

# Giving Thanks

## What's New at Pathfinder Ranch by Glacier

Our education staff has completed many projects this season. One of our naturalists made two new routes on the indoor traverse wall for free time. Students can enjoy either route, or create their own if they're looking for an extra challenge!

We have also updated our curriculum materials, including new photos and cards for our Ethnobotany hike. These materials will help participants learn more about how the Cahuilla used the local plants to survive in this environment.

There are also some new additions to the farm

and nature center. If you've visited the ranch recently you may have met Beau, our newest goat! He is a baby fainting goat, which means all of his muscles tense up when he is either super scared or startled causing him to fall to the ground for about 3 seconds. However, we ask that guests



*Meet Garbanzo, our new baby chick!*

not purposely scare Beau in order to see him faint, because it's stressful and we don't want our goats to be afraid of humans.

Beau isn't the only new addition to our animals. We incubated one of the eggs from our farm, which hatched over Thanksgiving break! Now that's something to be thankful for. Our baby chick is called Garbanzo and is currently living in the nature center until he can tolerate the cold winter temperature. We can't wait for him to join the farm community!

## The Bird is the Word by Lilly

Some of our students have been introduced to the world of birding! Thanks to a chaperone's generous donation, our students can use specialized binoculars and pocket field guides to develop birding techniques and identification. During the class, students also discuss adaptations and

predatory bird species. At the end, they can explore owl eating habits by dissecting owl pellets! Don't worry, these pellets are sterilized by a company for educational use. Our students are continually shocked and amazed by the animal remnants that they discover. We hope our students will share



their excitement for birds back home, and use birding as an excuse to get outside!

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## Student Quotes:

• "I didn't think I would like hiking, but now I love it! Do you [Naturalist] know of any nearby places I can ask my parents to take me hiking?"

• "[Naturalist], I am always going to remember you. You made my trip at Pathfinder absolutely amazing. Thank you so much for always listening to me and answering my questions."

## 0 Waste Awardees:

- Meher Montessori School
- James Madison (Indio)
- Keep reducing your food waste at home and help the Earth by conserving other resources like electricity and water!

## Upcoming Events by Gwen

Even though it's winter, there's plenty you can do outside! Why not take advantage of local events and outdoor spaces in your community?!

If you are in the Coachella Valley, Friends of the Desert Mountains hosts plenty of awesome events. They'll be hosting a Star Party with the Astronomical Society of the Desert on December 23rd starting at 5pm at the Monument Visitor Center. You can also join their docents for weekly daytime

hikes. For more events and making reservations, check out their web page ([www.desertmountains.org/calendar/](http://www.desertmountains.org/calendar/)). You can also sign up for their monthly event newsletter.

If you're further west, the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society will host a Beginning Bird Walk in Chino on January 7th at 8am at Prado Regional Park ([www.sbvas.net/field-trips](http://www.sbvas.net/field-trips)). The Escondido Creek Conservancy will host an insect talk by Bill the Bug



Guy at the Elfin Forest Interpretive Center on December 9th at 10am ([www.escondidocreek.org/events](http://www.escondidocreek.org/events)).

## Indian Canyons- Recreation and History by Todd

Indian Canyons, located in Palm Springs, is a destination for outdoor enthusiasts of all types and home to some of the largest California Fan Palm (*Washingtonia filifera*) oases in the world. With lush vegetation year round and over 60 miles of trails, ranging from an easy mile loop around the stream-bed oasis of Andreas Canyon to the strenuous twelve mile Hahn Buena Vista loop, these oases offer visitors a much desired reprieve from the desert

heat and surrounding arid landscape. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians oversees the



park's operation so the public can learn about Cahuilla culture and enjoy the landscape's beauty. Remnants of the Cahuilla's physical presence in these canyons, including landmarks and mortars serve as great educational tools on ranger-led hikes. Cahuilla roughly translates to "Masterful", which our staff are reminded of every time we visit Indian Canyons and the desert's harsh living conditions. Check out [www.indian-canyons.com](http://www.indian-canyons.com) for more.

## Snow Creations! by Juniper

It's December and Pathfinder is getting ready for snow! For me, it doesn't really feel like winter until it snows. Hopefully you and your family can take a trip this winter to play in the snow. In the meantime, here is a recipe for you to make your own snow at home! I like this recipe because you only need two things: baking soda and shaving cream. Start with a 16oz box of baking soda.



*You can make your own mini snowman with this project!*

Pour the whole box into a mixing bowl. Slowly add the can of shaving cream, stirring occasionally. You will use almost the whole can of shaving cream. When the "snow" is able to be molded into shapes it is ready! Enjoy and send us a Facebook post to show us the "snow" you made! Take care and see you all in the new year!

Pathfinder Ranch is a non-profit organization founded in 1964 that is dedicated to connecting people to nature and each other. We offer outdoor education field trips, youth summer camp, and retreat opportunities for groups of all types and ages. We take pride in providing affordable and high quality programming throughout the year. Check out our website and Facebook page for more information, and contact us if you have questions.

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