



Media Advisory, May 8, 2018

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Binational Gathering Will Help Shape the Future of the Sky Island Border Region

TUCSON, *Ariz.* – Hundreds of scientists, land managers, students, and conservationists will gather May 14 – 18 at the Biodiversity and Management of the Madrean Archipelago Conference. The 2018 theme for this premier regional event, known as the Madrean Conference, is “Collaboration Now for the Future.”

The conference is the fourth in a series that began in 1994 and comes at a critical time, as regional temperatures soar and the threat of border wall construction looms. The conference will feature a diversity of voices, values, and perspectives that support biodiversity, conservation, and human well-being in the Sky Islands, the binational border region named for its forested mountain “islands” surrounded by desert and grassland “seas”.

“We must work together across borders to keep wildlife thriving and water flowing for future generations,” said Louise Misztal, executive director at Sky Island Alliance. “From jaguars to wildfires to preserving precious springs and streams, the Madrean Conference brings together the expertise and commitment to tackle the conservation challenges of the 21st century.”

What: Biodiversity and Management of the Madrean Archipelago Conference

When: Monday, May 14 – Friday, May 18, [full schedule here](#)

Where: DoubleTree Hotel Reid Park, 445 S. Alvernon Way, Tucson

Key Events:

- Keynote presentation “Wildlife, People, and the Border Wall” by award-winning journalist and photographer Krista Schlyer, Tuesday, May 15, **5:00pm** (*[The time for this event was originally misreported.](#)*)
- Opening reception for Schlyer’s curated exhibit of photographs taken along the 2,000-mile border with the International League of Conservation Photographers at the Mexican Consulate, with complimentary tequila, Tuesday, May 15, **6:00pm** (*[The time for this event was originally misreported.](#)*)
- Field trips to the U.S.–Mexico border, Wednesday, May 16, 7:00am – 4:00pm, [additional field trip information here](#)
- Keynote presentation “Citizen Science: Connecting Time, Place, and Purpose” by award-winning author Mary Ellen Hannibal, Thursday, May 18, 8:00am

Interviews: Conference participants, Sky Island Alliance staff, and keynote presenters will be available for media interviews during the week.

Background:

The binational Madrean Archipelago, or “Sky Island” region of the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico, is globally renowned for its biological diversity, natural beauty, and cultural heritage. Named one of “the best places in the biosphere” by preeminent biologist and naturalist Edward O. Wilson, the Sky Island region is a place where species, people, and cultures from north and south overlap and mix to form a unique bioregion.

The conference will highlight the current knowledge of the natural resources and human communities in the Sky Island region. The conference will present cutting edge research that will guide management practices and help maintain those resources by fostering collaboration and partnerships across the region. Previous conference proceedings were published for [1994](#), [2004](#), and [2012](#).

Sky Island Alliance is a regional nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the biodiversity and natural heritage of the Sky Islands in the U.S. and Mexico.