



Shape the Future

Canyon Chatter

Friends of Madera Canyon

August 2026



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On the cover. Large herbivorous mammals such as deer, donkeys, and bison, along with their predators influence their movement and behavior. The predators and their prey play an important role as ecosystem engineers. By feeding heavily on some plants while leaving others relatively untouched, these animals shape the structure and diversity of the landscapes around them. Their grazing, browsing, trampling, and movement patterns can open dense vegetation, create pathways, spread seeds, recycle nutrients, and make room for new plant growth. Predators also contribute indirectly by changing where and how herbivores feed, which can reduce overgrazing in certain areas and allow plant communities to recover. Together, large herbivores and their predators help maintain dynamic, balanced ecosystems in which plants, animals, and soils continually influence one another. Photo credit Doug Moore.

Join Friends of Madera Canyon. Below are links to join as a new member, renew a membership or make a donation. The links will take you to a secure server to use to make an automated payment. Do you have any questions? Let us know. If you prefer to help by writing a check, please make your check payable to Friends of Madera Canyon - mail to: FoMC, Box 1203, Green Valley, Arizona, 85622-1203.

[A New Membership, Renew a Membership.](#)

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From the President

August 2026

“On July 26, 1988, Al Spitler, president of the Friends of Madera Canyon, and Mary Anna Wheat of the Coronado National Forest’s Tucson office attended a reception on the White House Lawn in Washington, D.C. The occasion was a recognition ceremony for the organizations from across the nation being celebrated as runners-up in the national Take Pride in America contest for 1987. How did they get there?

They were there because in September 1987, members of the Friends of Madera Canyon gathered to plant an Arizona sycamore tree at the Madera Picnic Area in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution. The Friends submitted that event to a statewide program recognizing unique and significant actions that met the criteria of the Take Pride in America contest sponsored by the Reagan administration.

The Constitution Tree project won the Arizona competition and advanced to the national level, where, as a second-place winner, it was the reason for Spitler and Wheat to be invited to the White House.

They were also there because of an article in the April 20, 1986, Green Valley News announcing U.S. Forest Service plans to close the Madera Picnic Area to public access. Spitler wrote a letter to Robert B. Tippeconnic, Supervisor of the Coronado National Forest, copying most public officials in Arizona. In it, Spitler asked that the plan be reconsidered, suggesting that volunteers in the Green Valley area might be able to help the Forest Service, which was, as is too often the case, underfunded and poorly staffed.

Wrote Spitler, “I’m sure that there are many people in Green Valley who would be willing to help keep the picnic area clean and in good order and also help make some improvements such as building a ramp so that all people would enjoy a picnic in beautiful, relaxing surroundings.”

These are the opening paragraphs for a history of the Friends of Madera Canyon currently being written. As members of the Friends, you and I constitute the 2026 version of the group Spitler envisioned. Understanding that we share a history and ensuring that it is not forgotten provides the rationale for Judy and me to delve into the records of the Friends to write a narrative about its history. Knowing where we have come from has importance as a means of understanding how we got to this point and how FoMC actions of the future might be seen as fruits of our shared past.

From our beginning, we have partnered with the U.S. Forest Service, a public-private partnership that has benefited Madera Canyon. We have worked together to optimize public access and facilitate the visitor experience, including work on trails, bridges, and benches. We have engaged in a common cause to be good stewards of the Canyon, ensuring that the human impact does not destroy the wonders of nature found in the Canyon. With encouragement from the Forest Service, the Friends have been prominent environmental educators, in person and online, for groups ranging in age from 4th graders to retirement communities.

We have twice stood against housing developments in or near the Canyon that would have stretched the capacity of the land and interfered with the experience of the easy movement of people living in urban and suburban settings to a place apart, a gateway to wilderness. We have built an Honor Wall to remember those who have served the Friends well and a Memory Wall for those choosing to remember their loved ones who held Madera Canyon in high regard.

In his 1999 book, *The Nature of Madera Canyon*, FoMC Naturalist Doug Moore wrote, “Madera Canyon

would not exist in its present state without the Friends of Madera Canyon.” That’s bragging, of course. But “philosophers” ranging from Babe Ruth to Muhammad Ali have argued that it “ain’t bragging if you can back it up.”

