



MICK MEADER CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT FUND

ongoing with \$50,000 challenge grant—see page 4

Cascabel Conservation Association
Supporting Conservation, Community, and Contemplation in the Middle San Pedro Valley
2018 CCA NEWSLETTER

Come see our newest Baicatcan Campground improvements



Sue Newman

The Cascabel Conservation Association (CCA) and Archaeology Southwest continue to co-manage the 130 acre Baicatcan property. Visitors to the shared campground will notice major changes. There is now a small cottage located in the campground, available for use by CCA/ASW guests and volunteers. It has a single bed, desk, wood stove for heat, ceiling fan, swamp cooler and a roofed porch. Other changes to the campground include two new picnic benches, new spigots, a 300 gallon emergency water supply, and a solar system for the cottage.

Camping and cottage reservations are coordinated by Susan Tollefson. If you are a CCA/ASW member, feel free to contact her directly at <smtollefson51@gmail.com>. If you are a guest of a CCA/ASW member, please ask your sponsor to make the reservations on your behalf.



All campground photos: Alex Binford-Walsh

Campground cottage inside



Campground cottage porch



Campground outdoor kitchen/ramada



Cottage solar system

Community Garden and Education Programs



Sue Newman

Raining mesquite beans

OUR GARDEN AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN GROWING AND PROCESSING A WIDE VARIETY OF LOCALLY GROWN FOODS: San Pedro Valley heirloom wheat and corn varieties grown in the Community garden became crusty loaves of whole wheat bread and marvelous herb polenta. Mesquite beans collected in summer were turned into sweet traditional mesquite flour for pancakes and tortillas, and our green chiles were roasted to smoky perfection over a mesquite fire. Currently, we are designing a bigger and better chile roaster for the next harvest. **Come to our garden parties and enjoy foods from our Cascabel harvests!**



Birgit De Gregorio

Grinding corn meal from our heirloom corn



Come down to the Garden.
Feed the body and the soul.
Friends connecting,
Growing food
~that's the goal.

It's Awesome!

Dave Shreeve



Birgit De Gregorio

Garden orchard peaches



Birgit De Gregorio

"Walls of Water" protecting tomato starts



Birgit De Gregorio

Promising harvests at the Community Garden



Birgit De Gregorio

THE IMPORTANCE OF CASCABEL CONSERVATION

by Daniel Baker

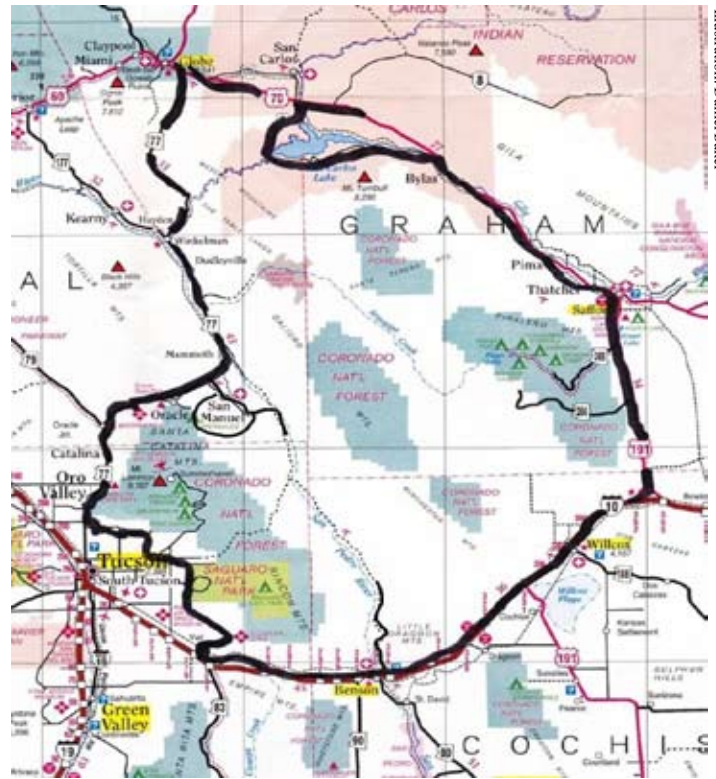
The wildlands surrounding Cascabel are extraordinarily unique. The Lower San Pedro River Valley (SPRV) includes the last major wild river and most extensive riparian area in the American desert southwest, and is the main western migratory corridor for Neotropical birds. Here the Sonoran, Chihuahuan, Madrean, and Rocky Mountain ecoregions meet, creating rich biodiversity.

