

# FIELD NOTES

FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN ARIZONA



SPRING 2020

INSIDE

*A Wolf Story*

*Waystations for Monarchs*

The Nature  
Conservancy   
Protecting nature. Preserving life.





## FIELD NOTES

Published by  
The Nature Conservancy  
in Arizona, for our members  
and friends.

*Field Notes* welcomes  
comments and questions.  
Please send to the editor,  
Tana Kappel, at [tkappel@tnc.org](mailto:tkappel@tnc.org)  
or 520-547-3432.

Visit [nature.org/arizona](https://nature.org/arizona)

 arizona nature conservancy

 @nature\_arizona

Copyright 2020  
The Nature Conservancy

**COVER IMAGE** This photo is a male red fox playing with his pup. Red foxes are found in northeastern Arizona, but are rare in the rest of the state. Most foxes in Arizona are kit foxes or gray foxes. © *Ian Murray/TNC Photo Contest 2018* THIS PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM *Reflections at White Pocket, Arizona* © *Laura Hedien/TNC Photo Contest 2019*; Ponderosa pine in a meadow © *Steven Gnam* OPPOSITE PAGE Pat Graham © *Mark Skalny*

## To Our TNC Family...

As we went to press with this issue, our country and local communities have been in isolation due to the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many businesses and nonprofits, The Nature Conservancy has temporarily closed our office doors in the interest of protecting the health and safety of our staff. We have also closed our preserves in Arizona to protect our many volunteers who support our preserves, our staff and visitors. We are continuing to work with our contractors to thin forests; with farmers on water efficiency projects upon which they depend to grow food; and to maintain the health of our preserves. In our work we are practicing physical distancing and following other guidelines from the CDC and state.

We are reminded during times like these of the importance of connecting with nature in ways that are safe: A walk around your neighborhood, in the desert or forest, or viewing images or videos of nature. Nature offers a much-needed calming effect. It gives us hope. It inspires us.

You are a valued member of our Nature Conservancy community, and your health and well-being are very important to us. Please stay safe.

We are working every day to help keep our planet healthy. **Now more than ever the world we depend upon, depends on us.**



Patrick Graham, *State Director*

I think that I  
shall never  
see a poem  
lovely as  
a tree.

~ Joyce  
Kilmer

Fifty years ago, a movement emerged. Its focus was clear. The air we breathe. The water we drink. Our health and the health of the planet.

At the time, rivers were catching on fire. Oil spills were blanketing beaches. Air pollution was killing people. The following decade saw the passage of major environmental laws including the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency.

I was in high school in Bozeman, Montana, and didn't fully grasp the significance of that day. However, we did take action picking up litter along the roads. It was a start. Finding the balance between a healthy planet and healthy economy became my life's work.

In this issue we see examples of the mysteries and resilience of nature from the migration of monarch butterflies to wolves. From the restoration of lands like the 7B Ranch to the Verde River.

We recognize the importance of courage in our tribute to Kevin Hauser, whose partnership with the Conservancy demonstrated how we could work together to save a farm and a river.

A founding supporter of The Nature Conservancy, Rachel Carson was very courageous to write *Silent Spring* in 1962. She was criticized as a scientist, even called a communist. Through it all she quietly battled breast cancer. Public support overwhelmed the critics. Many now consider her a founder of the modern environmental movement.

I have a personal connection to this story. Her book quoted my father's research on the impacts of spraying insecticides on forests.

Today, in the wake of COVID-19 we are faced with rebuilding a vibrant economy while addressing the challenges of a warming planet. May we have the courage to act in defense of nature, by creating more resilient communities, cleaner air, cooler cities and healthier rivers.

We are all in this together. Now more than ever we need to care for our planet, our communities and each other.

We hope you enjoy nature through this issue of *Field Notes*, which is dedicated to the beauty of nature. Poet Joyce Kilmer expressed this well in his poem called "Trees."

"I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree."

Thank you for caring.



