



**DESERT INSTITUTE**  
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL  
PARK ASSOCIATION

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Yucca Valley, 92284

# CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AND ETHNOBOTANY OF THE CALIFORNIA DESERTS

**FIELD CLASS / SPRING 2024 / INSTRUCTOR: ELIZABETH PAIGE**

**FEBRUARY 18, 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Learn about the abundantly diverse ecosystem of the California desert from an Indigenous perspective. Participants will be introduced to cultural landscapes, ethnobotany, and use of natural resources by Indigenous peoples, and the ways Indigenous people incorporate the environment into all aspects of their daily lives. We will discuss medicinal and ceremonial use of plants, cultural landscapes and suggested conduct therein, Indigenous people's role in desert ecosystems both traditionally and currently, and the importance of knowing the complex history of the lands we all call home. We'll spend some time in the classroom before taking a walk around the campground.

## PROGRAM AGENDA

We'll begin at the Black Rock Education Room with a lecture on botany, animals, and Cultural awareness, and then take a walk around the campground.

## MEETING LOCATION

[Black Rock Nature Center](#), Black Rock Campground 9800 Black Rock Canyon Rd, Yucca Valley CA

*Please arrive on time; we start classes promptly, and in the case of hikes or other classes on the go, we cannot wait for students who arrive late.*

## REQUIRED PREPARATION\*

**Waiver:** All participants must complete the [participation waiver](#) at least 24 hours before a class begins. *Failure to do so may forfeit your right to participate.*

**Park Pass (\$30 per vehicle):** For classes inside Joshua Tree National Park, participants are now required to purchase a [park pass](#). You can purchase a park pass [online](#), or pay at a park entrance. If you have an existing pass you may use that at the entrance!

## ACTIVITY LEVEL

**Easy:** The hike will not exceed two miles. Terrain will be rocky, sandy, and possibly uneven, but with less than 100 feet elevation gain/loss. Please contact us if you have questions about accommodations or your ability to participate.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- First aid and emergency supplies for the group
- Binoculars (for use during field excursion, not to keep!)
- Plant samples for observation
- Native art samples for observation (ollas, baskets, mesquite, seed-beaters)

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Admission to Joshua Tree National Park
- Meals, Lodging, or Transportation

## WHAT TO BRING

### The essentials for all field courses:

- Water, between 3 and 4 liters per person for a full day outing
- Food and snacks, easily packed and eaten in the field (please leave no trace)
- Close-toed athletic shoes or hiking boots; no sandals, not even hiking sandals!
- Sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sunscreen; light-colored long-sleeved shirts are recommended and very effective on hot days
- Warm layers for cooler mornings/evenings (it can be surprisingly cold!)
- Backpack to carry food, water, and any personal items you need for the day

### Recommended for this course (but not required):

- Notebook and pencil are always good to have
- Binoculars to spot wildlife

## GET TO KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTOR

**Elizabeth Paige** is a Desert naturalist and a member of the Torres Martinez Band of Cahuilla Indians. She has worked with organizations such as the Mojave Desert Land Trust, Coachella Valley Conservation Commission, and Cactus to Clouds Foundation, and also served as a cohort on the 2021 Desert Keepers Council for the National Parks

Conservation Association. She is dedicated to cultural preservation, and the advancement of indigenous people working in science and conservation. She is currently the Education and Stewardship Program manager for the Native American Land Conservancy.

### ***A note from Elizabeth:***

Miyaxwen omun emum! (Hello everyone!) I'm Elizabeth, an Indigenous naturalist and conservationist. I am dedicated to cultural preservation, traditional land management and the advancement of Indigenous people working in science and conservation. At heart, I believe that as Indigenous people, our ancient, unique, and sustainable relationships to our environment can guide climate change initiatives that will make a difference, protect threatened and endangered plants and animals, and strengthen the larger world community by reconnecting folks to the natural world.

### ***SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY***

There is no cell service in the park! Please allow ample time to arrive at the meeting location; park entrances may be very busy on weekends (see FAQs). Please make sure you check weather conditions and dress accordingly.



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## FAQ+ \_

### WHO DO I CONTACT IF I AM RUNNING LATE?

Desert Institute Manager Benny Erdahl: **949-241-9693**  
or Education Director Dr. Justin Lenzi: **760-819-4714**

For classes meeting inside the park, it can take up to 45 minutes to go through an entrance gate on weekends after 9am (though 15-20 minutes is typical). Please allot time to park, as parking lots tend to be congested between 10am and 4p in the busy season. ***There is no cell service in the park***, please plan accordingly.

### WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL?

Desert Institute will provide a full refund if we are notified more than 14 days in advance. We are unable to process refunds for *any* cancellations less than 14 days in advance.

### DOES DESERT INSTITUTE CANCEL ACTIVITIES FOR WEATHER OR LOW ENROLLMENT?

If we do not meet our minimum of 6 registered participants for any given activity, we will likely cancel the activity with at least 48+ hours notice.

*Desert Institute runs classes rain or shine*, with the exception of astrophotography classes, which require mostly clear skies in order to be successful.

We recommend that you purchase travel insurance, as we are unable to reimburse for expenses you incur due to a canceled class, such as airfare and hotel.

### WHAT IF I FORGOT SOMETHING I NEED?

Our visitor centers and park stores are stocked with amazing essentials for your adventure. Preview or purchase items from our [online shop](#); we carry [hats](#), [shirts](#), bandanas, water bottles, notebooks, [maps](#), [books](#). And more!

### CAN I BRING MY KIDS? MY SPOUSE? PETS?

Only registered participants may attend Desert Institute activities (unless noted in the activity description). If this is a kid-friendly activity, please make sure your child(ren) are registered and meet the age requirements.

As much as we love pets, we don't allow them in the field with any of our activities.