So far, we have found more than enough in the records of the Friends to claim that we “can back it up” with room to spare.

That’s something of which we all can be proud, together. It is also a charge to us to keep up the good work together.

Dan White

August 2026

Sky Island Field Notes from Your Executive Director

August 2026

Planting Seeds, Growing Stewards

Some ideas take years to sprout.

Before I ever set foot in this role, I worked on a Freeport-McMoRan-funded project introducing seedballs for rangeland restoration to local schools and community members — a simple, hands-on way to get native seed back into disturbed ground. It was one of those ideas I carried with me, hoping it would find the right place to take root.

I found that place here. When I brought the idea to Friends of Madera Canyon, it was Michele Gazica who took it and ran with it — turning it into a full restoration project for our 2026 Earth Day volunteer event, matched to the microsites at Old Baldy Trailhead where each species is most likely to establish.

Now comes the restoration where nobody can rush: the waiting. Seedballs are a bet on the monsoon — on enough rain, at the right time, without enough heat to cook a seed before it ever gets the chance to germinate. It's a little nerve-wracking, if I'm honest, watching the sky and hoping. But that's restoration work. You plant with care, and then you trust the canyon to do what it's done for thousands of years.

We didn't stop at one batch. A dedicated Round 2 team mixed and placed a second round of seedballs in July, giving us two windows of opportunity this monsoon instead of one.

This is exactly the kind of project that shows what our members and volunteers make possible. It started as an idea. It became real because volunteers showed up to roll seedballs by hand, because Earth Day leads and community members turned out to help, and because a second team of dedicated volunteers went back for Round 2 in July. Thank you to every one of you — whether you shaped a single seedball or helped organize the whole event, you're the reason there's native seed in the ground at Old Baldy right now, waiting for the rain.

And this is only the beginning. Restoration work is never really finished — it's a practice we return to season after season, site after site. As we look toward our 40th Anniversary in 2027 and events like Madera Canyon Day, we're thinking about how to bring more members and visitors into hands-on stewardship like this: more seedball days, more restoration sites, more chances for anyone who loves this canyon to leave it a little greener than they found it. If you couldn't join us this year, there will be more opportunities — and we'd love to have you.

More on the seeds: We sourced our native seed from Borderlands Restoration Network (I've also used Native Seed Search in the past for similar projects). Seedballs can be made with virtually any native seed — including seed you collect yourself in the wild, following ethical collection guidelines. If you'd like to try making your own, Dr. Elise Gornish's seedball instructions are a great place to start: <https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-08/az1797-2022.pdf>

What we planted, and where. Round 1 began with a diverse native grass mix scattered across all of the trailhead's microsites to give the site the best possible shot at recovery. We rounded that out with *Lasianthaea podocephala* and *Cosmos parviflorus*, placed in the spots best suited to each.

In July, our Round 2 team went back with a more targeted approach: blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) for the open, sunny, compacted ground near the trail margins and parking edges, and sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*) for the rockier, better-drained slopes with partial shade at the woodland edge — each matched to where it's most likely to take hold.

Curious what these look like in the wild? You can browse real sightings of each on iNaturalist: search "*Bouteloua gracilis*," "*Bouteloua curtipendula*," "*Lasianthaea podocephala*," or "*Cosmos parviflorus*" at [inaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org).



Seedling emerging from a seedball. Photo credit: Jackie Smith

Every seedball scattered this summer is a small act of hope in this place — and in the volunteers who keep showing up for it. We'll keep you posted on what sprouts, and we hope to see even more of you out there with us next time.

With gratitude,
Kristin Wisneski-Blum
Executive Director, Friends of Madera Canyon

“Respect the Canyon”

Doug Moore, Education Director

At the very heart of the Friends of Madera Canyon mission is a thorny question, “How can our stewardship most effectively preserve and protect the canyon with its many interconnected habitats and diverse plants and animals?” It is a difficult question due to the complexity of Madera Canyon itself. Any answer is further complicated by the number of people that visit Madera Canyon each year and the wide variety of activities these visitors participate in.

