

The Best Lookouts for Lions, Trogons & Bears

# ARIZONA

HIGHWAYS

ESCAPE · EXPLORE · EXPERIENCE

JULY 2010

## ULTIMATE CAMPING

**10** of Arizona's  
Coolest Places  
to Pitch a Tent

*plus*

Our Pick for  
the Best Hike  
in Arizona

Why You Should  
Head to Bisbee  
for a Hot Dog

The Refreshing  
Nature of a Drive  
in Garland Prairie

*and*

Going Green:  
No. It's Not What  
You're Thinking.



FEATURES

14 OUTTA SITE!

You've heard of rooms with a view? Well, we went looking for something a little different. And we found it. From the remote wilderness of the Grand Canyon to a place on the Colorado River that can only be reached by boat, we discovered 10 of the best campsites in Arizona.

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY KERRICK JAMES

22 GREEN MILES

There's a common misconception that Arizona is nothing but a hot, dry desert. In reality, it ranks third in the United States in terms of biodiversity. And with that biodiversity comes four seasons, including summer. You can keep buying into the stereotype, but as you'll see in this month's portfolio, when it comes to the greens of summer, Arizona can certainly hold its own.

A PORTFOLIO BY NICK BEREZENKO & SUZANNE MATHIA

34 WATCH FOR WILDLIFE

People get excited about seeing elk. And antelopes. And anything else in the wild kingdom. They'll even stop in the middle of the road and pull out their cameras. But that's a bad idea. Instead, go where our wildlife expert likes to go. It's safer, it's scenic and you might even catch a glimpse of an endangered species. BY LORI K. BAKER

40 RANCH WOMEN

Thanks to John Wayne, John Ford, Louis L'Amour, Larry McMurtry ... a romantic image of the American cowboy dominates books, movies and even advertising. Less attention, however, has been given to ranch women, who work just as hard as the men, whether they're in the kitchen or out on the range.

BY MARY TOLAN  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER SCHWEPKER

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▶ American avocets probe the shallow water of Gilbert's Water Ranch. PHOTOGRAPH BY BRUCE D. TAUBERT

FRONT COVER Silhouettes of The Mittens in Monument Valley provide a beautiful backdrop for camping. PHOTOGRAPH BY KERRICK JAMES

BACK COVER Keanu James races across the sand at Three Dunes Campground on Arizona's "West Coast." PHOTOGRAPH BY KERRICK JAMES

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JEFF KIDA

**"CAUTION: SLEEPING BEAR INSIDE!"**

I think I was 5 or 6 when my dad pinned that note to our big brown tent in Yellowstone. I can't remember if he used the exclamation point or not, but I do remember what went through my head. There were two things: 1) *Bear? How in the hell am I supposed to sleep tonight knowing a bear could get into this tent?* And 2) *Does he really think that note is going to keep people from stealing our sleeping bags while we're away from our site?*

He didn't think that, of course. He was just adding a little intrigue to the overall camping experience for my brother and me. My dad loved camping — he still does — and over the years we've pitched tents together in some of the most beautiful places in North America: Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ontario, Colorado, Montana, Idaho, New Mexico, Lake Powell ... and most recently at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. We've had some pretty impressive sites along the way, and we've seen a lot of Mother Nature, but after looking at Kerrick James' photos in this month's cover story, the bucket list just got a little longer.

When I first talked to Kerrick about this piece, I asked if he'd be willing to leave the pavement and do some exploring. I wanted the story to focus on the best individual campsites in Arizona, not necessarily the mainstream campgrounds. It was a ridiculous question. Sending Kerrick into the wilderness is like sending Lewis and Clark to the Pacific. He jumped at the opportunity. The only caveat from our end was that the campsites be relatively accessible. A high-clearance requirement was OK, but 4WD wasn't. As you'll see in *Outta Site!*, he came back with an impressive collection — it's definitely not a list of KOAs.

In addition to the Monument Valley campsite on our cover, he photographed sites along the Colorado River, on the edge of the Grand Canyon, down in the Chiricahuas and over in the White Mountains. The latter is a beautiful site in a tents-only campground on the south shore of Big Lake. The fishing there is fantastic, and so are the views of Mount Baldy. The best part of that campsite, however, is what surrounds it. Located at an elevation of 9,040 feet, the Cutthroat Campground is ringed by aspen groves and grassy meadows, both of which are extremely alluring to those of us who

ARIZONA  
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ARIZONA HIGHWAYS TV

If you like what you see in this magazine every month, check out *Arizona Highways Television*, an Emmy Award-winning program hosted by former news anchor Robin Sewell. For broadcast times, visit our website, [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com), and click the *Arizona Highways Television* link on our home page.

live in the desert. Especially in July. That's what we were thinking about when we put together this month's portfolio.

The theme of the portfolio is *green*, and there are a couple things we're hoping to accomplish with the images. The first is to inspire readers to explore the high country, and the second is to help dispel a myth. There are many stereotypes about Arizona, the most outrageous of which is that the state is nothing but a desolate stretch of merciless desert. The truth is, Arizona ranks third in the U.S. in terms of biodiversity, behind only California and Texas. And with that diversity comes millions of acres of brilliant green landscapes, some of which are depicted in *Green Miles*, our portfolio by Nick Berezenko and Suzanne Mathia.

Another benefit of the biodiversity is the animal kingdom that comes with it. Even if you're not a wildlife enthusiast, most people get excited about seeing elk and antelope and mountain lions and bears and especially endangered species, such as Mexican gray wolves. Although there's always a chance that a deer will run right into your windshield, in most cases, seeing wildlife requires a little more effort, and that's where we come in.

In *Watch for Wildlife*, we'll tell you about 10 of the state's best places to catch a glimpse of something wild. As Lori Baker writes, the options range "from raise-the-hair-on-the-back-of-your-neck encounters with Gila monsters and black bears to heartwarming glimpses of iridescent hummingbirds and diffident Kaibab squirrels."

The guide, which was compiled with the help of Bruce Taubert, one of our premier wildlife photographers, covers the length of the state, from the Grand Canyon in the north to Cave Creek Canyon in the south. If you want to see lions and trogons and bears, check it out. Or, if you have the time, you could make a trek to Yellowstone. The bears up there are easy to find. Just look for a big brown tent with a note pinned to its side.

ROBERT STIEVE, editor

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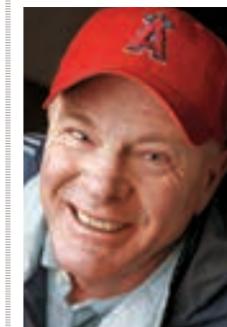
KERRICK JAMES

Photographer Kerrick James turned a childhood love of the outdoors into a career as a travel journalist. Hiking and camping are among his favorite activities because, at least figuratively, it takes him closer to the stars. "I've slept on the ground — often under the stars — more than 300 nights in my life, and I wouldn't trade those places for the best hotels anywhere," says James, who wrote and photographed this month's camping guide (see *Outta Site!*, page 14). Although he's set up camp all over the West, his sights are set on Arizona's highest peak for his next adventure. "I'd love to camp atop Humphreys Peak and sleep under the stars at almost 14,000 feet," he says. In addition to *Arizona Highways*, James' work has appeared in *National Geographic Adventure*, *Outdoor Photographer* and *Sunset*.



PETER SCHWEPKER

As a photojournalist and photography instructor, Peter Schwepker says working at his passion and earning a living from it are as good as it gets. "Photojournalism allows me to write with my camera," he says. After two years of working on *Ranch Women* (page 40), he became part of the Howell family. "Mary Tolan [the writer] and I were part of a wedding, a round-up and little moments of family life. It was a great experience," he says. He adds that Arizona is a great place for photojournalists because of the character of its people and the amazing landscapes. "Arizona is a perfect blend of those two visual outlets for me." Schwepker is a frequent contributor to *Arizona Highways* and an instructor at Northern Arizona University.



SUZANNE MATHIA

When photographer Suzanne Mathia was a child, her version of a perfect day consisted of packing a lunch and venturing into the mountains and fields surrounding her home in England. "I didn't see the inside of a hotel until the day we emigrated to America when I was 12," she says. Her exposure to the lush green lands of Great Britain and her love for photography are evident in the images she made for this month's portfolio (see *Green Miles*, page 22). "I manage to travel to the magical places in our state that hide cool waterfalls and verdant lush carpets of vines that grow in profusion along canyon floors," Mathia says. Her work has also appeared in *National Geographic*.



**PROOF IN THE PUDDING**

I recently visited my son and his family in Arizona, and while we were there we skimmed through your restaurant suggestions in the April 2010 issue. The Firehouse Kitchen [in Prescott] is where we went. The food was wonderful, and the bread pudding was the best I've ever tasted. The waitress was great, too. I'm so glad you listed it in your magazine.

PATRICIA BEARCLAW, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA



April 2010

**A STINGING BLOW**

I was happy to see you devote an entire page to honeybees [Sweet Somethings, March 2010]. However, you did them a disservice by not mentioning their serious plight across the U.S. — massive colony collapse and mysterious die-offs that are costing the economy millions to truck in bees from other locations. Your magazine would be better served not to be so Pollyannaish.

KAREN RIGGS, TUCSON



March 2010

**A FITTING TRIBUTE**

After I read Robert Stieve's "In Memoriam" about SSG Thaddeus



April 2010

Montgomery [April 2010], I had a million thoughts and feelings I wanted to express to his family and to *Arizona Highways*. Now I can't seem to put them into words, except God bless you, SSG Montgomery and all of our servicemen and women everywhere for what you do every day, so that we can have our freedom to do what we do. To his family, my deepest condolences — your son is a hero, and he'll never be forgotten. *Arizona Highways*, thank you for sending a piece of normal America to someone so far from home.

ROBERT W. WINTERS SR., FRANKFORT, INDIANA

What a fitting tribute to SSG Montgomery in your April issue. I couldn't keep the lump in my throat from choking me and could hardly read the last part through watery eyes. These young people deserve so much for volunteering to serve. It brought back memories of almost 60 years ago. I didn't volunteer; I received a summons to join the troops. I was, at 20 years old, one of the biggest gold-bricks in the whole U.S. Army. Now I'm proud to have served, and wish I had done much more. I'm so proud of these young men and women.

GORDON PUMPHREY, TUCSON

Regardless of where one stands on our nation's conflict with terrorism, or more specifically the war in Afghanistan, your statements about the life and commitment of SSG Thaddeus Montgomery are a thoughtful testimony about basic humanity and the American ethic. Bravo for writing it!

RICHARD DAY, NICHOLS HILLS, OKLAHOMA

**BUY THE BOOK**

I've been a subscriber to *Arizona Highways* for many years. I wish to tell you how much I enjoyed your article about J.P.S. Brown [Not Your Average Joe, January 2010]. I'm an Easterner, born in Tannersville, Pennsylvania, moved to northern New Jersey, married, have two daughters, relocated to Florida in 1979, then to Mesa, Arizona, in 1981 for six and a half years before returning to Florida. I love everything about your state. I'm grateful to have had my years out there. I don't know Mr. Brown, but I feel that I know him after reading your story, and I'm going to find one of his books at my first opportunity.

LYDELL "DELL" BUSH, DEERFIELD BEACH, FLORIDA



January 2010

**PICTURE PERFECT**

When I first receive your magazine each month, I always read the letters to the editor, and for the most part, they make sense. However, in the [March 2010 issue], there was a missive from a Bob Kraft in Riverside, California, bemoaning the fact that all he saw in the [December 2009] issue were pictures. He didn't mention how spectacular they were or anything else, but he missed his short stories. He also implied that if you didn't change your ways, he (and maybe others) would cancel. I've been in a snit ever since reading his letter. If I wanted stories, I could (and do) go to the library. Anyway, I think you do a wonderful job — each month you seem to improve on the previous.

