

When Kwarepa Tricked Yuku: An Ethnoherpetology of *Incilius alvarius*

18 Apr 2018, 7:15, Ward 3 Conference Room, 1510 E Grant. Pre-meeting dinner at Rubios, 2906 N Campbell, 5:30.



Robert is a proud Tucsonan deeply in love with the Sonoran region. He has been studying, exploring, and documenting its biological and cultural diversity (often with violin in tow) most of his 32 years. Specializing in amphibians, reptiles, and plants, he has consulted for and assisted in the production of broadcast television programs, the 2nd edition of *Natural History of the Sonoran Desert*, and published his findings in academic and popular outlets. He is currently president of the Tucson Herpetological Society, assists with ongoing developments at the Desert Laboratory on Tumamoc Hill, is a member of NextGen Sonoran Desert Researchers, works as a “paid apprentice” at the botanical estate of Mark A. Dimmitt, and grows plants himself. He considers himself a follower in the footsteps of Sonoran naturalist explorers such as Howard Scott Gentry, Charles Lowe, Tom Van Devender, and others, documenting and espousing the land where north and south embrace.

Recent media attention in the last seven years has led to renewed popularity of the psychedelic properties of Sonoran Desert Toad (*Incilius alvarius* syn *Bufo alvarius*). The powerful hallucinogen 5-meo-DMT was discovered in the skin of this toad in 1967 and likely as a result became popular in 1984 with the circulation of a pamphlet and subsequent establishment of a church. *Incilus alvarius* is the only animal known to produce 5-meo-DMT.

A brief natural history, misconceptions, ethnology, and comments on the unique threats and conservation challenges facing *I. alvarius* will be presented.