The quality most important to all those attributes is the connectivity of the landscape. Mountain-front recharge from mountain streams is the primary source of waters feeding the river and provides the extensive riparian feeding grounds for bird migrations. Due to the openness of the landscape, the many species in this “hotspot” of biodiversity have significant opportunities for dispersal, migration and genetic exchange, allowing for the possibility of their continued viability. But as modern conservation biology has demonstrated, if those connections are broken, those attributes begin to disappear.

The key to the Lower SPRV’s biodiversity, and thereby its attraction for conservation, is that it lies within a very large area of connectivity. Drawing a line around our area having no paved thruways shows Cascabel to be within the northernmost portion of the Madrean Archipelago. The Catalina, Rincon, Galiuro, Winchester, Santa Teresa and Pinaleño “Sky Islands” along with the San Pedro River running through it are all connected by the surrounding “desert seas” in this enormous largely unfragmented and intact landscape.

Because the Association’s original land was in the uplands of Hot Springs Canyon, it became our first conservation focus. We have facilitated the legal protection of some 2,000 acres in the canyon, helping maintain it as a major wildlife corridor. Unfortunately, threats to the surrounding wildlands have only increased and CCA has spent an ever growing portion of its volunteer effort on major fragmenting infrastructure proposals like the I-10 bypass, Sun Zia powerline, and Vigneto development.

One might imagine that a small community like Cascabel would have a negligible impact on such large state and federal level issues, but that is not the case. Cascabel Conservation had an outsized impact on rebuffing the I-10 bypass through the valley, was a major player in taking Sun Zia



Lower SPRV’s largely unfragmented and intact area having no paved thruways

“The local voice is required by law to be heard on such proposals, and Cascabel is possibly the largest community within this extensive wildland area.”

to the mat while managing important concessions, and its support is being sought in Vigneto legal contests. The local voice is required by law to be heard on such proposals, and Cascabel is possibly the largest community within this extensive wildland area.

CCA is able to magnify that voice by collaborating with like-minded conservation individuals and groups. As a local 501(c)3 non-profit organization that owns lands along the San Pedro River and has a history of active involvement in protecting this unique, ecologically rich area, CCA is a significant petitioner on behalf of local conservation issues. Also, CCA has strong ties with local groups such as Archaeology Southwest, Lower San Pedro Watershed Alliance, the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection as well as national conservation groups such as The Nature Conservancy and Sierra Club.

CCA already has improbable conservation accomplishments to its credit, and it has significant ongoing potential to impact major conservation issues in the Lower SPRV. Our

Illustration: Daniel Baker

Conservation Committee report (see page 5) is just a sample of some of our involvements. However, the potential workload overwhelms the ability of our volunteers to meet it. Several of our volunteers struggle to fulfill subsistence needs and are unable to volunteer as they would like. Potential interns or substantial volunteers attracted to our work are unable to help because even the rudiments of support are unavailable. Further, despite significant conservation achievements, CCA is unable to compete for grants due to the lack of fiscal security.

Mick Meader, memorialized in last year's newsletter, was an enormously generous conservation volunteer and his passing has had a great impact on the conservation effort. However, with Mick's typical foresight and care, he asked CCA in his written bequest "that the association accept his gift of \$50,000 as an endowment ...with the ultimate aim of furthering conservation in the Middle San Pedro Valley for its ongoing conservation efforts."

Mick Meader Facebook Page



On the basis of Mick's gift, CCA has created the Meader Conservation Endowment Fund. This is a "board designated endowment" that represents a commitment by the board to provide for the long term support of the conservation program. It provides three advantages: 1) A base-line of committed funds as security for the ongoing of the conservation mission; 2) Working funds to assist volunteers and further conservation projects; 3) Demonstrating financial stability to granting institutions. This board designated endowment will be managed by the Conservation Committee with oversight by the Board. David Blocker (CPA) has agreed to join the team and assist with financial management along with Birgit DeGregorio (Ph.D.) our treasurer.

Piggy-backing on Mick's donation, and in order to get the

fund to a meaningful level, a \$50K challenge grant to match donations to the fund has been extended until the end of 2018. So far \$23K has been received. You are invited to help magnify CCA's voice and mission for conservation in this extraordinary expanse that surrounds us.

