

MetroABQ Real Estate Newsletter

Including Rio Rancho, Corrales, Placitas, Atrisco Valley, Los Lunas & the East Mountains.

December

Along the Turquoise Trail: Cerrillos Hills State Park
The Barelvas Rail Yards Revisited, Again
ABQ Backyard Wildlife Refuges



Cerrillos Hills State Park, who knew?

There's so much to see & do along the Turquoise Trail, that it's not surprising to have missed something all these years. The Cerrillos Hills State Park is the newest park in the state system, but it's already been there since 2009. So it was time to check it out...

From the MetroABQ, the quickest way to the scenic [Turquoise Trail](#) is to head east into Tijeras Canyon & north on highway 14. Then the adventure begins...

The Turquoise Trail itself is a scenic smorgasbord. The two-lane road passes the east side of the massive Sandia Mountains, then runs along & passes through two other lower ranges, as it wends its way up to Santa Fe. There are other greenspaces along the way, one of which is the [Golden Open Space](#), with fab arroyo & mesatop views.

The route bring you through the tiny town of Golden, then Madrid, to Cerrillos. All three began as mining towns & have evolved into so much more.

From Cerrillos alone, veins of galena, zinc, manganese, copper, iron & turquoise were mined. None of those are as exciting as the turquoise, though, which has the longest history there: it was mined at Cerrillos by native people over 1300 years ago.

[Cerrillos Hills State Park](#) sits next to & overlooks the tiny town of Cerrillos, above image, which is a 10-street grid pattern. There are a few little shops; the [Blackbird Saloon](#) is a good place for lunch.



The park itself includes 5 miles of trails, going up an elevation of 300 feet. The terrain is relatively tree-less & brutally hot in the summer, so now is a great time of year to go for an easy hike there. Above is one of the Cerrillos Hills.



A unique feature at the park: the visitor's center was built around a simple type of sundial, called a Noon Analemma, "inspired by some very accurate sundials incorporated into structures built by prehistoric civilizations, like the Anasazi of Chaco Canyon."

While in the shade of the sundial, for the scientifically inclined, there is a ton of info to read about it. Following the instructions, I located the image on the floor created by the sun streaming through a circle in the wall, which told what time of day it was, including A.M. or P.M. It's pretty amazing how accurate it was--I checked my watch to be sure.

Above & below are images from the uniquely shaped Sundial/Visitor's Center. The sundial was worth the trip by itself...





Along the Turquoise Trail: From Albuquerque, the towns of Golden & Madrid are on your way to Cerrillos, home to the Cerrillos Hills State Park.