Patrick Graham, *State Director*



From the Editor: **A Forest Surprise**



Writing for *Field Notes* is always an adventure. Typically, three months out, we do a content plan, but the actual focus of each story is unclear until the final days of writing and editing.

Now, in the time of Corona virus, story selection is complicated, and striking the right tone is critical. Our members, our readers, have many important things to consider, and to some extent, it's nice to escape the weighty issues that consume us. So why not some nice musings about nature, or feel-good stories?

The development of one story in particular was weighing on me. How can I make our TNC forest restoration work — which involves creating tools to make thinning less costly — interesting or relevant to our readers during this time? Rather than focusing on the “how” of what we’re doing, I felt strongly about the “why.” Why do we do the work we do?

I called my source for the story — Joel Jurgens, the Conservancy’s forest stewardship director — and explained my dilemma. I asked him if he and his family could recall a special time spent together in the forest, preferably a healthy forest, where the trees were not like toothpicks sprouting up every 2 feet. A place where there were meadows and spaces and grasses, like in the days before we started putting out all fires. A place with birds, squirrels, coyotes and flowers. A hike or a picnic in a sun-dappled forest.

I’m sure glad I made that call. Boy, did he have a story.

A Wolf Story

The Nature Conservancy’s Joel Jurgens lives with his wife and two boys in the forested mountains west of Flagstaff. They are less than a mile from Chimney Springs in the Coconino National Forest, where TNC recently completed a forest restoration project. It’s also a popular hiking, biking and recreation spot.



One morning in mid-February, Joel’s wife Nicky and their dog Belle went out for their morning run through Chimney Springs. About six miles in, Nicky stopped for a breather and to take in the view, at which point she locked eyes with a large canine high above the trail. Assuming it was a coyote and unsure how to proceed around this animal, she turned to

jog towards home. The “coyote” followed, stalking her, or more likely, her female dog, from about 40 feet behind, all the way down the path. No shouting, screaming or twig throwing would distract it.

Soon she came upon another runner and her dog, and warned her about the “large coyote” stalking her. Nicky’s friend, who has been running these trails for 20 years, took one look and said, “that is no coyote, that’s a Mexican grey wolf.” The suspected wolf followed them until they reached a logger’s camp, at which point the wolf turned and left.

When Nicky got home she called Joel, who admitted his initial thought was “yeah sure.” However, he reached out to his contact at Arizona Game and Fish and was told that if this report had come in just a few years prior, disbelief would have prevailed. Turns out that images had been captured of a very large, lone male canine, just 20 miles west of Chimney Springs, two days later.

The consensus: A lone Mexican grey wolf on a walk-about, hundreds of miles from where his forebears were re-introduced back in 1998: Arizona’s White Mountains on the border with New Mexico.

There are more Mexican grey wolves in the wild now than at any time since reintroduction began. The latest survey shows there are at least 163 wolves in New Mexico and Arizona, a nearly 25 percent jump from the previous year.

When large predators like wolves exceed their pack size, the younger, non-mating males tend to wander to seek mates elsewhere. They go where they can find prey. Wolves are carnivores and prey on elk, deer, rabbits and various other

small animals. Their kills benefit many other wildlife, such as ravens, coyotes, eagles and other creatures that also consume the remains.

Historically, “before we started suppressing fire, our forests were more open; there were more meadows, with forbs and grasses that would likely attract and support more prey species and other wildlife,” said Joel, who oversees TNC’s forest restoration work in Arizona.

We can’t say for certain that the wolf was in the Chimney Springs area because of our recent restoration work. But we can say that restoring the forest is helping it become healthier and more resilient, which tends to attract all manner of wildlife. Including those creatures at the top of the food chain.

During this time of physical distancing, it’s re-assuring that this lone wolf, one of the rarest species on the planet, chose to meander through a restored forest in Arizona, perhaps finding food and rest in our neck of the woods.

