research fellow at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) for a year and a half where she studied spatial stable isotopes and bipartite interaction networks of plants and the herbivores that consume them. Then she joined the Department of Botany and Plant Sciences in the summer of 2017 working under the supervision of Dr. Jason E. Stajich. She is now a Ph.D. candidate working on using amplicon sequencing and metagenomics to resolve the microbial community of the yellow crustose lichen, *Acarospora socialis*. She received the NSF-GRFP Fellowship to work on lichen ecological genomics questions and also a Robert Lee Graduate Student Research Grant to better understand the microbiome of *A. socialis* across environmental gradients.



DIANE BEST was born in Boston, and headed west for studies at Stanford and the San Francisco Art Institute, before moving south to Los Angeles. In L.A. she created artwork for the entertainment industry and commissioned portraits. Tiring of city life & thirsting for adventure, she moved to Joshua Tree in 1995. Now living in Santa Fe, New Mexico, after 23 years in Joshua Tree, she has shown her work throughout the country, including solo shows at the Carnegie Museum, Southwest Museum (part of the Autry Center of the American West), and BoxoPROJECTS NYC.



STEVEN BILLER is the longtime editor-in-chief of Palm Springs Life and a board member of Desert X, the biennial exhibition of site-specific artwork in the Coachella Valley. He writes and lectures about California impressionism, especially the early desert painters, as well as contemporary art in the California desert.



ALEXIS GRINBOLD has been honing her culinary skills from a young age. She learned to appreciate the pleasures of making and eating food from her mother, who was classically trained in French Cuisine. With a Master of Fine Arts from School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a Bachelors Degree from University of California, San Diego she teaches Art and Art History at various colleges in southern California. Her love of food and the outdoors come together with two things, good food from fresh ingredients. She has discovered over the years, there is really no wrong way to do it, but you must bring a taste for adventure!



TANIA KURBESSOIAN received her Bachelor's degree in Microbiology from California State University, Northridge in 2013. She continued her Masters education at CSUN in Biology until 2016 with Dr. Larry Baresi. It was after she joined the Microbiology program at the University of California Riverside in Summer 2017 to work with her advisor Dr. Jason E. Stajich. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate focusing her research on black yeasts found in desert biological soil crusts. She received the Emory Simmons Award from the Mycological Society of America to understand black yeast's role in biological soil crusts isolated from the Mojave Desert. She will be using a combination of next generation sequencing techniques to assess the composition of fungal and bacterial communities and investigate the role black yeasts play in protecting them from the harsh Mojave Desert.



BERNARD LEIBOV is the Founder and Director of BoxoPROJECTS, a residency and programming initiative based in Joshua Tree, CA. He is also co-founder and co-curator of the Joshua Treenial. Prior to moving to California, Bernard was Deputy Director of Judd Foundation in New York and Marfa. He also operated a non-traditional gallery space in New York City which featured artists from Joshua Tree and other non-urban areas.



BRENDA LITTLETON, M. A. Educator, writer, and Jungian therapist. Brenda has taught book arts as a means to collect the unconscious whispering of dreams, images, rituals, poetry, prose, and personal literacy of place since 1994. Both as an art form and as a healing practice to document one's place on Earth, a handmade book is a welcome companion to the personal portfolio of self-expression and creativity. Littleton teaches transformative education and therapeutic self-inquiry in workshops and seminars, with a focus on how the terroir of landscape influences living a soulful life.

Meet Our New Instructors



DIANE MORGAN is an award-winning artist working in watercolor and oil. Her work has been featured in American Art Collector, International Artist, Southwest Art, American Artist, Artist Magazine, Sunset Magazine, Art Patron, Palm Springs Life, The Art of Watercolor and Watercolor Artist.



NUTTAPON (NAT) POMBUBPA received his Bachelor's degree with a double major in Molecular and Cellular Developmental Biology and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2015. Then, he joined the Department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology at the University of California Riverside in Fall 2015, working under the supervision of Professor Jason E. Stajich. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate with research focuses on biological soil crusts (biocrusts), desert fungal diversity, and microbiome. He received Robert Lee Graduate Student Research Grant award from Joshua Tree National Park to work on using next generation amplicon sequencing to explore the composition of microbial communities and to investigate spatial and temporal patterns on biocrust microbiome in Joshua Tree National Park.



