

Using Citizen Science, Education and Community Involvement to preserve, protect and restore springs and wetlands of the Southwest

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Springs and wetlands of the Southwest are remarkable habitats that support a much larger ecoregion. In the Southwest these areas are 'jewels' that hold precious water and become 'natural areas' that host an astounding biodiversity. With the appropriate restoration and protection of native plants and wetland species, as well as thoughtful ecological planning and management these areas become an oasis for wildlife, an educational teaching tool, community involvement and areas of ongoing Citizen Science research. They are the 'migratory waystations' and 'postage stamp habitats' of the Southwest.

This talk will show, with specific examples, how these areas need and can be protected, studied and restored, as well as maintained and used by the community and research based programs. We will specifically look at the changing climate, water, soils and water use in restoration of wetland projects in the Southwest. With wise management, ecological decision making, restoring appropriate native plants and the assistance of community partners and students, region-wide, these areas of water in an arid land continue to be precious resources.