

12TH ANNUAL

Desert Living Home Tour

In-Person Tour Saturday, November 4th, 10am - 3pm





Welcome to the 12th Annual Desert Living Home Tour

This year, cities across Arizona broke heat records with hottest recorded days and most consecutive days reaching 100 degrees and higher. When we pair these signs that our cities will be warmer moving forward with ongoing water shortages and growing urban populations, homes and communities will need to find a way to adapt to these challenges in a practical way that honors our local environment. Homes you will see on the Desert Living Home Tour have done exactly that - use local and renewable water resources to support cooler landscapes while conserving imported water and replenishing our local watershed.

As you visit the homes on this tour, we hope you find inspiration for simple, low-cost changes that you can implement at your home, business, church or neighborhood spaces. Our tour hosts are a wealth of information, and we recommend taking some time to chat with them to get tips on DIY projects, working with contractors, or where to source plants and materials.

After the tour, turn that inspiration into action. Start small and simple. Pick one or two projects you can feasibly get done in the next 3 months. Build a small rain garden with native plants, start a compost pile or start to chop and drop your yard waste to create mulch. Add mulch to your yard to reduce evaporation. Plant a native tree or two on the west side of your house, and use greywater from your dishes to water it. These small projects will grow over time, and can be a space to learn and experiment.

We'd like to extend a huge thank you to our tour sponsors, who make this event possible and bring our vision of restoring our watersheds and living hydro-local to life! We hope that you'll share your appreciation with them the next time you use their services. You can find their ads throughout this program, as well as a resources guide on page 29.

With gratitude and optimism,

Watershed Management Group

FAQs

How does it work?

This is a self-paced tour, so whether you're participating virtually or in-person you can visit the sites in any order. In-person locations can be visited between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Saturday, November 4. There are 15 in-person sites on the tour. There is not enough time to visit them all. We recommend picking out 4 - 8 homes you would like to visit.

[Access to the virtual listings will be available from the afternoon on Thursday, November 2nd until Wednesday, November 22nd.](#)

How will I know I'm in the right place?

We'll have a volunteer at many sites to greet you at the homes and community spaces. Some of our community sites will not have a volunteer (this is noted in the program for the specific sites). We still encourage you to check them out!

What is the bike route?

We encourage you to explore the homes on the tour by bike. There is a guided bike route led by BICAS staff leaving WMG's Living Lab at 10 a.m. Please show up at the Welcome Center (site #11) at 9:30 a.m. the day of the tour to be part of the bike route.

Look for these symbols to plan your route!



Active Solar



Passive Solar



Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat



Hosted a WMG Workshop



Greywater Systems



Neighborhood Restoration



Chickens



Compost, Composting Toilet



Rainwater on Tap

Enjoy happy hour under the stars at WMG's Living Lab, where the featured drinks are made with Tucson rainwater, locally captured and filtered. Sip on rainwater cocktails, rainwater mocktails, and rainwater teas and experience what hydro-local living tastes and feels like. This happy hour is on Giving Tuesday, a day of global giving following Thanksgiving—all proceeds and donations benefit Watershed Management Group's programs.