FRANCES BROOKS, TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS



**Sittin' on the Bay**

Water — crisp, clean, cool. That's what you'll find at Arizona Bay on Lake Mohave in Western Arizona. It's a great place to take in the views, take a load off and dip your toes. Information: Lake Mead National Recreation Area, 702-293-8990 or [www.nps.gov/lame](http://www.nps.gov/lame).

KERRICK JAMES

**contact us**

If you have thoughts or comments about anything in *Arizona Highways*, we'd love to hear from you. We can be reached at [editor@arizona-highways.com](mailto:editor@arizona-highways.com), or by mail at 2039 W. Lewis Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85009. For more information, visit [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com).



PAUL MARKOW

## Casino Art? Bingo!

If you look past the slot machines and card tables at Casino Arizona, you'll see something unique: original art. In all, the casino is home to more than 175 pieces, and the woman responsible is Aleta Ringle.

By NORA BURBA TRULSSON

IT'S EASY TO GET sensory overload at Casino Arizona: the ding-ding-ding of the slots, the flashing lights, the crooning Elvis impersonators. But right next to the hype of the gaming and the lounges, you'll find art. Loads of it. All by Native American artists.

A huge canvas by Harry Fonseca anchors a wall next to a bar. A glass case near the elevators holds a clay figure by Virgil Ortiz. Another wall

**SCOTTSDALE** is covered with a Dan Namingha painting. In all, the casino boasts more than 175 artworks in various mediums.

The remarkable collection is the work of an equally remarkable woman, curator and art consultant Aleta Ringle, a member of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Community, where the casino is located. "The casino people approached me about 'doing some art' for the building," recalls Ringle with a laugh. "Ten years later, it's become an ongoing process to showcase museum-quality art by Native Americans, including members of this community."

The thing is, you don't just ask Ringle to "do some art." It's her life's work — she lives and breathes it. "I got into art because I love museums," says Ringle. "When I walk into a museum, any kind of a museum, I feel like I'm at home."

Born in Arizona, she moved with her family to

Southern California in the 1950s, where her father, artist Mervin Ringle, worked as a saddlemaker to the Hollywood cowboy stars. "My high school was across the street from the Disney Studios," says Ringle. "I had my formative years on the Sunset Strip and in the Hollywood Hills."

Despite the temptations of the surrounding entertainment industry, Ringle credits her parents for instilling an early interest in art, recalling playing among her father's elaborately crafted saddles (one of which is in the Casino Arizona collection) and going to art museums with her mother, a member of the Gila River Community.

A chance meeting with Cree folk singer Buffy Sainte-Marie in 1969 at the Troubadour club raised Ringle's awareness of Indian identity and politics. "I knew I was different from most other kids in Southern California," she recalls, "but I never really thought much about my heritage before that."

Armed with a degree in art history, Ringle worked in art and archaeology before moving back to Arizona in the early 1980s. In 1989, she landed a job as the Native American public programs manager with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., and has continued working on Smithsonian projects since coming back to Arizona again in 1993.

The Casino Arizona project is not just closest to her home, it's closest to Ringle's heart, allowing her to put together works by her favorite artists. "The whole point of exhibiting art there was to challenge the notion of a traditional museum," she says.

"This collection is in a casino, on a reservation. You can stop by and look at art at 3 in the morning. I love that."

Casino Arizona is located at 9700 E. Indian Bend Road in Scottsdale. For more information, call 480-850-7777 or visit [www.casinoarizona.com](http://www.casinoarizona.com).

PRATT'S  
Q&A



**Kevin Johnson**  
Sacramento Mayor,  
Former Phoenix Suns Player

When you were with the Suns, what did you enjoy off the court? Typically, "off the court" meant off-season, when I was home in Sacramento. But during the season, I enjoyed checking out a movie at Camelview in Scottsdale, and reading at the Coffee Plantation or Borders in Biltmore Fashion Park.

Best place to eat in Arizona?

Hands down, my favorite restaurant was (and still is) Pizzeria Bianco. Every time I get back to Phoenix I stop by for a meal.

Do you have a favorite Arizona destination? The Arizona Biltmore. It's close to everything, yet secluded and serene.

How did you keep your cool during the summer?

When I was in Phoenix during the off-season, I'd begin each morning with a hike up Camelback Mountain. I'd start as early as possible — usually around 5 a.m. It was still 95 degrees!

If you could have taken a piece of Arizona with you, what would you have taken? Camelback Mountain. I lived there, I hiked there, and the views were incredible.

— Dave Pratt is the author of *Behind the Mic: 30 Years in Radio*

## Dog Peddling

Nothing against Oscar Mayer — he feeds a niche — but a classic hot dog is presented Chicago-style, and in Bisbee, nobody does it better than Jimmy.

By ROGER NAYLOR

Everybody knows that to get an authentic Chicago-style hot dog, you head for the Southside. The Southside of Bisbee, that is.

Jimmy's Hot Dog Co. occupies a building the color of ballpark mustard and has a 12-foot-tall wiener mounted on the roof. Hey, no one wants to belly up to a bashful hot dog stand.

In his youth, owner Jimmy Pionke worked at some iconic Chicago hot dog stands and frequented others, so he knew exactly what he wanted when starting Jimmy's. Lunchtime is a rollicking, rowdy affair with the few tables filling fast and diners staking out a hunk of the stainless steel counter lining the walls. Food flies from the kitchen almost as fast as the wisecracks. Even when crowded with out-of-towners, Jimmy's feels like a neighborhood joint.

The signature dish here is the classic Chicago hot dog, which is culinary architecture. To qualify as a Chicago dog, an exacting blueprint must be followed.

Start with the Cadillac of tube steak, Vienna all-beef hot dogs in natural casings. The casing gives it that satisfying snap, releasing juices and flavor at every bite. The dog nestles on a poppy seed bun from S. Rosen's, a Chi-town institution. And ingredients are piled on in precise order: mustard, neon green relish, chopped onions, tomato wedges, a pickle spear, two sport peppers and a dash of celery salt.

The result is a private riot in your mouth, a joyous collision of flavors. The juicy beast rolls across your taste buds in waves, a meal vastly more complex and savory than most served on fine china

Jimmy's Hot Dog Co. is located at 938 W. State Route 92 in Bisbee. For more information, call 520-432-5911.

BISBEE

flanked by a mysterious array of forks.

Pionke is an artisan of bun-cradled grub. Every dish displays the perfectionist mark of a craftsman, from the Italian sausage, the bratwurst and the Maxwell Street Polish Sausage (served with grilled onions, pickle and sport peppers on a Gonnella roll — another legendary Chicago name) to a meatball sandwich so big it should be delivered by forklift.

That said, french fries might be Pionke's true masterpiece. We've grown accustomed to fast-food joints, where fries are lifeless twigs stacked in a freezer. At Jimmy's, 5 minutes before you eat the hot, crispy fries, they were potatoes. The difference astonishes. The earthy richness of pure spud flavor topped with a light zing of salt rekindles a passion not just for fries, but for food done right and for simpler times in general. That's the Chicago way.



RICHARD MAACK



## Close for Comfort

Located just 30 minutes from Flagstaff, the historic Mormon Lake Lodge is a quick getaway with all the comforts of home. That is, if your home is surrounded by 300 acres of national forest.

By JOBETH JAMISON

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE GETTING away from it all without having to get too far away. Mormon Lake Lodge is that kind of place. You don't have to go to the airport. You don't have to load up your bikes or hitch up your horses. And you don't have to pack 15 different road maps or enough food to get you through a long weekend with growing boys.

Of course, you could do all of that — there's an airport nearby, there are dozens of roads and trails to explore in the area, and some of the resort cabins have kitchenettes — but you don't have to. Between the simple guestrooms, the multiroom cabins, the enclaves of cabins for large parties, the RV park, the on-site country store, the restaurant, the stables and the rental equipment, this lodge has it all. And getting there isn't bad either.

The drive down Lake Mary Road (Forest Highway 3) is one of the state's most scenic, offering jaw-dropping panoramic views of the San Francisco Peaks. Plus, it's just 30 easy minutes southeast of Flagstaff, so it's not too far from civilization. Nevertheless, you might feel like you've traveled at least 86 years back in time once you get there.

Mormon Lake Lodge, originally known as Tomblor's Lodge, was built by a Chandler man in 1924 as a place for local loggers and ranchers to enjoy dining and nightlife. Like today, the location was remote enough to be rustic but close enough to be considered an appealing option and all-around happening place for people as far away as Flagstaff and beyond. So beloved was the lodge that, when it burned to the ground in 1974 during the world's largest team-roping contest, its regulars from around

the state volunteered to have it rebuilt by the time the event rolled around the following year. The pioneering traditions live on today in the lodge's famed open-pit steakhouse and 1880s-style saloon, where summer brings a great lineup of live entertainment.

Although the lake itself doesn't always fill up — some years the natural water feature is little more than a bed of mud and marshland — after a wet northland winter, you might be lucky enough to find the lake at its peak. If not, water enthusiasts can enjoy nearby Lake Mary. Mere minutes away, that lake carries enough water for a hotbed of aqua activities, along with the burden of noise and chaos that accompanies them, leaving Mormon Lake and its spectacular wildlife (buffalo actually do roam there) to rest peacefully in their forest surroundings.

All of which adds up to what could be your best family vacation, your most romantic couple's getaway, your most-raved-about estrogen or testosterone fest, or even your most meaningful solo soul-searching endeavor ever.

Mormon Lake Lodge is located 7 miles south of Lake Mary Road on Mormon Lake Road. For more information, call 928-354-2227 or visit [www.mormonlakelodge.com](http://www.mormonlakelodge.com).

PAUL MARKOW

## Made in the Shade

When shooting landscapes, photographers set their schedules to the rise and fall of the sun — they know they'll see the light. When shooting in areas of diffused light, things aren't so simple.

By JEFF KIDA, photo editor



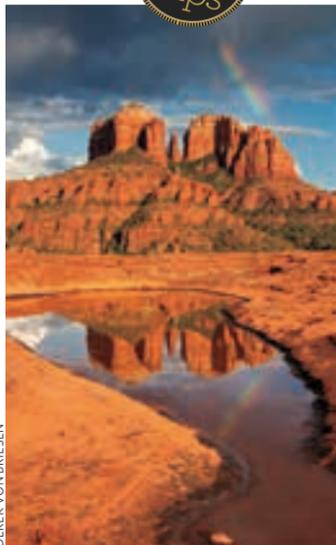
NICK BEREZENKO

NICK BEREZENKO ENJOYS MAKING photographs along heavily shaded streambeds close to his home on the Mogollon Rim, but he says that shooting streams and rivers is incredibly difficult because the sweet light of open landscapes doesn't exist. The frequent *Arizona Highways* contributor explains the importance of taking different angles in spots of lower elevation, where the light is blue and diffused: "You should shift from side to side, look high and low. It's almost like you're stalking the photo," he says. In this image of Fossil Creek, Berezenko

used the light at the end of the "alley" to create a highlight that appears as a diagonal line of reflection. Those leading lines set up the foreground elements of the boulder and the log, which are balanced by the lighter reflections at the top of the frame. "When shooting in low light, it's crucial to find the areas where lights and darks work against each other to create an interesting composition. Get close to the foreground with a wide-angle lens to bring everything into focus from near to far — and always use a tripod."

