



**June 2026**

*Echoes from the Canyon* is a regular publication of the Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalists. A printable PDF version is available for download on the website's [Echoes From the Canyon Archive page](#).

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*Note: Click on photos to enlarge them.*

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## **Summertime Fun Things to Do**

Here are the activities from our Public Interpretation team from June 15 to August 30.

- **Summer Storytime:** Wednesdays, 9:00–10:00 a.m. Meet at the Visitor Center.
- **Mt. Lemmon Summer Hike:** Fridays 8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. See Event Calendar for meetup location.
- **Ask a Mountain Naturalist table:** Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. at the Palisades Visitor Center on Mt. Lemmon.
- **Summer Lizard Walks:** 1st Saturday of the month, 7:30–10:00 a.m. Meet at the Visitor Center.
- **Summer Bird Walk:** 1st and 3rd Sundays 6:30–9:00 a.m. Meet at the Visitor Center.
- **Birds of Sabino Canyon table:** 2nd and 4th Sundays, 8:30–10:00 a.m. Meet at the Visitor Center.
- **Bird the Lemmon:** Sundays June 7 and 14, Aug 2 and 9, 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

For more information on any event or presentation check out our [Event Calendar](#).

## **John Wayne Lied to Me: You Can't Sweat Out a Snake Bite**

Naturalist Brent

I was looking for a leaking auto-fill valve in a koi pond. Every time I stepped over this one bush I thought, "This seems a good place to find a snake."

At 6 a.m., I surprised a rattlesnake, who in response bit my leg thrice before my foot landed on the ground. I was already bolting to the other edge of the pond when the snake finally rattled. I looked down, and yep, there was a mixture of clear and red fluid running down my leg from several holes.

I saw a lot of westerns as a kid, and after a snake bite the cowboy usually just sweated it out for a few days. So I was not at all worried. But I decided to search Google and found a differing opinion: get to ER ASAP. I called 911.

Since I had no pain, I expected to be released a few hours after an antivenin (also called antivenom) shot. I arrived at the Tucson Medical Center ER around 7 a.m., still in no pain, but that changed quickly. Reactions to antivenin can be severe, so I was monitored for swelling by literally drawing lines around the swelling with time stamps using a purple permanent marker. The ER confirms swelling before administering antivenin, or before administering more antivenin. By 7:30 the pain ramped quickly, dwarfing a kidney stone I had years earlier.

I got my first dose of antivenin around 10:30 a.m. and a second at 2 p.m., since swelling continued to move up my leg. I was moved to the ICU late that evening and received a third antivenin at 2 a.m. because swelling from the venom had reached within 2 inches of my belt line. The next morning, I told the doctors to stop morphine since the pain was hardly different with or without. They switched me to their strongest pain killer, which worked better but not enough to be comfortable. After two days in the ICU, I was moved to a general room for two more days.

Rattlesnake venom causes necrosis, so blood veins stop pushing blood up the leg and muscle tissue begins to dissolve. My swelling went up the outer side of my leg above the knee. Had the swelling gone up the inside of the leg, the artery to the heart would have been at risk because necrosis in the heart is likely fatal.

Being ambulatory was a requirement for discharge, but the pain was so high after five days that I couldn't put my foot on the floor because my foot was too far below my heart. A physical therapist recommended I try a knee scooter which enabled my release after five days although I was still 8.5 to 9 on the pain scale when using the scooter.

Key takeaways: if you are bitten by a rattlesnake get to ER ASAP. Limit movement and elevate the bite, but not higher than your heart. Expect several months of recovery. I was told I recovered quickly, but the bite occurred mid-July and I was about 97% in October.



