

Protecting Desert Watersheds at The Wildlands Conservancy's Desert Preserves

Information

Date/ Time: Saturday, March 28, 8:30am-2pm
Sunday, March 29, 8:30am-2pm

Meet at: Saturday, Pioneertown Mountains Preserve
Sunday, Whitewater Preserve to carpool to Mission Creek Preserve

Instructor: Caroline Conway, Retired Director of Education, Desert Preserves

Overview

The Wildlands Conservancy's three Desert Preserves protect watersheds essential to water supply and delivery to the surrounding deserts. Join us to visit all three preserves with a focus on the watersheds they protect and how watersheds both past and present are essential to the desert system. We will explore the canyons' roles as water delivery systems, wildlife corridors and habitats. This two-day class will include a 6.5 mile easy to moderate hike between Mission Creek and Whitewater Preserves on Sunday. Preserve staff will help us understand the particular concerns of each preserve.

Participants will meet at Whitewater Preserve on Sunday to park before consolidating into fewer cars to drive to Mission Creek Preserve to begin the hike. After lunch and an introduction to the preserve by staff, we will drive back to Mission Creek to pick up cars parked there. We will discuss a carpooling strategy during Saturday's session.

Itinerary

Saturday, March 28, 2020 – 8:30 am – 2 pm

Pioneertown Mountains Preserve Ranger Station

- Introduction
- Walk to wetlands and stone house
- Lunch/snack break, **bring your own food**

Sunday, March 29, 2020 - 8:30am – 2 pm

Whitewater Preserve Parking Lot

- Meet at Whitewater Parking lot to drive to Mission Creek
- Begin hike to Whitewater
- Eat lunch/snack, **bring your own food**
- Explore the ponds and wetland

What to Bring to the Course

Optional Class Materials

- Binoculars
- Camera
- ***The 10 Essentials: Everyday in the Desert***
- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Closed toe hiking shoes
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Sun glasses
- Sunscreen
- Notebook and pencil/pen
- Whistle

Fitness Requirements

Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

Hike Level

Moderate

Guidelines

- You are responsible for your safety.
- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the desert. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see them.
- Only you know your limits, please let the instructor or Desert Institute Representative know if you do not want to continue.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.
- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.
- Before leaving the class, check out with Desert Institute Representative.

Instructor Biography

Caroline Conway has been teaching desert ecology to people of all ages for 30 years. She worked as Education Director at The Living Desert for 15 years before moving to Joshua Tree. She recently retired as the Director of Education for the The Wildlands Conservancy's Desert Preserves, but continues to volunteer as a docent for both The Wildlands Conservancy and Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. She also

teaches Conservation of Natural Resources for College of the Desert. Caroline became interested in watersheds through her work at the three desert preserves, all of which protect canyons that contribute to surrounding desert aquifers.

* The Desert Institute staff/instructors will attempt to accommodate participant's needs; however we reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.