Get your tickets at Watershedmg.org/RainOnTap



Family Saturdays - Free Event

Youth activities about the desert and water

Every third Saturday of the month



Upcoming Dates

Beavers & Desert Rivers 11/18/2024 9am - 12pm

Birds, Bugs, Bats 1/20/2024 9am - 12pm

Water Conservation 2/17/2024 9am - 12pm

Rain Gardens 3/16/2024 9am - 12pm

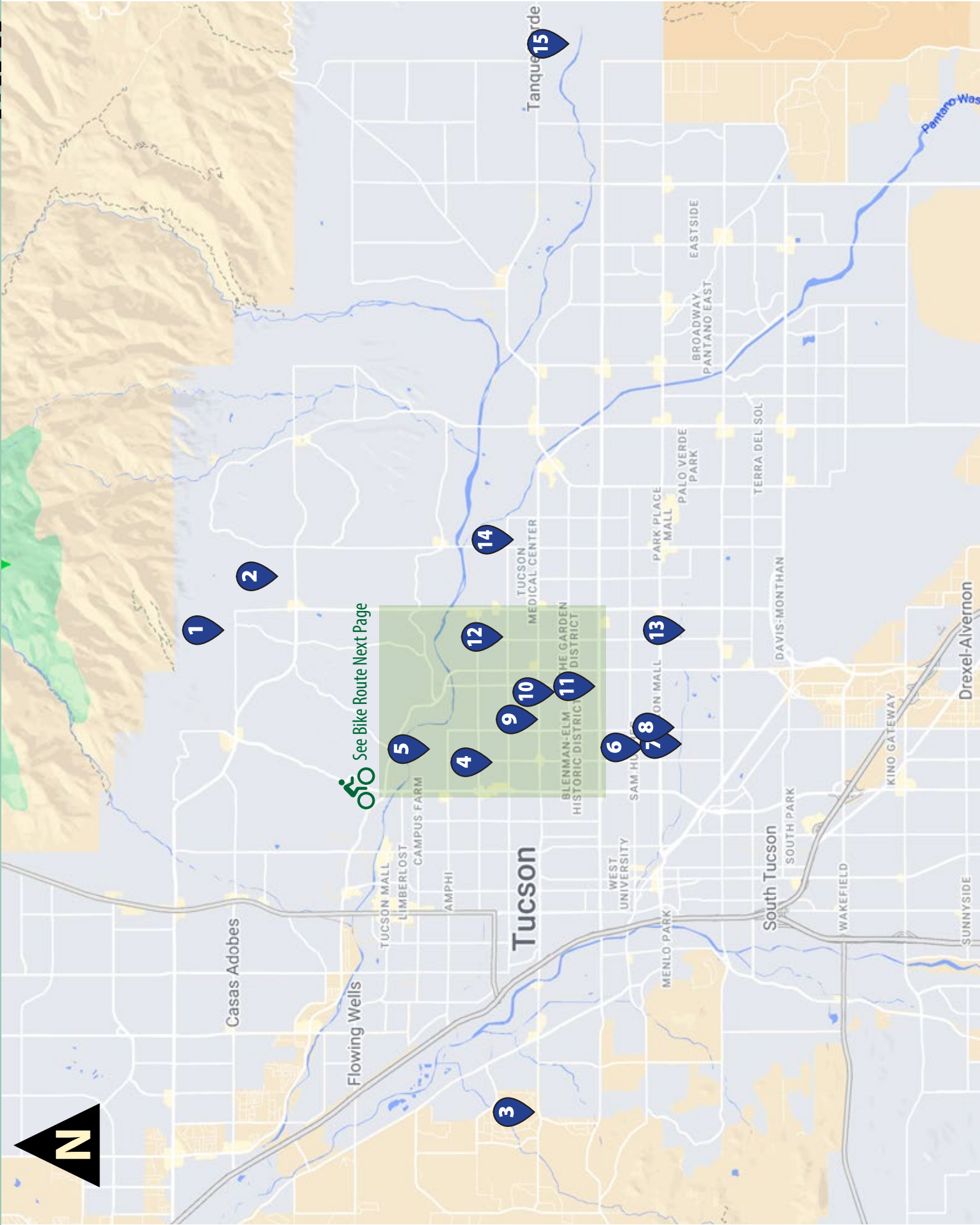
Rainwater Harvesting 4/20/2024 8am - 11pm