AZ Night-blooming cereus (*P. greggii*): "Never quits"



Sue Newman



Birgit DeGregorio

Land for sale: Part of Mick Meader's bequest to CCA was his Cascabel land. We are looking for a conservation-minded buyer for this approximately 20-acre upland parcel near Hot Springs Canyon, with shared well and solar water pumping system. Asking \$40,000. **Contact Chris Eastoe** <eastoe@email.arizona.edu>, 520-791-7430.



Birgit DeGregorio

Birders' Delight: CCA is selling another San Pedro Valley property (NW corner of E Nevada Dr & S Nucci Ln, Hereford) donated by a valued long-time member: 4.9 acres, 1/9 well share, electric/phone to lot line, gorgeous unobstructed Huachuca mountain views, zoned RU-4; secluded but easy access to Riparian National Conservation Area/Sierra Vista. Asking \$21,000. **Contact Chris Eastoe** <eastoe@email.arizona.edu>, 520-791-7430.

Mick Meader Conservation Endowment Fund

...continuing and expanding the conservation capacity of the Cascabel Conservation Association

- ▶ This is a board-designated endowment which grows by donations.
- ▶ A board-determined percentage of the funds (e.g. 50%) will serve as cash reserves for the stability of the association.
- ▶ Beyond these reserves, funds will assist volunteers and further conservation projects.
- ▶ An endowment committee is being established to receive, manage, and disperse funds.

A CHALLENGE GRANT OF \$50,000 *has been offered to help establish the fund.*

- ▶ To contribute, please check the endowment and bequests box on the enclosed form.
- ▶ Only monetary donations will be counted as matching funds against the challenge grant.
- ▶ Matching funds will be accepted until the end of the 2018 calendar year.

Invitation to Support the CCA



CASCABEL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION IS flourishing due to generous donations and tireless efforts of talented volunteers. However, serious threats to the San Pedro Valley continue to come from many fronts, and the current political and conservation climate in our country poses many barriers to our efforts.

CCA remains dedicated to our unique vision for the Middle San Pedro River Valley. Realizing this vision comes with mounting costs. We remain an organization supported almost entirely by donations and volunteers.

We appeal to you to join us in our efforts by helping us reach our matching grant goal, by becoming a member and volunteering your time and talent, or both.

Please see the enclosed materials for more information, and **add your voice to our vision!**

To learn more about our work in the Middle San Pedro River Valley, please check out our website at www.cascabelconservation.org

Conservation Committee

CONSERVATION AND CONNECTIVITY

In addition to managing the lands we own for the hermitage program, our members promote conservation and connectivity values for community properties.

Our **wildlife cameras** provide better understanding of our wild neighbors, and the data shared with agency neighbors helps to identify populations and how wildlife linkages function.

The **Lower San Pedro Collaborative** is a new initiative CCA helped launch in 2017. It provides a forum for all stakeholders to participate in conservation planning for the lower San Pedro. The concept is gaining momentum, with more than 20 groups (counties, state and federal agencies, tribes, NGOs, businesses) participating and more joining with each meeting.

MAJOR THREATS

Fragmentation and **water depletion** still rank as major threats.

SunZia:

We continue to support the Cascabel Working Group and local conservationists against SunZia, a major new utility corridor proposed and permitted through the heart of our part of the San Pedro Valley.

Villages at Vigneto:

CCA is part of a coalition bringing legal action to require the agency regulating a massive new development in the valley south of Cascabel to do a full assessment of its potential impacts on the water supply and on flora/fauna species of concern in the San Pedro Valley.

Turkey trot



Alex Binford-Walsh

Before work: early morning cup to go



Birgit De Gregorio

Smile! :)

CONTRIBUTE TO CCA WITHOUT COST TO YOU WHEN YOU SHOP AT AMAZON!



Designate Cascabel Conservation Organization as the Non-Profit of your choice, and Amazon will donate 1/200 of the purchase to CCA. (It won't replace personal donations, but every bit helps!) Go to www.smile.amazon.com to choose CCA in the list once, and then always remember to use their Smile site for purchases. Simply place an Amazon Smile bookmark into your toolbar, or better yet, do a search for an Amazon Smile browser PlugIn (Mozilla Firefox etc.) in order to be automatically redirected to their Smile Site, so you never have to remember (or it won't count for Amazon).