— Tana Kappel



**Mexican grey wolves** were first introduced in Arizona in 1998 into the Blue Range in east-central Arizona. It’s ironic that the Blue Range was where during the early part of the century, Aldo Leopold, today one of the guiding spirits of the American conservation movement, first came to know the Southwest. Before Leopold made his many contributions to conservation, he worked as a government hunter, and killed dozens of wolves in the area. He came to regret his work only after he mortally wounded an aged female, failing to make what hunters call a clean kill.

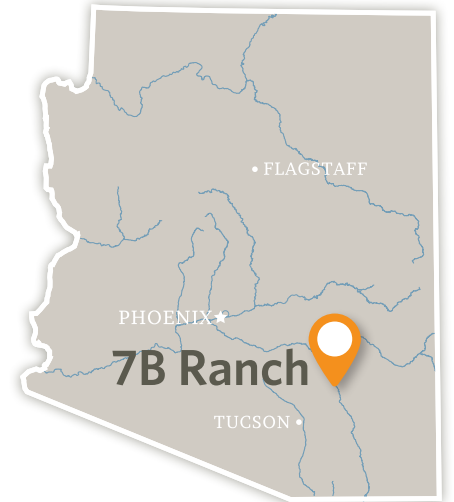
*“We reached the old wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes,” he wrote in his now-classic memoir A Sand County Almanac. “I realized then and have known ever since that there was something new to me in those eyes — something known only to her and the mountain. I was young then, and full of trigger itch; I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunter’s paradise. But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view.”*





# got milkweed?

## Magical Migrating Monarchs Need Milkweed Waystations



**Celeste Andresen** hopes the spring rains that sparked a riot of desert flowers will boost her new crop of milkweed, and in turn, lure a few intrepid migrating monarchs.

The goal, said Andresen, is to make the 7B waystation Ranch, which she manages, a waystation for the orange and black-striped butterflies as they embark on their epic migrations.

"We were blessed with abundant rains, so we're hopeful that the milkweed we planted last fall will thrive and attract monarchs," she said.

Every little bit of milkweed planted helps, since it's the sole food source for monarchs.

### Not Just a Pretty Butterfly

Monarchs are unique in the insect world; they are the only insects that undergo such marathon migrations. They fly up to 250 miles per day.

In spring, after overwintering on the California coast or in Mexico's fir forests, monarchs start their long journey north, a migration of more than 3,000 miles. On their way, they lay eggs on the underside of the leaves of milkweed plants. The young hatchlings start their lives as caterpillars. After they emerge as butterflies two weeks later, they join the stream of migrating monarchs heading north.

Individual butterflies never make it all the way north; they live for only a month. Their own offspring may not make the final leg of the journey either. Some lucky monarchs reach the final destination in Canada, and that special group tends to live for eight months, gliding all the way back south on air currents.

During their travels across North America, they perform an important service: pollinating plants. Monarchs drink nectar from flowers and transfer pollen in the process.

But their numbers have been declining significantly over the last two decades, corresponding to the loss of milkweed around the country, a casualty of urban development and aggressive weed control in farming. 2018 and 2019 saw historic lows in fall monarch migration numbers.

### Back to the 7B Ranch

Arizona, and specifically the 7B Ranch, rarely sees large numbers of monarchs, said Andresen, but the state's warm temperatures and presence of native milkweed species make it an essential area for the butterflies.

The ranch, owned by Resolution Copper Mining and managed by The Nature Conservancy since 2005, includes river bottom, a mesquite bosque and Sonoran Desert uplands. The property, located along the lower San Pedro River near the town of Mammoth, is home to hundreds of bird species, large and small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and countless insect species.

Last fall, Andresen worked with partners Westland Resources and Tonto National Forest Tribal Monitors to plant milkweed seeds and seedlings in several locations on the ranch.





“We planted 1200 milkweed seeds last fall, and 22 seedlings of native milkweed. The seedlings are looking good, but the seeds have yet to emerge,” she said.

