



ARIZONA-SONORA
**DESERT
MUSEUM**

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Rescued Black Bear Cub Finds New Home at Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

Tucson, AZ (March 30, 2015) An 11-month-old female black bear cub has arrived and becomes the newest resident at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. “We are so pleased to have this cub and know visitors will be thrilled to watch her develop into full adulthood,” states Shawnee Riplog-Peterson, the Museum’s Curator of Mammalogy & Ornithology.

The cub was originally found with a broken leg by the Gila County Sheriff’s department in Payson, AZ, where it is suspected she was hit by an automobile. Her age at the time was estimated at 5 months. She was transferred to the Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center in Scottsdale, Arizona where she was nursed back to health. Unsited for reintroduction into the wild, her adoption by the Desert Museum was assisted by the Arizona Department of Game and Fish. The Desert Museum traditionally adopts orphaned or rehabilitated animals which are not suitable for release back into the wild.

As with all new animals, the cub will spend time in quarantine in her exhibit. During this time veterinarians and keepers monitor her well-being and begin training efforts. “Keepers will train her on how to safely shift from one area of her habitat to another by using positive reinforcement techniques” adds Riplog-Peterson. “She is thriving. Visitors will enjoy watching her energy and youthful curiosity.”

(more)

Known scientifically as *Ursus americana*, black bears are omnivorous, eating a variety of fruits, berries, grasses and even carrion. They are only found in North America and appear to be flourishing with populations estimated at 750,000 individuals. Adult male black bears can grow to 4-6 feet in length and weigh up to 600 pounds. Black bears characteristically live solitary lives except for females with offspring which will typically stay with their mothers until about two years of age.

The Museum's previous resident bear sadly passed away on New Year's Eve 2014. Visitors will be able to view the new bear cub in the Mountain Woodland habitat on the Museum grounds beginning (insert day, date, time). The Museum currently opens daily at 7:30 am. Enthusiasts can follow news and photos of the cub on the Museum's website and social media sites, Facebook and Twitter.

Fans will also have an opportunity to select this cub's new name. Three names have been proposed by the staff of the Museum's Mammalogy & Ornithology department. The three names are: Ursula, Strawberry, and Judumi. These names follow the Museum's tradition of selecting names that are particular to the Sonoran Desert, are related to the scientific name for bear or are similar to names selected in years past by former Museum Educator, Hal Gras. Names like Olivia De Javelina and Quilly Mays were coined by Gras. Anyone wishing to cast their vote should log on to <http://www.desertmuseum.org/bear/>.

****ASSIGNMENT EDITORS - PLEASE NOTE:** The bear's public debut will occur at 9 AM Monday, March 30, 2015. Media are welcome to photograph and film the new cub and keepers will be available for interviews. Please contact the Marketing Department to arrange for film/photography requests and interviews.**

The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum is one of the nation's leading outdoor, living museums, featuring more than 230 animals and 1,200 varieties of desert plants. Its purpose is to inspire people to live in harmony with the natural world by fostering love, appreciation, and understanding of the bi-national, Sonoran Desert region. The museum is located at 2021 N. Kinney Road, in Tucson Mountain Park adjacent to Saguaro National Park (West). It is open daily year round with operating hours varying by season. Call (520) 883-2702 or visit www.desertmuseum.org for more information.