

# Welcome to Ce:wi Duag

The mountains you are standing in have been called by many names. While you might be more familiar with their Spanish and English name, the Santa Rita Mountains, older names tell stories of their cultural significance. Western Apaches call them Dził enzhó ("Beautiful Mountain") and Tohono O'odham know them as Ce:wi Duag ("Long Mountain"). The Tohono O'odham have lived near Ce:wi Duag since time immemorial, thus this is the oldest continuously used name for an important geographical landform and traditional cultural property.

Many Tribes and peoples consider the Santa Rita Mountains culturally significant – including the Akimel O'otham (Gila River Indian Community); Onk Akimel O'odham and Xalychidom Piipaash (Salt River-Pima Maricopa Indian Community); Akimel O'otham, Tohono O'odham and Hia C-ed O'odham (Ak-Chin Indian Community); N'dee (Western Apache); Nde (Chiricahua Apache); Hopi; A:shiwi (Zuni) and Yoeme (Pascua Yaqui) – yet the Tohono O'odham are the ancestral caretakers of this land. Ce:wi Duag is vital to ceremonies, stories and songs, and is home to ancestral villages, sacred sites, and critical natural resources. The land you are visiting is a foundational component of Tohono O'odham culture and *himdag*, a word that means "way of life."

Ce:wi Duag contains springs and natural resources not available in the lowlands, yet are integral to O'odham himdag. Equally important are the remnants of villages that contain the remains of O'odham ancestors. Tohono O'odham began living here at least 7,000 years ago, primarily because of the mountain's ecological diversity, natural resources necessary for tools and ceremony, and the availability of food and shelter. These mountains continue to be significant to Tohono O'odham for all of these same reasons, though it has become more difficult to access for societal and cultural needs. One of the benefits of the Arizona Trail passing through Ce:wi Duag is increased public access for all.

The Santa Rita Mountains also serve as a natural venue for spiritual ceremonies for individuals and groups. Oral history tells us that O'odham veterans returning from global conflicts spend four days in the mountains performing purification rites so that they can re-enter life within their communities. All visitors are encouraged to receive the blessings of renewal from time spent here.

Please help care for this cultural landscape by practicing Leave No Trace ethics, and visiting with respect. With your stewardship, Ce:wi Duag will continue to sustain future generations

## Where The Basket Plants Grow

Within Tohono O'odham culture, there may be no more important object than the basket. Woven together using local plant materials, baskets are used in nearly all aspects of life. In addition to continuing this ancient cultural tradition, modern basketmaking provides a significant source of income for O'odham weavers who are considered among the finest indigenous basketmakers in North America.

Ce:wi Duag provides an ideal climate for three plants used in traditional Tohono O'odham basketmaking, including:

- Beargrass (*Nolina microcarpa*), the primary core or bundle material for coiled baskets.
- Leaves of soaptree yucca (*Yucca elata*), used for stitching coiled baskets.
- Roots of banana yucca (*Yucca baccata*), for decorative red stitches.

All of these plants are relatively abundant in the Santa Rita Mountains, but are scarce at the lower elevations where O'odham reservations are currently located. These uplands also provide a wide variety of other plants for medicinal and ceremonial purposes. The east side of Ce:wi Duag is especially important for agave harvesting.

## Leave No Trace of Your Visit

The Center for Outdoor Ethics encourages you to Leave No Trace by following these basic principles:

- Plan Ahead & Prepare
- Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Learn more about you can be a good steward of the Arizona National Scenic Trail, public lands, and traditional cultural properties by visiting [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org).