### PLAY IT COOL

Movies are cool in three dimensions, and multidimensional photographs are equally interesting.



To add depth to your images, think about using reflections. Quiet pools of water, patterns on the shiny hood of a car or even the reflections in a storefront window can double the impact of what might already be an interesting composition — no 3D glasses required.



ADDITIONAL READING: Look for *Arizona Highways Photography Guide*, available at bookstores and [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com).

### ONLINE

For more photography tips and other information, visit [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com) and click "Photo Tips."



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, GRAND CANYON COUNCIL

The Snake Patrol, of Scottsdale's Troop 446, gathers in the Adirondack Cabin at Camp Geronimo in Payson in 1962.

## Scouting Report

This year, the Boy Scouts of America celebrates its 100th anniversary. Although the organization is only 89 in Arizona, there's still a lot of local history.

By JODI CISMAN

ALTHOUGH THE THICK-RIMMED GLASSES and sleek, short hair-styles of the 1950s have evolved to LASIK eye surgery and messy bed-head, the mission of the Boy Scouts of America has remained constant. "The goal is to build character in youths," says Derek Bechtel, director of development for the Grand Canyon Council. "It's all about serving kids and giving them good direction."

That's been the guiding principle of the BSA, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year — it's been around in Arizona for 89 years. Robert Baden-Powell, who established the Boy Scouts in 1910, wanted an organization through which youths could learn about the environment and develop leadership skills to apply within their communities.



### 50 years ago

IN ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

Our July 1960 issue was dedicated to the ancient crafts of Arizona's Native American tribes. Included were Hopi basket makers, who wove colorful designs into storage baskets with cloud symbols and animal drawings, and Navajo artists, who pounded sterling silver into intricate rings and necklaces with bright turquoise stones.

## This month in history

■ In July 1858, the Butterfield Overland Stage Line opened a station at Apache Pass in Southeastern Arizona.

■ The Maricopa & Phoenix Railroad arrived in Phoenix for the first time on July 4, 1887. Before that day, passengers had to travel 30 miles to Maricopa to catch the train.

■ A 1-square-mile site in what is now the city of Mesa was officially registered on July 17, 1878. The Mormon settlement's original name was Fort Utah, but when the site was moved to a nearby mesa, residents changed the name.

Scouts have the opportunity to earn any of 121 merit badges in such disciplines as canoeing and archery at camps scattered throughout Arizona, including outposts like Camp Geronimo, which opened at Hewitt Station in Magma, Arizona, in 1922. Today, Geronimo is a year-round camp north of Payson.

The pursuit of merit badges has played a significant role in the evolution of the Scouts' attire. While shirts and pants have remained fairly basic, other than the addition of cargo pockets and a more water-resistant material, the differences are in the details.

Buttons, for example, have gone from metal to plastic, and belts are much sturdier. Interestingly, the Scouts' socks have gone through dozens of redesigns, from old-fashioned calf-high stockings in the Boy Scouts' early years to 21st century low-cut athletic anklets. "When I was a Scout in the 1980s and '90s, we had knee-high socks with a red band at the top," Bechtel says. "No one wanted to wear those."

Uniforms are constantly being restructured for functionality, but not necessarily style. "They even have pants where the bottom part of the leg can be unzipped to make shorts," Bechtel says. "They had nothing like that back in my day."

Whether it's the improved uniforms or something else, the number of Scouts in Arizona is on the rise. When Boy Scouts organizers met in Mesa in 1921 to form the Arizona chapter, they did so over a cup of joe. That summer, only nine troops with 204 Scouts attended the first camp, which was held at Irons Ranch near Superior. There, the Theodore Roosevelt and Grand Canyon councils merged, adopting the latter's name for its national identity.

Today, Arizona has 2,886 troops composed of 58,865 members. Despite the growing numbers, the mission is still the same — only the uniforms are different.

**A Little Short** Although they're only 5 inches long, greater short-horned lizards can hold their own — pick one up and you might end up with blood on your hands. By KELLY KRAMER

Catch a greater short-horned lizard off guard and you might end up bloody. Not because it'll pounce like a jungle cat and turn you into lunch, but because it might just shoot blood out of its eyeballs. Heidi Easudes learned that firsthand when she held one captive during a road trip to Prescott. She was only 11, so maybe she didn't know any better, but boy, that must have been quite a scene.

Ocular bloodletting is weird, but it's also an effective defense mechanism. It's intended to ward off potential predators because of its resultant onerous odor. In most cases, the lizard will puff itself up and charge with its horns first, but beware: projectile blood might be imminent.

As the name suggests, it's the horns that differentiate this variety of lizard from others in the horny-lizard category. A broad gap separates the two stubby central horns and a swath of pointed, horn-like scales cascades down the lizard's back. The lizard's lower extremities are also fringed with pointy scales.

On average, this mid-sized lizard model measures just shy of 5 inches from snout to vent, and it has a remarkable way of blending in with its surroundings, which means it can range in base color from tan to gray and various shades of brown. The lizards' backs are often marked with black blotches, while their chins and bellies are commonly red-orange or yellow-orange.

Although they're cold-tolerant, they hibernate during particularly cold winter months and save little lizard-making for the spring, when they move above ground to bask in the warm mid-morning sun. Come summer, litters can include up to 48 newborn lizards, which must release themselves from a clear amniotic sac in order to survive.

Those that make it can be found throughout Northern, Central and Southeastern Arizona, from semidesert grasslands to conifer forests. They're known to frequent open, sunlit areas and shrubby plateaus, or anywhere they can find a steady, protein-filled diet of ants, beetles and grasshoppers. They are not, however, fond of family vehicles or girls named Heidi.

## nature factoid



BRUCE D. FAUBERT

### Touch of Gold

Desert marigolds are everywhere during wildflower season, blooming a happy golden hue in March, and then off and on through November. You'll find them amid rocks and on roadsides, as well as on sandy mesas. In late spring, desert-marigold moths cocoon their larvae atop the flowers, turning them into tight little balls.



TOM BEAN



**Frontier Days**

JUNE 28-JULY 4 PRESCOTT

This time-honored event revolves around the World's Oldest Rodeo — 123 years and counting. The weeklong celebration includes specialty acts, a parade along Prescott's famous Whiskey Row, a dance, an arts-and-crafts show and the excitement of one of the country's most popular PRCA rodeos. *Information: 928-445-3103 or [www.worlds-oldst rodeo.com](http://www.worlds-oldst rodeo.com).*



**Cornfest**

JULY 17 CAMP VERDE

Check out one of Arizona's corniest celebrations. You'll get some old-fashioned entertainment at this festival, which includes bluegrass music, a corn-eating contest, hog-calling and outdoor games. Vendor booths and a corniest joke contest round out the entertainment. *Information: 928-567-0535 or [www.cvaz.org](http://www.cvaz.org).*



IVAN MARTINEZ

**Photo Workshop**

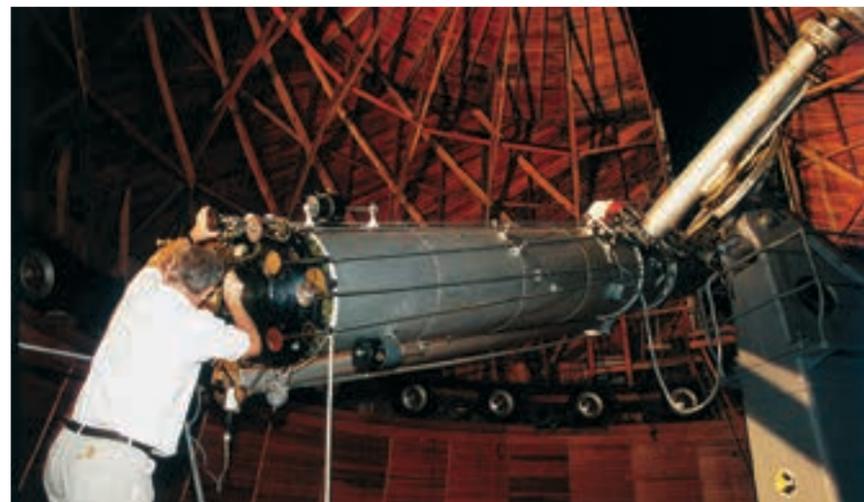
FLAGSTAFF

The cool pines and majestic mountain peaks surrounding Flagstaff offer the perfect photographic experience. Join *Arizona Highways* contributor Chuck Lawson for this photo workshop, which takes place August 20-22. The trip includes photo shoots at Wupatki and Sunset Crater national monuments, as well as the Weatherford Trail and other summer wildflower locations. *Information: 888-890-7042 or [www.friendsofhighways.com](http://www.friendsofhighways.com).*

**Toros Baseball**

JULY 1-31 TUCSON

Take yourself out to the ballgame this month as the Tucson Toros, an independent professional baseball team, take on opponents at Hi Corbett Field. *Information: 520-325-1010 or [www.tucsonoros.com](http://www.tucsonoros.com).*



DAVID SMITH

**Summer Stars**

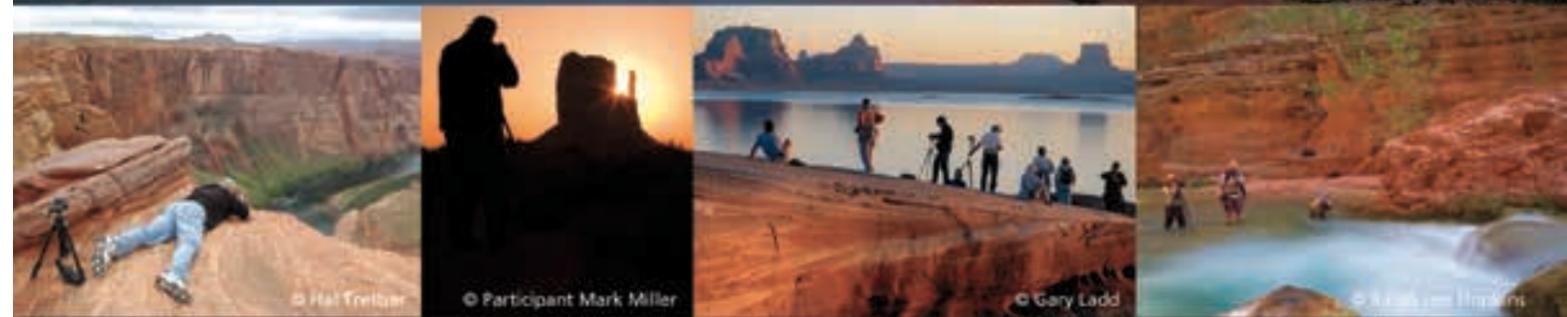
JULY 1-31 FLAGSTAFF

Starry nights take center stage above Arizona's International Dark Sky City. Head to Lowell Observatory, on Flagstaff's Mars Hill, to gaze at summer's night skies through numerous telescopes, and peruse exhibits and presentations about celestial objects. *Information: 928-774-3358 or [www.lowell.edu](http://www.lowell.edu).*

Learn from the Photographers of *Arizona Highways*



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**Upcoming Workshops:**

*Rafting the Colorado River*  
with Gary Ladd  
September 12-21, 2010

*Slot Canyons*  
with Peter Ensenberger  
October 6-10, 2010

*Preposterous Landscapes*  
with Gary Ladd  
October 17-22, 2010

*Monument Valley/Canyon de Chelly*  
with Jeff Kida  
October 26-30, 2010



For more information and a complete calendar of workshops, visit [azhighwaysphotoworkshops.com](http://azhighwaysphotoworkshops.com)

# Outta Site!

You've heard of rooms with a view? Well, we went looking for something a little different. And we found it. From the remote wilderness of the Grand Canyon to a place on the Colorado River that can only be reached by boat, we discovered 10 of the best campsites in Arizona. They're not exactly easy to get to, but talk about tents with a view.