Research, practice, and observation repeatedly reveal a clear message: A natural ecosystem thrives when it is of sufficient area to sustain life within and is left alone. If there has been significant environmental damage, a remedy might include clean up, but the main ingredient is clear- leave it alone! For clear example, witness the stunning proliferation of nature around the evacuated Chernobyl nuclear disaster site, the surprising emergence of wildlife during the Covid epidemic human quarantines, and the recent amazing rebirth of devastated California kelp forests after significant marine preserve establishment (and some sea urchin reduction efforts).

It is crystal clear- the best stewardship practices for Madera Canyon would be to close it off and leave it alone. But despite the potential benefits, I doubt the FoMC would find much public support for this action, even among its own membership. Madera Canyon is in an immensely popular destination, a USFS Recreation Area within the Coronado National Forest. The Service’s motto is “Caring for the land and Serving the people”. Easily accessed scenic beauty, famous hiking trails, picnic facilities, and sought-after flora and fauna make it certain that the canyon will remain open to the public, and that visitation will likely keep increasing into the future. The people will come...

Even the most enlightened, mindful visitation creates impact! Given this reality, “How can FoMC stewardship most effectively preserve and protect the canyon?” I believe that education remains a key component to our stewardship efforts- to foster/increase public awareness, promote least impact/best practices use, and cultivate mindful, minimal-impact interaction with canyon plants and wildlife.

With such aspirational goals in mind, Jim Burkstrand and I have been building a new FoMC Education campaign called “Respect the Canyon” (find “Respect the Canyon” under “Education” on the FoMC website). Distilled to its essence, “Respect the Canyon” is both philosophy and informational “tool set” to help anyone maximize their visit Madera Canyon while producing the least impact. A video series of popular canyon activities comprehensively addresses where to go, planning and preparation, outdoor safety, and FS regulations/best usage practices for enjoyment with minimal impact: “Leave the canyon as if you were never there!” Subjects will include Hiking, Picnicking, Birding, and potentially more.

The “Respect the Canyon” videos are admittedly “Do this! Don’t do that!”. The “Why?” will be explained in an introductory video sub-titled “Respect Their Peace”. This video will examine the intrinsic right of wild plants and animals to live their lives as naturally as possible. And the need for us to provide them with as much peace and freedom from human interference as we can. The very reasons for “Why?” we have rules, regulations, and moral/ethical obligation to allow them to do so. Together the video series educates the viewer as to why the effort is necessary and provides practical steps everyone can take to lessen our impact on canyon habitat and unhealthy human-induced stress on plants and animals.

Initially introduced primarily as a website education effort, we would like to extend the “Respect the Canyon” campaign into our social media presence, community outreach, field trips and education activities, and importantly, FoMC volunteers in the canyon- particularly our Canyon Ambassadors Program. To “permeate” the culture of the FoMC, if you will.

Wild places, like Madera Canyon and surrounding Santa Rita Mountains, face uncertain times. Habitats, plants, and animals face not only evolving climate pressures, but increasing human-based challenges. As more of us choose to participate in outdoor recreation, it means more people visiting popular natural areas like Madera Canyon. More people mean more impact. We cannot eliminate natural stressors, but we owe it to plants and animals to protect where they live and to do our utmost to minimize the stress we create.

The Bird Page Namesakes II

Bob Pitcher

In the spring of 2025, I devoted a Bird Page to people for whom certain birds found in Madera Canyon are named. This month's Page will be another one given over to Bird Namesakes.

Ornithologists -- Multiple Species

Three men have more than one species named for them among the birds regularly found in the Canyon: the naturalists Cassin, Swainson, and Townsend.

John Cassin, dates 1813 to 1869, has four Canyon species named for him: putting them in current taxonomic order, vireo, finch, and sparrow. A fifth North American species, Cassin's auklet, found off the North Pacific coast, is also named for him. All these are western birds, and Cassin, a Pennsylvanian who worked almost entirely at the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, never came west. On the other hand, many of the specimens sent back East by the Pacific Railroad and Mexican Boundary Surveys in the 1840s and '50s found their way to Cassin, who was the foremost bird taxonomist of his day. Other ornithologists, appreciative of his contributions to systematics, named these species for him. What might be termed an occupational disease did Cassin in before his time. His death is attributed to arsenic, which he came into contact with on the specimens he examined. However, Cassin's stay as a Confederate prisoner of war at the awful Libby Prison in Richmond can't have done his health any good either.

