

River Pathways

Program Overview



Photo: Audubon Arizona



Photo: Morgan Moore



Great Blue Heron
Photo: Glenn Upton

Dear Educator:

The Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center provides a gateway into the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area, a 600-acre stretch of riverside habitat along the Salt River. During their trip, students will assist Audubon biologists in monitoring the park's birds and habitats collecting valuable data that will aid in ongoing conservation efforts.

BEFORE YOU VISIT

Audubon Arizona's River Pathways Field Trip is intended to follow our River Pathways Curriculum which consists of roughly one week of hands-on classroom activities and lessons that introduce students to many topics related to riparian habitats and their management.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- The value of riparian areas to both humans and wildlife
- Multiple-use management
- Scientific monitoring as a conservation tool
- Making and using keys to identify common plants and animals
- Threats to Arizona's riparian areas
- Careers in resource management and conservation

Although it is not mandatory for your students to complete the River Pathways Curriculum prior to this field trip, it is highly recommended. For a copy of the River Pathways Curriculum, please contact Steve Prager at: sprager@audubon.org.

At a minimum, please guide your class through the discussion on the opposite side of the page prior to your trip.

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CORRELATIONS TO ARIZONA SCIENCE STANDARDS

Strand 1, C2: Inquiry Process

Strand 2, C2: History & Nature of Science

Strand 3, C1-C3: Science in Personal/Social

Perspectives

Strand 4, C3-C4: Life Science

Strand 6, C1: Earth and Space Science

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

By participating in this field trip, your students will:

- Gain first-hand experience with scientific field techniques
- Be given opportunities to collect data with the Bureau of Land Management
- Be introduced to careers in resource management
- Be introduced to career building opportunities such as internships and post-high school educational options

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Following this field trip, a select group of students will be chosen to assist either Bureau of Land Management or US Forest Service with ongoing monitoring efforts on the Agua Fria National Monument or Tonto National Forest. Due to the nature of these trips, only a small number of students may attend. You will be asked to provide a list of students who showed high levels of interest and enthusiasm during the River Pathways trip and who expressed interest in future monitoring experience.



WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING

- Hat
- Water bottle
- Comfortable shoes
- Sunscreen
- Lunch and snacks

Pre-trip Discussion

- 1) What is a riparian habitat?
- 2) Why are riparian habitats valuable to humans and wildlife, especially in the desert?
- 3) What types of things do people do in riparian areas? How do these activities affect the health of the habitat?
- 4) Why is it important that scientists monitor riparian areas and other important habitats?
- 5) As a scientist, what features of a riparian habitat would you monitor and why?
- 6) What would happen if Arizona lost its remaining riparian habitat?