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY KERRICK JAMES



**>> EDITOR'S NOTE:** What follows are 10 of what we consider the most amazing campsites in Arizona. Although each one falls into the general category of "car-camping," they're remote and require more effort than just pulling into a KOA. You'll need to pack the basics: tent, sleeping bag, sunscreen, sunglasses, maps, matches, compass, flashlight, pocket-knife, first-aid kit, food, water, clothing, etc. Because you're car-camping, pack plenty of extras and, if at all possible, travel with someone else. If that's not an option, let someone know where you're going and when you plan to return. Of course, while you're out enjoying the great outdoors, keep in mind that even when the skies are clear, flash floods are a reality in Arizona. Beware. Also, if you see lightning approaching, take cover in your vehicle or crouch down in a low, dry spot. If you plan to use a portable stove or build a campfire, check with the area's governing agency beforehand — fire restrictions may apply during periods of high fire danger. At campsites where fires are allowed, use only established fire pits, and put your fire out at least 30 minutes before you start to break camp. Let the fire die down, then pour water over the wood and ashes and cover them with soil. Mix the soil, water and ashes until the fire and any embers are completely out. Finally, use common sense and always obey the Leave No Trace Ethics (see page 46).

## ARIZONA BAY

The first thing that inspired me to tackle the 24 miles of rutted dirt road leading to this isolated fishhook-shaped bay was its very name. I thought Arizona Bay sounded cool and promising, not to mention a little out of the ordinary in a state known mostly for sandstone and saguaros. Turns out, it's an excellent place to camp at water's edge and photograph the clouds or the stars reflecting off the usually still waters of the pooling Colorado River. It's also a prime spot to shoot kayaking reflections or silhouettes at sunrise or sunset. Perhaps best of all — at least in the middle of summer — the 60-degree water offers a wonderful respite from the sun.

**Directions:** From Kingman, take U.S. Route 93 north for 28 miles to Cottonwood Road. Turn left (west) onto Cottonwood Road and drive 29 miles, veering right on Road 36 to Arizona Bay.

**FYI:** The camping at Arizona Bay is free; however, there are no restrooms or amenities and no potable water. Filter any water you drink from the river.

**More Information:** Lake Mead National Recreation Area, 702-293-8990 or [www.nps.gov/lake](http://www.nps.gov/lake)

## BARFOOT PARK

Hidden high up in the Chiricahua Mountains, one of Southeastern Arizona's spectacular sky islands, is Barfoot Park. That's not a typo, by the way, but if you're so inclined, you can walk barefoot in the surrounding meadow, which is ringed by the mountains' sheer volcanic ramparts to the west. By camping at Barfoot, you'll miss the summer crowds in the better-known Rustler Park area, about 2 miles to the south. And, if you do see another camper, it'll probably be a birder — this area offers some of the best bird-watching in the world (see related story, page 34). Whether you're alone or not, you'll want to wait for the morning sun to arc high enough in the sky before crawling out of your tent. When you do emerge, look up and enjoy the views of Barfoot Lookout on the summit of Buena Vista Peak.

**Directions:** From Tucson, drive 81 miles east on Interstate 10 to Willcox and State Route 186. Turn south onto SR 186 and continue for 23 miles. Turn left (east) onto State Route 181 and, following signs for Chiricahua National Monument, drive 3 miles,

turning right (south) onto Forest Road 42 (Pinery Canyon Road). Continue to the undeveloped campsite.

**FYI:** The camping at Barfoot Park is free; however, it's primitive, which means there are no amenities and no potable water. As in all forest areas, be extremely careful with your fire. At this site in particular, the majestic pines under which you'll be camping leave a deep carpet of dry flammable needles.

**More Information:** Douglas Ranger District, Coronado National Forest, 520-364-3468 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado)

## BUCK FARM OVERLOOK, GRAND CANYON

I went looking for this rarely visited vantage point of the Grand Canyon after seeing it described as one of the most isolated camping spots in Arizona. If you crave solitude, this is the campsite for you. Driving in, I was actually grateful for the 23 miles of washboard dirt road that separates the rim from the pavement of State Route 89A — it's what keeps the casually curious at bay. Naturally, a place so isolated and so incredible requires a major commitment of time and endurance along some rugged back roads. It's worth it, though. The views of Marble Canyon and the sliver of the Colorado River that you'll glimpse while hiking along the rim are nothing short of breathtaking.

**Directions:** From Navajo Bridge at Marble Canyon, drive west on U.S. Route 89A approximately 20 miles to Forest Road 8910. Turn left onto FR 8910 and drive 23 miles to the fork. Take the left fork and drive 2 miles to Forest Road 445H. Turn left onto FR 445H and drive 3 miles to the end.

**FYI:** The camping at the overlook is free; however, it's primitive, which means there are no amenities and no potable water. Beware,



this is remote backcountry, so be prepared and check your spare tire before leaving the house (see Editor's Note, page 16). A high-clearance vehicle is strongly recommended.

**More Information:** Backcountry Information Office, Grand Canyon National Park, 928-638-7875 or [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)

## COCHISE STRONGHOLD CAMPGROUND

Cochise Stronghold Campground, in an area that formerly served as the home base of the famed Apache chief, is tucked in a canyon of the Dragoon Mountains. This campground has just 11 sites, but your chances of nabbing one are pretty good. In addition to the obvious scenic beauty of the area, I love the way the warm morning light reflects into the campground off the light-colored walls of granite. And, of course, at an elevation of 5,000 feet, it's a cool place to get a great night's sleep.

**Directions:** From Tucson, take Interstate 10 east for 72 miles. Turn right (south) onto U.S. Route 191 and drive 12 miles. Turn right (east) onto Ironwood Road (which becomes Forest Road 85), and continue for 8 miles to the campground.

**FYI:** The camping fee is \$10 per night, and there's a \$5 user fee in this section of the Coronado National Forest. Open September

through May. Grills and picnic tables are available.

**More Information:** Douglas Ranger District, Coronado National Forest, 520-364-3468 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado)

## CRABTREE WASH, APACHE LAKE

Not far from Phoenix, the fifth-largest city in the United States, several gorgeous lakes offer a quick getaway and a chance to escape the gridlock. Apache Lake is among them, and Crabtree Wash Recreation Site, tucked in a lovely shallow cove, is one of my favorite spots on the lake. In the cove, you can pitch your tent on gravelly sand that's surrounded by vistas of saguaros, volcanic cliffs and refreshing water — ideal for swimming, fishing and (figuratively) drinking in. In the morning, the day's first light will illuminate the cliff walls to the west. It's beautiful. Also, on the beach, there's room to play Frisbee, have a barbecue, watch for shooting stars, and forget you're just a quick hop from the freeways and the rush of people.

**Directions:** From Mesa, drive north on State Route 87, the Beeline Highway, for 60 miles. Turn right onto State Route 188 and continue

**PRECEDING PANEL:** The clear, cool water of Arizona Bay along the Lower Colorado River attracts campers to its shores.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Coronado National Forest signs lead travelers to camping sites in the Chiricahua Mountains.

**ABOVE:** The Arizona Trail offers many camping spots along its 819-mile route, such as this one at Crabtree Wash on Apache Lake.

Royce James enjoys a good book, along with a magnificent view of The Mittens, at Monument Valley Tribal Park.



### THE PRIMITIVE CAMPGROUND, MONUMENT VALLEY

Ranking right up there with the Grand Canyon in terms of world-famous icons are The Mittens of Navajo Nation's Monument Valley Park — sandstone monoliths that look like giant red hands emerging from the other soil. Most people simply drive by and gaze out the window, but a better option is to camp right next to The Mittens. It's the best way to watch the interplay of light, shadow and cloud. But that's just the beginning. Rainbows, star tracks, evanescent sunrises and sunsets, horses and riders ... they all allow a seemingly endless range of photographic possibilities, whether you shoot them with a camera or the lenses of your eyes.

**Directions:** From Kayenta, take U.S. Route 163 north 23 miles to Indian Route 42 (the entrance road to Monument Valley Tribal Park) and turn right (east). Drive 4 miles to the park entrance booth, where you will receive directions to the campground.

**FYI:** The camping fee is \$10 per night, and there's another \$5 per person entrance fee to access Monument Valley Tribal Park. The campground is primitive; however, there are chemical toilets and picnic tables. The Navajo Nation observes daylight saving time, while the rest of Arizona does not. And be sure to pack every memory card or roll of film you can find — you'll need them all.

**More Information:** Monument Valley Tribal Park, 435-727-5874 or [www.navajonationparks.org](http://www.navajonationparks.org)

### SPILLWAY CAMPGROUND, WOODS CANYON LAKE

Just a mile or so north of the edge of the Mogollon Rim, about 30 minutes northeast of Payson, this fantastic fishing lake offers campers an oceanfront view, so to speak. When I'm there, I like to pitch my tent under the ponderosa pines at the Spillway Campground. There's nothing better than listening to the swish of the branches and the lapping of water just 30 yards below. The campground provides a shady spot to cool off after hiking along the scenic Mogollon Rim, home to the largest contiguous stand of ponderosa pines in the world.

**Directions:** From Payson, drive east on State Route 260 past Kohl's Ranch to where the road tops out on the Mogollon Rim. Turn left onto Forest Road 300, across from the Rim Visitors Center; follow the signs for approximately 5 miles to Woods Canyon Lake.

**FYI:** The camping fee is \$20 per night. Reservations are highly recommended; make them at 877-444-6777 or online at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov). Because the lake is located at an elevation of 7,500 feet, the

33 miles. Turn right onto State Route 88 and drive 12 miles. Turn right onto Forest Road 79 and continue 1 mile to the site. Another option is to take State Route 88 from Apache Junction.

**FYI:** A \$6 per day fee applies. At an elevation of 1,900 feet, this site is better suited for late summer and early fall; however, nighttime temperatures will often drop into the 60s, even in the summer. State Route 88 (the Apache Trail) is a narrow, winding mountain road. Filter any water you drink from the lake.

**More Information:** Tonto Basin Ranger District, Tonto National Forest, 928-467-3200 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto)

### CUTTHROAT CAMPGROUND, BIG LAKE

This beautiful site in a tents-only campground on the south shore of Big Lake offers great views of nearby Mount Baldy. Named for the trout that are stocked in the area lakes, the 9,040-foot-high site is surrounded by groves of aspens and grassy meadows. If you're looking for a little exercise, follow the Little Colorado River drainage up the slopes of Mount Baldy — the views from the top extend well into New Mexico. You'll find potable water, showers and vault toilets on-site;

filter any water you drink from the lake.

**Directions:** From Pinetop, drive east on State Route 260 for 60 miles. Turn south onto State Route 261 and continue 20 miles. Turn south onto Forest Road 115 and drive 1 mile.

**FYI:** The camping fee is \$12 per night, and there are 18 campsites available; RVs are not allowed. The campground is open May through September; reservations may be made by calling 928-537-8888 or online at [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com). Take a warm sleeping bag. You'll need it.

