

You want fall leaves? OF COURSE WE HAVE
FALL LEAVES SEE PAGE 32

ARIZONA

HIGHWAYS

ESCAPE · EXPLORE · EXPERIENCE

OCTOBER 2011

scenic drives

Good news: Some of the best views in Arizona can be seen from a car window. It's time to hit the road.

State Route 89 from Prescott to Stanton

WOOLLY MAMMALS ON THE
NAVAJO RESERVATION

THEY SPENT 136 DAYS
IN THE GRAND CANYON

A FAMILIAR VOICE FROM
A PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION

INSIDE

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People, places and things from around the state, including an Arizona winemaker who also "dabbles" in rock 'n' roll; a place in Sedona where John Wayne once slept (really); and Sue Scott, the second-most familiar voice on *A Prairie Home Companion*.

18 ONE FOR THE ROADS

We do a lot of stories about where to eat, where to sleep, where to hike ... telling you where to go is a big part of our mission. This time around it's about where to drive. It's one for the roads, and as you'll see, some of Arizona's best scenery can be eyeballed through a car window.

EDITED BY KELLY KRAMER

32 LOCAL COLOR

There's something to be said for every season in Arizona, but this month, fall is our favorite. The Sun Devils, Lumberjacks and Wildcats are back on the field, the sweatshirts and sweaters can come out of the closet, and the oaks, aspens, maples and cottonwoods are showing off their colors.

A PORTFOLIO BY RANDY PRENTICE

42 DIGGING DEEP

The Grand Canyon is known around the world for its scenic beauty, but there's more there than meets the eye. Deep inside, along the Colorado River, is a rich human history that dates back to 12,000 B.C. Although archaeological digs in the Canyon are rare, a recent project unearthed nine sites in 136 days. It was the first dig in 40 years.

BY ANNETTE MCGIVNEY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAWN KISH

50 WOOLLY MAMMALS

Bringing an animal species back from the brink of extinction isn't unprecedented, but wait until you hear the story about Navajo-Churro sheep. These fascinating creatures were saved by a stroke of serendipity. Or maybe it was divine intervention.

BY KATHY RITCHIE

52 SCENIC DRIVE

Hart Prairie Road: Of all the scenic drives in this issue — and there are some beauties — this one might be the most picturesque.

54 HIKE OF THE MONTH

Oaks & Willows Trail: There's a good chance you've never heard of this hike, but now that you have, put it on your list. It's one of our favorites.

56 WHERE IS THIS?



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Join our Facebook community to share your photographs, chat with other fans, enter trivia contests and receive up-to-the-minute information about what's going on behind the scenes at *Arizona Highways*.

► An approaching storm adds to the drama of this already wild sunset as seen from Mescal Road, north of Interstate 10, east of Tucson. | MOREY MILBRADT

FRONT COVER Not exactly off the beaten path, State Route 89 winds southwest from Prescott toward Stanton. | MOREY MILBRADT

BACK COVER A stair-stepped cascade is covered in brightly colored golden maple leaves. | CLAIRE CURRAN



PAUL MARKOV

The Old Red Barn

Unless there's an early snow, I plan on pitching a tent at Los Burros Campground sometime this fall. I've never been, but I'm intrigued by the old red barn that sits there. The barn and a house are all that's left of a ranger station that was built on the site in 1909, and the campsites are located along the edge of a gorgeous meadow. It looks bucolic.

I wasn't thinking about Coleman stoves and sleeping bags when I sat down to write this column. I was thinking about scenic drives and our cover story. I like to flip through the issue before I start writing, and this month, as always, I was holy cowed by the photography: Suzanne Mathia's moody shot of the high desert along Forest Road 209; Morey Milbradt's stark image of the Grand Wash Cliffs; and Tom Bean's panoramic beauty from Mormon Lake Road. They're all landscape shots, they're all magnificent, and they're all to be expected in a story about scenic drives. It was Nick Berezenko's photograph of a red barn, however, that inspired me most.

I'm not really sure why. Mostly, I stick to wilderness areas when I'm off the grid, places where there aren't any signs of man, but the old red barn looks so inviting. Perhaps it represents a simpler time in my life, or maybe it has some kind of Rockwellian appeal. Whatever it is, I'm camping there this fall, and I'm taking the scenic drive that surrounds it.

