

Copper Queen Library offers birding backpacks

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The Copper Queen Library now has birding backpacks for patrons to check out.

MARK LEVY HERALD/REVIEW

BISBEE — In an ever-expanding effort to provide patrons with more offerings to better bodies and minds, the Copper Queen Library now provides birding backpacks to patrons with most all of the gear needed for a day of watching the county's diverse feathered and furred populations.

Library Manager Jason Macoviak came up with the idea of the birding backpacks as a way for people to have a fun outdoor exercise to promote good health. Thanks to a \$4,000 grant from the University of Arizona Center for Rural Health, the backpack program was one of several ideas he packed into the application.

If you have a library card, you can check out a birding backpack with binoculars, a field guide to birds, a note journal and a birding guide to acquaint you with the winged wonders beginning Jan. 9. There are backpacks for adults and children, so it can be a family outing.

Allison Williams, library services coordinator, noted the backpacks have child-sized binoculars, which will encourage youngsters to take note of their environment while getting a bit of a walking workout.

“We like to think outside the box” to boost healthy lifestyles, Williams said. “This is a great activity for families.”

The logs provided in the backpacks will become a journal for all who go on such adventures, she added. This means there will be a running record of the wildlife spotted on treks.

To kick off the addition to the Library of Things, Trevor Lauber, with Waterwise, will provide an informational workshop on Tuesday, Jan. 9, at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the greater and lesser sandhill cranes, and others, that gather by the thousands in Cochise County.

This time of year, the greater and lesser sandhill cranes as well as other waterfowl, shore birds, birds of prey and other migrating species make Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area in the Sulphur Springs Valley their winter hangout. Whitewater Draw attracts thousands of people every year who marvel at the multitude of critters at the oasis in the desert.

Excursions to the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area also delight bird and wildlife watchers as the San Pedro River serves as a migration corridor for winged, hoofed, clawed and crawler species.

The library has lots of books on birds, which can add to the experience of seeing others that roost and nest around the draw and the county.

The Library of Things

The backpacks are the latest in efforts to provide patrons with more options as part of the Library of Things, which is a collection of useful items for home, projects, sports and adventures that can be checked out for free with a Copper Queen Library card.

For instance, the library has blood pressure monitor kits to check on blood pressure daily from home and share the results with doctors. It allows physicians to track heart health, offer medications and lifestyle changes to keep blood pressure in check. Patrons are allowed a three-week window to return them.

For children, there are Pretend Play sets to bring make-believe worlds to life, while inspiring role-play outfits give dress-up playtime a creative boost. Kids can choose from fisher, camper, doctor, builder, scientist, gardener and firefighter, said Williams.

Then there is the Copper Queen Seed Library, which allows patrons to check out vegetable, flower and herb seeds to plant in their home gardens. The goal is to form and encourage a learning community centered around the saving and sharing of seeds in this unique desert climate. Patrons are encouraged to harvest and return seeds from their healthiest plants to ensure the sustainability of the project.

Need some tools for home repair, carpentry or garden tools to prepare gardens for planting? Visit the Copper Queen Library annex in San Jose on Melody Lane.

The tools include hand saws, shovels, rakes, hoes, pitchforks, hedge shears, tape measurers and even an electric weed trimmer and extension cords in different lengths.

There also are pliers, tin snips, screwdrivers, pipe wrenches, hammers, mallets, clamps and more to help with any small job, even plumbing.

Carpentry tools like drills; levels; miter saw kits; jig, circular and table saws; routers and much more to help with small home repairs are available for checkout.

For information, call the library at 520-432-4232 or visit the webpage at copperqueenlibrary.com.