Of Cassin's birds, only the kingbird is regularly found in Madera Canyon year-round. The vireo is mostly a migrant, though its very close relative, the plumbeous vireo, nests here. Cassin's Finch is an occasional winter resident sometimes seen at the Santa Rita Lodge's feeders. At least a few Cassin's Sparrows are probably in the lower grassland all year long, but their rarity is hard to gauge since the birds are hardly ever seen except after summer rains, when the males start to sing their plaintive song along Madera Canyon Road.

William Swainson, 1789-1855, who was English, never came to North America but traveled a good deal in other parts of the world. In his younger years, he went on a collecting expedition to Brazil, bringing back thousands of specimens that kept him busy for years. Swainson was both a taxonomist and an illustrator and interested in far more than just birds. Later in life he emigrated to New Zealand and continued his studies there and in Australia.

Three American birds—a hawk, thrush, and warbler—were named after Swainson by other ornithologists—Bonaparte, Nuttall, and Audubon—each of whom, in turn, have birds named after them. Swainson's hawk breeds in Arizona's desert grassland and might be seen in summer on the way up to the canyon. It is more common here in migration, especially in fall. Swainson's Thrush is uncommon here and seen only in migration. Swainson's Warbler is an uncommon eastern bird, never reported from Madera. In addition to these, several African and Latin American birds were named for Swainson.



On the left. John Cassin. Though his name isn't as familiar today as Audubon's or Peterson's, Cassin was a major figure of nineteenth-century ornithology. With five American birds named after him (and four more from elsewhere in the world)—Cassin is matched only by Alexander Wilson as a namesake for North American species. On the right is a Cassin's Kingbird. Photo by Laurel Wreath of Victors. A Cassin's kingbird in Tijuana, MX. [Wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cassin's_Kingbird.jpg)

John Kirk Townsend, 1809-1851, a Pennsylvanian like Cassin, did come West, though not to Arizona. He participated in an early collecting expedition to the Oregon Territory, where, among many other species, he found and first described Townsend's Warbler, which he named after himself. His name is also attached to at least half a dozen mammals found in the Northwest and to Townsend's Solitaire, a kind of thrush. Also like Cassin, Townsend died young from arsenic poisoning. It seems that although arsenic has been known as an effective poison since ancient times, it was not realized until much more recently how dangerous the cumulative effects of continual exposures to small quantities of it are. It's said the Smithsonian used arsenic as a preservative for specimens into the 1970s. One should be cautious in handling older specimens.

Townsend's Warbler, a particularly beautiful species, is mostly found in the Canyon in migration, when it's common, but one or two can often now be found all winter long, usually near Madera Creek, adding a bit of color to a gray winter day. Townsend's Solitaire, all gray, is only a wintering bird here and not too common. When it's found, it's usually along the creek too, lower in the canyon.

Non-Ornithologists

Winfield Scott, 1786-1866, eventually brevet Lt. General, U.S. Army, was known, affectionately or not, as Old Fuss and Feathers. He was perhaps the most important U.S. military commander



On the left. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service photo of a Townsend's warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*) -photo by Kevin Cole. On the right John Kirk Townsend. By Unknown source, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=28106808>

between the Revolution and the Civil War. Among many other campaigns, Scott led the successful invasion of Mexico and the capture of Mexico City during the Mexican War. That should have been logistically impossible at the time, given what Scott had to work with. Scott was less successful at national politics. He tried four times for the Whig Party's nomination for president, only to lose to Franklin Pierce in 1852. Scott might have done better as president than Pierce, but we in Southeastern Arizona should remember that one of Pierce's few accomplishments as president was the Gadsden Purchase, which brought Madera Canyon into the United States. (I see I have strayed from my topic.) I've found no indication that Scott was especially interested in birds.

Scott's Oriole was named for the general by an ornithologist named Couch—who, yes, also has an American bird named for him. Scott's Oriole, bright yellow and black, is one of three oriole species regularly seen in Madera Canyon in the summer, commonly on the open slopes, where the males may sing constantly in spring.

