

# MADREAN DISCOVERY EXPEDITIONS



**OBJECTIVE: DOCUMENT THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE MADREAN SKY ISLAND MOUNTAIN RANGES IN SONORA, MEXICO.**

## THE REGION

The Sky Island Mountain Range is a global biodiversity hotspot that ranges from New Mexico and Arizona to Mexico. These rich habitats are home to a tremendous diversity of local and transient species, including half the bird species of North America, more than a hundred mammals ranging from elusive jaguars to endangered bats, and turtles, butterflies, lizards, and more.

## THE EXPEDITION

Twice per year, approximately 40-60 volunteers come together for a multi-day expedition to one of the understudied Sky Island Mountain Ranges in Mexico. This uniquely qualified group includes scientists, students, policy professionals, and photographers, split roughly equally between Mexican and North American nationals.

## THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Most residents of the smaller towns in the region have little knowledge of the animals, plants, vegetation, or ecology in the Sky Islands. By educating local students about the plants and animals in their backyard, we can inspire the next generation of environmental leaders.

## THE DATABASE

The Madrean Discovery Expeditions database ([madreandiscovery.org](http://madreandiscovery.org)) is a free, publicly available database with thousands of flora and fauna records for Sonora. The database has been used for conservation, research, and education – serving as a resource to advocate for new federally protected areas, as well as for records in various museums and books.

## 2016 IN REVIEW

Expeditions to two previously unstudied Sky Islands garnered approximately 2000 new biodiversity observations. Educational visits to five rural middle schools reached a total of 221 students and 18 teachers, none of whom had ever had an environmental education presentation from visitors.

## THE FUTURE

Since 2009, there have been 13 major expeditions. With your help, we can continue this tradition and ensure that our Sky Island ecosystems remain a global biodiversity hotspot. Every dollar raised will go directly toward funding the expeditions.