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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)** – “Phenology Day”, a family event being held on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm, will highlight the first of its kind, regional “Phenology Trail”, connecting 10 observation sites across 75 miles in the greater Tucson area. 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. 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. Upcoming events for the Tucson Phenology Trail can be found here:

[www.meetup.com/Tucson-Phenology-Trail](http://www.meetup.com/Tucson-Phenology-Trail).

This event is sponsored by the [USA National Phenology Network](#) (USA-NPN), the [University of Arizona’s \(UA\) Pima Cooperative Extension Office Horticulture Program](#), the [UA Campus Arboretum](#), [UA’s Santa Rita Experimental Range](#), the [Tucson Audubon Society’s Mason Center](#) and the [Sam Hughes](#) and [Rincon Heights](#) Neighborhood Associations.

Nearly all of us frequently take note of phenological events, indicators of seasonal change and long-term shifts in climate, without knowing it. We observe when seeds germinate, flowers bloom, vegetables are ready for harvest, animals hibernate, birds migrate and leaf color changes.

USA-NPN sponsors an interactive citizen science program, [Nature’s Notebook](#) ([www.nn.usanpn.org](http://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, begins at Pima Cooperative Extension 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.

At 10:30 participants will visit one of three locations: the Biosphere 2 to learn about phenology research being conducted, the Tucson Audubon Society's Mason Center to learn about bird phenology, or the UA Campus Arboretum to learn more about desert plant phenology. Those interested in Phenology Day can participate in the morning events beginning at 9:00 am, join us for the afternoon session at 12:30 pm, or stay for the entire day.

All groups will return to the USA-NPN National Coordinating Office headquarters, 1955 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, for a pizza lunch and two short talks about how phenology observations are being used for scientific research. The first 25 participants to arrive after 12:15 will receive free pizza.

At 1:30 pm the USA-NPN staff will host a walk through the Sam Hughes and Rincon Heights Neighborhoods to learn how they can participate in *Nature's Notebook* on a regular, unguided, basis. There will be a concluding ice cream social and a photo slide show of the day's events.

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.

### **About the USA National Phenology Network**

The [USA National Phenology Network](http://www.usanpn.org) ([www.usanpn.org](http://www.usanpn.org)) is a collaborative effort, housed at the University of Arizona, in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) and School of Natural Resources 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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