

Biographical profiles of the 2009 inductees into the Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame

Dr. Robert Ohmart. Dr. Ohmart's accomplishments as a biology professor at Arizona State University can be measured by the number and energy of undergraduate students he produced and also by the body of research engaged by his team of graduate biologists. Dr. Ohmart coached more than 40 graduate students in an incredible array of studies ranging from raptors to tortoises, and bighorns to burros, as well as the habitats they required. His pioneering work on restoring riparian vegetation along the lower Colorado River contributed significant insights into the complexity of Southwestern riparian systems. During the 1970s and 80s, he helped secure more than \$2 million in grants to fund many of the projects he and his students were researching.

Frances Werner. Wildlife enthusiast Frances Werner of Tucson has volunteered on behalf of Arizona's natural resources for almost four decades. The first woman appointed to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, Ms. Werner worked to obtain access to public lands for sportsmen and was a strong advocate for cooperation between governmental agencies, the public, and the various resource users. She has served on many boards and committees of wildlife and land management agencies, including the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the Bureau of Land Management and the Arizona State Land Department. Ms. Werner's various awards include the Arizona Wildlife Federation's Conservationist of the Year and the Arizona Chapter of The Wildlife Society's Conservation Award.

Mesa Hunter Education Instructor Team. The Mesa Hunter Education Program has been dedicated to meeting the hunter education needs of residents in the East Valley for 35 years. Originally started in 1974 as an NRA firearms safety class offered through the Mesa Parks and Recreation Department, the program is coordinated by four chief instructors who conduct two large classes each January and September and two smaller classes taught on an "as needed" basis. The team attracts and retains a large cadre of instructors. Currently there are 55 active instructors that have over 500 years of combined HE teaching experience. This hunter education team routinely graduates about 10 percent of all of the state's hunter education graduates, and since 1996 has accumulated over 29,000 volunteer hours while teaching hunter education to more than 5,400 students during that time.

Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club. The Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club (YVRGC) aggressively supports the enhancement and protection of wildlife, wildlife habitat, wildlife-dependent outdoors recreation, and public vehicular access on public lands. Started in 1936 when a small group of local farmers put together an Annual Bass Fishing Derby and Deer Hunting Contest, the club has expanded in membership and activities over the years, now offering more than 20 events each year along with monthly club meetings. YVRGC has long been in the forefront of teaching firearms safety and hunter education. Since the 1960s, YVRGC's volunteer instructors have graduated thousands of youth and some adults who are educated in safety and outdoor ethics. The club also actively volunteers its time and efforts to a wide variety of habitat improvement projects in partnership with other groups and agencies. YVRGC is politically active in a variety of wildlife conservation issues.