Native Edible Plants 5/18/2024 8am - 11pm

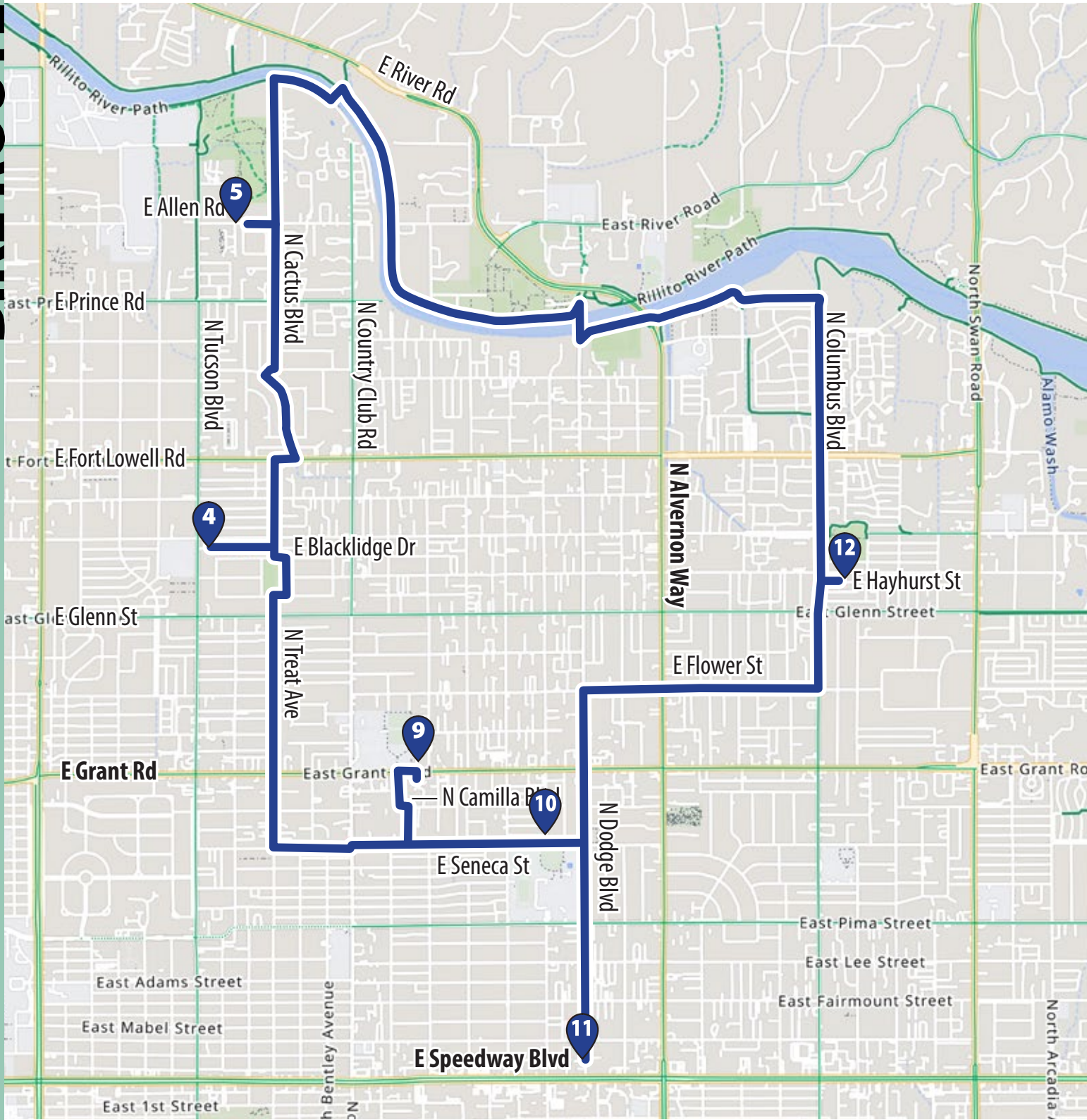
Learn More: 520-396-3266 Watershedmg.org/Family

 **Living Lab and Learning Center**
1137 N. Dodge Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85710





BIKE ROUTE



11. Living Lab and Learning Center - 1137 N Dodge Blvd

10. Elaine - 3581 E Seneca St

9. The Rain Store - 3248 E Grant Rd

4. Lynn - 2518 E Blacklidge Drive

5. Lisa and Catlow - 2611 E Allen Rd

12. Craig and Christina - 4325 E Hayhurst St



Full Loop 11.5 miles
Grade +172 ft / -172 ft



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1. Damien and Melissa

6530 North Catalina Avenue | No Bus Access
Se Habla Español Basico

This one-acre foothills residence features passive water harvesting earthworks and cistern rain harvesting (currently 3,350-gallon capacity, planning to increase). They also cultivate many native food plants as well as blueberries and fruit trees. They removed their circular driveway and now utilize the remaining paved driveway's water runoff to feed a series of basins supporting shade trees and various plants. Other enhancements include L2L, a rain fed grow house, registered wildlife habitat, pollinator gardens, Zen Garden and labyrinth, and a garage wood shop where they build owl houses and other animal dwellings. Damien and Melissa have been involved in several workshops with WMG, implementing learned skills at home and for customers of their business, Green Bee Wholistic Home Services.

