

From the Chairman of the Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park

Welcome to the second edition of the Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park newsletter. In striving to keep the newsletter useful and interesting, we are looking for articles relating to the Park as well as experiences from other hiking or climbing venues. Those readers who are interested in contributing articles should contact Matt Lucky whose e-mail address is: editor@MattLucky.com

We encourage you to click into the Friends website www.pinnaclepeakpark.com to enjoy the site as it continues to be developed under the guidance of Gary Block.

Additionally, we are looking for financial contributions to help defray the cost of publishing the newsletter and to support the activities of the Friends. If you are interested in helping, we strongly urge you to please mail your contributions to: Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park, P.M.B. 288 8711 E. Pinnacle Peak Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85255.

Sincere thanks and happy hiking,
Morrie Chernis, Chair

This Newsletter is published by the Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park. We welcome participation in the form of story ideas, letters and comments.

Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park

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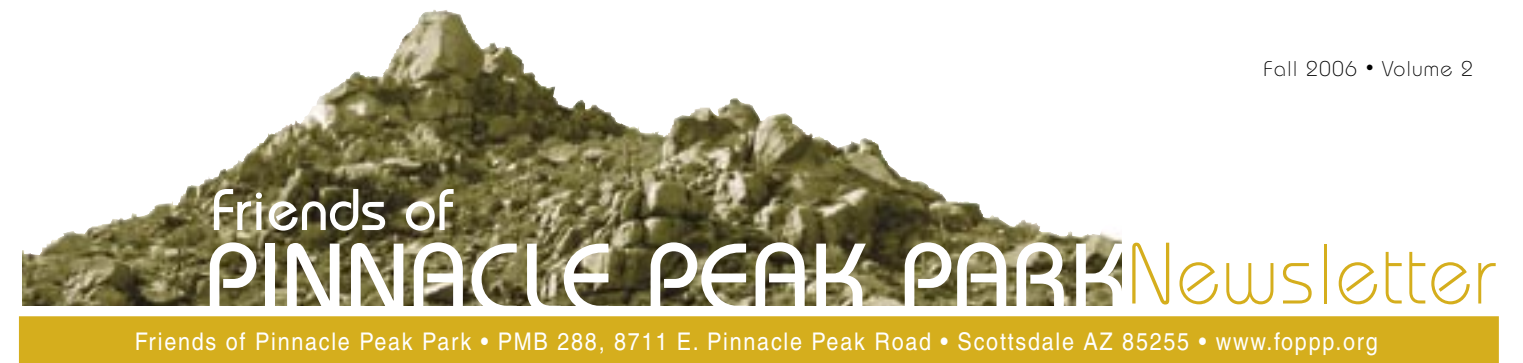
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Pecari tajacu JAVELINA

By Diane McCoy-Berney

If you are a resident of the Arizona Desert chances are that you have seen a herd of Collared Peccaries, commonly called Javelina, in the wash beyond your home. You may have seen them in your front yard eating prickly pear cactus. The question is what have you heard about these atypical looking hoofed mammals that are unique to the Americas? You may have heard that these animals are gigantic rodents. You may have also heard others call them pigs (Old World Swine). The purpose of this article is to expel these two perpetual myths.

incisors and the molars. Teeth aside, another major physical characteristic that distinguishes rodents from Javelina is that rodents do not have hoofs. Javelina and swine do.

Myth #2: "Javelina are pigs". It will take a little more explaining to undo the Javelina-pig myth.



pigs belong to the family Suidae. Just what are some physical characteristics that led to Javelina and pigs being classified into separate zoological families? How do these two animals differ? This article will discuss some of the differences.

Characteristic #1: Unlike swine, Javelina have a musk gland located on the lumbar area of the back near the rump. As a result of this musk gland, anyone living in Javelina country will tell you that these mammals are real stinkers! Standing side-by-side, head to rump, Javelina become familiar with their herds unique "fragrance" because the musk gland comes into contact with members of the group. Furthermore, because Javelina have a good sense of smell, the musk

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Expelling the Pig and Rodent Myths

Myth #1: "Javelina are rodents".

This myth is as widespread as it is untrue. The simple fact is that rodents, which make up the world's largest mammalian order, are distinguished from other mammals in that they uniquely have only two pairs of upper and lower incisors that continue to grow throughout their lifetime. Because of this, rodents must gnaw on a variety of plant life and other available materials to keep their teeth at a functional length. They also lack canine teeth, so there is a large gap between the

Without doubt, javelina do look like pigs; they have hooves and long pig-like snouts. Each evolved from a distant ancestor that lived millions of years ago. Because they share the characteristic of being even-toed hoofed animals, pigs and Javelina, as well as camels, hippopotami, deer, cows, horses and over 200 more species of mammals are classified within the mammalian order Artiodactyla (hoofed animals having either 2 or 4 toes). Classifying further, Javelina belong to the zoological family Tayassuidae, whereas



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The Biodiversity Study Team Completes Its Task



Team members from left to right: Gerald A. Rosenthal, Diane McCoy-Berney, Tracy Weaver, Gretchen Mills, , Gay Christensen-Dean and David Mills.

