

# HOME+LIFE

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PHOTOS COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Surveyors sometimes crawl up steep brushy canyons or dig into lush vegetation on the hunt for montane or rare plants.

## ‘LOST PLANTS’ FOUND

Surveyors combed Saguaro National Park for rare plants

**CINDY COFFER CHOJNACKY**  
Special to the Arizona Daily Star

When you think of Saguaro National Park — sprawling mountain reserves on the east and west ends of Tucson — you may think of cactus. But probably not orchids.

However, the Thurber’s bog orchid is one of nine montane and rare plants recently rediscovered in the park’s Rincon Mountain District — plants previously considered extirpated (locally extinct). These plants were missing in the last extensive Rincon survey (done in 1982-84 and published in 1987) but recently found in a National Park Service survey.

“Orchid is not a plant you use in the same sentence as Saguaro National Park,” quipped Don Swann, Saguaro biologist. Surveyors also discovered new springs and more than 30 plants never previously recorded, most of which are native. This included another orchid species.

Park staff have been concerned about losing plants from climate change and extended drought.

“As the park biologist for 30 years, I have wanted to do this for some time,” Swann said.

Lower elevation vegetation has been studied, particularly Saguaro cactus (which the park was established to preserve) but Swann wanted to study higher elevation natural resources. “The National Park Service mission is to protect species, so losing species is something we take seriously.”

Hardy technicians, seasonal workers, and other employees combed canyons and north slopes of Mica Mountain, the highest point in the Rincons, in spring and summer 2017-2020. (A sixth survey began this spring with new funding.)

Several “moisture-loving, cold-loving” species were found along seeps on Chimenea Creek above Manning Camp, a historic former private summer home complex built by Levi Manning in 1905 on a homestead claim. It’s now the Park Service summer headquarters for high country field work and adjacent to backpacker campsites reserved by the public.

The creek was dammed in 1960 to provide a permanent Manning

water source, eliciting concerns about potentially eliminated species. However, two “rediscovered” species, red osier dogwood and thin leaf alder, were found in moist areas in upper reaches of the creek.

Other plants use shade and lingering snow beneath towering rocks on Mica. Helen’s Dome, a prominent rock outcrop visible from Tucson, offered a home for Porter’s melic grass on a forested north slope. Ravine fescue, another perennial grass, was scattered along the base of the massive Spud Rock outcrop.

Saguaro biological technician Dan Beckman has led the surveys. The most focus was on areas around Manning, Helen’s Dome, Italian Spring and Deer Head Spring, all within day hiking distance of Manning.

Please see **PLANTS**, Page E4



**VIEW:** Take a look at Saguaro National Park through the years with this historical photo gallery. Point your smartphone camera at the QR code, then tap the link. **NEWSVU**



Thurber’s bog orchid (*Plantanthera limosa*) was among montane plants rediscovered on Mica Mountain previously thought to be possibly extirpated (locally extinct).

## Blending fashion, art and the Old Pueblo



COURTESY OF JENNY WANTLAND

Owner of Luna Bloom, Jenny Wantland, wears one of her hand-painted Sonoran Desert-inspired hats.

### Artist brings hats to life with desert-inspired designs

**ELVIA VERDUGO**  
Arizona Daily Star

Local artist and designer Jenny Wantland is a Tucsonan through and through.

She starts every morning the same way: waking up around 5 a.m. as the sun begins to rise and peeks through a window in her Tucson home. She then makes her way to the desert area surrounding her home to take in the fresh Sonoran Desert air and the warm Arizona sun.

“I just sit out there, and I just let that sun heat me up, and it’s just impossible not to feel inspired,” she says.

She uses the inspiration from the Sonoran Desert to design and hand-paint wool hats that she sells through her online shop, Luna Bloom ([shoplunabloom.com](http://shoplunabloom.com)).

The boho wide brim hats feature

paintings of the fauna and flora of the Sonoran Desert, including saguaros, snakes, coyotes and even the moon.

“Everything is inspired, even things that don’t look inspired, by Tucson,” Wantland says. “They’re somehow inspired by the desert. So, I would say the desert is kind of my girl; she kind of does most of the work.”