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Greywater

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Compost
- Rain Gardens
- Outdoor Shower
- Vegetable Garden
- Fruit Trees
- Meditation Labyrinth

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)



2. Dolores (Bonnie) & Linda

5141 E Camino Bosque | No Bus Access

Bonnie attended the City of Tucson's water harvesting workshops and purchased water harvesting tanks that are installed in her backyard and hooked up to a pump to irrigate vegetation. Her paved driveway slopes and drains water to various areas with native vegetation that attract lots of pollinators. This landscape, installed by Colin Guiley of Hummingbird Gardens Landscaping, is a great example of how native pollinator plants can create a strikingly beautiful aesthetic throughout a landscape.

Features:



Active Solar



Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat

Additional Features:

Vegetable Garden

Rain Tanks

Rain Gardens

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)

IMAGINE

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3. David

3112 W Avenida Cresta | Bus Route 20

This west-side home of a long-time WMG supporter beautifully showcases sustainable desert living. Features were installed through WMG's Water Harvesting Certification Course and other WMG workshops and a number of DIY projects. In addition to all the water harvesting features, tour participants can learn about pumping and purifying cistern rainwater and generating and storing electricity from the sun. David says, "I like working with WMG on projects because the projects teach other students and community participants about water harvesting so they can do projects, too." Over the last decade, David's vegetation has matured nicely with his water harvesting love.

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Greywater
-  Compost, Composting Toilet

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Rainwater on Tap
- Rain Gardens
- Tippy Tap
- Outdoor Shower
- Powerwall Batteries

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)






4. Lynn

2518 E Blacklidge Drive | Bus Routes 1, 34
Se Habla Español Basico

WMG has been Lynn's main source of information and education about rainwater harvesting. Since undertaking an extensive landscape transformation with EcoSense, she has loved that she is harvesting all the rainwater that falls on her roof and ramada, as well as on the landscape itself (driveway and street easement collection coming in Phase 2.). Lynn has a combination of basins fed directly by rainfall as well as collected by pipes from roof gutters, and two tanks for water storage fed by gutters. She appreciates the flexibility to use supplemental irrigation and stored tank water only as needed. When Lynn looks at her yard now, she loves the new native plants and the uptick in pollinators they are attracting, even though her

landscape is less than a year old. Everything just looks cool!

Features:

-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Chickens
-  Compost, Composting Toilet

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens
- Vegetable Garden

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)

Help Eradicate Arundo from our Creeks



Help restore flow to Tanque Verde Creek by joining our restoration workshops removing invasive Arundo donax. WMG hosts weekly workshops Saturday mornings to remove Arundo donax, a thirsty invasive plant that drinks up to 3-4 times as much water as native plants, removing water from the creek. With volunteer help, we have already removed 54 tons of Arundo, and our goal is to completely eradicate the invasive plant from the Tanque Verde. Learn more and sign up at

Watershedmg.org/Arundo



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5. Lisa and Catlow

2611 E Allen Rd | Bus Route 17

Come check out the extensive rain garden and stormwater harvesting basins at the Shipek's home on the edge of the Rillito River floodplain. Each monsoon season, about 1-2 million gallons of stormwater are infiltrated onsite, benefiting native shade trees, habitat, and native edible plants while recharging the aquifer. Their home is retrofitted with 8,700 gallons of rainwater storage that fully supplies their vegetable garden, fruit trees, and chickens, while also providing drinking water. Other site amenities include an outdoor shower; laundry and sink greywater supporting fruit trees; and a composting toilet. Together, these systems reduce the Shipek's city water demand to less than 12 gallons per person per day, allowing them to live hydro-local and recharge more water than they use! Since moving into their home in 2017, the Shipeks have lived a car-free lifestyle, as well as incorporating zero-waste practices and expanding native plant-based food production.