Article by Gerald A. Rosenthal

The Biodiversity Study Team of Pinnacle Peak Park was formed primarily to inventory the flora of Pinnacle Peak Park (PPP). The recently completed study also describes the historical use of PPP, its basic geology, soil, and climate of the park.

topped buckwheat, desert lavender, ocotillo, catclaw acacia, chuparosa, jojoba, golden-eye (viguiera), and massive numbers of brittlebush.

One of the most significant findings of our study was that the section of the companion mountain (starting at trail marker 56) to Pinnacle Peak, which we have named Red Face, has a floristic composition distinct from the remainder of PPP. Its soils are nutritionally the richest in the park and there are many plants that can be found only on Red Face.

Future FOPPP newsletters will feature many of the diverse plants and animals you may see while visiting the park. We will also explore what causes the abundant diversity. □

DEFINITIONS: *PERENNIALS* - lasting three seasons or more
EPHEMERAL - enduring a very short time
ANNUALS - plant that lives for one year only
LEGUMINOUS - plant which has seeds in pods



Tracy Weaver sets up test plot boundaries

Team members (see photo) began fieldwork in the fall of 2005. The completed study – soon to be published - identifies 143 individual plant species, covering some 47 plant families.

Pinnacle Peak Park was found to house a diverse mixture of leguminous trees, shrubs, cacti, and other perennials; these plants in addition to ephemeral annuals cover about one-third of the PPP landscape. The remaining area consists of granitic boulder outcroppings and materials created by their slow and inexorable weathering and breakdown.

Foothills palo verde and, to a lesser extent, ironwood are the principal trees of PPP. If you are a careful, you can find four velvet mesquites within view of the park trail system. A group of some 13 trees and shrubs constitute the predominant perennial flora of the park. Among these are: triangle-leaf bursage, flat-



(Above) Diane Berney and Dave Mills establishing boundaries of test plot

(Right) Dr. Gerald Rosenthal, and Gretchen Mills, observing flower through hand lens



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gland becomes quite useful by helping Javelina “sniff out” when non-herd members enter the herd’s territory. The musk gland also discharges a musky odor when a Javelina is frightened. Interestingly, Javelina tend to roam about established territories as members of a social herd, whereas, pigs tend to form temporary and less cooperative groups.

Characteristic #2: Anyone that has raised pigs on a farm, visited the livestock section of the State Fair, or observed wild pigs, can tell you that some of these animals may weigh several hundred pounds. They outweigh adult Javelina tenfold, which tend to weigh between 35 and 60 pounds.

Characteristic #3: Pigs may bear several piglets in a litter. The piglets are born nearly helpless. They also nurse while lying down. Javelina, on the other hand, generally bear twins. Baby Javelina, are born precocial, meaning they are up and able to rove about a few hours after birth. Another interesting fact is that they nurse while standing at the rear of the mother while she stands; a unique behavior most likely the result of the physical characteristic that only the rear two of four pairs of the mother’s nipples provide milk.

Characteristic #4: Pigs have a simple stomach, 34 or 44 teeth, an omnivorous diet of plant and animal life and their tusks grow outward. Javelina, on the other hand,

have a complex stomach, 38 teeth and their upper tusks grow straight downward. javelina are primarily herbivorous, eating mainly plant life and only occasionally insects and carrion.

For further information, a variety of sources are available. The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum [Book of Answers](#) by David Lazaroff is an interesting source of Sonoran Desert information. [National Audubon Society’s Field Guide to Mammals](#) is also a fact-filled reference. □



Fall Activities

GUIDED HIKES BEGIN IN NOVEMBER

Pinnacle Peak Park conducts guided hikes Tuesday through Sunday at 10am. These moderate hikes last 2 hours and cover about 1.25 miles round trip. There are many stops along the trail to discuss a variety of subjects that will include geology, history, archaeology, plants and animals of the Sonoran Desert. There is no charge for the hikes, just check in at the office.

GUIDED FULL MOON HIKES

Guided Full Moon hikes and Astronomy Nights will also start in November and will be conducted through February.

JUNIOR TRAIL RANGER

Children ages 5-11 can become a Junior Trail Ranger! Stop at the office to pick-up a questionnaire and learn more about the plants and animals of the park. Fill it out with the help of an adult and earn your Junior Ranger badge and certificate.

Please call the park at 480-312-0990 to register and obtain further details.

Cookout XI at MacDonald’s Ranch

Sponsored by the Greater Pinnacle Peak Association

Approximately 300 guests and volunteers enjoyed an Aussie style meal provided by Outback Steakhouse and entertainment by Geoff Conklin.

The highlight of the evening was the amazing display of owls, eagles, hawks, etc., from Liberty Wildlife and Wild at Heart. Many stopped by the Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park booth to watch an exceptional video/audio presentation of the park. Wild at Heart treated everyone to an unforgettable release of 2 owls into the desert evening sky.

As a new organization and new sponsor of this event, Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park had an opportunity to share its mission with others. As awareness grows so will donations from those who appreciate Pinnacle Peak Park.

Hope to see you at the next “Cookout at the Ranch”.



Left to Right: Jim Friedbacher, Jackie Hoff & Dave Jaeger sharing information with visitors at the [Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park](#) booth.