“We got to know the 7B Ranch as part of a related project assessing some of the diverse plants there, including the unique soapberry grove within the mesquite bosque,” said Daniel McNair of Westland Resources. The western soapberry tree is the host plant of the soapberry hairstreak butterfly.

As part of a survey of butterflies, the team found no monarchs, but they did find a profusion of their look-alike butterflies – Queens. Noting the absence of milkweed on the property, the team set to work planting native milkweeds.

Live plants and seed plots were planted in four separate areas: Two plots, which receive only natural moisture, were established within the mesquite bosque. The rest were

planted near a livestock water tank that receives regular water from an artesian well.

“We call it the Dragonfly drinker,” said Andresen, so named because of the plethora of dragonflies that hang out there.

“One plot of live plants circles the drinker, while another plant plot surrounds the outflow of the well. These plants receive ample moisture,” said Andresen.

Twenty of the 22 live plants have survived. The two lost plants most likely succumbed to hungry wildlife who frequent the area.

Soon, Andresen hopes the milkweed plants will flower and provide a much-needed waystation for our intrepid monarchs. With completion of the project, the 7B was registered as a Monarch Waystation through Monarchwatch.org



## How You Can Help Monarchs

Plant milkweed. Two species of milkweed that do well in Arizona are Arizona milkweed (*Asclepias angustifolia*) and western whorled milkweed (*Asclepias subverticillata*)

**Where to get plants:** The 7B project got their live milkweed plants from Desert Survivors Nursery in Tucson.

**How to plant:** You may need to amend the soil before transplanting. You might use hardware cloth installed a foot deep around each plant to exclude gophers and other predators.

**To plant seeds:** In the fall, line seed plots with burlap about one foot below the soil surface to protect the seeds. Hand-bury the seeds. The seeds for the 7B project were purchased from Native Seed Search in Tucson, which were wild harvested by Borderlands Restoration from Arizona native milkweed species.

### Resources for planting milkweed and helping monarchs:

- Monarchwatch.org is a good resource for planting and monitoring monarchs, and you can get your plot designated as a Monarch Waystation.
- The Southwest Monarch Study provides information and protocols for monarch conservation work and citizen science.
- The Arizona Game and Fish Department has mobilized to plant milkweed and restore monarch habitat throughout Arizona.
- Check out westlandresources.com/blog

THIS PAGE LEFT TO RIGHT Queen butterfly at Las Cienegas National Conservation Area © Peter Warren/TNC; Comanche skimmer dragonfly © Cary Kerst; Tagged Monarch at Hassayampa River Preserve © Christina Kondrat-Smith INSET © Monarch Waystation sign © Tana Kappel/TNC

# How healthy is the Verde?

## The Verde River Watershed Report Card

A leisurely springtime float on the Verde River: What could be more delightful? You would almost think that all is well with this river and the wildlife who depend on it.

But dig a little deeper and you'll find that the river needs some help. Some more water would be nice.

In February, The Nature Conservancy and Friends of the Verde River released a comprehensive analysis of the river's health with input from more than 16 entities and concerned citizens. The first-ever Verde River Watershed Report Card gave the river an overall score of 57 percent, for a grade of C-plus.

One of the lowest grades was the river's baseflow — river flows during

the summer — at 38 percent. That score reflects nearly 30 years of steady declines due to groundwater pumping, diversions, degraded habitats and warmer, drier weather.

Not all the scores were low. This hard-working river that stretches from Chino Valley to Phoenix, and provides drinking water, irrigation and recreation for all the communities it runs through, scored well on recreation access and visitor satisfaction: 87 percent and 96 percent respectively.

The report — which required 18 months of workshops, data compilation and stakeholder interviews to complete — provides a roadmap for where to focus our

efforts on the river, said Kim Schonek, the Verde River program director.

The report also shows the importance of the river to local communities, not only for drinking water and irrigation, but also recreation.

“It's important to think about how we can achieve conservation goals in concert with economic goals for the communities in the watershed — these include housing and recreation,” said Schonek.

