



DESERT INSTITUTE
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL
PARK ASSOCIATION

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55922 Twentynine Palms Highway,
Yucca Valley, 92284

HOW-TO IDENTIFY ANIMAL BURROWS

FIELD CLASS / SPRING 2024 / INSTRUCTOR: CANDICE WEBER & KURT LEUSCHNER
SATURDAY, MAY 25TH, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Have you ever taken a walk and noticed a hole in the ground and wondered what animal made it? Holes abound in the desert as animals seek refuge from climatic extremes and predators, or hunt for food. Candice Weber will shed light on ground holes, elevated holes, divots, and mounds in this field class. In the classroom session, participants will learn how to identify holes and clues that can help discern which animals are living in which holes, and put their knowledge to the test in the field. Curious visitors as well as seasoned naturalists will enjoy peeking into the secret lives of these subterranean dwellers and discover who's behind all of that digging!

PROGRAM AGENDA

Introduction followed by a short time in the field. Once we wind back down we will have a lecture and PowerPoint presentation and will resume field time.

MEETING LOCATION

[Black Rock Canyon Nature Center](#), 9800 Black Rock Canyon Road, Yucca Valley

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!

ACTIVITY LEVEL

Easy ▾

All levels are welcome. Please contact us if you have questions about your ability to participate.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- First aid and emergency supplies for the group

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Admission to Joshua Tree National Park
- Meals, Lodging, or Transportation
- Writing essentials to take notes

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:

- Camera
- Field guides
- Binoculars
- Small mirror for illuminating insides of holes

GET TO KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Candice Weber is an adjunct professor of natural resources at College of the Desert, teaching courses in Conservation and G.I.S. She also is a GIS analyst/planner for TerraNova in Palm Desert. Raised in rural Ohio, she lived and worked in a sanctuary for rescued animals. She majored in environmental studies (and French) and has extensive experience working with animals of all kinds (wild and domestic), including many years as a zookeeper and animal trainer at the Living Desert, the Long Beach Aquarium, and other marine parks. For the past 22 years she has resided in the Coachella Valley and now considers the desert her home.

Kurt Leuschner, M.S., Wildlife Ecology, Professor of Natural Resources, College of the Desert. Leuschner's specialties include: ornithology, entomology, and desert ecology. He has led hundreds of field trips both locally and as far afield as Africa. He teaches natural history courses and leads field trips for the Desert Institute, the Desert Studies Center at Zzyzx, the Living Desert, the Desert Cities Bird Club, Western Field Ornithologists, UCR Extension, California State Parks, the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association, and many other conservation organizations.

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.