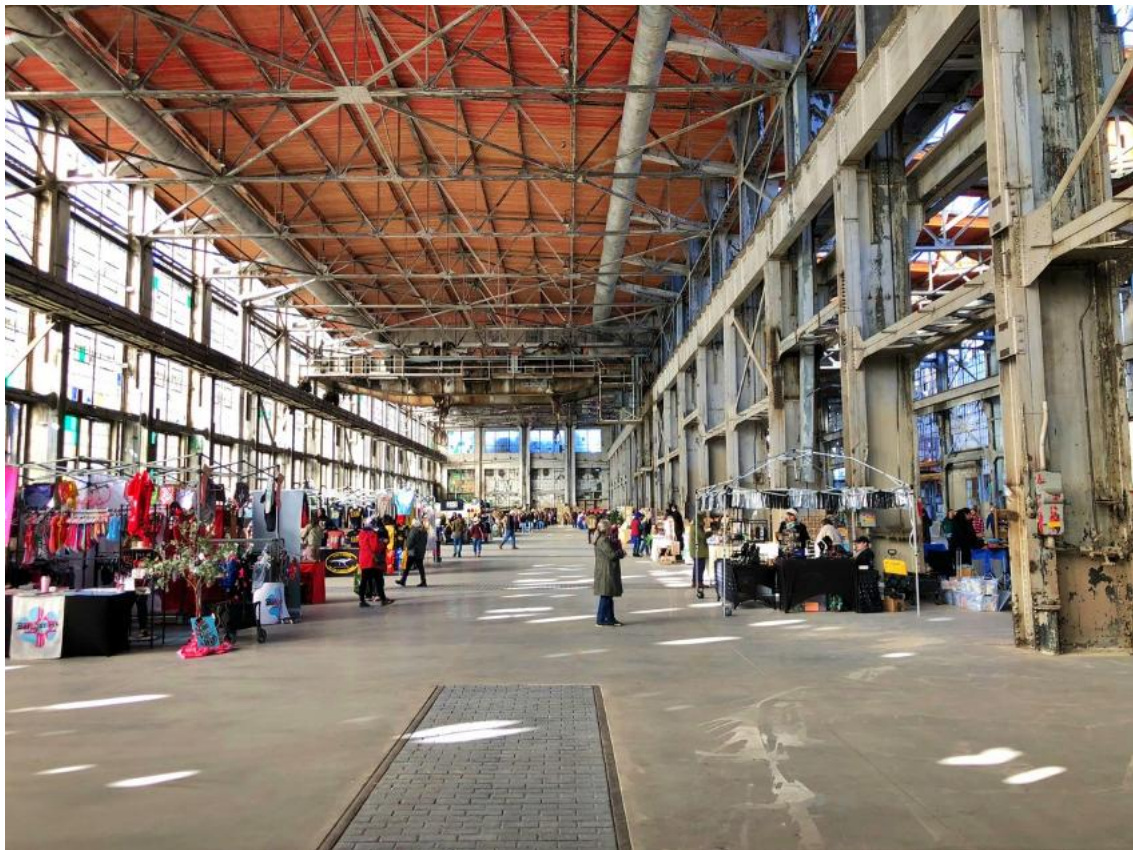


Returning to the Barelás Rail Yards, Redux.

As the Barelás Rail Yards are ever evolving, it's necessary to check it out regularly. This trip the Holiday Market was my excuse to get back to the Yards. The Winter Market has booths with lots of stuff to buy & eat, etc.

The real reason I went, though, was to see some of the new buildings that have been opened to the public recently. Above is the main square for the outside market, with vendors. The two massive buildings in the background were open that day: the Tank Shop & the Boiler Shop.

Both enormous Post-Industrial Brutalist structures have exposed beams & bare building materials with colored glass windows throughout, image below. With the Boiler Shop alone sitting on 58,000sqft, it's a lot of interesting real estate to open to the public, for limited events.



The Boiler Shop had what is called a cross-axial design, allowing trains to be spun around & moved to different areas. For the modern use of the buildings, the city kept remnants of the original tracks, bricking them in to complete the pedestrian walkways, seen above.



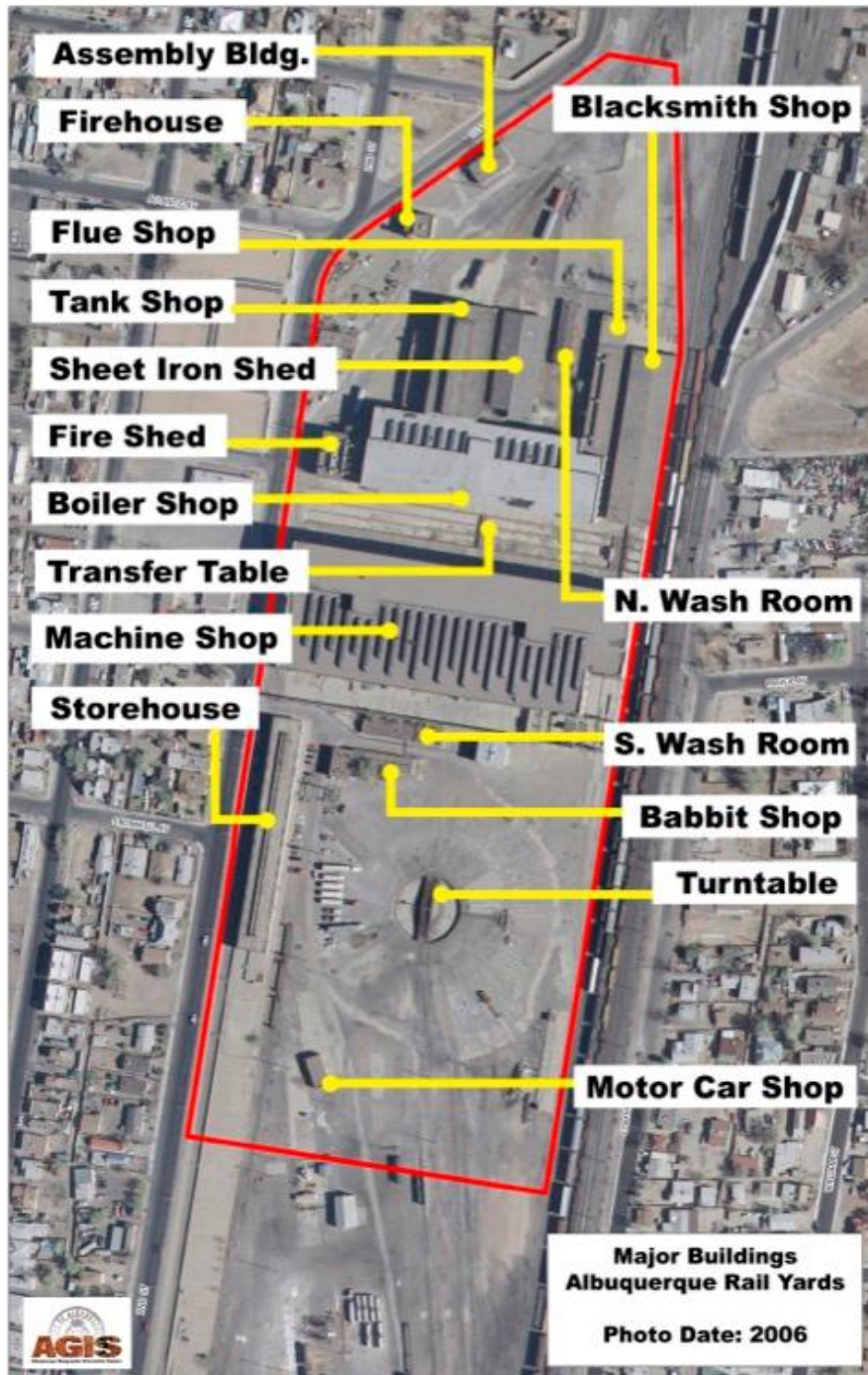
Above is the Blacksmith Shop, one of the 1st buildings to be re-invigorated & is consistently used for numerous events like a music festival, jazz concerts & of course the seasonal growers markets (May-October).