Forest Road 224, the route from McNary to Vernon via the campground, will be a first for me. It's one of several drives in our story that I haven't done. Pearce Ferry Road is another. The route, which offers great views of the Cerbat Mountains, winds through the rugged landscape between Kingman and Lake Mead. I'm not sure when I'll hit that road, but I will. And you should, too. There's a lot to see through the car window, including fall leaves.

The best bet for that is Hart Prairie Road, which is featured in our monthly *Scenic Drive* (page 52). The dirt road skirts the western edge of the San Francisco Peaks, and it ranks as one of the state's best places to see fall leaves. Another good option is the South Fork of Cave Creek in the Chiricahua Mountains. In *Local Color*, a spectac-

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS TELEVISION



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, and click the *Arizona Highways Television* link on our home page.

ular portfolio by Randy Prentice, we showcase some of that scenery. Unfortunately, this might be the only way you'll get to see it. The Horseshoe Two Fire scorched parts of the Chiricahuas this summer, and at press time, we still weren't able to get in there to assess the damage along the creek. We're hopeful, but not optimistic. Fortunately, things are looking better for Navajo-Churro sheep.

If you're not familiar with this animal, you're not alone. On a list of endangered species, Navajo-Churro sheep wouldn't even be a footnote. In fact, we didn't fully understand their plight until Associate Editor Kathy Ritchie started researching her story, which was inspired by a random photograph and an exchange with Photo Editor Jeff Kida.

Jeff: "Hey Roberto, check out this photo."

Me: "Wow. That's a funky-looking sheep."

Jeff: "It's a rare species that's being reintroduced on the reservation."

Me: "That's cool ... very cool. Let's do a story."

Turns out, the story is a doozy that includes a government-sanctioned program that led to the slaughter of up to 800,000 Navajo-Churros, a ranch in Gonzales, California, a sheep experiment station in New Mexico, and a professor at Cal Poly — a professor who never set out to save sheep, but, thanks to his curiosity and a stroke of serendipity, did just that.

In *Woolly Mammals*, Kat tells the unlikely tale of a rare breed that the Navajos believe was a gift from their deity. Most endangered-species stories don't have happy endings, but this one does. All they need now is a nice red barn on the edge of a meadow.



SEND US YOUR PHOTOS

We're on a mission to collect "Global Snapshots" from all 50 states and as many countries as possible, but we need your help: Please send a photo of you or someone you know posing with our magazine in front of some kind of landmark — the Tower Bridge, Death Valley, a diner — and we'll post it on our website. Send your photos to: kkramer@azdot.gov.

ROBERT STIEVE, editor

Follow me on Twitter: www.twitter.com/azhighways.

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

OCTOBER 2011 VOL. 87, NO. 10

800-543-5432

www.arizonahighways.com

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Arizona Highways® (ISSN 0004-1521) is published monthly by the Arizona Department of Transportation. Subscription price: \$24 a year in the U.S., \$44 outside the U.S. Single copy: \$3.99 U.S. Call 800-543-5432. Subscription correspondence and change of address information: Arizona Highways, P.O. Box 433124, Palm Coast, FL 32143-3124. Periodical postage paid at Phoenix, AZ, and at additional mailing office. CANADA POST INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS MAIL PRODUCT (CANADIAN DISTRIBUTION) SALES AGREEMENT NO. 41220511. SEND RETURNS TO WORLD COLOR, P.O. BOX 875, WINDSOR, ON N9A 6P2. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arizona Highways, P.O. Box 433124, Palm Coast, FL 32143-3124. Copyright © 2011 by the Arizona Department of Transportation. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. The magazine does not accept and is not responsible for unsolicited materials.



PRODUCED IN THE USA

ANNETTE MCGIVNEY

When writer Annette McGivney isn't teaching journalism at Northern Arizona University, she's busy exploring the Southwest. "I've been wandering around in the woods and writing about them since I was a kid growing up in the Big Thicket of East Texas," she says. In *Digging Deep* (page 42), McGivney explores one of her favorite areas, the Grand Canyon. This is her first story for *Arizona Highways*. Her work has also appeared in *Backpacker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *Runner's World*.



DAWN KISH

Having worked as a Colorado River guide from 1998 to 2005, photographer Dawn Kish is very familiar with the Grand Canyon. That background came in handy when she photographed a recent archaeological excavation along the river (see *Digging Deep*, page 42). "I wanted to work for the research trips, have the thrill of whitewater and learn more about the Canyon," she says. "I would row the scientists downriver, and when I wasn't on the oars, I was shooting." Originally from Pennsylvania, Kish moved to Arizona when she was 7 years old. "Arizona is home, especially Flagstaff. I feel really lucky to have mountains, canyons, red rocks, deserts and rivers. This area is amazing." Kish's photographs have also appeared in *National Geographic Explorer*.