Since the shop’s start nearly three years ago, Wantland’s following has grown from 300 Instagram followers to more than 30,000 followers and has caught the likes of locals and star-studded celebrities like Heidi Gardner from “Saturday Night Live” and Jillian Rose Reed from MTV’s “Awkward,” who have both donned the desert-inspired hats, according to Wantland.

Wantland started Luna Bloom after she decided to leave her job in education and follow her lifelong passions for fashion and art.

“It started from a whole life of really loving fashion and really loving art, that’s the two things

I did my whole life,” she says. “As I got older, I would be commissioned to do work here and there and just, eventually, kind of blended the two worlds together and just had this creative idea. It was something that I hadn’t seen and wasn’t being done. And I thought, ‘OK, this could be something cool’ and just felt drawn to.”

But the idea of making the change was inspired by someone close to Wantland who wanted to see her utilize her art and fashion skills — her mom.

“I remember talking to my mom one day on the phone, and she’s like, ‘It’s a shame you’re not painting more and using your talents.’ You know how moms are,” Wantland says. “And I had just bought a new hat, and then I remember looking at it like ‘Man, it’d be so much sicker if it had like a snake wrapped around the top.’”

One of Wantland’s signature designs is a hand-painted snake that curves around the wide-brim

Please see **HATS**, Page E4



NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

ANSWERS / E2

**PARTING WAYS**  
**BY DAVID, KAREN AND PAUL STEINBERG / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ**

David, Karen and Paul Steinberg live in Pacific Grove, Calif. David is the puzzles and games editor for the Andrews McMeel Universal media company. Karen and Paul, his parents, are longtime puzzle enthusiasts. The idea for this one was Paul's. David wrote a program to generate possible themed entries. When the standard 21-by-21-square grid didn't work for the theme, Karen suggested changing the grid size, which was successful. Karen and David did the fill, and Paul look the lead on the clues. This is The Times's first all-family crossword collaboration. — W.S.  
Note: When this puzzle is done, read the circled letters line by line from top to bottom to get an appropriate word.

- ACROSS**

1 Dual degree for a physician/scientist

6 "My man!"

9 D.C. figure

12 Impulsive desire

16 An avian abode

17 Janis \_\_\_, main role in "Mean Girls"

18 One's time in office, maybe

19 "For \_\_\_ is the kingdom ..."

20 See 5-Down

22 See 12-Down

24 Parts of a machine

25 Creep (along)

26 "Me too"

27 Destroy internally

28 Get rid of

29 Trap

31 They'll give you more of the same

33 Kidney-related

35 Tuckered (out)

36 Straddling

37 Places of refuge

39 "Love \_\_\_, " Pet Shop Boys dance hit of 2009

41 City between Chicago and Milwaukee

45 Cry while plugging one's ears

46 What cobblers cobble

48 \_\_\_ de deux (ballet dance)

49 See 29-Down

53 Like Hitchcock's "Curtain"

54 Passionate feeling in Spain

56 Wall molding

58 Weaken, as support

59 Untrustworthy paper
- 60 Publication with an annual "Power 100" list

62 See 53-Down

64 Social worker?

65 Olaf Scholz's country: Abbr.

66 Wireless-network std.

67 Its life span is short

68 See 61-Down

72 Kind of pear that resembles an apple

74 Exploit

75 It has thousands of openings

76 Laugh at, say

78 Ride in "Calvin and Hobbes"

79 \_\_\_ Pro, tech release of 2017

80 See 73-Down

83 Capital player, for short

84 "Rotten" indicator on Rotten Tomatoes

86 Eastern honorific

87 Source of some leaks

90 There was Noah-counting for it

92 Verse's partner

96 Gospel singer Winans

97 You might speak under this

99 Earth, in some sci-fi

100 Works on oneself?

103 Fit

105 Little annoyance

106 Bad way to go

107 Many a summer TV show

109 Title for Mozart

110 Make an oopsie

111 See 84-Down

113 See 104-Down

115 Like the sea
- 116 Bother

117 European World Cup team, on scoreboards

118 "Beep!" maker

119 Word with tag or tax

120 Parking space

121 Online feed letters

122 Deep, dark hole
- DOWN**

1 It may run when you cry

2 Cleanses, in a way

3 Offspring

4 They "don't lie," per a Shakira hit

5 Tyrants/Patterns

6 "We're pregnant!" e.g.

