

MOJAVE MAXINE EMERGENCE CONTEST

HOW TO MAKE A GOOD GUESS



Dear Students,

My name is Mojave Maxine and I'm a desert tortoise living on exhibit at The Living Desert. I've been living at the zoo since April of 1997, and I'm about 41 years old.

Every fall, when I feel a chill in the air and I notice the days getting shorter, I go into my burrow and enter a state of sleep called brumation. Brumation is the reptile version of hibernation – it's our long winter sleep. While in brumation, I avoid the cold winter temperatures and conserve my energy as I wait for spring to arrive.

The Living Desert hosts a contest each year for students in Southern California to guess the date and time that I will emerge from my burrow for the first time in the spring. Winners receive prizes for themselves, their teacher, and their entire class!

Last year, over 1750 students from all nine Southern California Counties entered the Mojave Maxine Emergence Contest to guess when I would make my first appearance for the year. I hope that you will try and guess when I will emerge this year. The best way to make a good guess is to learn a bit about desert tortoises by going to www.livingdesert.org/mojave-maxine, and by looking at my previous emergence dates (see table below).

YEAR	DATE OF EMERGENCE	TIME
2006	February 9	No time records before 2009
2007	February 15	No time records before 2009
2008	February 10	No time records before 2009
2009	February 24	1:52 p.m.
2010	February 13	2:30 p.m.
2011	February 19	11:38 a.m.
2012	February 25	11:33 a.m.
2013	March 2	10:17 a.m.
2014	February 17	11:53 a.m.
2015	February 9	12:44 p.m.
2016	February 8	11:56 a.m.
2017	February 7	12:06 p.m.
2018	January 31	12:28 p.m.

To enter your guess, go to www.livingdesert.org/mojave-maxine/. Good luck with your guess – and remember to always keep the desert clean, stay on designated trails, and please don't touch or move wild desert tortoises!

See you next spring!

Mojave Maxine