Moctezuma (II) Xocoyotzin, c. 1466-1520, was the last Aztec emperor. His ornithological connections are somewhat sketchy, though he and his predecessors maintained a zoo in Tenochtitlán, the Aztec capital and now Mexico City. And there exist several feather headdresses reputed to have been Montezuma's. There is some doubt whose headdresses they really were, however, and in any case, they consist mostly of quetzal feathers, not those of the bird known as the Montezuma quail.

The range of the quail lies mostly in Mexico. It was first described from a specimen collected there and named for the long-deceased Mexican emperor. Montezuma's are reasonably common permanent residents in the Canyon but are heard more often than seen. They are secretive and stay in areas where the grass is high enough to cover them. The first I ever saw was a small family group that crept across a walkway while the Friends of Madera Canyon Board was having a meeting at the Proctor Ramada. The birds are found even quite high in the mountains, however, where there's

grass under the trees.

The Montezuma quail is sometimes known as Mearns's quail, after ornithologist and army doctor Edgar Mearns. Mearns's is, in fact, the official name of the northern subspecies of the Montezuma quail, which has at times been considered for full species status. If that decision comes through, the bird here may be Mearns's quail, with the Montezuma name restricted to what's now the southern subspecies living in southern Mexico and Central America.



Above a male Montezuma's Quail (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) Photographer Dominic Sherony. Insert is an illustration of Moctezuma (II) Xocoyotzin, c. 1466-1520 taken from the Codex Mendoza. The relationship between the bird and the man is poorly understood.

Partner Spotlight: Robyn Abeyta

Robyn Abeyta is the Partnership Coordinator for the Coronado National Forest, where she leads partnership development, volunteer engagement, and collaborative initiatives that connect local governments, nonprofit organizations, and community partners like the Friends of Madera Canyon with public lands.

Robyn spent her childhood roaming the Santa Fe National Forest, thus initiating her passion for the great outdoors. She began her career with the Forest Service in 2014 as a student intern in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and joined the Coronado National Forest in 2023.

Robyn is passionate about building strong partnerships and fostering collaboration to support the stewardship and long-term sustainability of our National Forest System Lands. That passion really shone through when Robyn came out to support the Preservation and Maintenance Tread Team National Trails Day work event...on crutches!

Robyn lives and works by the Forest Service motto: Caring for the land and serving people. If you see her in the Canyon, say hello. She'd love to hear from you!



Robyn Abeyta. Photo by Michele Gazica.

Michele Gazica

FOMC Marketing

Join us at the Friends of Madera Canyon table at the Tucson Bird Alliance Birding Festival. The Festival takes place at the Doubletree Hotel Reid Park on Alvernon in Tucson. The Nature Expo where all of the vendors will be located is inside the Grand Ballroom and just outside in the Ballroom lobby.

We will be there:

Wednesday, Aug 12: 4–6pm

Thursday, Aug 13 & Friday, Aug 14: 12–5:30pm

Saturday, Aug 15: 10am–5:30pm

Additions to the Biodiversity of Madera Canyon

A new Flower Fly with populations in Madera Canyon and it's a wasp mimic

Flower flies (Diptera: Syrphidae), also known as hover flies, are a species-rich family (with more than 6,500 described species). The family is well-known for the ecosystem services provided, such as pollination, movement of nutrients, acting as bioindicators, organic matter recycling, pest control and for presenting examples of the most accurate (perfect) Batesian mimics of wasps (Hymenoptera).

Among the most charismatic groups of syrphid is the tribe Cerioidini, now placed in the sub-family Eristalinae. Adult cerioidines are extraordinary high-fidelity mimics of several families of wasps and their larval stages are saprophagous in a wide range of habitats. Members of this tribe are rare in collections and new species have been described in the last two decades from different biogeographical regions.

Mengual (2026) describes *Sphiximorpha oharai*, a new species from New Mexico, U.S.A. The full description is accompanied by images, DNA barcodes, and an identification key to the Nearctic species of *Sphiximorpha*. The placement of this new species in *Sphiximorpha* is discussed as it has pilose eyes, a characteristic that is not diagnostic for *Sphiximorpha*.

The specimens of the new species were collected by J.E. O'Hara using a hand-net near or at the hilltop of the Gomez Peak, New Mexico (U.S.A.) A search for additional records of this new species was conducted on iNaturalist (<https://www.inaturalist.org/>) and BugGuide (<https://bugguide.net>). The search terms were "*Sphiximorpha*" and "*Sphiximorpha*", with the filter "U.S.A.". The online observations were used as complementary data to have a better understanding of the distribution of this new species.

