



Volume 61  
Issue 1

# TELESCOPE

The Official Newsletter of the Death Valley Natural History Association

Spring 2016

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

By David Blacker, Executive Director

By now you're probably aware that we are having an incredible "Super Bloom". This year has been compared to the banner 2005 year all over the media, but this year is even better. The flowers are larger, higher, more diverse and very fragrant. If you haven't been here to see them this season, it's not too late! We should have incredible flowers for the months ahead moving to higher and higher elevations.

The second most asked question we hear is "When will Scotty's reopen?" So, I asked DVNP Superintendent, Mike Reynolds, for an update. Since the rain event in October 2015, crews from all over the Park Service have been working to open roads and clean up Scotty's. Just in case you don't already know, road access and all utilities at the Castle were destroyed and the Hacienda and Garage (modern day Scotty's Castle Visitor Center) were the most damaged structures at this location. A great deal of the debris around and inside the buildings was removed by hand one wheelbarrow at a time. We are very proud of our Park Service partners. Their dedication and hard work has been amazing!

The latest estimates for major repairs are:

- Electrical—\$290,000
- Water—\$1.44 million
- Septic System—\$520,000
- Visitor Center—\$2.35 million
- Hacienda—\$843,000
- Other repairs to site features: building exteriors, plazas, parking, entrance gate—\$750,000
- Highway Repairs—\$9.4 million

Everything listed above has received funding from Federal Highways or NPS emergency funds, however there are a number of projects that you can help with including: restoration of the historic console of the Welte-Mignon Theatre Organ, the dining room silver collection, and the historic firearms in Scotty's Bedroom. The logistics of working at such a remote site increases costs substantially and completion of these projects is estimated to take two years. This doesn't include any expenses for design or installation of new exhibits, future flood mitigation, or storing the curatorial collection. Approximately \$35,000 has been received by DVNHA from supporters like you who want to help with the restoration efforts. If the work we are doing here speaks to you, please help us provide relief for more curatorial projects at Scotty's Castle by donating to the Scotty's Castle Historic Preservation Fund. This campaign will be ongoing into the future to help preserve this special historic treasure.

Thank you for your continuing support!

*David*



## Accountability

**2015 IN REVIEW**—You helped DVNHA provide \$259,931 in aid to Death Valley National Park during the period of October 1, 2014 -September 31, 2015. Your support helped provide free printed publications, funded seven internships, provided 8,640 hours of educational programming, 700 hours of wilderness restoration and 5,840 hours of visitor service assistance to 204,244 visitors. Here's the breakdown:

- \$169,758 - Staff time in Death Valley
- \$15,889 - Scotty's Castle interpretive interns
- \$15,662 - Payroll taxes on donated staff time
- \$13,514 - DVNP Video Project
- \$12,500 - Scotty's Castle curatorial interns
- \$10,773 - Devils Hole Video Feed
- \$8,820 - Tuning and maintenance of Scotty's Castle Organ and associated instruments
- \$3,477 - Free publications
- \$3,000 - EMT Education Grant
- \$2,232 - Wilderness restoration
- \$1,587 - Miscellaneous aid to NPS
- \$1,000 - JTNP Art in Wilderness Week Grant expenditures
- \$927 - NPF Wilderness Grant expenditures
- \$612 - Donations of inventory
- \$180 - NPF Music in the Parks Grant expenditures

Additionally,

- \$11,708 - in Aid to Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge was provided!



Our financial information is published online and is available for public viewing. Visit:

<http://www.guidestar.org/profile/95-2083126>

# Direct From Devils Hole

When we worked with the National Park Service to come up with an anniversary project we knew that our members and supporters would be happy to help us celebrate our 60 years of service in 2014! Our campaign raised over \$12,000 to bring a live video feed of the Devils Hole pupfish to the Furnace Creek Visitor Center.

Many of our readers already know that in 1952 Devils Hole was put under the protection of what was then Death Valley National Monument. Many visitors have heard about Devils Hole, but few have visited the site and fewer have had the opportunity to observe the endangered Devils Hole pupfish in their natural habitat. Devils Hole is actually located in a discontinuous portion of Death Valley National Park found in Nevada by driving to Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors who do make the trip are sometimes disappointed to find the area gated for visitor safety and protection of the Devils Hole ecosystem, guarding the pupfish from invasive species and other human dangers such as acts of vandalism. In recent years, cameras were installed at Devils Hole as part of the Park's monitoring program—this included an underwater camera that overlooks the rock shelf where the pupfish like to hang out and feed close to the surface.



To the many members and friends who made generous contributions to this DVNHA anniversary campaign, here's the beautiful results!

Hopefully you can visit Death Valley National Park soon and see this fantastic exhibit for yourself.



The National Park Service recognizes that there is a delicate balance between resource protection and visitor enjoyment and interpreting the work they are doing with visitors. This video feed is now LIVE and broadcasting at the Furnace Creek Visitor Center giving the public a chance to see these incredible fish up close!