Hermitage Program

by Susan Tollefson, Program Coordinator

Since 1996, the Hermitage Program has been an integral part of CCA, a unique effort envisioned by Jim Corbett and Francis Gonzalez-Leitner. Seeking the wildness within as well as without makes CCA unique in its holistic approach to conservation. Reading over the reflections Daniel Baker thoughtfully compiled from sojourners over the past 22 years, one theme stands out and remains constant: Gratitude- *gratitude for a simple place of silence, reflection, and connection with the earth.*

The Jim and Pat Corbett Retreat & Research Center, with its simple hermitage for solitary retreatants and couples, and campground for small groups, continues to host those desiring a retreat/sojourn in wildlands. The Gonzales-Leitner strawbale hermitage is no longer in use due to its deteriorating condition. We hope to have another hermitage in a remote site in the near future.

The "Retreat" section on the CCA website has been revised and now contains a calendar that you can browse to check availability, so please let us know if you or your group would like to schedule a sojourn in our wildland.



"I've felt incredibly privileged and have a deep respect for the mission and history of the hermitage, of those who have the care and commitment to conserve such a beautiful place in our world..."

"I applaud the CCA for this singular opportunity, offered to anyone that wishes to take advantage of it. It takes great courage and insight to realize that we are only stewards of this rare and pristine environment. I am immensely grateful to have been a beneficiary of the Association's wisdom and love of the desert."

(Sojourner quotes)

What (in the world) is Questing?!

by Joe Page, Cascabel AZ and Talkeetna AK



Autumn 2018 breaking news! CCA's Education committee is developing a "Quascabel Quest", i.e. a treasure hunt to help tell the story of Baicatcan. Once the quest is complete, visiting questers will be supplied with a site map and verses full of clues. If questers are successful at deciphering clues, they'll discover the hidden Quest box containing the Quest stamp (for the quester's passport), a sign-in book, and occasionally a surprise. Stay tuned...



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Production: Birgit De Gregorio; Sue Newman (proofreading)

Graphic Design: Michael Puttonen

Baicatcan - a strange word to say

How it's pronounced- our first topic of the day.

A dessert lover shopping? well Pie Bought Gone

Three suns rising? that's Tri Hot Dawn

An online purchase is Buy Dot Com

And our desert oasis: Baicatcan!

Dave Shreeve

JOIN THE CCA TODAY!

MISSION

The Cascabel Conservation Association is dedicated to the collaborative stewardship of the Middle San Pedro River watershed in a way that promotes the health, stability and diversity of the whole community, including its earth, waters, plants, and animals. We strive to integrate the needs of the land with the needs of a sustainable human community through educational, economic, agricultural, contemplative and other conservation related endeavors.

COMMUNITY

CCA opens itself to the community. It has a friendly and supportive relation with the Saguaro-Juniper Corporation, sharing a common Covenant, adjacent land and similar purposes. It also partners with The Nature Conservancy, the Cascabel Community Center, the Cascabel Working Group, BorderLinks, and other organizations, churches and neighbors. Furthermore,

it is open to you. CCA operates in a consensual manner and your voice and participation are welcome.

FINANCES

In keeping with its integrative approach to the human and natural community, CCA seeks simplicity, equality and justice in financial matters, offering all services at no fee or minimal cost. CCA is run primarily by volunteers, and staff members work for minimal or no compensation. Nonetheless, financial support is required for expenses (such as office, infrastructure, insurance, vehicles, etc.) and the sustainability of our programs.

We would like to invite your participation in CCA by becoming a member (no fee required), or by donation (no membership required), or both. Donations are tax deductible.



Cut here and return the form below.

CCA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I, _____ [PRINT], wish to become a member of the **Cascabel Conservation Association: Supporting Conservation, Community and Contemplation in the Middle San Pedro River Valley.** I understand that I will receive announcements of CCA meetings, minutes, mailings and invitations to participate in events and decision making. (If you were a CHA member, you are already a CCA member)

MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT: I support the mission of the Cascabel Conservation Association (see above), am in accord with its efforts to function in a consensual manner, and agree to abide by applicable covenants and/or conservation easements when on CCA lands.

SIGNED _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

CCA DONATIONS

- I would like to make a monetary donation to CCA. *(Please specify if you want your donation to go to the General, Hermitage, Garden, or Education Fund. For Conservation Fund: see below).*
- I would like to make a donation or bequest to the **MICK MEADER CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT** fund.
- I would like to help at CCA work parties. Please contact me when they are scheduled.