**More Information:** Springerville Ranger District, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, 928-333-4301 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf)

**RIGHT:** Keanu and Royce James enjoy a campfire along the Colorado River at a Three Dunes campsite.

**BELOW:** Point Sublime in Grand Canyon National Park is an apt description for one of Arizona's ultimate camping spots.



nights will be chilly — you might even need an extra blanket. The campground is closed mid-September through mid-May, earlier or later, depending on weather. Drinking water is available.

**More Information:** Springerville Ranger District, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, 928-333-4301 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf)



### POINT SUBLIME, GRAND CANYON

Rarely does a name say it all, but this one surely does. After 18 deeply rutted, often-muddy miles on a high-centered road, you'll come to the naked limestone ledges at the very edge of the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. You'll know you're there when you're surrounded by endless vistas to the south, east and west. At any time of day, from morning sunbeams to afternoon thunderstorm displays, it's likely you'll be blown away by what you'll see in front of you. So, pack a camera, preferably something panoramic, a tripod, a rain slicker and watch the weather, light and drama change the views of the Canyon every other second.

**Directions:** From Flagstaff, drive north on State Route 89 to State Route 89A and turn left. Continue to State Route 67 and turn south toward the North Rim entrance to Grand Canyon National Park. Turn right just before the ranger station before reaching the rim.

**FYI:** The camping is free; however, it's primitive, which means there are no amenities and no potable water, and a camping permit is required. Permits are available from the Backcountry Information Office of Grand Canyon National Park. The office is open 1-5 p.m., Monday through Friday only. Beware, this is remote backcountry, so



be prepared and check your spare tire before leaving the house (see Editor's Note, page 16). A high-clearance vehicle is strongly recommended.

**More Information:** Backcountry Information Office, Grand Canyon National Park, 928-638-7875 or [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)



### THREE DUNES

Arizona's "West Coast," as it's known, offers a wide variety of small, secluded campsites, many of which are reachable only by boat. One of my favorites, Three Dunes, is in a small cove ringed by a soft, sandy beach. I especially like the wind-sculpted dunes that afford views up

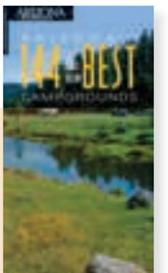
and down the river. It reminds me of the shoreline along the Sea of Cortes. In addition to being a scenic location to shoot, it's also ideal if you just want to camp and relax.

**Directions:** To Cattail Cove State Park from Lake Havasu City, drive south on State Route 95 for 11 miles. Turn right (west) onto Lake Shore Boulevard and follow to the park's entrance. To reach the park's 28 primitive boat-in campsites by motorized boat, contact a park ranger.

**FYI:** The camping fee is \$10 per night. Although it can get warm in the daytime, evenings cool off nicely by the water, even during the summer months. Nevertheless, always keep plenty of water handy, and filter any water you drink from the river.

**More Information:** Cattail Cove State Park, 928-855-1223 or [www.azstateparks.com/Parks/CACO](http://www.azstateparks.com/Parks/CACO)

**ADDITIONAL READING:** For more campsites, pick up a copy of our book, *Arizona's 144 Best Campgrounds*. Now in its fifth printing, the book (\$15.95) features the state's most beautiful campgrounds. To order a copy, call 800-543-5432 or visit [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com).



# Green Miles

When it comes to Arizona, there are a couple of half-baked stereotypes: 1) the state is overrun with old people and 2) the terrain is nothing but hot, dry desert. Here's the reality: Arizona ranks 25th in the U.S. in terms of people over 65 (even Vermont has more seniors per capita) and third in terms of biodiversity. And with that biodiversity comes four seasons, including summer. You can keep buying into the stereotypes, but as you'll see in this month's portfolio, when it comes to the greens of summer, Arizona can certainly hold its own, no matter how old you are.

.....  
 A Portfolio by Nick Berezenko  
 and Suzanne Mathia  
 .....

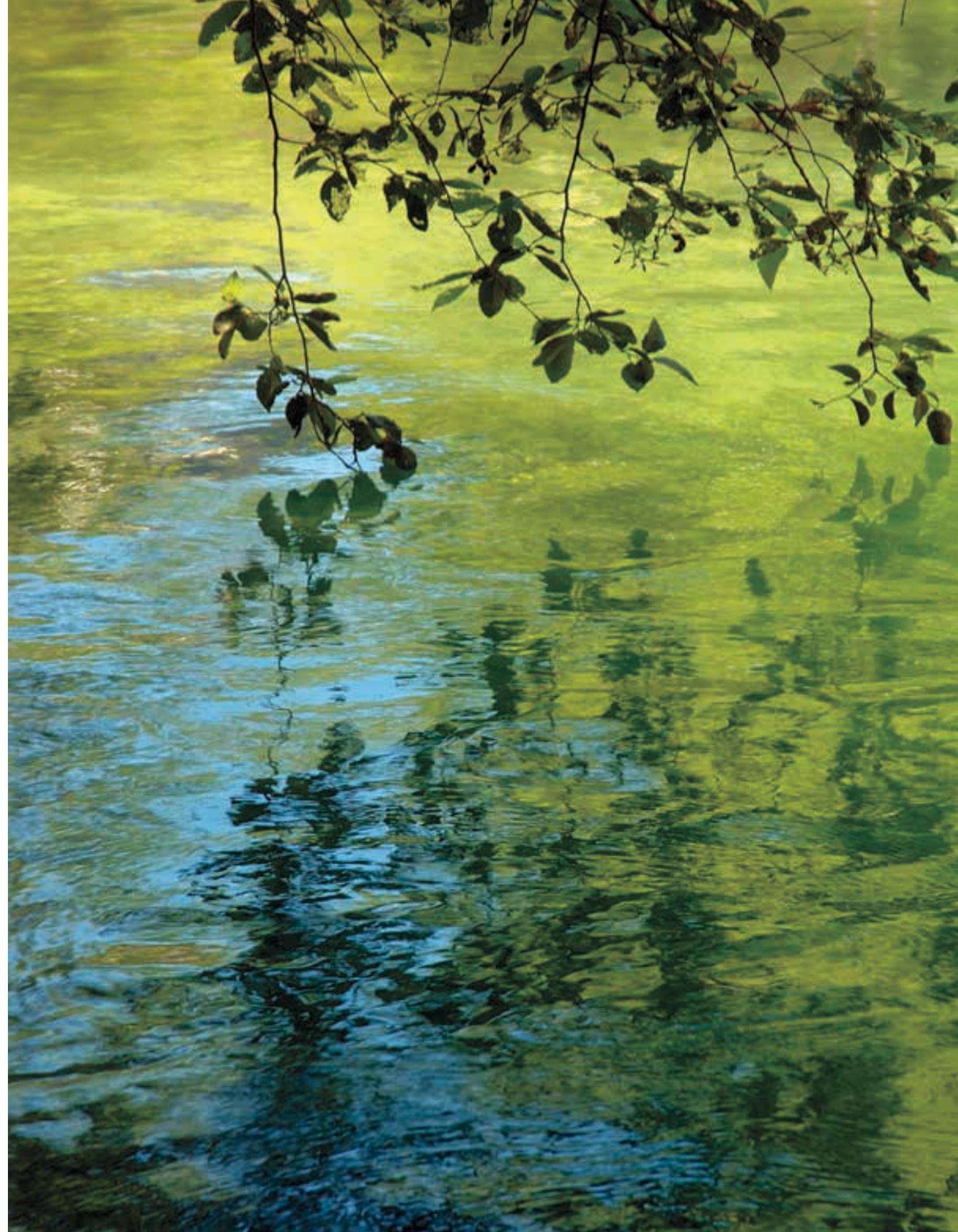


PRECEDING PANEL: A drop of dew clings to a blade of grass, showing the softer side of Arizona summers.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK BEREZENKO

ABOVE: An iris bud reveals its multihued form before coming into full bloom. PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZANNE MATHIA

RIGHT: Central Arizona's Fossil Creek reflects the low-hanging branches of an Arizona alder. PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK BEREZENKO





Tonto Falls flows amid a variety of verdant vegetation  
in the Tonto National Forest, below the Mogollon Rim.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK BEREZENKO



ABOVE: A yellow bee plant stands out against the red soil of Fossil Springs Wilderness in the Coconino National Forest. PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK BEREZENKO

RIGHT: Sunset's glow combines with reflections of Oak Creek's tree-lined banks to create an idyllic summer scene. PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZANNE MATHIA



Wild grapevines cover the lush landscape of Havasu Canyon within Grand Canyon National Park.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZANNE MATHIA





LEFT: A waterfall rushes over travertine cliffs at Tonto Natural Bridge State Park.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZANNE MATHIA

ABOVE: Along the Barnhardt Trail in the Mazatzal Mountains, a seep in the quartzite walls provides moisture to the area's natural foliage.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK BEREZENKO ■



# WATCH FOR WILDLIFE

People get excited about seeing elk. And antelopes. And anything else in the wild kingdom. They'll even stop in the middle of the road and pull out their cameras. But that's a bad idea. Instead, go where our wildlife expert likes to go. It's safer, it's scenic and you might even catch a glimpse of an endangered species.

BY LORI K. BAKER

Blue-throated hummingbird  
PHOTOGRAPH BY BRUCE D. TAUBERT

To order a print of this photograph, call 866-962-1191 or visit [www.arizonahighwaysprints.com](http://www.arizonahighwaysprints.com).

Despite evidence to the contrary in places like Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona is still the epicenter of the Wild Wild West. Not the cowboys-and-Indians kind of wildness, but wildlife — from raise-the-hair-on-the-back-of-your-neck encounters with Gila monsters and black bears to heart-warming glimpses of iridescent hummingbirds and diffident Kaibab squirrels. Spotting a rare Mexican gray wolf in the White Mountains, spying an even rarer elegant trogon in a riparian area, or seeing an elk saunter through an alpine meadow is not only a thrill, it's an uplifting experience. If anyone should know, it's Bruce D. Taubert, an acclaimed wildlife photographer and wildlife biologist who has devoted more than 25 years to protecting wildlife and Arizona's remaining wild places. In a recent interview, he shared 10 of his favorite places to view wildlife.

## GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK

"Once you see the condor soaring, it owns you," writes National Public Radio reporter John Nielsen in his book, *Condor: To the Brink and Back — The Life and Times of One Giant Bird*. After dramatically surviving near-extinction, this prehistoric bird, a remnant of the Pleistocene epoch, now soars gracefully for miles and miles over the vast cliffs and buttes of the Grand Canyon's South Rim — its giant 9-foot wingspan outstretched. This is home to one of only three wild populations of California condors in the world. The scruffy black vulture with a bald head was rescued from the brink of extinction by a successful captive-breeding program and reintroduction at Arizona's Vermilion Cliffs beginning in 1996. While many other skittish wildlife species dodge for cover along the Canyon's South Rim, which draws about 4.5 million visitors a year, the California condor can easily be spotted windsurfing the updrafts. If your timing is right, you might also glimpse mule deer, bighorn sheep and elk.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Flagstaff, drive west on Interstate 40 for approximately 35 miles to the State Route 64 exit. Drive north on SR 64 for 62 miles to the South Rim entrance of Grand Canyon National Park.