JESSICA SCHIFFMAN has been a working artist for over twenty-five years. Her oil and acrylic paintings, including desert landscapes, forest scenes, figurative works and more, are widely collected. In addition, she has illustrated sixteen children's books and created several murals. Jessica has taught art for fifteen years at venues including the Idyllwild Arts Academy and Summer Program, the Desert Art Center in Palm Springs, and the Create Center in Palm Desert. Jessica has a BFA in painting from the San Francisco Art Institute.



SYDNEY WILLIAMS When the former collegiate athlete and competitive skydiver unexpectedly found herself on the receiving end of a Type 2 diabetes diagnosis, while grappling with unresolved trauma from a decades-old sexual assault, she set out on a mission: turn her pain into power. Two hikes across Catalina Island and 80 miles later, she founded Hiking My Feelings® to help others tap into the mind-body connection and healing power of nature that helped kick her self-limiting beliefs and disease into remission. Having more than 12 years of marketing experience with Fortune 500 companies and emerging brands, Sydney serves up her "truth juice" style of storytelling to break wide open tough conversations with practical, powerful content and experiences.



Class Registration Form

You may register for a course by phone, mail, or online at joshuatree.org. Before participating in any of the field activities provided by the Desert Institute, and as a condition to being accepted for such activities, you must sign, for yourself and, if applicable, for your minor child who is a participant, a waiver and release of claims, including of negligence, arising from your or the minor's enrollment or participation.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ CELL PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

- Check here if you would like to receive Desert Institute information and updates on merchandise, lectures, classes, and custom-designed programming via email. We do not share your contact information without your prior approval.

Membership Information

Current JTNPA membership qualifies me for a \$10 discount on every Desert Institute class

- I am a current member of JTNPA!
 I would like to renew my membership or join

DATE	CLASS NAME	FEE	CREDIT FEE	TOTAL
			Membership Fee (Optional)	\$25
			Total Enclosed	

**Make checks payable to: Joshua Tree National Park Association
 74485 National Park Dr., Twentynine Palms, CA, 92277**

How did you hear about us? _____

PAYMENT BY: CHECK AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER MASTERCARD VISA

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Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Authorized Signature _____

General Information

REGISTRATION

You may register by phone, fax, mail, or on-line at joshuatree.org. Please register early, our classes have limited sizes. You may also register using the registration form found on page 24.

COURSE INFORMATION PACKET

Upon receipt of your registration, we will send you a course itinerary, map, enrollment confirmation/entrance fee waiver, and information on clothing and equipment needs. Local lodging and camping information is available upon request.

CANCELLATION POLICY

We have modified our cancellation policy due to the COVID 19 pandemic. We will refund all cancellations with no cancellation fees.

WAIVER AND RELEASE OF CLAIMS

Before participating in any of the field activities provided by the Desert Institute, and as a condition to being accepted for such activities, you must sign, for yourself and for your minor child who is a participant, a waiver and release of claims, including of negligence, arising from your or the minor's enrollment or participation. Your information is confidential. Participants must provide their own health and accident insurance. Please obtain a doctor's clearance if you have any condition that may impact your ability to participate in a class.

DISCOUNTS

There is a \$10 discount per class for **JTNPA members**, including those who join when they register.

SAFETY, INSURANCE AND PHYSICAL FITNESS

Every effort is made to ensure safety on Desert Institute courses. However, participants are responsible for their own safety and accident insurance. JTNPA does not accept responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged property or any bodily injury incurred during the courses. You must sign a liability waiver in order to participate in the courses. Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

CHILDREN AND PETS

Our courses are designed for adults. An adult must accompany children under 16; the minimum age is 14. Pets are not permitted on courses, on National Park trails, or unattended in vehicles.

ACADEMIC CREDIT

Credit is available from University of California, Riverside Extension. Optional credit courses are marked by the symbol found on page 3. The number of units are listed with each class. Credit fees are listed separately from noncredit fees. Credit units are based on a quarter system. Credit students may be required to successfully complete assignments or exams. Teachers may apply for Professional Career Development through their school district.