RANDY PRENTICE

Photographer Randy Prentice has visited the South Fork of Cave Creek many times over the past 20 years. In this month's portfolio (*Local Color*, page 32), he celebrates the Chiricahua Mountains' stunning fall color. "What makes this place so great is that it's fairly remote," Prentice says. "Because it's tucked away in the southeast corner of the state, traffic is minimal and it's very peaceful." Prentice is a longtime contributor to *Arizona Highways*. His first assignment was in 1986.



RIGHT NICE

What a great gallery of photographs in the August 2011 issue [*What's Right With Arizona*]. Especially impressive are George Stocking's image portraying the sun's dramatic spotlighting of the Grand Canyon's East Rim; Suzanne Mathia's absolutely awesome composition of the Navajo herder with his dog and flock of sheep amid the graceful forms of massive sand dunes; and David Muench's view of Montezuma Castle, uniquely framed by arching sycamore trees.



August 2011

Regarding the recent wildfires, I was really happy to see Gary Ladd's photograph showing the rebirth of the Kaibab National Forest, beginning with young aspen trees, since the June 2006 wildfire that burned more than 58,000 acres of conifer forest along the North Rim Parkway, which winds through the forest toward the North Rim of the Grand Canyon.

RUSS BUTCHER, OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA

STREAM OF MEMORIES

When I saw your *Scenic Drive* in the July 2011 issue, memories came flooding back. Way back in the late 1950s, my father started packing up the family, our Coleman stove and lantern, and the Arctic water cooler and ice chest, and driving us from Phoenix way up to Bull Pen Ranch. In the beginning, we took an old '51 Ford, and later a Rambler station wagon — barely making it over the dry washes on the very primitive gravel road. Back then there was no campground, or improvements of



Summer 1959

any kind. How my dad knew about or even found the place escapes me, but it was a Western paradise for my brother and me, with a beautiful stream with gorgeous swimming holes, hordes of migrating butterflies, and plenty of fish and wildlife. My father told us one morning that a skunk had entered our tent during the night, nosed around and left again while our parents held their breath and hoped that my brother and I didn't wake up and scare the stink out of him. This photograph [above] taken by my mother, Ruby, around 1959 with an old Brownie, shows my dad, Donald; my older brother, Greg; and me cooling off in West Clear Creek.

GARY PAYTON, SKIEN, NORWAY

CARR JACKED

Unfortunate timing on the *Scenic Drive* in your August 2011 issue. Carr Canyon as we knew it is no longer there, and the area will be closed indefinitely because of the recent fire. It destroyed 30,000 acres and 70-plus homes and businesses. The entire lower Huachuca Mountain range has been destroyed, most likely due to human carelessness.

IRENE SILVERMAN, LIBERTY LAKE, WASHINGTON



August 2011

DRAWING ATTENTION

I just had to write you this quick note about your July 2011 issue. On page 49 there's an illustration of a Mexican gray wolf by Dugald Stermer. It is absolutely magnificent.

MARION SUSSMAN, SUNNYSIDE, NEW YORK

FLEETING GLIMPSE

I received the July 2011 copy of your magazine today, and I was very interested in the article on the Mexican gray wolf [*Elusive in Nature*]. I have friends living in Arizona, and I used to visit them almost every year for the past 20 years. On one visit, I think it was around 1999, we were driving from Hannagan Meadow to Alpine, and when we came around a corner on a dirt road, we came to a complete stop as a gray wolf was just crossing the road ahead of us. He stopped to look at us, and then meandered into the woods. Of course, I didn't have my camera with me, which I regret to this day, but it was a beautiful sight!

CHARLENE PAGE, DEXTER, MAINE



August 2011

WRONG ADDRESS

We've just received the August 2011 issue and want to let you know there's an error. On page 12 there's a story about Rigden Ranch. The article states that the ranch is located in Greer. It's located in Kirkland. The photograph of Ms. Margaret, however, is beautiful indeed. They're a lovely family.

