

Save the Watershed An Evening with Kevin Pakulis and Friends



Saturday,
Nov. 19, 2011

6:00 to 9:00

Sponsored by
Friends of Sonoita
Creek

PATAGONIA COMMUNITY CENTER
100 Quiroga Lane

Friends sponsors an evening of music and information

Friends of Sonoita Creek is inviting all of our members and the public to an evening of music and information on November 19 at the Patagonia Community Center from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. We are sponsoring Kevin Pakulis, the popular Arizona folksinger who was the headliner for the May 2011 Tucson Folk Festival. In addition to Kevin's music David Teel, Patagonia town manager, will speak about getting a protective agreement with the US Forest Service for the Harshaw and Sonoita Creek watersheds. Wendy Russell of PARA Watchdogs will discuss how to send out scoping comments to the forest service. Kathy Pasierb will summarize by talking about the importance of understanding the watershed. Watershed posters designed by Patagonia school children will be on display. Light refreshments will be served.

The evening will be free and open to the public, but donations will be accepted to help defray costs.

Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative adds nectar plants in Sonoita Creek watershed

--Ron Pulliam

The Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative (BHRI) is a new community-based conservation effort that seeks to engage local citizens in restoration of wildlife habitat. The initiative builds on 20 years of extensive restoration efforts on the Cuenca Los Ojos (CLO) ranches in southeastern Arizona and northwestern Sonora. Over the past year, CLO and *Friends of Sonoita Creek* have worked together to establish a pilot community outreach project in Patagonia and the Sonoita Creek watershed.

The pilot project in Patagonia/Sonoita Creek focuses on propagation of native, nectar-producing plants that provide food for pollinators. Enhancing populations of pollinators, for example, hummingbirds and butterflies, increases seed and fruit production and thereby provides food for many other wildlife species. The goal of the project for this year has been to engage local residents in the propagation of 2,000 plants of several species important to hummingbirds and other pollinators. To this end, the Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative, in conjunction with *Friends of Sonoita Creek*, and several other local groups, sponsored four workshops and "potting luck" parties where those participating learned to propagate hummingbird plants native to the Sonoita Creek watershed. Participants also received free plants for their home gardens in exchange for agreeing to grow "mother plants" that will eventually provide the seeds and cuttings needed for future potting luck parties.

The two groups have many goals in common and intend to work together closely to improve habitat quality for wildlife and the quality of life for people in the Sonoita Creek watershed. To learn more about the Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative visit their website <http://resourceeasternsantacruzcounty.ning.com/group/borderlandshabitatorrestoration>. Hit "Join" to view the site.

Hummingbird Monitoring Network completes banding season

--Elizabeth Bernays

Susan Wethington and her husband Lee Rogers continue their great work with the Hummingbird Monitoring Network. Their banding in the Patagonia area is on Harshaw Creek and on Sonoita Creek in the Sonoita Creek State Natural Area, though they work at several other sites in southeast Arizona and also keep track of what is happening at 28 other sites throughout the west. Susan was successful in getting a grant from NASA, and another from the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation program, allowing her to expand the program and study questions relevant to hummingbird populations in the Americas as well as our hummingbirds in the Sonoita Creek watershed.

A number of important issues are being addressed, such as evaluating how climate change influences hummingbird populations and migration patterns, and to what extent management activities are effective in restoring hummingbird habitats. This will be particularly interesting in our watershed where plant restoration work is in progress.

Many interesting details are emerging from this year's work at Harshaw Creek, which has just come to an end as the last of the migrants fly south. For example, high site fidelity was noted with returning Broad-billed Hummingbirds in spring and all species in spring returned to the feeders at intervals, indicating the shortage of nectar sources after the dry winter. The southward migration began early with unusually fat Rufous Hummingbirds occurring in record numbers in July and August. Black-chinned Hummingbirds were in high numbers, a big proportion being birds that hatched this year. In general, diversity of species was fairly high, but relatively few birds had pollen on their bodies when they were captured. Of course, the large-scale patterns and ecology of the birds will only become evident when data from all the sites is analyzed. One of great values of the work is that the data is collated and made available to researchers who may need to answer new questions over time.

Welcome to our new board members

Elizabeth Bernays and Judy King have joined the FOSC board since our last newsletter. Elizabeth is retired from her position as head of the U of A Entomology department. She lives in Patagonia and is active in the community.

Judy King replaces her husband Ron on the Board. She is the volunteer coordinator of the Ridgeway Visitor Center in Colorado and program coordinator at the Visitor Center at Patagonia Lake State Park.