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Greywater
-  Chickens
-  Compost, Composting Toilet
-  Hosted a WMG Workshop

Additional Features:

- Outdoor Shower
- Veggie Garden Enclosure
- Fruit Trees
- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens
- Compost
- Potable Rainwater System
- Streetside Water Harvesting

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)



JOIN THE RIVER RUN NETWORK & HELP US RESTORE THE FLOW!

Join over 3,000 River Run Network members dedicated to restoring our heritage of flowing desert rivers and cooling riparian forests. Participate in creek walks, restoration workshops, river clean-ups, beaver surveys, conservation activities, and advocacy efforts—all to steward our rivers. Membership is free and includes a biweekly email with upcoming activities.

Sign up at:
Watershedmg.org/RRN





6. Molly

2827 E 8th St | Bus Routes 3, 17

Molly had a blank, gravelly front and backyard. Seeing how much water was flowing off her property and into the street when it rained, she decided it was time to make use of the rainwater and reached out to EcoSense to makeover her landscape. Now, the passive earthworks in Molly's front and backyard direct roof water to basins supporting a variety of native shrubs, accents, and shade trees. Molly has been thrilled to see her basins in action, preventing water from running off into the street and infiltrating the rainwater to support the future shade trees that will help keep her home cool.

Additional Features:

- Rain Gardens
- Urban Wildlife Habitat

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7. Richard & Susan

2833 E Arroyo Chico | Bus Routes 8,17

In 1990, Richard and Susan moved into their home and began planting fruit trees. They now have 14 mature fruit trees in their yard designed to provide organic food for their family every month of the year, as part of what they jokingly call their “fruit of the month club.” In 1995, Richard and Susan began watering their trees with greywater from the washing machine. After volunteering with WMG in 2008, they installed their first cistern that same year. Thanks to WMG, they now have 5,000 gallons of rainwater storage in cisterns, and more storage in basins. Combining the rainwater with greywater from the laundry and an indoor shower/bathtub, and curb cuts harvesting street runoff into two basins, they can water the landscape and a small garden using only rainwater, greywater, and street runoff for most of the year. In 2010, they began collecting desert plants that could thrive and produce food without added water for installation along the Broadmoor neighborhood’s eight

block-long Treat Walkway. As the Treat Walkway and neighborhood medians became filled with maturing plants, their collection gradually became the Treat Walkway Nursery, a source of tough desert plants at low prices for the Tucson community, open on occasional weekends and during the WMG Home Tour.

Features:

-  Greywater
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens
- Veggie Garden
- Fruit Trees

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)





8. Peggy & Phillip

3134 E Via Palos Verdes | Bus Route 8

This residential site was having neighborhood-scale flooding issues with water flowing from the street and neighboring properties and through their landscape. Working with EcoSense they installed some significant passive systems that mitigated the issues and used a 100% native Tucson-basin plant palette. Five rain tanks in the backyard receive rainwater from the roof and feed their irrigation system that is helping establish their native landscape. This home took a flooding problem for their whole property and used water harvesting to address the issue and support native pollinators and shade trees.

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat

Additional Features:

- Rain Gardens
- Rain Tanks

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)



9. The Rain Store

3248 E Grant Rd | Bus Routes 9, 17

The Rain Store was created to offer Tucsonans local, accessible solutions to global problems. From DIY homeowners to seasoned water harvesting professionals, the Rain Store is Tucson's rainwater harvesting headquarters. They have installed four tanks on-site with wet and dry inflows along with different tank styles including Texas Metal Tanks. Other cool features you see around are their passive rain basins that are fed by 2 of their tanks, rain chain to pot assembly, and a Laundry-to-Landscape display. All the features they have in their landscape are for sale in the shop. Check out how the Rain Garden is talking the talk and walking the walk for water harvesting!