Significant funding for the process was provided by the U.S. Forest Service and the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. Read more about the report and the methodology at [Verdereportcard.org](http://Verdereportcard.org).

## From Our Partner: Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust



We are tremendously grateful for Pulliam's leadership in protecting the Verde River. The Trust has contributed \$4 million to date to TNC and partners, and recently announced another \$8 million over the next five years to this effort. We asked the Trust's board chair, Carol Peden Schilling, why they support our work in the Verde.

### Why is Pulliam interested in the Verde landscape?

The Verde is one of Arizona's last perennial rivers and the sense of responsibility we have to restore and protect this waterway and the myriad of systems it supports is weighty. The Verde River

provides habitat to hundreds of bird, wildlife and fish species. It supplies drinking water to 14 rural communities along its banks and nearly 3 million residents in Maricopa County. As our state endures persistent drought and as the impacts of climate change become ever more evident, it is imperative that we protect this critical waterway.

### Why is this work so important for the Pulliam Trust?

Nina Mason Pulliam was a conservationist. She loved Arizona — its landscapes, people and animals — and dedicated much of her wealth to caring for them. Acting on Nina's great love of animals and nature, we believe that if you want to help animals, you must protect habitat. And if you want to protect habitat, you must protect

water. So, in recent years the Trust has sharpened its focus on the environment, particularly on protecting and restoring waterways in Arizona and Indiana.

### Why do you support TNC?

We are immensely grateful to The Nature Conservancy for its visionary leadership coalescing various entities into real action on behalf of the Verde. We are inspired by the future-focused, broad-minded and innovative projects in which the Conservancy has been engaged on behalf of the Verde River and the Verde Valley for decades. We are honored to be partners with them in this work.

THIS PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM Sunset at the Shield Ranch in Camp Verde, Arizona © Andrew Kornylak; Carol Peden Schilling © Courtesy of Pulliam Charitable Trust





**KEVIN HAUSER 1960 - 2019**

# My Friend, A Farmer



Kim Schonek, TNC's Verde River program director, remembers her friend in the Verde Valley, Kevin Hauser, who

passed away December 27 after a two-year battle with colon cancer.

We were unlikely friends.

Kevin Hauser was everything you would want in a farmer – hard working, innovative and able to weather a storm. We met more than a decade ago. I had moved to Arizona from Oregon to work on issues related to the Verde River. I wanted to see the farms that nestled along the river and understand how the irrigation ditches worked.

Kevin was skeptical about why I might want to see his farm. How could having

The Nature Conservancy out for a visit be a good idea? Reluctantly, he agreed to show me around.

I was impressed with the beauty and productivity of his farms. My job with The Nature Conservancy is to find ways to improve and protect flows in the Verde River. I had a lot of questions. Kevin had a lot of answers. That day we didn't talk about water. We stayed on safe topics like GMO (genetically modified) corn and presidential elections. I think he



drove as fast as he could in hopes that I would not be able to find my way back. Lucky for me, I did get invited back.

Kevin wanted to steward his lands in a way that would protect them for the future. He did not want to conquer the land and push every dollar from it that he could. He wanted the land to be healthy, to turn a profit and to ensure that it was a farm for future generations. His love of farming was only rivaled by his love of family. To be able to farm and work with his family brought him great joy – and some frustration, of course. Over his years farming, Kevin's leadership resulted in successful farms throughout the Verde Valley and central valley of California.

Our first effort was to upgrade a Verde irrigation water delivery system – by installing a solar-powered, computerized system to regulate water flow to landowners and restore unneeded water to the river. I remember agreeing to meet Kevin at a spot along the ditch. I arrived first, his truck pulled up in front of mine. We stood in the weeds between the two trucks and talked. There were hard questions, best guesses and assurances from both sides. Since that day many projects have become a reality on Hauser

and Hauser Farms and around the community because Kevin was willing to take risks with us. Projects were negotiated on ditch banks, in tractors, along the river and sitting in the shop.