Reference

Mengual X. 2026. A New *Sphiximorpha* Rondani, 1850 (Diptera: Syrphidae) from the Nearctic Realm. Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Washington, 128(1):19-37.



Sphiximorpha oharai, new species, holotype male (CNC DIPTERA #245424). 1, Habitus, lateral view. 2, Habitus, dorsal view. 3, Labels. Scale = 1.0 mm.

A new synonym for a weevil in the genus *Peltophorus*.

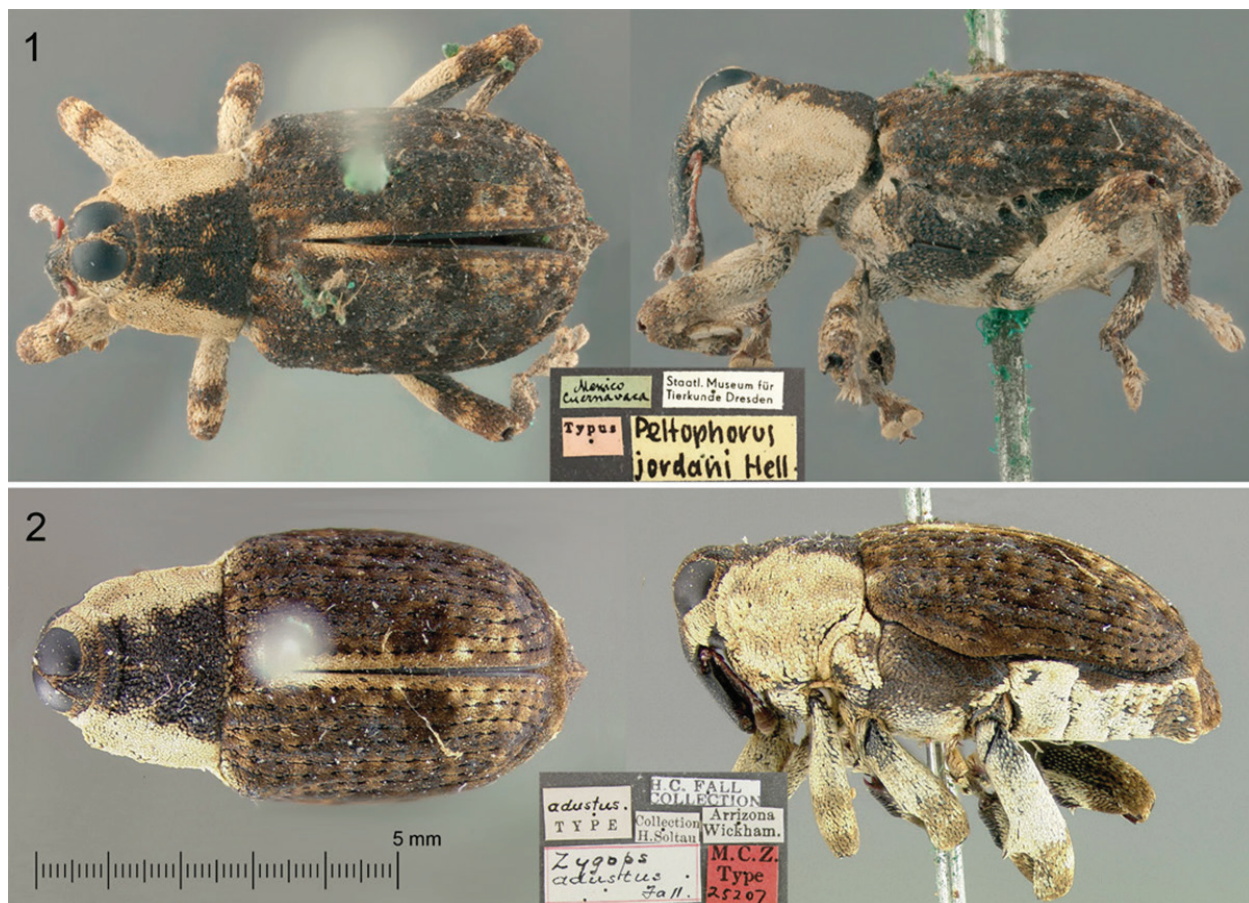
Peltophorus is a genus of twig and stem weevils in the beetle family Curculionidae. There are at least two described species in *Peltophorus*. Hespenheide et al. (2026) found *Peltophorus* Schönherr, 1845, is restricted to drier areas from the southwestern United States south to Honduras and is associated with plants of the genus *Agave* (Asparagaceae). Heller (1895) briefly discussed the genus, and described *Peltophorus jordani* from Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico. The species has received little attention since its description. Two of the authors of this paper examined one of the syntypes of *P. jordani* in the collection of Senckenberg Naturhistorische Sammlungen Dresden and they showed that it is conspecific with the subsequently described *Zygops adustus* Fall, 1906, now known as *Peltophorus adustus* (Fall). *Peltophorus jordani* is therefore a senior synonym of *P. adustus*, a new synonym. The authors did not study the syntype(s) of *P. jordani* housed in the Natural History Museum at Tring, UK.