ELIZABETH & JOHN G. HARRINGTON,
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

Across the Tracks

To experience the very best of Mescal Road (see page 23), you'll have to go to the other side of the tracks. Fortunately, there's no wrong side on this scenic drive. Information: Santa Catalina Ranger District, 520-749-8700 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado



MOREY K. MILBRADT



PAUL MARKOW

Quietly Making Noise

As a world-famous rock star, Maynard James Keenan is used to the center stage. But even when he's home, in the remote countryside of the Verde Valley, the lead singer of TOOL is attracting attention. Not for his music, but for his wine.

By KATHY RITCHIE

MAYNARD JAMES KEENAN IS not who you think he is. Yes, he is the frontman for TOOL, as well as the rock bands Puscifer and A Perfect Circle, but it's his other work, the work where he literally toils in the fields, that's made him something of a rock star among Arizona oenophiles. Although the state isn't renowned for its wine country, a wine country does exist. And Keenan, because of who he is (that guy from TOOL) and what he's created (Caduceus Cellars and Merkin Vineyards), has helped put Arizona's *terroir* on the map.

Keenan cracks open the front door of the Caduceus tasting room in Jerome. He stares out somewhat suspiciously. He

gives nothing away, making small talk even more awkward. He's quiet, almost cold. But that's to be expected from a self-proclaimed "curmudgeon." Crankiness aside, Keenan has a dry sense of humor, which leaks out as he begins to feel more at ease. He's also smart — very smart — and guarded. Keenan is fiercely protective of his privacy. And rightly so. Let's just say it's not the wine connoisseurs who tend to trespass on his private property.

That need for privacy, coupled with his desire for a simpler way of life, is why Keenan finds Jerome and the surrounding Verde Valley so appealing, and why the musician-cum-winemaker has been calling the area home since 1995.

"When I came here, I realized this is where I was supposed to be," he says. "It was just familiar — it made sense."

Something else made sense, too. The earth. That chalky, limestone-covered earth that is Jerome. Although Keenan had been a disciple of Bacchus with an impressive collection of wine, it was his neighbor, "a guy with no shoes and a rope belt," who suggested he start a vineyard.

The proverbial seed was planted.

The formation of Arizona's Verde Valley is, simply put, the result of the right geological forces at play. Layers of sedimentary rock, volcanic activity, a vast inland sea and the marine life that once lived in that sea helped produce the ingredients necessary for the creation of some spectacular *terroir*. That, coupled with the right elevation and climate variations (30-degree night and day temperature swings), and you have an environment that's more Old World than California could ever be. "This is Mount Etna," Keenan declares. "This is Sicilian soil."

Caduceus Cellars was born in 2004 —

or at least the brand was. Merkin Vineyards, Keenan's second label, was also formed that year "as a catchall to whatever else happens," as he puts it, with "catchall" meaning food, wines and anything that doesn't fall under the Caduceus label. Once Keenan had his vines in the ground, he had to play a waiting game until his own grapes were ready to harvest. In the meantime, he did something unorthodox for a world-famous rock star. He worked as an apprentice-slash-assistant-winemaker to Eric Glomski, the owner and director of winemaking at Page Springs Cellars, and began learning the art of winemaking. (In 2007, the duo became co-owners of Arizona Stronghold Vineyards in Willcox.)

"I was sourcing fruit from California and using a custom crush facility to process the fruit," Keenan says. "I'm so hands-on, and I was there right from the get-go ... I had an idea of what I wanted and I'm a quick study, my senses are fairly honed."

The result? His 2004 Primer Paso, a mostly California Syrah cut with Arizona white wine.

Today, 90 to 95 percent of his juice is pure Arizona, and for better or for worse — better for oenophiles, worse for those who see his progress as competition or an unwelcome change — he's created some impressive wines. In fact, his 2007 Nagual del JUDITH (his first 100 percent pure Arizona Cabernet Sauvignon, named after his mother, who passed away), his 2005 Nagual del Sensei, his 2006 Nagual de la NAGA and his 2007 Primer Paso have all received high scores from *Wine Spectator*.

"Winemaking," he says, "is not nearly as daunting as people make it seem — if you have the right skill set. Again, you can either swim or you can't. This comes naturally to me. Washing dishes doesn't come naturally to me."

The grapes he plants are mostly Italian and Spanish varieties — Sangiovese, Malvasia Bianca, Tempranillo and Negroamaro — because that's what he likes and "that's what the soil screams for." He also doesn't mass-produce his juice. That's because everything is done by hand — hand-farmed, handpicked, hand-sorted, hand-everything. He also avoids using chemicals on his vines whenever possible, which means more work keeping the ver-

min away. "It's a war ... we're fighting off everything."