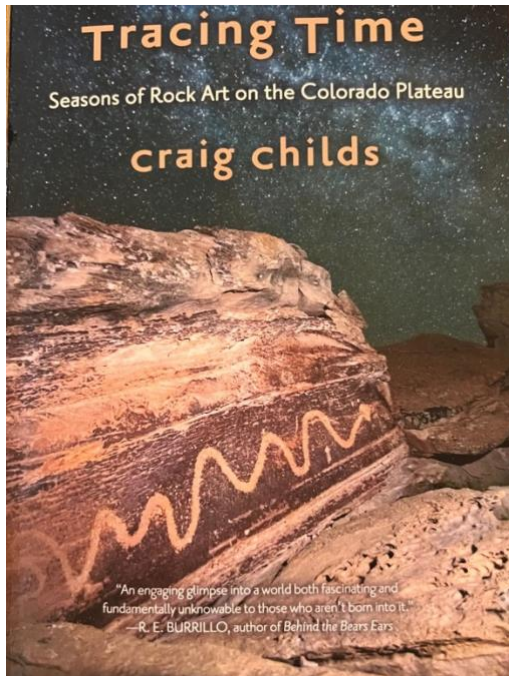
**Hospital staff monitored the swelling on Brent's left leg (and yes, those are Brent's legs above) by physically marking advancing boundaries of edema and tenderness directly on his skin with a marker and also measuring limb circumference. Despite what he went through, Brent said, "I don't have fear or ill will towards snakes more than before the bite and would not kill a rattlesnake in the backyard, but rather scoot it away."**

(Photo by Brent)

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## Book Review: *Tracing Time: Seasons of Rock Art on the Colorado Plateau*, by Craig Childs

Reviewed by Naturalist Barb



Craig Childs has spent a lifetime exploring the desert Southwest, mostly on foot. On the first page of this book, he proclaims, “My art is seeing,” and in the pages that follow he shares the rock art he has encountered. This is not a guidebook. Childs deliberately avoids revealing specific locations for fear they would be overrun by people eager simply to notch another sighting. Instead, he invites readers to experience the wonder, beauty, and mystery embedded in these ancient works of art. He explores questions about the people who created them, why they were placed where they are, and what they might mean.

To seek answers, Childs consults Native Americans with both scientific training and traditional cultural knowledge. He speaks with non-native anthropologists and archaeologists, as well as local ranchers and families whose roots on this land stretch back two hundred years. Throughout, he offers his own interpretations of what the images may represent, always with humility and gratitude.

The book is organized around specific recurring rock art images—spirals, handprints, horses, rain—each of which raises multiple questions. Do they represent rituals, record actual events, or express hopes for the future? The final two chapters focus on desecration, which is heartbreaking to read about, and on the wonder that many of these images appear connected to celestial events that marked the passage of time.

The illustrations included in each chapter are not photographs but pen-and-ink drawings that possess a remarkable photographic quality and are impressive works of art in their own right. The book often reads like an adventure story, with Childs recounting who accompanied him on each journey.

Written during the COVID epidemic, a period especially devastating for the Four Corners region, the book reflects the isolation imposed by restrictions on entering reservation lands and gathering in groups. That sense of solitude aligns powerfully with Childs’s invitation for readers to pause and listen to the mystery of the art itself.

## Become a Naturalist

Are you passionate about environmental education? Would you like to know more about the unique desert ecology that makes Sabino Canyon such a special place? Are you interested in desert plants and wildlife, native and natural history, aquatic life and geology?

We are now accepting applications for our 2026-2027 training program!

[Click here](#) to learn about joining us.



**SABINO CANYON**  
VOLUNTEER NATURALISTS  
Explore, Discover, Inspire

**Now accepting applications  
for our 2026-2027 training!**

## Join Us



### Become a Naturalist

Learn and grow in a master class taught by experts in their field on the Sonoran Desert's ecology



### Teach K-6 Field Trips

After graduation, volunteer one morning a week October through April.



### Influence the Future

Inspire others about the wonders of nature while making friends and having fun!

## See You in September

*Echoes from the Canyon* is going on summer break until the fall. Our next issue will be published in September. Have a great summer!



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*Echoes from the Canyon* is published monthly except July and August by members of the Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalists. If you are interested in learning about the Sabino Canyon Volunteer Naturalist program or about educating the public and/or children in learning about the flora and fauna of this unique riparian environment of the Sonoran Desert, please visit <https://sabinonaturalists.org/join-us/>

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