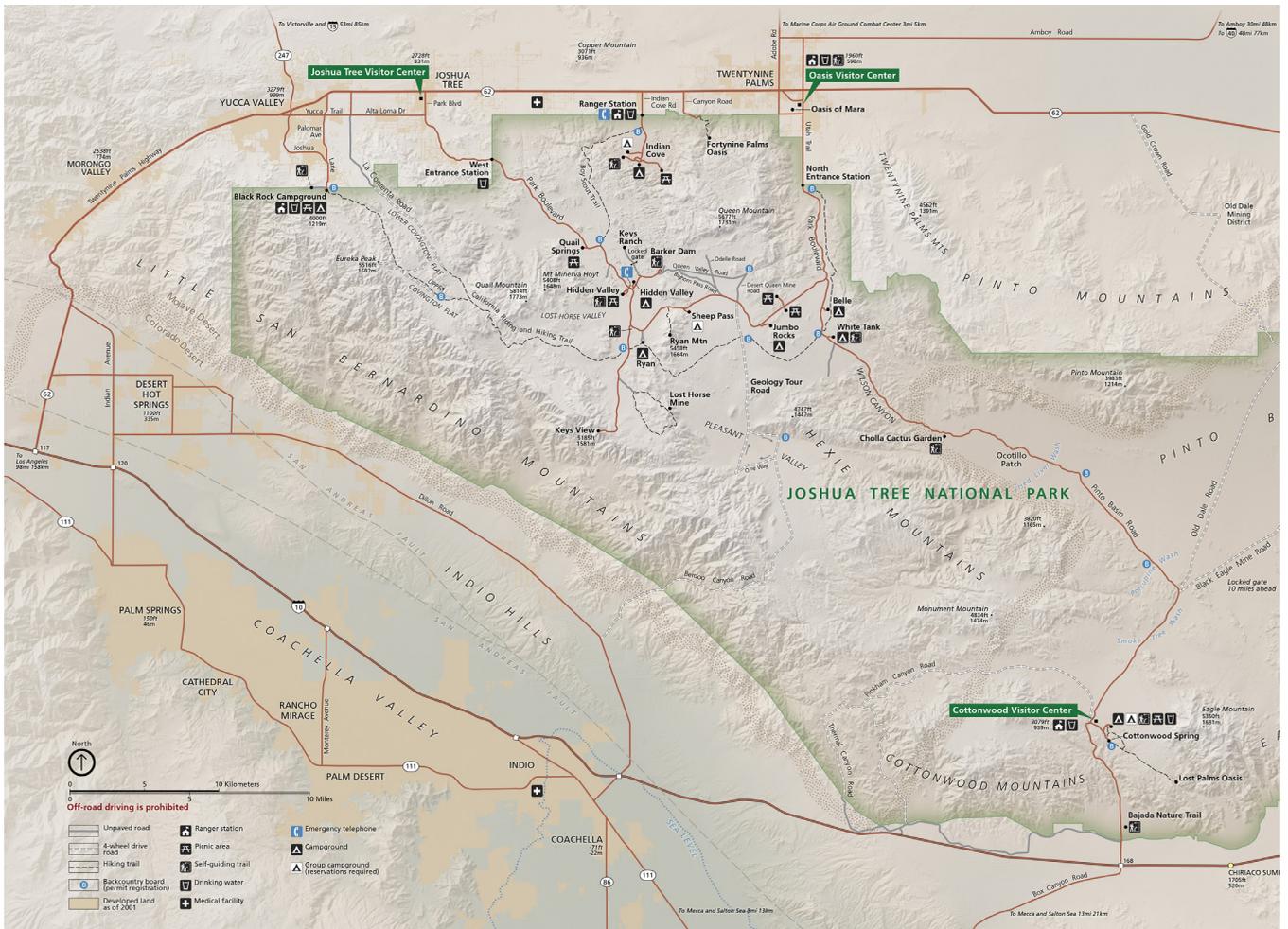
CAMPING AND PARK INFORMATION

Most campgrounds are first come, first served. Reservations are available for Black Rock and Indian Cove from October through May. Camping and fees for overnight courses held at Lost Horse Campground are included in registration. For other courses, campsites may be reserved online through recreation.gov. Campground fees will apply. Participants are responsible for their own accommodations and food. Visit the park website at nps.gov/jotr for more camping information.

WEATHER, CLOTHING, AND EQUIPMENT

Courses are held rain or shine. We reserve the right to change the course itinerary due to weather or other conditions. Students should be prepared for a variety of desert weather conditions, including cold and windy days. Appropriate clothing, footwear, and sun protection are very important. Clothing and equipment needs will be identified in your course information packet. Be prepared - bring plenty of water!





From Los Angeles: Take Interstate 10 East to Highway 62 to Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree or Twentynine Palms. You may enter Joshua Tree National Park through the **North Entrance**, Utah Trail, Twentynine Palms (south from 62); **West Entrance**, Park Blvd., Joshua Tree (south from 62); or the **South Entrance** at Cottonwood (take Interstate 10, Exit 168 north.)