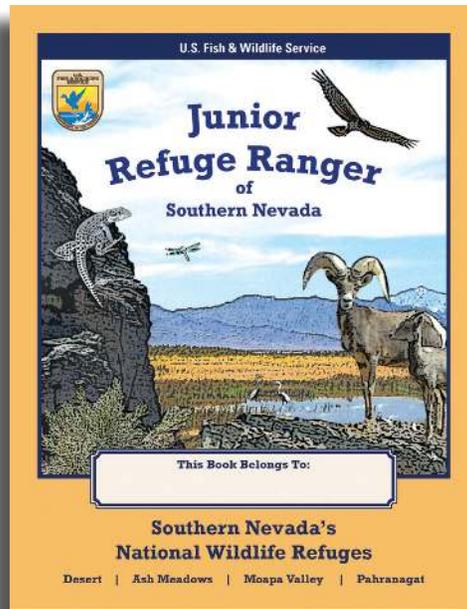
Just for fun, we thought we'd show you that you are an integral part of more than 1,400 avid Death Valley Natural History Association supporters from around the world!

Pictured here is a representation of just those geocoded in the U.S. Can you find yourself on the map?



# Junior Refuge Ranger Program

As part of our aid partnership with Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, DVNHA has helped create a new Junior Refuge Ranger Patch and supplied them to Junior Refuge Rangers! Youth who visit one of four refuges contained within the Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex can earn this patch after completing all the activities in the Junior Refuge Ranger Booklet. Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Desert National Wildlife Refuge, Moapa Valley National Wildlife Refuge, and Pahrnanagat National Wildlife Refuge are all part of the complex located in Southern Nevada totalling over 1.5 million acres of wildlife habitat under the protection of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



**DEATH VALLEY**  
NATURAL HISTORY  
ASSOCIATION

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## TELESCOPE

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### WHO WE ARE:

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dan O'Brien

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Nathan Francis

*Board Vice-Chair*

Marcelle Rice

*Treasurer*

John Kopczynski

*Secretary*

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Tim Kendzierski

Bob Lehmann

Tom Moritz

William Walton

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David Blacker

*Executive Director*

Sandra Andrus-Sheet

*Office Manager/Accounts Receivable*

Geneil White

*Development/Memberships/*

*Telescope Editor*

JJ Graham

*Road Scholar Program Administrator*

Wesley Massey

*Warehouse*

Nathan Wabbel

*Accounts Payable/Bookstore*

Justin Baldino

*Bookstore*

Noah Cobillas

*Bookstore*

Bill Pelkey

*Bookstore*

Serena Revere

*Ash Meadows Visitor Services*

#### NEWSLETTER DESIGN

KimberMoore Design

**IT'S HERE**—Every year we feature a different Death Valley National Park Wildflower. 2016 features the Panamint Daisy *Enceliopsis covillei*, a beautiful combination of screen print/embroidery on a 100% cotton ladies cut T-shirt.

Hurry, only while supplies last!

Call us at  
**800-478-8564 ext. 10**

or order online:  
**dvnha.org/opencart**



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## DVNHA Seeking Board Members

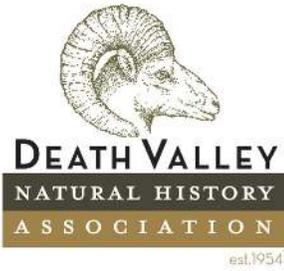
Spring is a time for renewal and each year some of our excellent board members fulfill their terms of service. We are actively seeking qualified individuals who have specific skill sets, can work as team players, and are interested in serving on our all volunteer board.

If you love Death Valley and Ash Meadows and think you may be interested in serving on our board of directors, we'd love to hear from you!

Please visit:  
<http://dvnha.org/news/108-board-members>

to find out more about what the commitment entails and how to apply.





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or online at [www.dvnha.org](http://www.dvnha.org)



## Celebrating 100 Years

By Alexandra Rothermel, Centennial Event Coordinator  
Park Guide, NPS, Death Valley National Park

By the early 1900s, dozens of National Parks and Monuments had been set aside to preserve and protect majestic scenery and invaluable cultural history. It wasn't until 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act, that the National Park Service began taking care of these iconic places and resources. Now, a century later, the National Park Service is still thriving and taking care of more than 400 sites across the country.

Join us! Death Valley National Park is celebrating the National Park Service Centennial with special events throughout the year.

**BioBlitz:** Death Valley's first ever BioBlitz was held on **March 12, 2016**, at Salt Creek. A bioblitz is a rapid survey of all living species in a certain area. During this day-long event, desert scientists, local students, and the public teamed up to discover plants and animals in the rich life zone along this unusual desert creek.

**Celestial Centennial:** Dry, hot, low... and dark! Death Valley's famous superlatives make this park an ideal place to contemplate the cosmos. Come listen to a talk, join an expert for a field trip, or visit with scientists and rangers at our Patio expo. Rangers, scientists and other experts will lead programming during this three-day night-sky festival, **April 8-10th**.

**Centennial Art Show:** The Organic Act that created the National Park Service was signed on August 25, 1916. To celebrate the date, Death Valley will show some of its historic and singular works of art. Come see these pieces on exhibition the **month of August** at the Furnace Creek Visitor Center. Entrance fees will be waived at all National Park Service sites the anniversary weekend, **August 25-28th** in celebration of 100 years of service!

**Hike Death Valley:** The wildly popular Hike Death Valley program is in its second year, offering a free, collectable, annual decal to those who explore the selected hiking routes. This event will be going on all year long, with routes for ADA visitors, beginners, and backpackers. There are even high elevation hikes to enjoy mid-summer!

**Every Kid in a Park:** Our education division is partnering with the Death Valley Natural History Association to provide transportation grants for local school children to visit Death Valley and participate in ranger-led field trips. Our rangers also visit classrooms to inspire 4th grade students to learn about their public lands and encourage participation with Every Kid in a Park passes.



For more information on these events and more, visit [www.nps.gov/deva](http://www.nps.gov/deva)