We welcome them and are grateful they are willing to donate their time and talents to our organization.

FOSC booth at Santa Cruz County Fair

One of our opportunities to tell people about the importance of the watershed is one-on-one conversations at our booth at festivals. We have been at the Energy Expos in Patagonia and Sonoita, the Patagonia Trails Day in April, the Patagonia Fall Festival, and this year, for the first time we had our booth at the Santa Cruz County Fair.



Board member Jim Lockwood discusses the watershed map at the Santa Cruz County Fair.

A brief history of FOSC

The charter members at the first meeting of *Friends of Sonoita Creek* held in April, 2004 in Rio Rico were Ron Hummel, Jack Walsh, Diana Holmes, Barbara Harsh, Debbie Sebesta and Amy McCoy. Officers elected at the first annual meeting November 16, 2004 were Ron Hummel, president, Jack Walsh, vice president, Diana Holmes, secretary and Steve Holmes, treasurer.

Friends' financial resources grow

--Steve Holmes, Treasurer

Summary: For the year, 2011 has seen roughly equal income (compared to 2010). However, this year has seen a significant increase in membership income over last year. Since our expenses have been less this year, it is likely we will finish this year in a stronger financial position.

Details: The year began with total monies in the treasury of \$3,551.50 (in 2010 the year began with \$3,610.59). As of Oct 23, the year's income for the Friends has totaled \$1,568.18 (\$1,583.87 in 2010) with \$1,510.60 (\$995.00 in 2010) of that income coming from membership dues. Cash donations and interest made up the balance.

As of October 23, expenses have totaled \$678.70 (\$1,870.72 in 2010), leaving us with a current balance of \$4,422.98 (\$2,824.12 in 2010).

Jack Walsh leaves our area

Charter FOSC member Jack Walsh and his wife Caroline have moved to Colorado to be closer to their children. He was Vice President when the organization was formed. Lately, Jack has been a dependable volunteer whenever we needed help. He is a strong advocate for the environment. He leaves a legacy of his New Mexico-Arizona Railroad program that has delighted hundreds of people and his work to develop the Train Track Trail along the old railroad bed east of Patagonia. We will miss these wonderful people, but we wish them happiness in their new locale.



When is the Annual Meeting?

We are still trying to find the best time for an Annual Meeting at which we sponsor a speaker and vote on officers and any other business that needs membership attention. We have tried early December, but that is a busy time for many people, late November, and last year in October. This year we are planning a mid to late March meeting. We want it early enough that seasonal residents won't have left for the summer. If you have suggestions on attracting more members to this meeting, we would welcome your ideas. We will send more information in the spring when you get our next mailing with the spring activity schedule.

Friends' website takes new direction; visit www.sonoitacreek.org

--Allyson Armstrong, Web Master

The Sonoita Creek watershed encompasses 270 square miles of territory. The geography is diverse and so are the people and issues facing us. I hope to make the web site informative and useful for us all. Mining, ranching, drought, tourism, research, and recreation are issues for federal, state, private, corporate, and non-profit land owners within the watershed. Please take a look at the site and send feedback to the Board via the web page. Suggestions and contributions are welcome. A big thanks to member Tom Arny for his expertise and support in developing the website.

The website has biographies of the Board of Directors, a photo gallery from the watershed, the weekly bird sightings list from bird walks at Patagonia Lake State Park and links to maps, information and studies being conducted along Sonoita Creek. There is a section on hiking with suggested hikes and information about hikes and other activities being sponsored by *Friends*.

Note to our members and friends: What are your interests and concerns about FOSC? Suggestions are welcome, e.g., Where would you like our organization to put our energies and resources? Contact us through our web page.

THE VISITOR CENTER AT PATAGONIA LAKE OPENS FOR FALL SEASON

--Judy King

The fall season for Patagonia Lake State Park and Sonoita Creek State Natural Area began October 15 when the Visitor Center reopened. Hours of operation for the Visitor Center are from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm on both Saturdays and Sundays. The Visitor Center has educational displays, a children's corner and a reference library.

There are both regularly scheduled activities and specialty activities planned. Junior Ranger activities will be available for children aged 6 through 12 on Saturdays at 2:00 pm and Sundays at 10:00 am.