Features:

 Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens
- Laundry to Landscape Demonstration

CLICK FOR MAP

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(520) 222-7771



10. Elaine

3581 E Seneca St | Bus Routes 5, 11

Elaine likes having drought-resistant plants and shade. She is glad she can now hold onto rainwater for her plants instead of letting it all get away. Same for her greywater system. Elaine's solar panels have cut her electricity costs by a LOT. She attended WMG's rainwater and greywater harvesting classes and hired Emma Stahl-Wert to get started on changing her landscape. Emma designed and installed all of Elaine's water harvesting systems in a collaborative process that allowed her to tailor the landscape to her use and aesthetics, while relying on Emma's expertise to ensure the rainwater harvesting features all work properly and look great.

Features:



Active Solar



Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat



Greywater

Additional Features:

Rain Tanks
Rain Gardens
Stormwater Harvesting
Compost

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)









11. Living Lab and Learning Center

1137 N Dodge Blvd | Bus Routes 4 & 11

WMG's Living Lab and Learning Center is the cream of the crop and beats the pants off Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards! WMG's educational center is also our office headquarters, where there's rainwater on tap and we meet the majority of our indoor and outdoor water needs with harvested rainwater. The staff members, docents, and interns who work on campus regularly make use of the native gardens, outdoor shower, and solar oven, and composting toilets. Kids will enjoy the Raindrop Retreat, a children's playhouse featuring a rain tank, play kitchen with greywater, and a sandbox. Check out our newly constructed Learning Center building with passive solar design, water harvesting, and natural building features.

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Passive Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Greywater
-  Chickens
-  Compost, Composting Toilet

Additional Features:

- 10,000-Gallon Underground Cistern
- Rainwater on Tap
- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens
- Outdoor Shower
- Fruit Trees
- Solar Oven
- Natural Building

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)






12. Craig and Christina

4325 E Hayhurst St Tucson | Bus Routes 1, 11

When Craig and Christina first moved to their home they installed a traditional irrigation system for their landscape, but since they began adding DIY water harvesting projects to their home, it's been used less but is still needed for certain plants/plantings. Features you'll get to see in their landscape are a Laundry to Landscape system, a 275-gallon IBC tote to harvest water from the casita they built, a large solar installation (8.1 kW) that went up earlier this year, and a solar supplied camper (200 W) that they use while boondocking. Craig is a volunteer for Solar United Neighbors (SUN). He is excited to show the Energy Monitoring and Management system he and Christina installed to monitor every kWhr that enters their home (from TEP or solar), that is used in the home, and that is sent to the grid.

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Greywater

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)









13. Joaquin & Christian

4419 E 15th St | Bus Routes 1 & 11
Se habla Español

Christian and Joaquin love to watch the rain “do its thing” on their site as it slowly spreads and infiltrates into their rain gardens. These homeowners have seen their landscape come to life with the installation of passive water harvesting systems, and they are passionate about educating others. Joaquin and Christian have also installed a pollinator garden to increase monarch habitat in the Sonoran Desert. Joaquin says, “It’s been great to see the full monarch life cycle from larvae to pupa to butterfly, right in front of the house.” They recently installed a patio area with an interesting Mexican brick design and expanded their vegetable garden, and they claim they have the most beautiful outdoor shower and composting toilet in Tucson! In the backyard, you can say hello to their desert tortoise named “Tortuga,” explore their vibrant chicken coop, and enjoy the straw-bale seating area.

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Passive Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Greywater
-  Chickens
-  Compost, Composting Toilet

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens
- Outdoor Shower
- Tippy Tap
- Laundry-to-Landscape
- Streetside Stormwater Harvesting
- Clay Pizza Oven
- “Catio”

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)







14. Kathy & Brian

5561 E Kelso St. | Bus Route 34

After attending WMG's rainwater harvesting class, Brian and Kathy knew they wanted to transform their property to incorporate as many water harvesting features as possible to make living in the desert a little more sustainable. In 2019, they hosted a WMG workshop that installed passive harvesting earthworks, native plants, and a cistern. Since then, they have also added additional basins, more native plants, another cistern, a laundry-to-landscape system, and an outdoor shower. They also recently converted their indoor shower and sink to send greywater to their yard. Thanks to WMG workshops, they not only learned the skills to do most of this themselves, but they met some great people along the way!