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, Morongo Valley: Turn southeast off Highway 62 onto East Drive. Turn left into the Preserve.

Black Rock Nature Center, at Black Rock Canyon Campground, Yucca Valley: From Highway 62, take Joshua Lane going south, right turn at intersection onto San Marino Dr.; turn left onto Black Rock Canyon Rd.; turn right into the nature center parking lot.

Cottonwood Visitor Center: Take Exit 168 north off Interstate 10 and turn right into the visitor center parking lot.

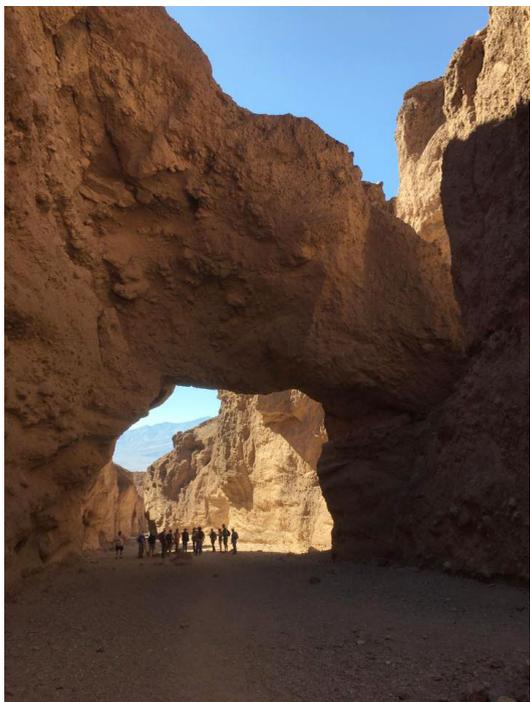
Joshua Tree Visitor Center, Joshua Tree: From Highway 62, take Park Blvd. south and turn right into visitor center.

Oasis Visitor Center, Twentynine Palms: Turn south off Highway 62 onto National Park Drive and turn right into visitor center.

Coachella Valley Preserve: Exit Highway 10 at Ramon Road, turn East, turn left on Thousand Palms Canyon Road.

Mission Creek Preserve: Exit Highway 62 at Mission Creek Road in Desert Hot Springs, head west to the gate.

Whitewater Preserve: Exit Highway 10 at Whitewater to meeting site.



Photos from the class "Geology and Geomorphology of Death Valley." Photos by Amanda Lopez

Dennis Mammana and I are high school classmates from Easton, PA. When I learned a few years ago that Dennis conducted Night Sky Photography workshops, I knew that I wanted to attend one of his programs. I have been a serious amateur photographer for many years, but had never learned how to shoot the night sky, and if I was going to take a course, why not take it from someone that I knew and in an area of the country where the night sky is so different from the light polluted northeast where I live. That's how I came to travel from Bethlehem, PA to take Dennis' Desert Institute workshop. I really enjoyed learning from Dennis, and especially liked the time we spent photographing in the night desert. The images I captured were beyond my expectations. I have already had some Pennsylvania friends ask me about Dennis and the workshops, so there may be more photographers traveling to you from the east coast.



I am an artist, but I chose to do this class as a way to reawaken my eyes. I had not previously used these techniques, so I found it refreshing to follow her lead. Fran was so thoughtful with each student, helping everyone to feel they had something to contribute. Though the subject matter of JTNP can be intimidating, she broke down the landscape, so that it was less chaotic. She simplified the process so that I noticed everyone came away with a credible sketch. Listening to everyone talk about their experience was a great way to see how we all experience the landscape in front of us differently!

All Desert Institute programs have been reviewed by the NPS for potential environmental impacts and approved as being compliant with National Park standards.



Volunteer Opportunities

Combine your passion for the Joshua Tree National Park and education by joining the Desert Institute volunteer team.

We are recruiting candidates for the following program:

Field Class Representatives training to be held on

August 29 - 30, 2020

Please call 760-367-5539 for more information on volunteer programs with the Desert Institute.



Desert Institute at Joshua Tree National Park
74485 National Park Dr.
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Joshua Tree National Park Association is a private, not-for-profit Cooperating Association working in partnership with Joshua Tree National Park to help in its achievement of programming goals in education, interpretation, scientific and historic research and activities.



Join The Adventure



Follow us and share images and ideas!

Mount San Gorgonio seen from Keys View