As Arizona Stronghold and Merkin Vineyards continue to evolve and expand, Keenan has two other projects in the works: Merkin V&O, an organic market café that will feature both food and wine, is slated to open its doors next year in Cornville; and FOUR EIGHT Wine-Works, a co-op for young winemakers who can't afford to go into the business alone, is also slated for the coming year. As for Caduceus, Keenan will likely keep it special and intimate.

"We do our best to make it everything it can be," he says of his wine. "It's not meant for everybody. It's for those who are present and in the moment that get to try it."

Although his love of wine is easy to see, Keenan himself is a tough read. He doesn't smile very much, and when he speaks, he's controlled.

Keenan offers to give a tour of Merkin East, one of his private vineyards located near Cornville. "You can ride with me," he says. The drive is surreal. Not because of who is behind the wheel (he is), but because a busload of groupies would give up their first-born to ride shotgun. In some ways, the thought serves as a reminder of how celebrity-obsessed people in this country can be — that a man who wants to spend his days growing grapes has to worry as much about rabid fans as he does the resident vermin.

Merkin East sits on a small plot that's no more than 2 acres in size. Sangiovese and Cabernet rule the land, and the site looks and feels more like Italy than Arizona. It's beautiful and sustainable. But Arizona isn't ideal for those looking to make a fast buck.

"We don't have huge pieces of land for people to gobble up," Keenan explains. "It's just not available."

That's probably a good thing. And Keenan would agree.

The guy from TOOL looks perfectly at home on this small patch of Arizona dirt. While standing there, a man walks over, someone he knows, and gives him a plastic bag filled with flour. The musician-cum-winemaker is going to make homemade pasta later.

At his quiet home in the Verde Valley.

For more information about Caduceus Cellars, visit www.caduceus.org.

P R A T T ' S

Q & A



Sue Scott

Voice Actor,
A Prairie Home Companion

If you could take Garrison Keillor on a tour of Arizona, where would you take him? I'd have to take him to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. I'd also drive up through Gates Pass, to the Tucson Mountains, through Saguaro National Park, and go to Sabino Canyon. When you head toward Patagonia, there are gorgeous grassland prairies. When I was a kid, there was a gorgeous house used in the movie *Oklahoma*. I think Garrison would enjoy it.

If you could voice the cartoon version of any Arizona icon, who would it be? There was a kids show in the late '50s and early '60s called *Marshall KGUN*. You could be in the audience and win prizes and play games. I'd do the cartoon of *Marshall KGUN* — it's an icon to me, at least.

Where do you like to go when you return home to Tucson? Number one is the Arizona Inn dining room. That's a treasure. There's also a Mexican restaurant, La Fuente. When I'm with my husband, we have to drive through Gates Pass. I drove it many times as a high-schooler — way too fast, but don't tell my parents.

What do you miss about living in Arizona? Being tan. I was always tan and blond before I left. When I came back once, my mother said, "When did you get so fair?" I was just out of the sun. I've been the whitest person on the face of the Earth ever since. I also became a Mexican-food snob. One of the first Mexican-food places I went to in Minnesota put sour cream in their guacamole, and I thought, *Are you kidding me?* I almost walked out.

Describe Arizona in three words. Gorgeous. Home. Warm.

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



PAUL MARKOW

John Wayne Slept Here

It's true. The Duke spent a night at Saddlerock Ranch. So did Orson Welles, Jimmy Stewart and many others. The historic property in Sedona isn't limited to Hollywood types, however. It's open to anyone who wants to be treated like a celebrity.

By MARYAL MILLER

WHEN WE'RE YOUNG, WE see history as a school requirement, a class taught by an old man who resembles the Crypt Keeper and smells like mothballs. But as we grow older, so does our appreciation for history, and eventually we realize that it's a subject to be celebrated. Sedona's Saddlerock Ranch does just that.

As one of the city's lesser-known landmarks, the ranch and its 85-year history are part of what makes the property's intimate, modern accommodations so enchanting. It proves that some things really do get better with age.

Perched on what is now the Airport Mesa hillside, Saddlerock was built in 1926 as a homestead for the Cook family's sprawling 6,000-acre ranch. In the late 1940s, the owners downsized the homestead to a 3-acre parcel and sold it to Ed Ellinger, who transformed the property into a dude ranch with all the accoutrements.