Thanks to Kevin's leadership and vision, there will always be farms along the river and crops will grow here. And, in 100 years, if we keep working hard, a river will run through them. Many people are part of this story, but Kevin's role was critical. My part could have been played by another, but his part could only be played by him and he played it perfectly.

I don't know what Kevin would think of what we are dealing with today, but I know what he would be doing. He would be planting crops, watering them and working hard to make them grow. He would hire local folks to do good work and eat lunch with his family. Today as I think about how food gets from the ground to the grocery store, I am happy to know that we did conservation in a way that supports

farming and addresses challenges to our water supply. There are other things that can't be measured – like the impact of having a place where conservation and agriculture work together to solve real problems. The things Kevin taught people will have a lasting impact on our community and agriculture. He taught me a lot about farming, water and life in general. We talked about raising kids and how hard it is, but how good the results can be. He taught me to negotiate a good deal, but to also accept the deal I could get. He taught me that we have to keep going if we are going to succeed, even if it's hot and dusty and in spite of what the neighbors might think or say. He inspired me to compromise, dream big and not lose focus on what really matters.

The most important thing we can all learn is to steward the lands along our rivers: They are treasures. Kevin's legacy is his family and friends, and these lands and the waters that flow, that will last forever in Arizona.



THIS PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM Kevin and his wife, Claudia Hauser © Andrew Kornylak; Four generations of the Hauser family © TNC





# 458

The number of river miles TNC has worked to protect in Arizona



## BONDING IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

**BY WADE GIBSON, TNC/AMERICORPS STEWARDSHIP ASSISTANT**

When I joined The Nature Conservancy's family through AmeriCorps in March, I could not have predicted the circumstances to come. No one could. I knew I was going to become friends with my three new AmeriCorps co-workers, and that is exactly what happened. Seeing each other every day through our orientation week in Tucson, participating in the Prescott Fire Academy, and living in a bunk-style housing while serving at Ramsey Canyon Preserve; naturally we became close.

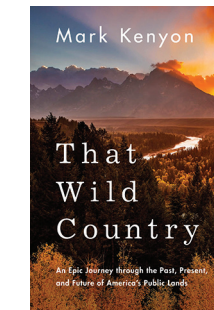
We knew the COVID-19 virus was a threat and would eventually come to Arizona. Having worked multiple seasonal jobs, I was used to being adaptable. Under the current circumstances, our service term with AmeriCorps and TNC was uncertain. Our service involves working in remote areas, which meant we were performing our civic duty to socially distance ourselves from others. After TNC closed Ramsey Canyon Preserve to the public in mid-March, only we four AmeriCorps members were on the preserve. Fortunately, we were able to keep working and logging hours, even as Arizona's governor declared a "shelter in place" order for the entire state.

Hearing the horrible stories of the rising death toll, the economy collapsing, the essential shutdown of America...we knew our daily face-to-face interactions would be important for us. During times of crisis, relationships trump everything else. Not having the ability to be with family during these uncertain times is hard. It is fortunate that we have the technology today to visually see our family and friends via phone or computer. However, over the past month, I have gained another family I can interact with daily, a family I can trust and share my thoughts and emotions with. I am thankful for my AmeriCorps and TNC family.

A part of the AmeriCorps pledge states, "Faced with adversity, I will persevere." Faced with a global pandemic, I and my newfound AmeriCorps family have bonded, we're healthy and in a healthy state of mind. We're getting preserve work done. And we persevere.

## Nature Books - TNC Staff Picks

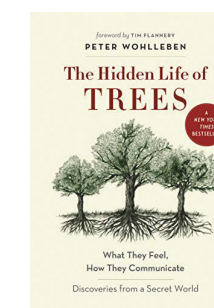
**"That Wild Country: An epic journey through the past, present and future of America's Public Lands"**  
by Mark Kenyon



"That Wild Country" reflects on the past and future battles over America's public lands. It is part travel log and part historical examination of America's public lands through the eyes of Mark and his co-travelers, and the vast controversy over them since their inception.