Below is the former Flue Shop, currently the completely remodeled workspace for a new CNM/Barelas Rail Yards project.

From [CABQ.gov](https://www.cabq.gov): "*Beginning this fall, CNM began a series of film and digital media courses in the Flue Shop at the historic Albuquerque Rail Yards. This partnership also allowed CNM's Film Technician students the opportunity to use the Railyards this fall for student productions. Additionally, students from CNM's Geographic Information Systems program will begin a project to produce 3-D maps of building interiors at the Railyards.*"

Slowly but surely, the Barelas Rail Yards is beginning to live up to its potential, as the old buildings are being refurbished, & new projects like the CNM Film collaboration are begun.







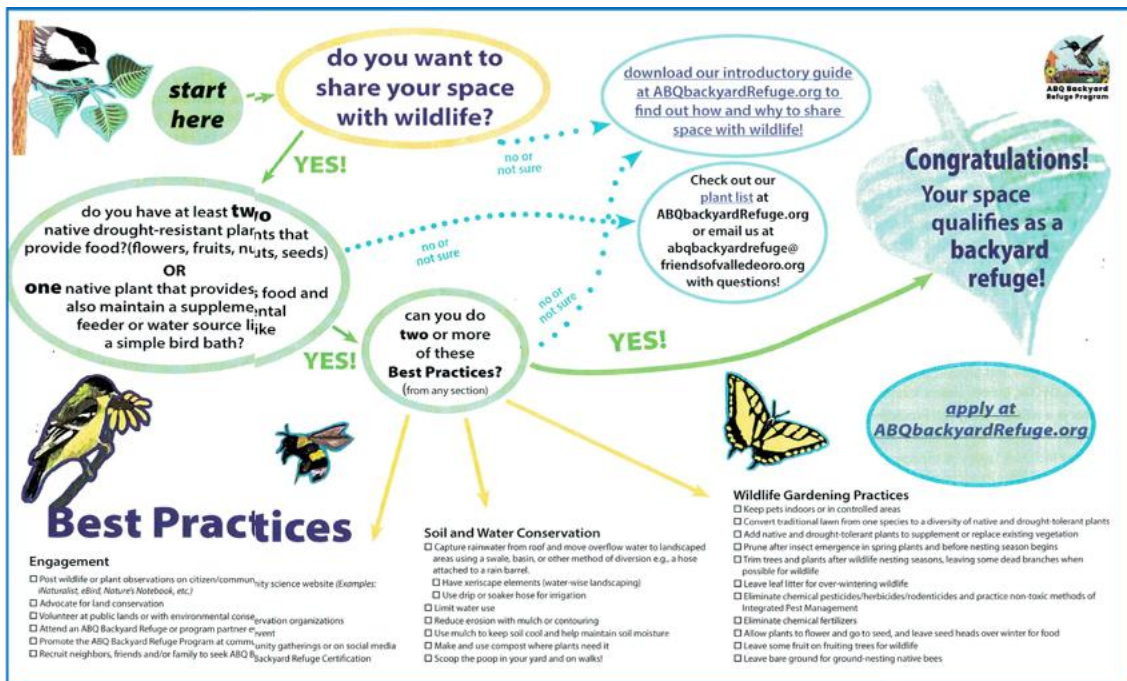
Share Space with Wildlife: Build a Backyard Refuge...

We share our backyards with hundreds of different plants & animals; however, as cities continue to grow, places for wildlife become fewer & farther between. By building a refuge in our yards, we can actively care for local wildlife & give our wild neighbors space to make their homes.