Sleeper (1963: 216) considered the syntype in Fall's collection, labeled "Arrizona" [sic] and it has been in the Museum of Comparative Zoology (the MCZ) since 1939, as the type of *Z. adustus* (MCZ Type 25207). However, he (Sleeper) specified that the "Type locality ... [is] here restricted to Arizona, Pima Co., Santa Rita Mtns., Lower Madera Cyn." This was the locality of Hubbard and Schwarz's syntype in the USNM collection, except that neither Fall (1906) nor the specimen label mentions Madera Canyon. It remained unclear to the authors if they consider Sleeper's (1963) usage of the term "type" as a valid lectotype designation (ICZN 1999: Art. 72.4.7) and they leave this issue to a future revision of the entire genus.

While *P. jordani* was described from Morelos, it has also been reported (as *P. adustus*) from Amozoc, Puebla (www.inaturalist.org/observations/127184782), and from Guerrero (Figueroa-Castro et al. 2016). Larvae *Peltophorus* have been found in the seed pods of several species of *Agave*.

References

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- Fall, H. C. 1906. New species of American Coleoptera of the tribe Zygopini [part]. *Transactions of the American Entomological Society* 32: 57-61.
- Heller, K. M. 1895. *Zygopiden-Studien II, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Gattung Copturus*. *Abhandlungen und Berichte des Königlichen Zoologischen und Anthropologisch-Ethnographischen Museums zu Dresden* 1894/95(11): 1-70
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Figs. 1–2. 1) Syntype of *Peltophorus jordani*, dorsal view, lateral view, and labels; 2) Syntype of *Zygops adustus*, dorsal view, lateral view, and labels (from <https://mczbase.mcz.harvard.edu/guid/MCZ:Ent:25207>). The type images of *Z. adustus* are from the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University; © President and Fellows of Harvard College.

A new species of green lacewing in the genus *Meleoma*

Meleoma is a specialized genus of New World green lacewings (family Chrysopidae) noted for their unique facial structures. It contains 28 species with the addition of the one described in the Tauber and Tauber 2026 paper. Adult males often possess striking secondary sexual characteristics, such as interantennal lobes and sclerotized "horns" that are used during courtship and which are entirely unique to this genus. Males typically feature a distinct frontal horn or pit located between their antennae. Adults have longer, strongly cylindrical antennal scapes that are distinctly separated from one another. Many species are found in coniferous and montane regions across the Americas. Entomological discoveries, such as *Meleoma hirabayashi*, continue to expand our understanding of the diversity of life in forest habitats.

The new species was described by Tauber and Tauber (2026) based on a male holotype from the Huachuca Mountains at Miller Canyon, Cochise Co., AZ, in the Coronado National Forest at 5690' ASL, 31.2459N 110.1622W. Two male and six female paratypes were also collected at the type locality, and 18 paratypes were deposited in the University of Arizona Insect Collection, Tucson; the California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco; and the Arthropod Collection, Museum of Southwestern Biology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. In the Santa Rita Mountains, paratypes were collected along Cave Canyon Trail at 5280' ASL. The new species was also collected in Madera Canyon.