7 Southwestern spread

8 No longer at sea

9 In and of itself

10 Snack item that's partly foreordained?

11 Dessert of molten chocolate

12 Anyplace/From which place

13 Turning point

14 Rack up

15 Zooms with, maybe

19 Stumble over

21 Division \_\_\_, lowest level of the N.C.A.A.

23 Chews the scenery

29 Made puffier, as cushions/Very desirable job

30 Admits

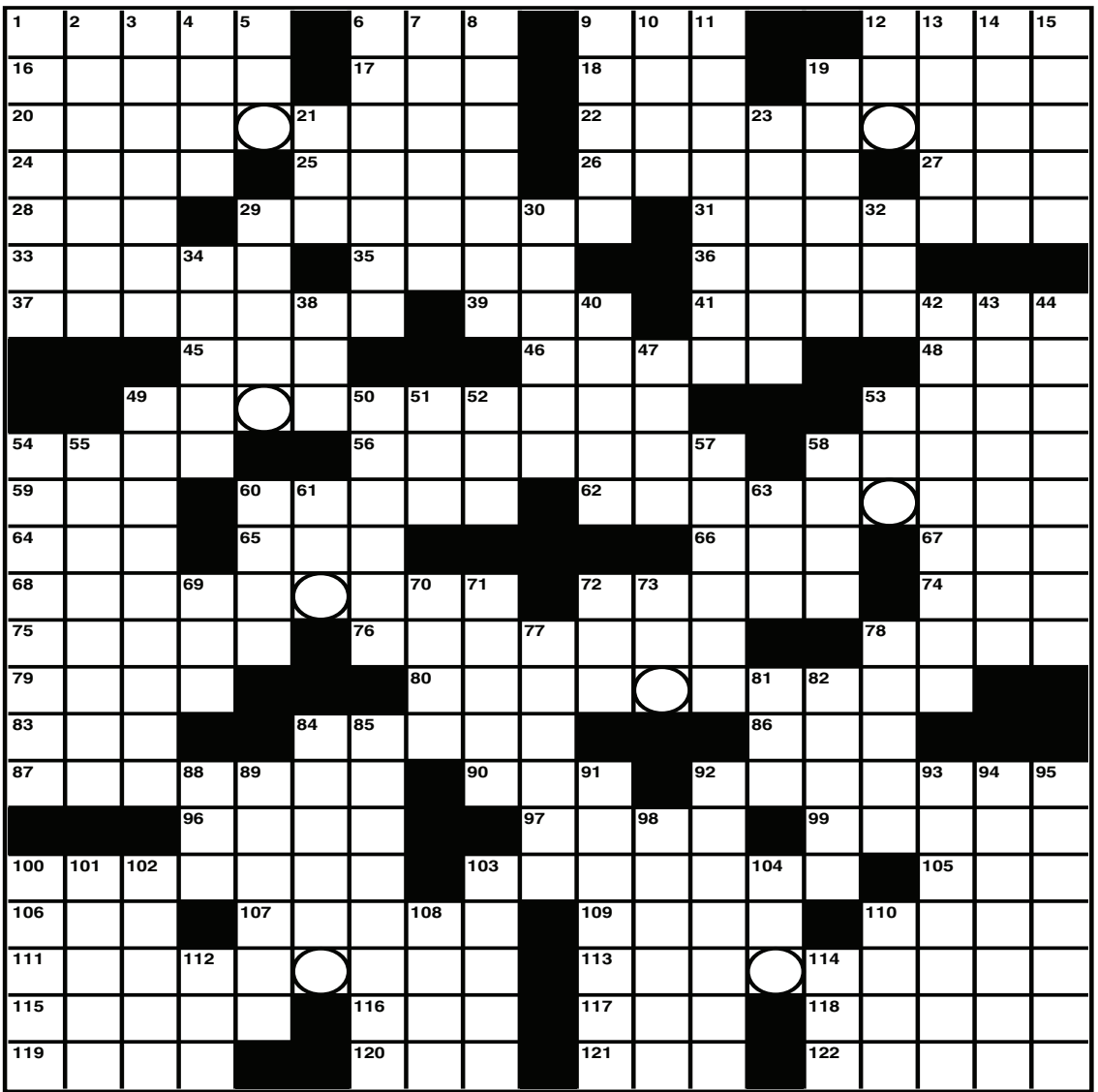
32 Start-up's announcement, for short

34 Take in, say

38 "O \_\_\_ babbino caro" (Puccini aria)