Recommended by Heather Switzer,  
Events Manager

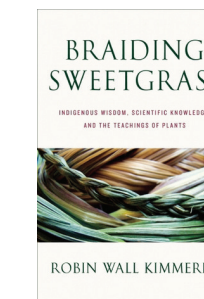
**"The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate — Discoveries from a Secret World"**  
by Peter Wohlleben



Drawing on amazing scientific discoveries, Wohlleben explains how trees are social beings: how they communicate, support each other, share nutrients with those who are sick or struggling, and even warn each other of impending dangers. After reading this book, I gained a deeper appreciation for woods and forests and the incredible processes of life, death and regeneration.

Recommended by Caity Varian,  
Development Coordinator

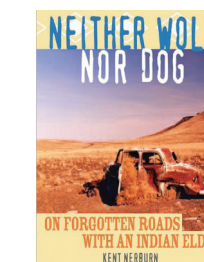
**"Braiding Sweetgrass"**  
by Robin Wall Kimmerer



I started reading "Braiding Sweetgrass" because I longed for a woman's voice speaking about nature. Her poetic style and use of storytelling to describe ecological principles is approachable and engaging. She brings together indigenous knowledge, science and nature.

Recommended by Sarah Martin,  
Loyal Donor Officer

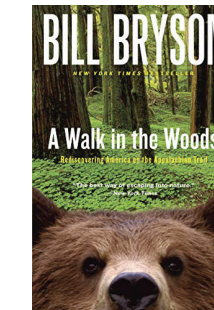
**"Neither Wolf Nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder"**  
by Kent Nerburn



This book spoke to me in an authentic voice that attempts to remove the author's privileged bias. It is a reminder to acknowledge cultural difference without judgement. It espouses the simplicity of reverence, silence and the divinity of the Earth. In Dan's words, "Live close to the earth. Get rid of some of your things. Help each other. Talk to the Creator. Be quiet more. Listen to the earth instead of building things on it all the time. Don't blame other people for your troubles and don't try to make people into something they're not."

Recommended by Mark Ryan,  
Donor Relations Manager

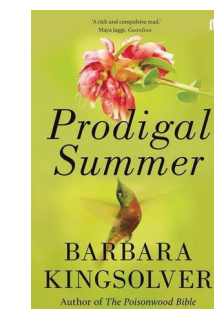
**"A Walk in the Woods."**  
By Bill Bryson



Bill Bryson's book, "A Walk in the Woods," brings you on his journey and attempt to walk The Appalachian Trail. It is a combination of humor, ecological history and human interaction. If you've always been interested in hiking the trail, but never actually wanted to do it (a fraction of the people who start the trail finish), this is a great way to explore vicariously.

Recommended by Heather Beshears,  
Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing

**"Prodigal Summer"**  
by Barbara Kingsolver



"Prodigal Summer" weaves together the story of three main characters who are living amid the mountains and farms of southern Appalachia. Over the course of one verdant summer, it explores their nature, their relationship with nature, love and challenges. Kingsolver's vivid descriptions of Appalachia transports the reader to that unique area and stimulates one's senses. She also has a brilliant way of describing nature and science in a friendly and engaging way.

Recommended by Celeste Andresen, 7B  
Ranch Manager and Outreach Liaison



# ON NATURE, AFRICA AND INSPIRATION

David Bygott and Jeannette Hanby are well-traveled supporters of TNC and bring a perspective that links nature and people. After extensive time in Africa, the two have written a book that explores the intersection of environment and social networks. The Tucson residents share insights on global travel, and some closer to home.

## You've travelled broadly - which place really inspires you?

The Serengeti ecosystem. We have been going to Africa for almost half a century. David studied chimpanzees at Gombe in Tanzania in the early 1970s, then went to Cambridge, England to work on his doctoral thesis. Jeannette was there doing research on captive monkeys, having just received her own doctorate degree. Together we went to Tanzania to study lions in the Serengeti. Lions are a top predator and from their point of view we learned a lot about Serengeti's ecological pyramid. We continue to return there as safari guides and are still enthralled by Serengeti's immensity and diversity; the web of interactions between plants and animals, predators and prey.