Features:

-  Active Solar
-  Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat
-  Greywater
-  Hosted a WMG Workshop

Additional Features:

- Rain Tanks
- Rain Gardens
- Compost
- Outdoor Shower

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)



15. Kathy and Jeff

1825 N. Forty Niner Drive | No Bus Access
Se Habla Español Basico

Kathy and Jeff converted a large, fully-irrigated Bermuda lawn to passive water harvesting by utilizing basins, berms, and native plants for habitat with the help of Madeline Ryder of Heaven and Earth Environmental Landscaping. Kathy and Jeff are excited to contribute to a new neighborhood aesthetic and have plans to bring more food producing plants into their landscape that will be supported by passive water harvesting. With their new landscape they have also moved away from using traditional landscaping methods and are keeping all their organics on site to mulch their plants and are excited to see similar steps taken in front of 49ers Country Club alongside Tanque Verde Creek, which is no longer being treated with herbicide. Kathy and Jeff hope to be a demonstration of what the rest of the neighborhood could be to reduce flooding and rebuild soil health.

Features:



Passive Solar



Native Plants & Urban Wildlife Habitat

Additional Features:

Rain Gardens

Compost

Street Runoff Capture

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A colorful poster for BICAS (Bicycle Inter-Community Art & Salvage). The title "B I C A S" is written in large, stylized letters at the top. Below it, the full name "Bicycle Inter-Community Art & Salvage" is written in a smaller font. The central part of the poster is a purple cloud-like shape containing a list of services: "New & Used Parts", "Refurbished Bikes", "DIY Bike Repair", "Donation Drop Off", "Recycled bike Art", and "And more!". On either side of this central shape are illustrations of people working on bicycles. At the bottom, there are three boxes: "Shop Hours: Tues-Sun 11 AM - 6 PM, Mon WTF workshop 3PM-7PM", the BICAS logo with the tagline "Bicycle Recycling and Education Center Tucson, Arizona", and the address "2001 N 7th Ave Tucson, AZ (520) 628-7950".

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Sponsor Resource Guide

BICAS (Bicycle Inter-Community Art & Salvage)

Nonprofit educational bicycle center.

Bicas.org, 520-628-7950.

See ad page 26

EcoSense Sustainable landscapes.

Full service landscaping, specializing in rainwater harvesting native plant design, and greywater harvesting.

EcoSenseAZ.com, 520-575-7005.

See ad page 13

Lil' John's Excavating, LLC

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See ad page 13

Net Zero Custom solar systems.

NetZeroSolar.net, 520-207-4053

See ad page 26

Oasis Water Harvesting

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See ad page 27

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See ad page 25

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See ad page 16

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See ad page 10

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TFSSolar.com, 520-740-0736.

The Rain Store

Rainwater harvesting tanks and accessories. <https://www.TheRainStore.com/>, (520) 222-7771.

See ad page 19

Tucson Water

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TucsonAZ.gov/water

See ad page 7

WMG's Family Saturdays

Hands-on activities for the whole family, learning how to care for the Sonoran Desert at home.

Watershedmg.org/family

See ad on page 4

WMG Flow Membership

Become a monthly donor with WMG and help sustain our education and river restoration efforts.

Watershedmg.org/flow

See ad on page 27

WMG's Help Restore Flow to Tanque Verde Creek

Join the River Run Network arundo removal workshops.

Watershedmg.org/Arundo, 520-396-3266 x9.

See ad on page 13

WMG's Rain Water on Tap

Enjoy rainwater cocktails and mocktails while learning simple hydro-local solutions for your own home.

Watershedmg.org/RainOnTap. Tuesday, November 28th.

See ad on page 4

WMG's River Run Network

A group of community members that participate in educational creek walks, family education events, river clean-ups, restoration workshops, and advocacy events to help restore our heritage of flowing rivers.

Watershedmg.org/river-run-network, 520-396-3266 x9

See ad on page 15