40 Group of vocal people

42 Amounts of sugar, perhaps



NO. 0529

- 43 Person not easily swayed by sentiment

44 Prescription directive

47 Never again

49 Rewards for staying, maybe

50 Point person?

51 It's written with a + or -

52 Take a shot at

53 Tourist, e.g./Hypnotic state

54 Italian rice balls

55 "Hoo-boy!"
- 57 Actor Page

58 Uniform

60 Parts of a clutch

61 Tom who hosted "Dancing With the Stars"/Brimless caps

63 Second letter after epsilon

69 Alt-\_\_\_, PC command to switch between windows

70 Relative of turquoise

71 Capital of Yemen
- 72 \$\$\$ taker

73 Endurance/ Subway map info

77 Fruit with a thick peel

78 Take potshots

81 Sorta

82 Give an address

84 Tryst partner/ Discharging, as a liquid

85 Like the motions before a hearing

88 Unfriendly

89 Very much
- 91 Disputed Asian region

92 River next to Boston's Esplanade

93 "The Divine Comedy," e.g.

94 Weasel family members

95 Eric B, Pimp C and Chuck D

98 Nonbinary possessive

100 Pointed remarks

101 Best \_\_\_ recording (Grammy category)
- 102 Who may care, so they say

103 Bit of gold reserves

104 Qualifying match, for short/ Big name in antifreeze and brake fluid

108 Take back

110 Sudden feeling, as of remorse

112 "Good \_\_\_!"

114 Relaxation spot

Plants

From E1

Saguaro's mule packer and mule team packed up supplies, food and equipment for each survey, which often went five to eight days.

In a report published last summer, Beckman wrote that the high elevation plant community may be more stable than previously believed, offering "hope that remaining lost plants may be rediscovered."

"Results of Surveys for Potentially Extirpated Plants in High Elevations of the Rincon Mountain District, Saguaro National Park, 2017-2020," was published in "Desert Plants" 37:1 in July 2021, a Boyce Thompson Arboretum publication.

The report notes the nine "rediscovered" plants of 14 thought to be extirpated. The report gives a brief history of plant surveys in the area, methods for this project and discussion on findings.

The project, funded by Friends of Saguaro National Park, began in 2013. Staff consulted old surveys and studies; the oldest dating to 1891. The survey by Janice Bowers and Stan McLaughlin, ("Flora and Vegetation of the Rincon Mountains, Pima County Arizona," Desert Plants 8:51-94), initially identified 41 "excluded species" which "have not been collected in the Rincon Mountains during ... this project and might no longer occur there," according to the report.

Surveyors checked this list against online databases, a U.S. Geological Survey Rincons survey and the University of Arizona herbarium which has plant collections from earlier surveys. They were able to reduce the potentially missing plants list from 41 to 14 by removing from consideration six nonnative species, six species found at lower elevations that were not montane, others that had been misidentified and two reported that were never documented.

"We had the advantage of trying to look for specific species that were not found in the last survey but were thought to possibly still be around," park biologist Don Swann noted. "So, we could fairly narrowly focus. Also, we had more resources; leveraging interns, other survey technicians and even wilderness rangers who are up on the mountain during the season."

Surveyors were given laminated species cards with photos, key identifying features and botanical descriptions. Records and notes from surveys in other nearby mountain ranges helped the plant detectives know where to look.



COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Survey crews often found water pockets, seeps or previously unknown springs.

Beckman, a self-trained botanist is leading a new round of surveys this year covering areas off trail around Rincon Peak which are too far for day hikes from Manning.

"We will do six backpack trips, mostly cross country in rough terrain through catclaw mimosa, manzanita and shin daggers" (vegetation notorious to Arizona hikers), Beckman said. "We have some hardy interns and I personally love gnarly exploratory backpacking."

Surveyors will make day trips up canyons from the defunct Madera Ranger Station (closed to the public by private homes on the former X-9 Ranch property but open to the Park Service.)

Western National Parks Association and Wild Tribute are funding the new phase.

