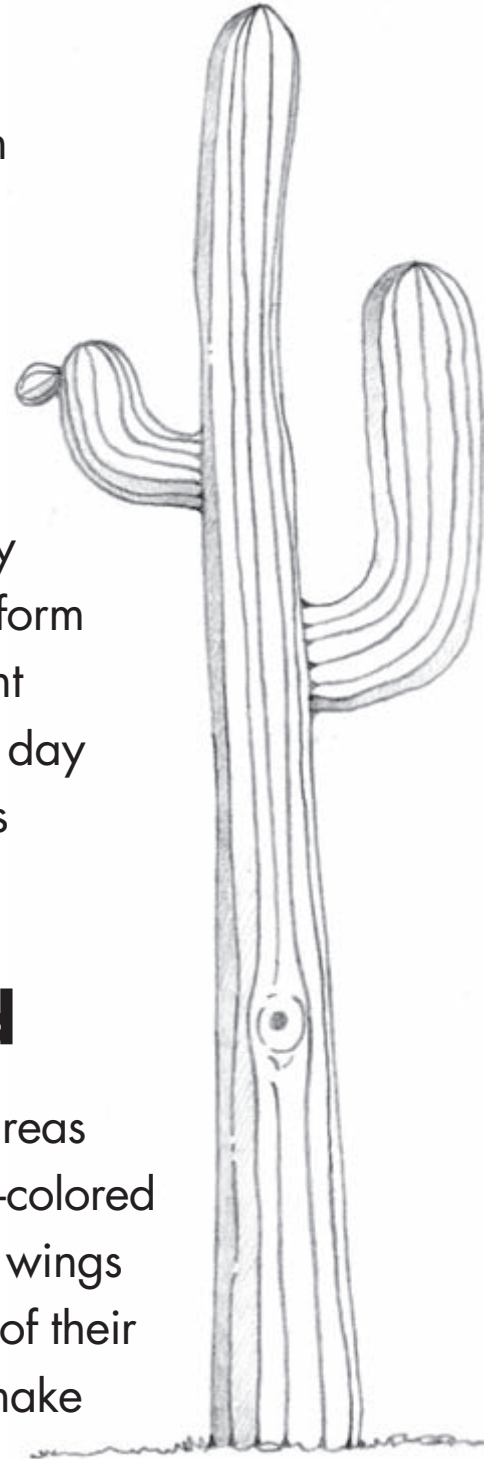


Saguaros

The saguaro is a tall cactus that grows in desert areas of Arizona and California. The climate there is very dry. When it does rain, the saguaro's roots soak up water. Then the cactus acts like a sponge. It has a ribbed, waxy covering that holds in water. Saguaros store up water to use during the dry season when there is no rain. White flowers form at the end of the branches. They open at night when the air is cool, and close up during the day when the sun is hot. The saguaro is Arizona's state flower.



A Desert Bird

The Gila woodpecker is found in desert areas of Arizona and California. This bird has a tan-colored head and body, with black and white spotted wings and tail. Males have a red patch on the back of their head. The Gila woodpecker uses its beak to make holes in the stem of a Saguaro cactus. Then it makes its nest in the hole. Insects are a favorite food of Gila woodpeckers. They also eat cactus fruits, nuts, and sometimes the eggs of smaller birds.

Name _____