

## **ANNUAL REPORT: UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION PROJECT (AZ) 2013 FIELD SCHOOL**

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**Class of 2013 at the US/Mexico Border Fence**

### **GENERAL**

A five-week IFR Field School took place in Arivaca, Arizona between June 16<sup>th</sup> and July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013. The first week consisted of introductory seminars, field trips to a migrant shelter in Noagles, Mexico, field lectures on the desert environment, and field practicums focused on contemporary archaeological techniques. Our team consisted of 22 students and staff members from American and Canadian Universities including the University of Michigan, University of Chicago, Bowdoin College, and the University of Victoria.

Our daily routine consisted of survey and site analyses starting at sunrise (about 5:00 AM) until about 1 PM. This was followed by lunch and a break during the hottest midday hours, post-field work tasks: artifact processing and cataloging, field form processing, writing journal entries, and working on independent projects in the lab. Students took part in all the activities, including on-site recording and mapping.

### **RESULTS**

2013 was the final field season of research to be conducted in the southern Arizona desert. This year we focused on filling in survey areas that had been previously unexplored and fine-tuning our analysis of sites in areas that had been previously surveyed. We developed a two-step protocol for recording artifact assemblages at individual sites. First, we estimated the frequencies of major artifact classes along an ordinal scale ranging from 0 to more than 200. Second, we selected a subset of these sites for more detailed inventories of artifacts sorted according to their functional class (e.g., clothing, hygiene product, aid), subclass (e.g., shirt, dental care, pharmaceutical), and type (e.g., t-shirt, toothpaste, pill bottle); we recorded backpacks and beverage containers on a more detailed inventory including size and brand.

By sampling artifact assemblages, we were able to focus on mapping spatial relationships within and between sites. Regionally, we undertook systematic pedestrian survey around known sites and natural travel corridors such as canyons, passes, ridges, and washes. We also revisited four sites where human remains had been recovered in the past five years. Locally, we recorded site boundaries, artifact concentrations, and features using high resolution GPS (<1 meter resolution). In some cases, we employed a digital total station for detailed mapping, particularly at sites featuring small shelters built from tree limbs, brush, and black plastic sheeting. In addition to these spatial data, we also described the setting, vegetation, depositional and post-depositional processes, estimated dates, and air and ground visibility for each surveyed site.

Our classification of sites began with their distinction from *isolates*—one or few artifacts representing a single short-term event or secondary deposition. Many isolated water bottles and food wrappers appeared along trails where people discard items while walking, while others turned up in seasonal washes where wind and water act to redeposit artifacts. In contrast to *isolates*, *sites* were assemblages of artifacts and features attesting to the intensive, long-term, or repeated use of a particular locale. Beginning with the primary activities and agents responsible for sites, we assigned each site to types based on the presence of features, such as shrines, structures, or trails, as well as the numbers of artifacts that were produced or utilized by specific groups (e.g., Border Patrol hand restraints, humanitarian water jugs). The results of this refined classification system from the 2013 season are currently under review for publication.