**Citizen scientists**

Beckman also hopes to enlist more "citizen scientists" to help identify plants. iNaturalist, a digital platform for naturalists and biologists around the world to share observations, now includes Beckman's project Plants of the Saguaro NP High Country (tucne.ws/saguaroplants). There,

you can see hundreds of plants already identified and click on "About" and "read more" for a description of the project and how to participate.

Rincon visitors can sign up for a free iNaturalist account (inaturalist.org) or use an iNaturalist app on their phone (check out a tutorial at inaturalist.org/posts/50206-learn-the-basics-phone-app), then post photos of mid- to high elevation plant species in the Rincons.

Observations for the area (some posted before the new project) include photos of 693 plant species from 150 "observers" and named by "identifiers" including Beckman and hundreds of other "plant geeks."

Since Arizona Trail thru-hikers are the largest segment of yearly visitors to Rincon high country, "we'd like to get more Arizona Trail hikers involved," Beckman said.

"We'd like to get people involved with learning about plants," Swann added. "The Sky Islands (high elevation mountains in Southern Arizona including the Rincons and Santa Catalinas) are one of the most amazing places in the country."

Hats

From E1

hat. But, Wantland's favorite creation is a red wool hat with hand-painted black coyotes and white moons.

In true artist style, many of Wantland's creations are one-of-a-kind designs that come from her experiences of living in the Old Pueblo, meaning that she often retires designs after one of her bi-monthly online hat drops.

"When the first drop sold out, I was kind of like, 'Well, that was weird. I wonder what that was all about? Like, that was so strange, that shouldn't have happened,'" she says. "Now we're coming on three years, and to have this following that not only appreciates your art and wants to support you, I think I'm very lucky."

The desert-inspired hats range from \$230 to \$250. Luna Bloom's most recent hat drop featuring around 10 new designs was Friday.

**'A labor of love'**

Wantland sometimes spends 10-hour workdays, working until 3 a.m. painting the intricate designs on the Luna Bloom hats with paints and colors she manufactures at her home studio.

"Every hat is different," she says. "They all take a while, but some are definitely a labor of love. I always say I can't guarantee I'm going to ever do a design again because, you know, I go off a lot of the experience of it and if the experience of making it doesn't just feel right, I retire it right then and there, after that day."

Regardless of what design you choose, Wantland hopes that its wearer feels confidence, happiness and the "love from the hat pouring back in," she says.

"I just feel so honored that they're allowing me to be a part of their trip to the grocery store or walking down Congress (Street), you know, or whatever it is that they're doing," Wantland says.

As the shop's customer base began to grow, so did the amount

of work that needed to be done. Initially, Wantland handled all aspects of the business, including designing, painting, steaming hats, checking for quality control and all logistics like checking emails and shipping out hats.

The shop was primarily a one-woman show until about a year ago, when her husband, Nick, joined the shop full-time to help with the business side of things. But despite his helping hand on the administrative side, he says that Jenny is the "mastermind, artist and everything else."

"Everything is so effortless and seamless," he says. "There's no downside to it (working together), it's all upside. It's all super fun. We get to hang out together all day, and she has her little office, her art area, and I get to stand next to her all day and pack and answer emails and do all those fun things."

**'Tucsonan to the bone'**

Despite Luna Bloom's growing success, Wantland wants to keep the business operating from her at-home studio to remain close to what matters most to her: her family.

"I try to get in touch with myself and remember the purpose of it," she says. "And a lot of the purpose is to be home and be there for my children growing up and be a part of their daily lives and their education. And also, for them to be a part of a creative world, you know, I think is a cool thing that a lot of kids don't get to grow up to be a part of."

With no plans anytime soon for a brick-and-mortar shop, Luna Bloom's online storefront will continue to sell specially designed and painted Sonoran Desert-inspired hats for the foreseeable future and even possibly have a label of unpainted Luna Blooms hats to come in the future.

"She's a Tucsonan to the bone," her husband says. "It's not like some sort of marketing trick. The whole desert thing, that's who she is to the core. And all of this stuff, all the artwork, everything about her business is just a way of representing Tucson."



Jenny Wantland's hats have earned her more than 30,000 Instagram followers. COURTESY OF JENNY WANTLAND