Parsons Field Institute
Who We Are and What We Do

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McDowell Sonoran Conservancy seeks to preserve and advance natural open space through science, education, and stewardship.
McDowell Sonoran Conservancy

• >600 volunteers

• Partnership with City of Scottsdale to protect McDowell Sonoran Preserve
  - Stewardship
  - Preservation
  - Education
McDowell Sonoran Preserve

- 30,580 acres
- Largest urban preserve in North America
McDowell Sonoran Preserve

- Owned/managed by City of Scottsdale
- >200 miles of trails

Photo credit: Lynne Russell
Regional Importance

Network of 3 million acres of protected lands
Complex Ecosystem

973 known species!

- 410 plants
- 4 amphibians
- 174 birds
- 323 invertebrates
- 30 mammals
- 32 reptiles

(minimum numbers)
Parsons Field Institute

The Parsons Field Institute at McDowell Sonoran Conservancy conducts ecological research through partnerships and citizen science to inform long-term natural resource management of the Sonoran Desert, to contribute to broader scientific knowledge, and to inspire stewardship of the desert.
1. Assess the impact of urban stressors and climate change on Preserve resources.

2. Improve best management practices for the Sonoran Desert and other arid lands.
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2. Improve best management practices for the Sonoran Desert and other arid lands.
Why It Matters

Unique opportunity

- Urban preserve
- Dichotomy between use and preservation
Why It Matters

Inform management

- Detect changes
- Protect resources
- Provide quality recreation
- Mitigate impacts due to uncertain future
Why It Matters

Protect regional resources

• Important part of regional network
What We Do

Priority 1: Assess the impact of urban stressors and climate change on Preserve resources

- Habitat connectivity
- Long-term monitoring
Habitat Connectivity

**Goal:** Maintain regional connectivity for wildlife movement

- Wildlife cameras
- Acoustic monitoring
- Mule deer telemetry
Long-term Monitoring

Goal: Determine composition of wildlife community and assess trends of species and populations

- Amphibians
- Arthropods
- Bats
- Birds
- Butterflies
- Reptiles
- Plant (and animal) phenology
And now for the presentations!

- Habitat connectivity
- Mule deer telemetry
- Phenology