

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 5, 2026

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RESCUED MOUNTAIN LION CUBS DEBUT AT DESERT MUSEUM

TUCSON, AZ—The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum is excited to announce the public debut of two young mountain lion cubs. The arrival of the cubs provides visitors with a unique opportunity to observe one of the Sonoran Desert's most iconic residents as they grow, play, and develop the skills they would rely on in the wild.

The mountain lions, approximately seven months old, came to the Museum through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, following a determination by wildlife officials that they could not be returned to the wild. After arriving at the Museum, the cubs underwent comprehensive veterinary evaluations and a carefully managed acclimation process designed to ensure their health, wellbeing, and a successful transition to their new home. The sibling cubs recently moved into their new habitat after completing this period of acclimation and are thriving under the care of the Museum's animal care and veterinary teams.



Guests visiting the exhibit may observe the cubs engaging in a variety of natural behaviors, including climbing, exploring, scent investigation, and engaging with enrichment placed in their habitat. Because they are still young and adapting to their surroundings, activity levels may vary throughout the day. The cubs are now viewable during regular Museum hours in the Mountain Woodland Exhibit.

Cats that Keep the Peace

Native to the Sonoran Desert and much of the Western Hemisphere, mountain lions play a critical role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. As apex predators, they help regulate prey populations and contribute to ecological balance across diverse landscapes. However, habitat fragmentation, roadway mortality, and increasing human-wildlife interactions continue to present significant challenges for mountain lion populations throughout the Southwest.

The debut of these young mountain lion brothers provides guests with a memorable connection to one of the Desert Museum's most iconic animals, while simultaneously increasing knowledge and awareness of the species and its conservation needs.

From Rescue to Resident Ambassadors

The Desert Museum remains dedicated to advancing conservation through education, research, and meaningful experiences with the plants and animals in our care. Ambassador animals, like these cubs, offer a powerful opportunity for guests to form a bond with the species.

"Mountain lions are an important part of our desert ecosystem, yet many people never have the chance to see one," said Shawnee Riplog-Peterson, Curator of Mammalogy and Ornithology at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. "The addition of these cubs represents another step in the Museum's mission to connect people with nature while fostering a greater understanding of the role predators play in maintaining healthy ecosystems. We hope to inspire actions that support wildlife conservation across the Sonoran Desert region and beyond."

For more information about the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and its wildlife conservation programs, visit the Museum's website or follow its social media channels.

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About the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

Founded in 1952, the Desert Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization widely recognized as a model institution for immersive and innovative interpretation of native plants and animals in their natural habitat. The 98-acre Desert Museum in Tucson, AZ is regularly recognized as a top-tier facility due to its pioneering approach to interpreting the complete natural history of a single region. It is a zoo, aquarium, botanical garden, art gallery and natural history museum, all rolled into one. The mission of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum is to inspire people to live in harmony with the natural world by fostering love, appreciation, and understanding of the Sonoran Desert. To learn more, visit www.desertmuseum.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).