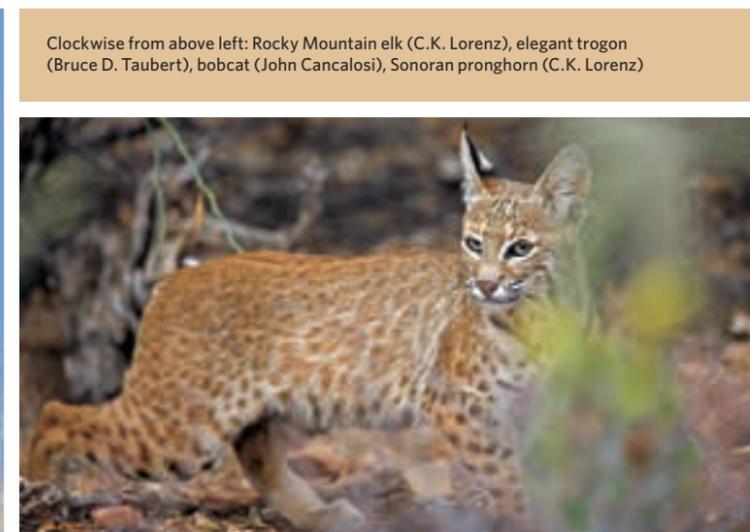
**INFORMATION:** 928-638-7888 or [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)

## CAVE CREEK CANYON

A splash of color catches your eye — a glistening green back, a bright crimson belly and long coppery tail. With binoculars in hand, you spy one of Arizona's rarest and most dazzling birds, the elegant trogon, a top prize for bird-watchers. "If there's a single bird among the roughly six dozen Arizona species that fill the dreams of out-of-state birders planning their first trip to the Southwest, it most assuredly must be the elegant trogon," says Jim Burns, author of *Jim Burns' Arizona Birds: From the Backyard to the Backwoods*. One of the best places to see this flamboyant bird, by which even dazzling hummingbirds pale by comparison, is Cave Creek Canyon, located on the outskirts of Portal in Southeastern Arizona. Your best bet is to take the South Fork Trail, which starts at the South Fork Picnic Area and crosses and recrosses a stream as it meanders through a riparian forest of walnut, sycamore and cypress trees. Enjoy a few moments of silence, and you might spy a cast of characters in the branches: a red-faced warbler, Arizona woodpecker, Lucy's warbler, sulphur-bellied flycatcher or one of a variety of hummingbirds found only in Arizona. While Cave Creek Canyon is one of the best places to see wildlife, it's also one of the state's best-kept secrets.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Tucson, take Interstate 10 east for 139 miles, crossing the New Mexico border. Turn right (south) onto U.S. Route 80 and drive 28 miles, then turn right (west) onto the road to Portal, for 7 miles. Head west on Forest Road 42 for approximately 2 miles to the South Fork turnoff; turn right (south) and continue 1 mile to the South Fork Picnic Area and trailhead.

**INFORMATION:** 520-388-8300 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado)



Clockwise from above left: Rocky Mountain elk (C.K. Lorenz), elegant trogon (Bruce D. Taubert), bobcat (John Cancalosi), Sonoran pronghorn (C.K. Lorenz)

## SIPE WHITE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE AREA

Summer brings an array of festivals. In Arizona, there's even a hummingbird festival (High Country Hummers) in the Sipe White Mountain Wildlife Area, outside of Springerville in Eastern Arizona. If you've ever wondered what it would take to catch a high-speed hummingbird, you can find out on July 31, when handlers from the Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory will be at Sipe to capture and collect data on the area's diminutive birds. In this cool, high-elevation destination that includes views of Escudilla Mountain, one of Arizona's tallest peaks, visitors can explore exhibits of live hawks and owls, as well as venture off on four hiking trails through a variety of habitats, including grasslands roamed by abundant elk, pronghorns, mule deer and coyotes. An observant eye might also catch a glimpse of smaller critters, such as porcupines, badgers, Abert's squirrels, golden-mantled and 13-lined ground squirrels, and cliff chipmunks. Make new feathered friends by heading down the 3-mile Rudd Creek Loop Trail, binocs in hand, or by exploring the orchard and tall trees surrounding the visitors center, which is strewn with hummingbird feeders. Rudd Creek is where the action is for songbirds (mountain and western bluebirds, white-breasted nuthatches, American robins, Virginia's warblers, black-headed grosbeaks and Bullock's orioles) and water birds (northern pintails, cinnamon and green-winged teals, white-faced ibises and great blue herons).

**DIRECTIONS:** From Eagar, take State Route 260 to U.S. Route 180/191 and drive south for 2 miles toward Alpine. At the top of a mesa, turn right at the sign, and continue 5 miles to the two parking areas.

**INFORMATION:** 928-367-4281, 602-942-3000 or [www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov)

## KAIBAB PLATEAU PARKWAY

Set your alarm clock for the wee hours of the morning, and you'll be nearly guaranteed a wildlife sighting along this 44-mile National Scenic Byway, which ribbons past ponderosa pines, spruce firs, grassy high plains and mountain meadows, and ends at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. "You'll see lots of Merriam's turkeys along the way, feeding in the fields with their young," says Bruce D. Taubert, retired assistant director for wildlife management for the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and a frequent visitor to this area to photograph mule deer. This is one of only two places (the other is nearby Mount Trumbull) you'll find Kaibab squirrels — shy sprites, known for their tufted ears, contrasting black bellies and white plumes for tails. As the name suggests, the scenic drive crosses the enormous Kaibab Plateau ("Kaibab" is derived from a Paiute word meaning "mountain lying down"), which is home to one of the country's densest populations of northern goshawks.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Flagstaff, drive north on U.S. Route 89. Turn left (west) onto U.S. 89A, where the routes split. Follow the highway to Jacob Lake, which is the start of the Scenic Byway on State Route 67. Continue 30 miles to the Grand Canyon National Park North Rim entrance. The Canyon is 13 miles farther south.

**INFORMATION:** 928-635-5600 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/kai](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/kai)



Gray fox (BRUCE D. TAUBERT)

## SIERRA VISTA

There's one place in Arizona where wildlife is guarded by a fort — Fort Huachuca, the historic headquarters of the 4th Cavalry patrols that pursued Geronimo and the famous Buffalo Soldiers who chased Pancho Villa in 1916. Now a military intelligence and communications center, Fort Huachuca is about the last place you'd expect to find a Garden of Eden. But, bordered by creeks, ponds, forests and waterfalls, Garden Canyon is home to white-tailed deer, pronghorns, javelinas, coatimundis and must-sees for bird-watchers, including elegant trogons, acorn woodpeckers, Mexican jays and red-faced warblers. South of Fort Huachuca, a spring-fed stream and high canyon walls create the moist, cool Ramsey Canyon, known for its immense variety of plant and animal life. In this exotic landscape, water-loving sycamores, maples, lemon lilies and columbines line the banks of Ramsey Creek, often growing just a few feet away from iconic desert cactuses, yuccas and agaves. Here, you might catch glimpses of 14 hummingbird species, including beryllin and white-eared hummingbirds — the numbers peak from mid-July to August. Another bird-watching mecca is nearby Miller Canyon, where visitors lounge at picnic benches at Beatty's Guest Ranch and watch hummingbirds hover around feeders. Meanwhile, the highly elusive plain-capped starthroat has been spotted at Ash Canyon, along with the Scott's oriole and Lucifer hummingbird.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Tucson, drive 44 miles east on Interstate 10. Take Exit 302, turn right (south) onto State Route 90, and drive 30 miles to the center of Sierra Vista.

**INFORMATION:** 520-417-6960 or [www.visitsierravista.com](http://www.visitsierravista.com)

## MOUNT LEMMON

Before you embark on the 25-mile National Scenic Byway leading to Mount Lemmon, which is known by several aliases — General Hitchcock Highway, the Catalina Highway, the Sky Island Scenic Parkway

or simply Mount Lemmon Road — keep in mind that it's a real zoo out there. The winding road begins in the saguaro-studded Sonoran Desert and climbs past scrub oak and finally into cool mountain forests of pines, aspens and firs at the top. As you travel through the varied habitats, just about anything might wander out of the woods: a white-tailed deer, black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, ringtail, gray fox or red squirrel. "It is the best place to see the yellow-eyed junco, a real rare bird that's found in one or two sites in Arizona," Taubert says. It's also home to the Arizona woodpecker, Steller's jay, plumbeous and Hutton's vireos, hepatic and western tanagers, mountain chickadees and painted redstarts.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Tucson, drive northeast on the Catalina Highway to the national forest boundary where the road designation changes to (General) Hitchcock Highway. Continue up the mountain 26 miles to the village of Summerhaven and another 2 miles to the summit.

**INFORMATION:** 520-388-8300 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado)

## MADERA CANYON

Madera Creek zigzags through the heart of this canyon in the Santa Rita Mountains south of Tucson, spinning lush ribbons of grasslands, sycamores and pines. This is a fecund realm for more than 240 species of birds — including 15 different hummingbirds, which flutter among scenic views of 9,453-foot Mount Wrightson and the broad Santa Cruz Valley. If you're a birder stalking an elegant trogon, painted redstart, broad-billed hummingbird or whiskered screech owl, this is the place to be. Meanwhile, be on the lookout for the Mexican jay, bridled titmouse, acorn and Arizona woodpeckers and sulphur-bellied and dusky-capped flycatchers. Exotic mammals and reptiles also roam there, so if you've ever wanted to brush past a coatimundi, mountain skink or Madrean alligator lizard, this is the place.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Tucson, drive south on Interstate 19 to Continental Road, Exit 63. Continue approximately 11 miles, following the signs to Madera Canyon Road.

**INFORMATION:** 520-388-8300 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado)

## SWIFT TRAIL

Don't let the name fool you. It's best to take it slow on this 35-mile roller-coaster drive that starts at an elevation of 3,200 feet among cactus, yucca and mesquite and ends at 9,400 feet in verdant alpine meadows just below the top of Mount Graham. From an ecologist's point of view, traversing these switchbacks is the equivalent of driving from Mexico to Canada in one leisurely afternoon, because you pass through five of North America's seven life zones, all populated by a variety of plants and wildlife. The endangered Mount Graham red squirrel (it's actually grayish-brown in color with rusty and tan markings along its back) inhabits the highest elevations. Stage a stake-out and you might also see white-tailed deer, Abert's squirrels, black bears, northern goshawks or Yarrow's spiny lizards.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Safford, drive 8 miles southward on U.S. Route 191. Turn right and head southwest on State Route 366, the Swift Trail. The road continues for 35 miles to the top.

**INFORMATION:** 520-388-8300 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado)

## PINETOP

Just take a seat on a park bench along the Lake Loop Trail in Pinetop-Lakeside's Woodland Lake Park and enjoy the show while ospreys, perched on snags surrounding the lake, dive for fish. You might also spot turkey vultures, double-crested cormorants, pied-billed grebes, great blue herons and belted kingfishers, along with a host of woodpeckers, hummingbirds, blackbirds and swallows during the summer months. For a road trip, head out on the 45-mile Wildcat Point Loop Drive around dawn or dusk, and this road, which passes through old-growth forest and skirts Black River vistas, might also offer a sneak peek at elk and mule deer.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Phoenix, drive east on Interstate 10 for 10 miles to U.S. Route 60. Head east on U.S. 60 for 80 miles to Globe. Turn left, remaining on U.S. 60, and continue 75 miles to Show Low. Turn right (south) on State Route 260 for 9 miles to Pinetop. Turn right onto Rim Road and continue a half-mile to Wagon Wheel Road. Take Wagon Wheel Road less than a mile to White Mountain Boulevard, the center of Pinetop.