An Ellinger contribution — one that remains the centerpiece of Saddlerock today — is the 900-square-foot great room in the main house. It's equipped with 14-foot ceiling-to-floor windows that frame an unobstructed panoramic view of Sedona that stretches from Cockscomb in the west to Steamboat Rock in the east.

Thanks to those red-rock vistas, Saddlerock's upscale Old West charm and penchant for privacy, the ranch became a veritable Hollywood hideout in the '40s and '50s, hosting screen legends like John Wayne, Orson Welles, Hopalong Cassidy, Jimmy Stewart and Arlene Dahl. However, Saddlerock's high-profile habitué wasn't exclusive to Tinseltown. The ranch also served as a hiking and horseback-riding respite for political heavy hitters like the Goldwater, Bush and Quayle families.

Today, beautifully updated and under new management, Saddlerock serves as a tranquil guest retreat with all the modern amenities of home. Groups may book the entire property for

a ranch-style family reunion complete with s'mores around the campfire and meals at the colossal dining table. The only caveat is that you'll have to take your own food or hire a chef. It's also possible to plan a scenic Sedona wedding or a girls' weekend, the latter of which can be spent lounging on plush poolside chairs or enjoying spa services in the peaceful Sedona Room.

Guests may also rent any of the rooms individually, including the main house's rustic Saddlerock Suite, the secluded Rose Garden Suite, the cozy Red Rock Loft or the quiet Writer's Retreat, all of which feature private baths. Ellinger's original tack shed, now called the Artists' Studio, also still stands on the property and offers a funky, frontier-style space for gatherings of all agendas.

But even after decades of transformation, remnants of Saddlerock's rich history — the original adobe walls; flagstone floors; stone fireplaces; pristine 1930s claw-foot bathtubs; a weathered upright piano; massive ponderosa support beams; and a mature, mesquite-smoked aroma that lingers in the main house — still serve as the ranch's heart and soul.

So, escape to Saddlerock for the R&R, but if history class is still on your schedule, be sure to ask Mr. Mothballs for some extra credit.

For more information about Saddlerock Ranch, call 928-554-6226 or visit www.sedonasaddlerockranch.com.

For Pete's Sake

For 25 years, Peter Ensenberger was director of photography for *Arizona Highways*. Although he's officially retired, he isn't finding much time for fishing. One of the reasons is his new book, *Focus on Composing Photos*.

If you want to learn something about photography, read this Q&A, and then buy Pete's book.

By KATHY RITCHIE



What do you want people to take away from the book?

It's a book about the fundamentals of composition, so my main objective was to give photographers at beginner and inter-

mediate levels a solid understanding of the principles of good composition. I want to help them take their photography to the next level. But I also put in a few things that advanced photographers can use to improve their photography, as well.

How is your book different?

I added in-depth discussion of the reasons for the so-called "rules of composition" to give readers a solid understanding of why certain techniques lead to better photographs. It's not enough to simply apply the rules because you should. The rules make much more sense if you know the rationale behind them. I also included a chapter in the book on when, why and how to break the rules to good effect. The book is loaded with color photographs of examples to support the text.

What makes a great photo?

That's a very complex question. A great photograph begins with a few basic ingredients: Good light and shadows, balance, simplicity and seemingly relationships between compositional elements. But beyond the components of good composition, every great photograph stirs up emotions and forms a connection with the viewer to communicate a message or tell a story.

Should the next generation of photographers even bother with film?

Film certainly has its good qualities, but availability of film and the costs of processing have made it nearly impossible to continue shooting film. And the advantages of digital photography have far surpassed film's good qualities. But just because an image is captured digitally doesn't necessarily make it good. Photographers still must employ sound compositional techniques that lead to good photographs.

Ever miss a shot?

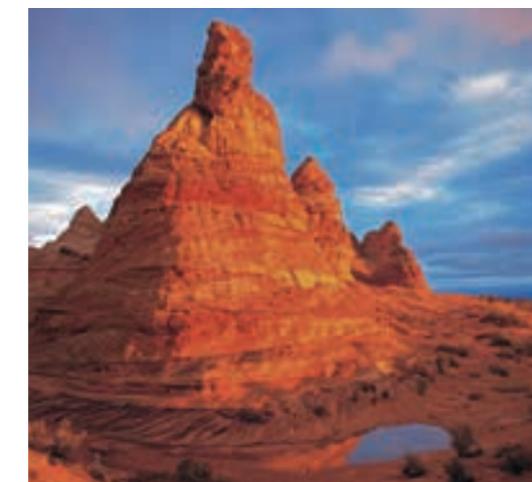
Oh, yes — and more than once! And the ones I missed are the ones that haunt me. I can still see them in my mind's eye. But I've learned valuable lessons from those missed opportunities.

