

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

**By Mary Wilson
January 15, 2017**

Poppy Reserve

The rain received in December was not enough to bring about germination – not even for grasses and filaree. Going to the Poppy Reserve on January 14th I spotted the grasses up to about 2 inches, filaree has true leaves and the fiddleneck leaves are about ½-inch long. January 7 through January 13th there was 1.24 inches of rain at the poppy reserve. The ground is spongy to walk on so there is some moisture saturation. Checked four different locations and found a few poppy cots at each one. The cots are up only about 1/4-inch and have the two spiked leaves so they are just starting to germinate. We are to have a few days of sunshine and perhaps more rain by the end of the week. Hopefully this could be the start of a good wildflower season.

Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland

Male trees are producing their cones and have turned brown. The female trees have ripe berries. A good sign that the berries are ripe are the fact that coyotes will eat them. A lot of coyote scat on the trails with Juniper seeds in it. The rains have left the trees green but you can also see a marked increase in brown dieback. Grasses are up to about 1 to 2 inches.



Juniper Tree with green live branchlets and the brown dieback.



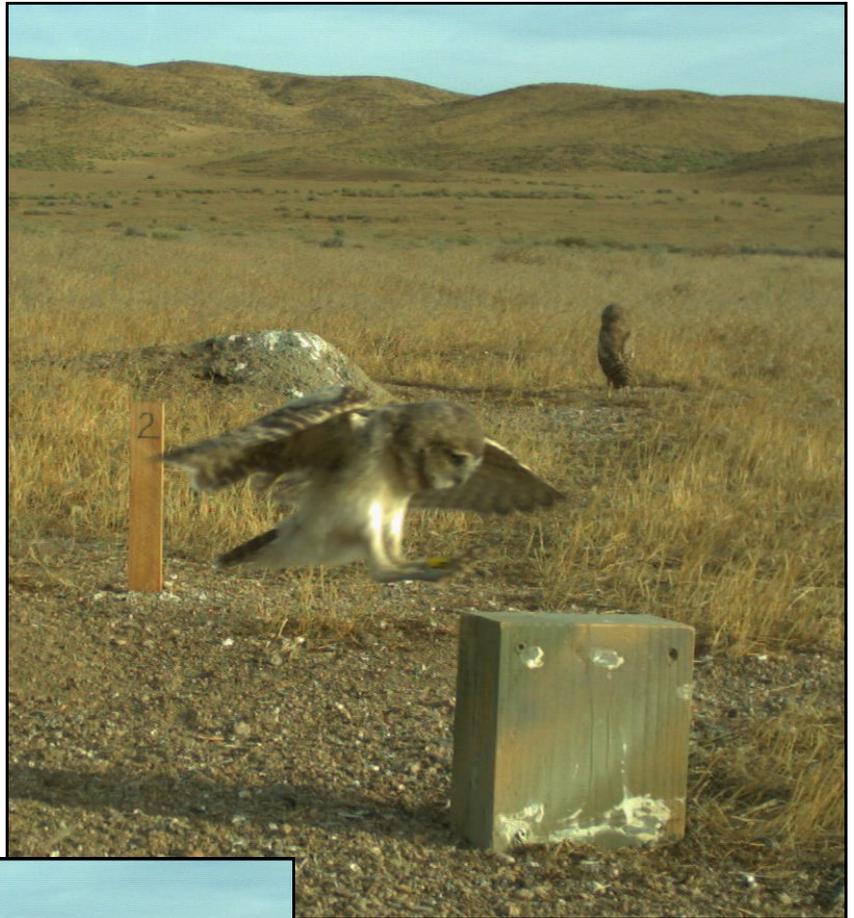
Photo taken from the Rare Juniper Trail at Ripley on January 14, 2017 with snow on the Tehachapi Mountains.

BURROWING OWLS

By Mary Wilson

Practice flight and then learning to land.

The photo to the right shows the look of concentration on this fledgling owl. It has to have the wings in the right position to glide, the tail just right for stability and the feet ready for a landing.



This photo shows the landing was a success and he or she is giving a victory call.