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Phenology Day: A Celebration of Local Gardens and Trails, Observing the Natural World, and Making Meaning out of Science.

TUCSON, Arizona (March 13, 2013) – The [USA National Phenology Network](#), the [University of Arizona's \(UA\) Pima Cooperative Extension Office Horticulture Program](#), the [UA Campus Arboretum](#), [UA's Santa Rita Experimental Range](#), UA's Biosphere 2, the [Tucson Audubon Society's Mason Center](#) and the [Sam Hughes](#) and [Rincon Heights](#) Neighborhood Associations are uniting to celebrate the first annual "Phenology Day" on April 20th, 2013 from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm. Phenology Day, a family event, will highlight the first of its kind, regional "Phenology Trail" which connects 10 observation sites across 75 miles in the greater Tucson area. Sites along the [Tucson Phenology Trail](#) are used to teach science and observation skills in the natural world, provide opportunities for youth and adults to engage in outdoor activities, connect university researchers to the surrounding community, and assist scientists with climate-related research.

Hosted by the USA National Phenology Network (USA-NPN), Phenology Day will educate participants about phenology, or the study of seasonal life cycle events in plants and animals and the relationship of these events to the surrounding environment. Nearly all of us frequently take note of phenological events without knowing it. We observe when seeds germinate, flowers bloom, vegetables are ready for harvest, animals hibernate, birds migrate and leaf color changes. Such events are wonderful indicators of seasonal changes, over time, can indicate long-term shifts in climate. The USA-NPN sponsors an interactive citizen science program, [Nature's Notebook](#) (www.nn.usanpn.org), a way to record nature observations online that can be used in participants' backyards or scientists' study plots. [Pima County Master Gardener, Edy Alderson](#), says she enjoys the ease of recording these events so much that she thinks it is, "...not work. This is pure pleasure." Another participant muses "[P]henology touches everything. It brings to light the connections you already know."

Phenology Day, an event for all ages, will begin at the Pima Cooperative Extension Office at 9:00 am at 4210 N. Campbell Road, Tucson, AZ 85719. After an introduction to the science of

phenology, participants will join a guided tour of plants and animals on the Pima Extension section of the Tucson Phenology Trail. A similar introductory event will take place, also at 9:00 am, at the Santa Rita Experimental Range in Green Valley. Participants will then select a learning track and visit one of the following three locations: the Biosphere 2 to learn about phenology research being conducted at that site, the Tucson Audubon Society's Mason Center to learn about bird phenology, or the UA Campus Arboretum to learn more about desert plant phenology. All groups will return to the USA-NPN National Coordinating Office headquarters on campus, 1955 E. 6th Street, for a pizza lunch and two short talks about how the phenology observations participants collect are being used for scientific research. At 1:30 pm the USA-NPN staff and volunteers will host a walk through the Sam Hughes and Rincon Heights Neighborhoods to view the established phenology walk and learn how they can participate in *Nature's Notebook* on a regular, unguided, basis. Following the neighborhood walk participants can enjoy an ice cream sundae, a photo slide show of the day's events, and will receive more information about upcoming events. Those interested in Phenology Day can participate in the morning events beginning at 9:00 am, join us for just the afternoon session at 12:30 pm, or stay for the entire day.

Funding for this event and project is provided by a University of Arizona **Community Connection Grant**, supported by the University of Arizona Foundation and the Office of the Senior Vice President for Research.

For more information and to let us know you'd like to participate, contact the event organizer, LoriAnne Barnett by phone at 520-622-0363 or email lorianne@usanpn.org.

About the USA National Phenology Network

The [USA National Phenology Network](http://www.usanpn.org) (www.usanpn.org) is a collaborative effort, housed at the University of Arizona, with major funding from the US Geological Survey and the National Science Foundation. The USA National Phenology Network serves science and society by promoting broad understanding of plant and animal phenology and its relationship with environmental change. The Network is a consortium of individuals and organizations that collect, share, and use phenology data, models, and related information.

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