

Southwest Book Views

NEW BOOKS FROM THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

Look Who Lives in the Desert! by Brooke Bessesen (Book Division of Arizona Highways, Phoenix AZ. ISBN 1-932-0822-55, oversized paper, 48 pp., \$9.95, 2004)

Written and illustrated by Brooke Bessesen, *Look Who Lives in the Desert!* is a remarkably simple combination of fact and fun. Each page is devoted to a desert animal, the illustrations divulging educational specifics easily digested by the eyes of the young: Lady Tarantula's closet holds eight of each shoe; she rolls out the silk carpet and prances around wearing ballet shoes and a tutu; the sign over her door says "Welcome Crickets." These clever details hold the children's interest while educating them at the same time.

Opposite the illustrations, "Fascinating Facts" and a witty poem featuring the critter of the page amuse all. Featuring 22 different creatures from Kangaroo rats and tortoises to cougars and owls, Bessesen's first book *Look Who Lives in the Desert!* is well done and it is clear that this is a subject close to the author's heart. A writer and producer for television programs on both the National Geographic Channel and Discovery, she is the creator of the children's program *Cool Critters* and spent many years working as a certified veterinary technician with the Phoenix Zoo; she also is a volunteer with rescuers of Arizona native wildlife.

—Celeste Bonde