Nature walks start at 9:00 am on Saturdays and are open to everyone. The ever-popular Bird Walks have resumed on Mondays. The walks begin at 9:00 at the Birding Trailhead at the east end of the campground. There will be a Moonlight Hike monthly beginning on November 10th. Visitors will meet at the Visitor Center around 4:30 pm to carpool to the trailhead. Park entrance fees apply to all activities. More information is available at www.azstateparks.com/parks/SOCR

The volunteer staff at the Visitor Center this year includes on-site volunteers that will stay for two months to staff the Visitor Center, do trail work, present interpretative programs, and lead hikes and other activities. The goal for the season is to offer as many educational activities as possible to make certain that visitors to our area have a positive experience when they visit Patagonia Lake State Park and Sonoita Creek State Natural Area. More exciting activities are in the works for the next several months and will be updated on the Park's website. Hikes to petroglyph sites, special children's activities, and some new presentations regarding the history of the area are some of the programs coming up. Many FOOSC members are involved with the park activities, and their contributions are greatly appreciated.

Membership Application

Please Print

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

CONTRIBUTIONS

- (Student) CARDINAL \$ 5
- GREEN KINGFISHER \$15
- GRAY HAWK \$25
- ELEGANT TROGON \$50
- Please contact me to volunteer for Friends

.....
Contributions accepted as memorials and as gifts.

Name of recipient _____

Donor's name _____

Address _____

City _____

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Acknowledgement sent to

Name _____

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*Friends of Sonoita Creek is a 501(c)3 organization.
Your contributions are tax deductible.*

Checks to FRIENDS OF SONOITA CREEK
P.O. Box 4508
Rio Rico, AZ 85648
www.sonoitacreek.org

Friend to Friends

--Sally Lockwood, president

In the past year the *Friends* organization has taken on new energy with local initiatives and ideas growing out of concerns for the watershed. Allyson Armstrong has worked to make our web site a “go to” place for information about the health of the watershed <www.sonoitacreek.org>.

We are concerned about the proposed mining in the Patagonia Mountains and how it will affect the amount of water and its quality for the residents—human, plants and animals, as well as other effects such as air quality, traffic and aesthetics.

The *Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative*, under the leadership of Patagonia resident Ron Pulliam, is focusing on restoring nectar plants as one small step which could have a big impact on the health and abundance of insects, birds and other plants. The story about the initiative on page 1 of the newsletter explains how planting nectar plants can provide important benefits for the watershed.

The *Hummingbird Monitoring Network*, also based in Patagonia, is an international organization sponsoring research in Canada and Mexico as well as the United



Ron Pulliam and participants in the *Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative* transplanted over 400 hummingbird plants on a recent October day. Some of the plants were given to participants and some were reserved for community pollinator gardens and experimental restoration trials.

States. *Friends* members are involved with both organizations to support them in their efforts.

We plan to provide a program of hikes in the spring. You will receive it in the mail as well as being able to access it on the web. We hope you can join us.

FRIENDS OF SONOITA CREEK

FOSC is organized to protect the surface water and natural habitat of Sonoita Creek and its watershed by increasing community awareness and support through education.

GOALS

- b. Promoting environmental educational programs and activities that facilitate understanding and stewardship of the resource.
- c. Advocating for issues that pertain to habitat protection.
- d. Acknowledging that conserving Sonoita Creek and its watershed is a community endeavor, providing a link between private and public stakeholders, and being informed of current events and potential partnerships.
- e. Adapting and utilizing conservation education and developing specific local programs to involve property owners, residents and visitors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Sally Lockwood
Recording Secretary: Allyson Armstrong
Corresponding Secretary: Barbara Casimir
Treasurer: Steve Holmes

Board Members: Elizabeth Bernays, Judy King, Jim Lockwood, Kathy Pasierb, Greg Scott.
Advisory member: Ron Pulliam.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Rio Rico, AZ 85648

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520.604-6679

Web Address: www.sonoitacreek.org

Web master: Allyson Armstrong
Newsletter editor: Sally Lockwood

Friends is sponsoring a

PATAGONIA RAMBLE

December 10, 2011

Join naturalist Ron Hummel for a 5 mile circuit through several trails through Patagonia (Train Track, Animal Tracks, and TNC's Cemetery Trail) and celebrate the natural diversity of the area.

We will...

- stop often on the flat paths to look at and discuss plants from here and around the world as well as animal tracks and possibly animals.
- view the Native Seed Search work to propagate native plants and the butterfly garden to catch a glimpse of late flyers.
- linger at the Animal Tracks trail to discover the resident quail population and to see any of the several woodpecker species which frequent the woods.

Meet at the Patagonia Post office parking lot behind the recycle bins at 9 AM and plan to walk until mid afternoon. Bring water and lunch.

Friends of Sonoita Creek

P.O. Box 4508

Rio Rico, AZ 85648