**INFORMATION:** 928-368-6700 or [www.ci.pinetop-lakeside.az.us/woodlandlake.htm](http://www.ci.pinetop-lakeside.az.us/woodlandlake.htm)

## SAN FRANCISCO PEAKS

Each summer, migratory songbirds flock to an 1890s homestead, where a rough-hewn cabin remains in a small, scenic mountain meadow on the south slope of the San Francisco Peaks. Two springs form a small creek and pond surrounded by towering ponderosa, fir and aspen trees — an enticing habitat known as the Lamar Haines Memorial Wildlife Area that offers visitors a good chance of seeing mule deer and elk in the mornings and evenings.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Flagstaff, drive 7 miles northwest on State Route 180. Turn north on Forest Road 516/Snowbowl Road and continue 4.5 miles to the designated parking for the wildlife area.

**INFORMATION:** 928-527-3600 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino)



BY MARY TOLAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER SCHWEPKER

# RANCH WOMEN

Thanks to John Wayne, John Ford, Louis L'Amour, Larry McMurry ... a romantic image of the American cowboy dominates books, movies and even advertising. Less attention, however, has been given to ranch women, who work just as hard as the men, whether they're in the kitchen or out on the range.

**I**t's close to noon on this windy Friday, and Victoria Howell Westlake has been up since 4 a.m. She's preparing her second meal of the day, which, like the first, will feed a dozen or so hungry cowboys, including her father, husband and new brother-in-law.

As huge beefsteaks sizzle on the outside grill, Victoria and her mother, Jamie Howell, scrub and slice potatoes inside the bunkhouse kitchen, and then Victoria drops them into a large cast-iron skillet on the gas stove. On the long Formica-topped table is a mouthwatering spread, laid out cafeteria-style. With the steaks are cowboy beans, greens, rolls, tall plastic pitchers of lemonade and ice tea, and a tantalizing blueberry cobbler.

The men file in, some with spurs jingling, all in jeans, cowboy hats off for this midday dinner, and serve themselves heaping plates as the women stand by. After the men's plates are filled, Victoria, her mother, sister Danielle Howell Rodgers, Victoria's young daughters, Katherine and Rebecca, and a couple of visitors join in the breaking of the bread. Or, rather, the freshly baked rolls.

It's the last day of the fall roundup at the Redlands Camp of the Babbitts' Cataract Ranch about 75 miles northeast of Flagstaff. The cowboys have gathered to wean the calves, perform "preg checks" and to "turn the cows out" to winter country.

Like many ranch families, the Howell men and women work hard together to keep the cattle business thriving. Jamie's husband, Vic Howell, has been managing the Babbitt ranches for about a decade. Before him, his father, Bill Howell, worked as Babbitt ranch manager for 25 years.

Romantic images of the cowboy permeate American literature, arts, music and even advertising. Less attention has been paid to ranching women, who can be found in ranch kitchens and out on the range. The Howell family provides one snapshot of a way of life for ranchers in the American West today.

Family traditions are passed through the generations of this Northern Arizona ranching family. And not simply riding and roping. Both Jamie and Vic come from ranching families. Jamie grew up in Prescott and married Vic when she was 17; he was an older man at 19. Vic basically grew up on the Babbitt ranches. And now, all three of Vic and Jamie's daughters have married cowboys they met while their future husbands worked for Vic. Two of those cowboys still work for their father-in-law.

"Vic's thing was he wanted his girls to grow up and ranch and rope and ride and brand," Jamie says after the cowboys give their thanks and leave the bunkhouse with full bellies. While Jamie and Victoria clean up the kitchen, Danielle, who married in the summer and is now pregnant, keeps watch over her nieces. "He would tell them, 'You don't have to do this [life], but you have to know how to.'"

"And he knew once we did it, we'd love it," adds Victoria, who with

her sisters is a fourth-generation ranch woman.

Danielle agrees.

"Because Dad didn't make us do this, but he made us learn it so we'd know how, then it was ... like, 'I'm not living in town; that's the last thing I'd ever want to do,'" Danielle explains. "The last thing I'd want to do is marry some man who wanted to live in town."

She didn't. Danielle married Clay Rodgers, who, like the Howell girls, had grown up on the Babbitt ranches. Their wedding saw a Flagstaff church bursting at the seams with long-legged cowboys in their go-to-town jeans and best snap-button shirts, pretty cowgirls and a heap of children. A photo in the church vestibule shows Danielle in her white wedding dress donning a white cowboy hat.

The third Howell daughter is Cassandra Howell Oland, who lives with her husband about 40 miles southwest of Prescott, where she's a ranch bookkeeper. Her husband, Ryan Oland, worked as a horse-breaker for Vic, and now shoes and breaks horses outside Prescott.

Cassandra didn't join the family for the fall roundup. But she echoed her sisters' and mother's words one summer day in Flagstaff where she and her sisters traveled to get their toenails painted for Danielle's wedding.

"Everything that Dad was part of, we were part of, too," Cassandra says, picking out just the right faux rhinestone to be placed on her big toenail for the wedding. "He didn't have boys, so he seized the opportunity of having girls. Dad gave us each a horse when we were born and wanted us definitely to be part of it all."

All three Howell girls were home-schooled by their mom. "I don't regret home-schooling them and being able to have children at home and teaching at home. We rodeoed with them and 4-H'd with them; the family 4-H club was a big part of the girls' growing up," Jamie says, stopping for a moment before shaping her next words. "We only have them for a short time. I was able to spend every day with them while they were little."

Many ribbons, trophies and giant belt buckles were brought home by the girls' efforts. Cassandra was the only one of the Howell girls who wasn't 100 percent sure if ranch life was for her.

"When I was little, I wanted to be a beautician. Later I thought about going to New York and pursuing modeling," says the second daughter, who, like her sisters, has long straight hair and a stunning smile. The second year of her marriage, she was pregnant with her first child. "We lived in Tucson, in an apartment," Cassandra recalls. "I hated it. I can't handle all those people. It wasn't for me, and it wasn't for my husband."



PRECEDING PANEL: Victoria Howell Westlake leads her daughter, Katherine, out of the gate after a long day of work at the Tin House Ranch location.

FAR LEFT AND LEFT: In addition to kitchen duty, Westlake drives heifers onto the loading truck for the Babbitt ranches.

ABOVE: Danielle Howell Rodgers sports the appropriate cowgirl attire.

**A**t another family workday, this time in November, Victoria and Danielle join their husbands and father. Instead of cooking for a crew on this windy day marked by puffy clouds flying across the sun's rays, the sisters mount up. The morning is filled with the constant lowing of heifers.

As their mom and aunt work the cattle, Katherine and Rebecca, the next potential generation of ranch women, watch from the other side of the fence, helping their dad weigh the heifers, and tossing stones at a stock tank.

Both women wear jeans, boots, winter parkas and, of course, cowboy hats — a gray one for Victoria and a tawny one with a jaunty feather for Danielle. Danielle wears a white silky scarf around her neck to keep the dust out, and Victoria's is silver.

Today's work is to gather heifers from the pastures to the corrals at the Tin House camp — part of the Babbitts' Espee Ranch, off State Route 64, about halfway between Williams and the South Rim of the Grand Canyon — and onto an 18-wheeler that will transport the animals to Oklahoma.

Victoria rides Piñon while Danielle rides Chocolate, the ranch's fastest horse and one that helped both Cassandra and Danielle win numerous rodeo prizes, including trips to nationals for Danielle when she was in high school. Chocolate was awarded the state's prestigious Horse of the Year award 2 years in a row, and carried Danielle around hundreds of barrels at a breathtaking clip.

The sisters look like they were born on horseback. Horse and rider become one, turning the horses like city girls might take a bicycle around a bend. The job requires moving often-reluctant cattle from one corral to the other to be weighed and then counted before being loaded onto the truck. The women lean over to pull gates closed, horses backing up, moving sideways, flowing with their riders. It's a dusty job as the wind whips through camp.

Both women slap the ends of their coiled ropes over and over, nudging the heifers from one corral to another. Clay also rides the herd, as Scott, Victoria's husband, stays outside the corral with the little girls.

"Hey," Danielle calls out as one of the animals decides it's not interested in moving into the weighing area with the rest of the herd. Danielle deftly turns Chocolate and the two race after the lone heifer to bring her back. Danielle clicks her tongue to get the animal moving.

As Victoria moves another bunch of heifers, she yells a harsh "hey, hey, hey, hey, hey." Suddenly, the little voice of one of the girls floats on the air from outside of the corral. "Mommy, mommy, mommy."

"In a minute, sweetheart," Victoria answers from atop her mount. Her voice is now high and sing-songy, the perpetual mother's call. Then it's back to the raspy "hey, hey, hey, hey, hey" as she focuses again on the cattle running in front of Piñon.

It's been a few years now since Victoria has worked on horseback. She's content in both jobs, but says it's fun to mount back up and work the cattle.

"It's like riding a bike. You never forget," she says after the job is finished. When she and Danielle are asked if the men will cook for *them*, they both laugh quietly.

"I wish," Victoria says. "It's so much more work now because of having them [her daughters]. You've got to get them ready, get yourself ready, do all this, and then go home and work."

Growing up, Victoria, being the eldest, was often her dad's main sidekick. "He'd say to me things like, 'You pick out a good bull,' and I would," Victoria remembers. "I didn't cook, I didn't do stuff in the kitchen until now. When Scott and I got married, I still helped. I was out there with him 3 days a week, maybe 4."

Vic Howell is thrilled that all three of his daughters are living the ranching life.

"It's a great way to raise kids," he says while holding his granddaughter Rebecca during a local cowboy rodeo. "I hope it stays around. I hope we don't lose it. American standards live through the ranching life: truth, honesty, fairness and values."

"I'm happy to see our girls choosing men who continue that lifestyle," he adds. "They didn't move to New York City or L.A. to lose that."

Little Katherine is already in love with the life. She wears pink cowboy boots, no matter what else makes up her outfit of the day.

"She's been riding forever, but by herself since she was 4," Victoria says. She remembers earlier in the year when Katherine had just turned 4 and she ran barrels for the first time — at a lope and atop one of the safer horses on the ranch. She was not pleased. "She said, 'I just want to ride on Chocolate, and go faster and faster and faster.' And when I cooked for the cowboys last spring, Katherine thought it was wonderful — all this food and all these guys."

Today, there's no telling what life choices will be made by the fifth-generation Howell cowgirls — Katherine, Rebecca and their youngest cousins — but one thing remains clear: This family will keep working together to keep the ranching tradition alive. And the Howell women will continue to support an American way of life, far from the America of malls, lattes and instant messaging. ■



**GARLAND PRAIRIE** There's a lot of history along this back road in Northern Arizona, but it's the scenery that'll really get your attention.

BY JOBETH JAMISON  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM BEAN

There's an age-old stigma about venturing to the south side of almost any set of railroad tracks. Mothers warn against it. Songs lament the consequences. But it's probably safe to say that if Mom or Bruce Springsteen had ever ventured through Garland Prairie — just west of Flagstaff and south of the BNSF Railway tracks — they'd sing a different song.

After exiting south, off Interstate 40 at Parks (Exit 178), onto Garland Prairie Road (Forest Road 141), you not only cross the tracks, you also cross

into another dimension of Northern Arizona. With such driving-force destinations as the Grand Canyon, the San Francisco Peaks and Sedona nearby, Garland Prairie gets a lot less attention, but its recreational and scenic bounties rank right up there.