You may have seen the yard signs mentioning that a property is a Certified Wildlife Habitat, through the [National Wildlife Federation](#).

This project is similar, but is sponsored primarily through the [Friends of Valle del Oro](#) & the National Wildlife Refuge System, among others.

Sharing your space with local wildlife can be as simple as a small native plant container garden on your patio, to "providing a diversity of the key elements of habitat including food, water, shelter & space, to support wildlife during every season, in your yard."



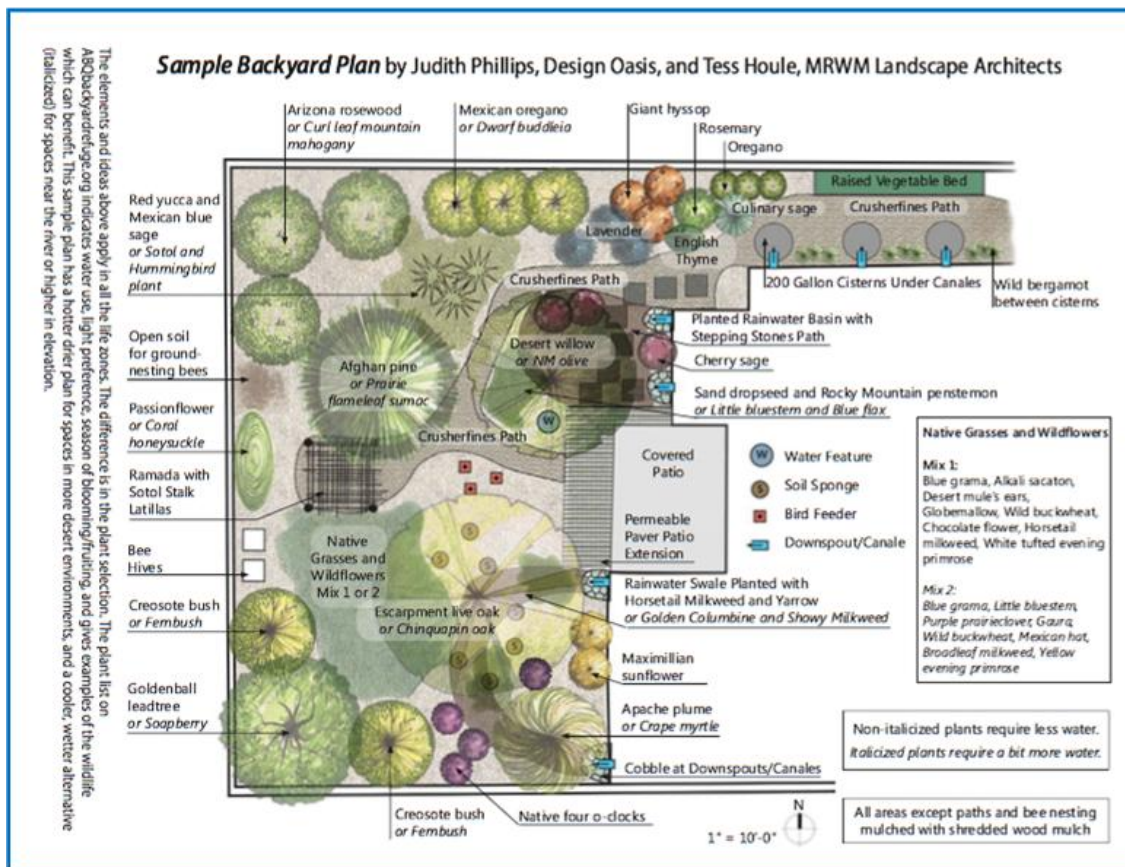
Wildlife Superstores

Certain plants can provide for many different species during multiple life stages. Adding a variety of these plants to your backyard habitat can make the best use of your space, & attract many more creatures. Certain trees, shrubs & grasses, with plenty of sunflowers help diversity the area.

Read more on the website, specifically "Plotting your Space" & "Creating your Design," which walks a beginner through many options & ideas.

The webpage is invaluable: ABQbackyardrefuge.org.

Note: The vast majority of information in this Backyard Habitat conversation was taken directly from the Friends of Valle del Oro Website & from a brochure titled [Share Space with Wildlife](#).



Environmental activist & Southwest landscape designer [Judith Phillips](#), has been designing water-smart landscapes for decades. Her name pops up the more one explores in these areas, so it's great to see that she also has a sample garden in the Backyard Refuge Program, seen above. Another place to look for her work is at [Los Poblanos](#).

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Thx for reading & for making it this far...Have a fantastic '23! See you there.

Missing something?...

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I continually seek out the hidden gems in all areas for my **Buyers**, & am a tireless promoter for all of my **Sellers'** listings. I love talking real estate...

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My 3-D Virtual Tours



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