Part of the type series of the new species was collected at Hirabayashi Campground on the Mount Lemon Scenic Byway in the Santa Catalina Mountains of southern Arizona. Thus, the species was named in honor of Japanese-American Gordon K. Hirabayashi (1918–2012), who resisted internment during World War II in defense of his and others' civil rights as citizens of the United States of America.



A green lacewing in the genus *Meleoma* from Dane County, Wisconsin. [Photo by llona](#) at iNaturalist. The original image was cropped and its contrast was increased. This photo bears a strong resemblance to the new species.

Reference

Tauber CA, Tauber AJ. 2026. A new species in the green lacewing genus *Meleoma* Fitch, 1855 (Neuroptera: Chrysopidae) named in memory of an exemplary American. *The Pan-Pacific Entomologist*, Jun;102(2):104-21.

The Last Page

Beyond Respect: What Must Humans do to Protect the Environment

In the Education column of this issue Doug Moore writes, “It is crystal clear- the best stewardship practices for Madera Canyon would be to close it off and leave it alone.” Recognizing ecological limits seems to be the answer.

Martin et al. (2016) argue that one of the most urgent environmental challenges is still too often underestimated: the need to respect the ecological limits of the biosphere. These limits define the conditions that allow species, ecosystems, and human communities to survive over time. When societies exceed them through overconsumption, pollution, habitat destruction, or unsustainable extraction, environmental damage becomes harder to reverse and increasingly threatens the systems on which human life depends.

The authors emphasize that environmental protection requires more than admiration for nature or general concern about conservation. Respect for the biosphere must become a practical guide for decision-making. This means recognizing that human activity cannot expand endlessly without consequences. Economic development, technological innovation, and resource use must be evaluated according to whether they stay within the boundaries that natural systems can endure.

A central issue identified by Martin et al. is the tension between ecological limits and an economy built around continuous growth. Modern societies often assume that economic expansion is both necessary and desirable, and that technology can solve the environmental stress created by that expansion. While technology can reduce some harm, the authors suggest that it cannot fully resolve the contradiction between unlimited growth and a finite planet.

This growth-centered model encourages societies to treat conservation as a problem of management rather than transformation. In practice, this means trying to protect species and ecosystems while continuing the same patterns of consumption and development that caused environmental decline in the first place. The result is a cycle in which conservation efforts slow down damage but rarely address its deepest causes.

The growing impact of human activity on species, habitats, and natural systems has made conservation science an important multidisciplinary field. It draws on ecology, economics, ethics, policy, sociology, and other disciplines to understand environmental problems and propose solutions. Conservation science has helped identify endangered species, restore damaged habitats, design protected areas, and measure the effects of human behavior on the natural world.

However, Martin et al. point out that conservation science has struggled to achieve lasting success when working within the same social and economic framework that drives ecological disruption. Scientific knowledge alone is not enough if political institutions, markets, and cultural values continue to prioritize short-term growth over long-term ecological stability. Conservation science can describe the problem and

recommend action, but society must be willing to change the values and systems that shape human behavior.

The authors therefore argue that protecting the environment increasingly requires profound shifts in societal values. These shifts include moving away from the belief that nature exists primarily for human use and toward a broader understanding of humans as part of, rather than separate from, the living world. Environmental responsibility must include restraint, humility, and a willingness to place ecological well-being alongside economic and technological goals.

Future conservation efforts should focus on several related changes:

Reducing patterns of consumption that exceed ecological limits.

Designing economies that prioritize sustainability, resilience, and fairness over endless expansion

Using technology as a support for ecological responsibility rather than as a substitute for social change.

Strengthening policies that protect species, habitats, and ecosystem functions.

Encouraging cultural values that recognize the intrinsic importance of the natural world.

In this sense, the challenge extends beyond simple respect for the environment. Humans must reshape the assumptions, institutions, and behaviors that determine how they live within the biosphere. Martin et al. suggest that the future of conservation science depends not only on better research but also on a deeper transformation in how society defines progress. Protecting the environment will require humans to accept ecological limits and build ways of living that sustain both human communities and the natural systems that make life possible. JCM

References

Martin JL, Maris V, Simberloff DS. 2016. The need to respect nature and its limits challenges society and conservation science. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113(22):6105-12.

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