At first, traveling the 26-mile side stretch from Parks to Williams feels a little like traveling down several other roads in the Kaibab National Forest, whose vistas are narrowed to dense, shady stands of ponderosa pines. Then, 4 miles in, you begin to break through the wooded atmosphere into the glorious open space of historic Garland Prairie.

In the 1860s, this spot was a stopping point for military troops and miners making their way from Flagstaff to build Fort Whipple near Prescott, and to find gold along Lynx Creek. Allegedly, it was also the stomping grounds of Bill Williams, a 19th century guide and trapper whose Kid Shel-len-like reputation made him

a local legend — a legend that lives on in the nearby town, river and mountain that bear his name. Ultimately, the brutal winters and short water supply sent homesteaders and farmers searching for greener pastures. The splinter-bare remains of their cabins and structures give the prairie a lonesome, ghostly charm that, along with the panoramic views of the San Francisco Peaks, is uniquely photogenic. Still, there's plenty of new life at the meadow's southernmost end, where the road passes through a block of modern-day homes.

Deer, antelopes, ospreys and a wealth of other wildlife can also be seen roaming and playing — especially around Scholz Lake, a few miles north of FR 141 on Forest Road 63, and White Horse Lake, south of FR 141 on Forest Road 109. Summer brings abundant flora to the prairie and adjacent meadowland of McDougal Flat, including sunflowers and acres of golden crownbeard. If you care to linger, there are a number of hiking and biking trails, including the Overland Trail, off FR 141. Also, White Horse Lake offers fishing and camping.

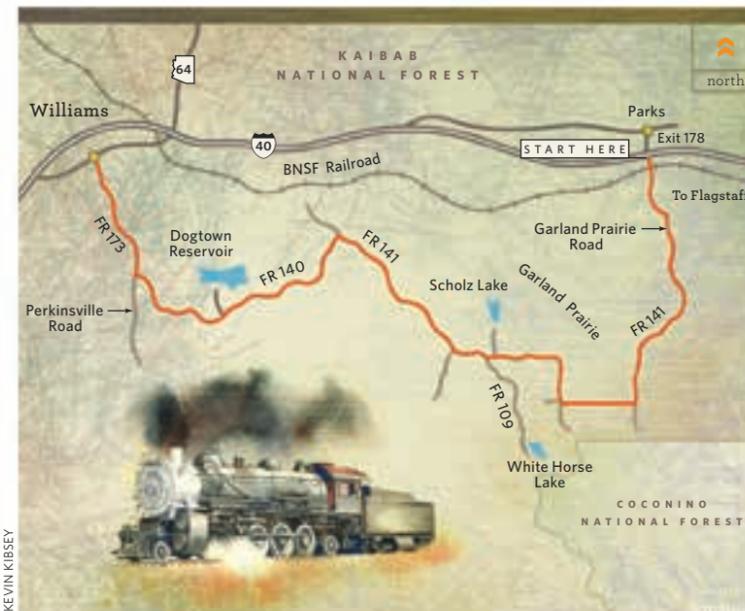
At mile 15, FR 141 comes to a junction with Forest Road 140. Take FR 140 past Dogtown Reservoir to Forest Road 173 and turn right (north) to Williams. Be sure to visit the Williams Kaibab National Forest Visitors Information Center (a restored Santa Fe Railroad depot) before you end your rebel foray to the “wrong” side of the tracks.

**LEFT:** Summer wildflowers blanket Garland Prairie as the San Francisco Peaks rise in the background.

**ABOVE:** Area wildlife, such as ospreys, deer, elk, coyotes and wild turkeys, can be found at Scholz Lake.



**ADDITIONAL READING:** For more scenic drives, pick up a copy of our book, *The Back Roads*. Now in its fifth edition, the book (\$19.95) features 40 of the state's most scenic drives. To order a copy, call 800-543-5432 or visit [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com).



KEVIN KIBSEY

tour guide

Note: Mileages are approximate.

**LENGTH:** 26 miles one way (paved/dirt)

**DIRECTIONS:** From Flagstaff, drive west on Interstate 40 for 17 miles to Parks (Exit 178), and turn left (south) onto Garland Prairie Road (Forest Road 141). Approximately 7.5 miles south of I-40, turn right and continue west on Garland Prairie Road. About 1.5 miles later, take another right to continue north on Garland Prairie Road for 5 miles, then west for 3 more miles to the junction of forest roads 141 and 140. Turn left (south) on FR 140 and continue 2.8 miles to Perkinsville Road (Forest Road 173). From there, continue on to Williams or back to I-40.

**VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS:** Accessible to all vehicles. A four-wheel drive, high-clearance vehicle is recommended in winter and wet weather conditions. Deep water and mud may be present.

**WARNING:** Back-road travel can be hazardous, so be aware of weather and road conditions. Carry plenty of water. Don't travel alone and let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.

**INFORMATION:** Williams Ranger District, 928-635-5600 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/kai](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/kai)

Travelers in Arizona can visit [www.az511.gov](http://www.az511.gov) or dial 511 to get information on road closures, construction, delays, weather and more.



**WIDFORSS TRAIL** It's true, there are a lot of great hikes in Arizona, but this one is the best. There, we said it.

BY ROBERT STIEVE  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID ELMS JR.

It's hard to single out the best hike in Arizona. There are too many 10s. That said, a solid case can be made for the Widforss Trail. It's quiet, the ecosystem is exceedingly diverse and over your left shoulder you'll see one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. The only thing the Widforss doesn't offer is elevation gain, which is important to hikers who want to burn calories while drinking in the scenery. Still, this is a 10-mile round-tripper, so a few calories will be incinerated.

Named for artist Gunnar Widforss, this relatively easy trail follows the rim of the Grand Canyon all the way to Widforss Point. A few minutes into the hike, you'll see a box with trail guide pamphlets inside. Grab one. The guides include numbered listings that correspond to numbered sites along the first 2.5 miles of the trail. No matter how many times you've hiked this trail, you're bound to learn something from the guide.

When you're not learning, take time to enjoy the idyllic forest of Colorado blue spruce, Engelmann spruce, white fir, Douglas fir and aspens, the latter of which you'll see growing in droves where recent

fires have burned. You'll be amazed at how quickly the aspens move in and shoot up once the sun isn't blocked by the towering evergreens, including the one you'll see at Site No. 8. It's not official, but this might be the biggest ponderosa pine on the trail. It's definitely impressive, and it's several hundred years old.

From the big tree, the trail meanders through the quiet forest. Before long, you'll start catching glimpses of the Canyon to your left. Then, after about 30 minutes, you'll come to a short side trail that leads right to the rim, from which you can see into Transept Canyon below — it's a side canyon of the big canyon.

The scenery stays much the same as you rack up the miles, and after about an hour, the trail angles away from the rim and eventually leads to a lush valley, which ranks as the best part of the trail — other than the Canyon, of course. Here, the narrow path cuts through a beautiful grove of aspens and ferns and tall grasses. The wind blows a lot on the North Rim, and this is a great place to pause and appreciate the sound. Also, if you sit still long enough, you might catch a glimpse of a Kaibab squirrel, a shy, dark animal with tufted ears and a bushy white tail. Deer and turkeys are likely to cross your path, as well.

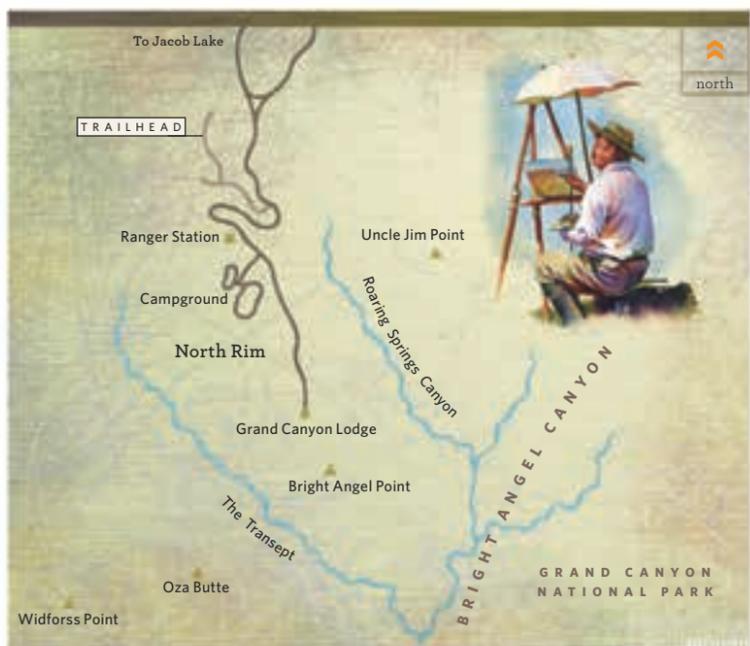
Take your time, but keep in mind the best is yet to come. Not far from the lush valley is the approach to Widforss Point. Although the trail stops short of the actual point, the views from the end of the trail are out of this world. Among other famous Canyon landmarks, you'll be able to see Isis Temple and Cheops Pyramid. You can also see Phantom Creek. Bottom line: The views are second-to-none. As you're standing there, you'll agree that there might be other trails in Arizona that compare to the Widforss, but few, if any, have this kind of diversity and solitude. Not to mention the temples and the pyramids. ■



Widforss Trail, on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, winds through pristine forest landscapes (opposite page) that lead to Widforss Point (above), which offers views of Isis Temple and the South Rim.

trail guide

- LENGTH:** 10 miles round-trip
- DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- ELEVATION:** 8,200 to 7,811 feet
- DIRECTIONS:** Drive 4 miles north of Grand Canyon Lodge on the North Rim, and turn left onto the gravel road marked with a sign to the trailhead.
- VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS:** Accessible to all vehicles
- USGS MAP:** Bright Angel Point
- INFORMATION:** Backcountry Office, Grand Canyon National Park, 928-638-7875 or [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)
- LEAVE-NO-TRACE ETHICS:**
  - Plan ahead and be prepared.
  - Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
  - Dispose of waste properly and pack out your trash.
  - Leave what you find.
  - Respect wildlife and minimize impact.
  - Be considerate of others.



KEVIN KIBBEY



where  
is this?

## Wing It

BY SALLY  
BENFORD  
PHOTOGRAPH  
BY LAURENCE  
PARENT

This winged figure is one of a pair that straddle the American flag at this man-made milestone of modern ingenuity. Considered one of the greatest engineering feats in history, construction of this site gave hope to a struggling nation, not to mention jobs to more than 16,000 workers.

Like so many major projects, this one is still surrounded by cranes and construction.



May 2010 Answer:  
Orpheum Theatre.  
Congratulations to  
our winner, Hilary  
Hartline of Phoenix.

**Win a collection of our most popular books!** To enter, correctly identify the location featured above and e-mail your answer to [editor@arizonahighways.com](mailto:editor@arizonahighways.com) — type "Where Is This?" in the subject line. Entries can also be sent to 2039 W. Lewis Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85009. Please include your name, address and phone number. One winner will be chosen in a random drawing of qualified entries. Entries must be postmarked by July 15, 2010. Only the winner will be notified. The correct answer will be posted in our September issue and online at [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com) beginning August 15.

# HELP US ... HELP OUR STATE PARKS!



Slide Rock State Park in Sedona. Photograph by Derek von Briesen

Like every other state in the country, Arizona is dealing with a budget crisis. As a state-owned publication, *Arizona Highways* has felt the impact, and so have our Arizona State Parks. In an effort to weather the storm, we're teaming up with our park colleagues to help ensure that Arizona, through the pages of our magazine and the state's 30 parks, remains open and accessible to residents and visitors alike.

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