THIS PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM Male lion at Serengeti National Park in Tanzania © Nicolás Alais/TNC Photo Contest 2019; From left, David Bygott, Jackie Day, Jeannette Hanby and Mark Haberstich at Aravaipa Canyon Preserve © Mark Ryan/TNC

## What is your favorite place in Arizona?

We asked each other, if you could spend a week anywhere, where would you go? Our top choice was The Nature Conservancy's Muleshoe Ranch. It offers comfortable self-catering rooms in the historic ranch house, and endless hiking opportunities through lovely scenery rich in wildlife. The outdoor hot tubs are the perfect place to relax at the end of the day. We have been going there for years.

## What drew you to get involved with TNC?

We were impressed by TNC's ability to conserve large and intact natural areas. Visits to Muleshoe and Aravaipa Canyon preserves convinced us that TNC knows what it is doing and has the staff to preserve and maintain precious habitats where wildlife can thrive.

## What are your major environmental concerns?

Most environmental problems, including habitat destruction, pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity, are due to humans. The unchecked growth of our species seems the fundamental issue that we are still unable to address.

## What do you think about how TNC tackles these issues?

We see that TNC does all it can to halt habitat destruction by securing crucial habitats. For instance, we lived in the vulnerable semi-arid environment of northwest Tanzania for nearly 20 years. The area is still home to a small group of hunter-gatherers known as the Hadza, who we came to know well. They need a large area where they can forage, using traditional skills. Encroachment by pastoralists and farmers has seriously endangered both wildlife and the Hadza. TNC has started a carbon-offset project that provides funds for protection of the habitat, helping to ensure that this unique area and its people survive.

## Where are you now?

We are temporary caretakers of Ruby Ghost Town in Southern Arizona, far from most people, in a place we love! Ruby is a privately owned historical and nature reserve. It's a disused mining area that has been going back to nature since the mine shut down over 60 years ago. It has lakes, woodlands and rocky hills that support a rich variety of large mammals, birds and smaller creatures. We help monitor the environment with trail cameras and species inventories.

## What inspired you to write your book?

Living in a little-known part of Africa with an amazing diversity of people and wildlife inspired us to write about our experiences. We lived in a village near Lake Eyasi in northern Tanzania, a place where strikingly different cultures meet and interact. Our forthcoming book, "Spirited Oasis," is a collection of stories about this unique place, known as Mangola, and we have a sequel planned as well.



## Leave Your Legacy:

David and Jeannette became TNC Legacy Club members by creating a TNC charitable remainder trust. As Legacy Club members, they enjoy Legacy field trips and events. "It was an easy process and we're glad to support the work of The Nature Conservancy."

For information about giving options that offer income opportunities, please contact Mark Ryan at [mdryan@tnc.org](mailto:mdryan@tnc.org).





The Nature Conservancy  
Arizona Chapter  
7600 N. 15th Street, #100  
Phoenix, AZ 85020

[nature.org/arizona](http://nature.org/arizona)

Tucson Conservation Center  
1510 E. Fort Lowell Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85719

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
TUCSON, AZ  
PERMIT NO. 2216



CLOCKWISE Red monkey flower in Aravaipa Canyon © *Marian Stampfer*; A swallowtail butterfly perches among pine tree needles at Hart Prairie Preserve © *Doug Iverson*; The arm of a saguaro cactus drops down to say hello. © *Anthony Rodgers/TNC Photo Contest 2019*; Sandhill Crane taking her baby chicks out for a swim. © *Roxana Walters/TNC Photo Contest 2019*

# NATURE THANKS YOU

Your support has helped  
us to ensure people and  
nature prosper and thrive,  
together. Because of  
you, Arizona and our  
world will be better for  
generations to come.

