

Biography of James W. Cornett

With forty-three science and natural history books to his credit, author James W. Cornett is one of the Southwest's best-known naturalists. His latest publication titled *The Joshua Tree* is about one of the Southwest's most iconic plants. In addition to his latest publication book credits include *Wonders of the Coachella Valley*, *Wildlife of the Southwest Deserts*, *Indian Uses of Desert Plants*, *Atacama: Desert of Chili and Peru*, and a local favorite *Desert Palm Oasis*. He is currently working on a book titled *Deserts of the World* and recently returned from Australia where he traveled through the Great Australian Desert. Mr. Cornett is the first desert ecologist to have visited all nine of the world's great deserts.

In addition to his books and award-winning newspaper column (his column was voted "Best of The Valley" in 2011), Mr. Cornett has written for numerous magazines including *Natural History* (published by the American Museum of Natural History), *California Wild* (published by the California Academy of Sciences), the *New Yorker* and *Westways* to name only a few. He has also authored dozens of scientific papers and is one of the country's leading experts on desert palm oases, the Joshua Tree and Ocotillo. He is currently researching the impact of climate change on these three symbols of the Southwest. In 1987, Mr. Cornett discovered the native desert fan palm was the first terrestrial plant on Earth whose populations were being impacted by global warming. His research has been front-page news in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Desert Sun*, and *Riverside Press Enterprise* and in August he appeared twice on ABC's *Good Morning America*. His research activities have also appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times*. More recently he has been conducting research on the possibility roadrunners hibernate. The new edition of his book on the Greater Roadrunner was released in 2021.

Mr. Cornett holds both B.A. and M.S. degrees in biology and for thirty years was the Director of Natural Sciences at the Palm Springs Desert Museum. Upon retirement from that institution, he founded and became the principal biologist for JWC Ecological Consultants, Inc., an ecological consulting firm specializing in endangered species studies in the deserts of the American Southwest.

He lives in Palm Springs, California, with his wife Terry and spends summer in Park City, Utah.