Which restaurants do you miss most around the office?

Well, I don't miss the dives (and we tried them all!), but I actually do miss eating at a few of our regular lunch haunts — Pepe's Taco Villa on Camelback, Wild Thaiger on Central, The Paisley Violin on Grand Avenue. Now that I'm thinking about it, suddenly I have a craving for the carnitas torta at La Piñata on 19th Avenue. Thanks a lot!

Top 3 tips for a novice photographer?

1) Always work in the best light conditions. It's the quickest and easiest way to improve your photography, and it doesn't cost anything. The interplay of light and subject is a top priority in good image-making. 2) You don't have to spend a lot on photography gear to make better images. In fact, you already possess the most important piece of photography equipment — it's between your ears. 3) Try to be original in your approach to your subjects. It's OK to be inspired by the photographs of others, but don't go out and copy them. Strive to improve upon them.



PETER ENSENBERGER

Using color photographs in his book, Peter Ensenberger demonstrates photo techniques and rules. In this image, he shows how the juxtaposition of complementary colors adds interest to an image.



JEFF KUDA

BE STEADY

Image stabilization, or vibration reduction (IS or VR), helps reduce camera shake while holding the camera or working from a shaky platform. This technology is built into camera bodies or lenses — depending on the manufacturer — and allows users the ability to shoot three to four stops slower. Since IS or VR only help arrest camera movement, they're great when shooting static subjects, but they won't help freeze fast-moving subjects.



ADDITIONAL READING: Look for our book *Arizona Highways Photography Guide*, available at bookstores and www.arizona-highways.com/books.

ONLINE

For more photography tips, visit www.arizona-highways.com/photography.asp.

Arizona: 1982-1991

In Arizona's eighth decade, the world's largest nuclear facility opened 50 miles west of Phoenix, the infamous Evan Mecham became governor, and the ASU Sun Devils won the Rose Bowl.

By JANA BOMMERSBACH

EDITOR'S NOTE: In February 2012, Arizona will celebrate 100 years of statehood, and *Arizona Highways* will publish a special Centennial issue. Leading up to that milestone, we're presenting a 10-part history of the state. This is Part 8.

BY 1984, ARIZONA HAD exceeded a population of 3 million people, and Phoenix was the fastest growing city in the nation. Its young mayor, Terry Goddard, was full of new ideas — and he wasn't alone.

Space Biosphere Ventures purchased land in Southern Arizona for its Biosphere project. Its goal was to study human "sustainability" years before the word became popular. By 1985, the world's largest nuclear plant began operating at Palo Verde, 50 miles west of Phoenix, and the Central Arizona Project — which had been a dream since statehood — finally delivered Colorado River water to Phoenix via open canals that crossed the desert.

A year later, in 1986, a Glendale car dealer named Evan Mecham was elected governor — on his fifth try. He would serve only two years before being impeached and removed from office on charges of official misconduct, making him the first U.S. governor in 59 years to be so removed. Meanwhile, on a more positive note, former Phoenix attorney William Rehnquist was named Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. And, in a major boon to lovers of the outdoors, Phoenix voters approved the

Phoenix Mountains Preserve project by a margin of three to one. City officials used taxpayer money to buy and preserve the mountains around Phoenix — one of the most ambitious public parks projects the nation had ever seen.

Not even Pope John Paul II could pull off something like that, but he did visit Phoenix in 1987. And in other religious news, prayers were answered when the Arizona State Sun Devils beat the University of Michigan in the Rose Bowl. Final score: 22 to 15.

Professional football made headlines in this decade, too. In 1988, the St. Louis Cardinals became the Phoenix Cardinals, making them the second professional sports team in the state, with the other being the Phoenix Suns. But while Arizonans celebrated what they hoped would be a championship football team, politics broiled. Mecham was impeached, and in 1991, both of Arizona's senators — Democrat Dennis DeConcini and Republican John McCain — became part of the "Keating Five." The Senate Ethics Committee rebuked them for "bad judgment," and claimed that the senators had tried to inter-

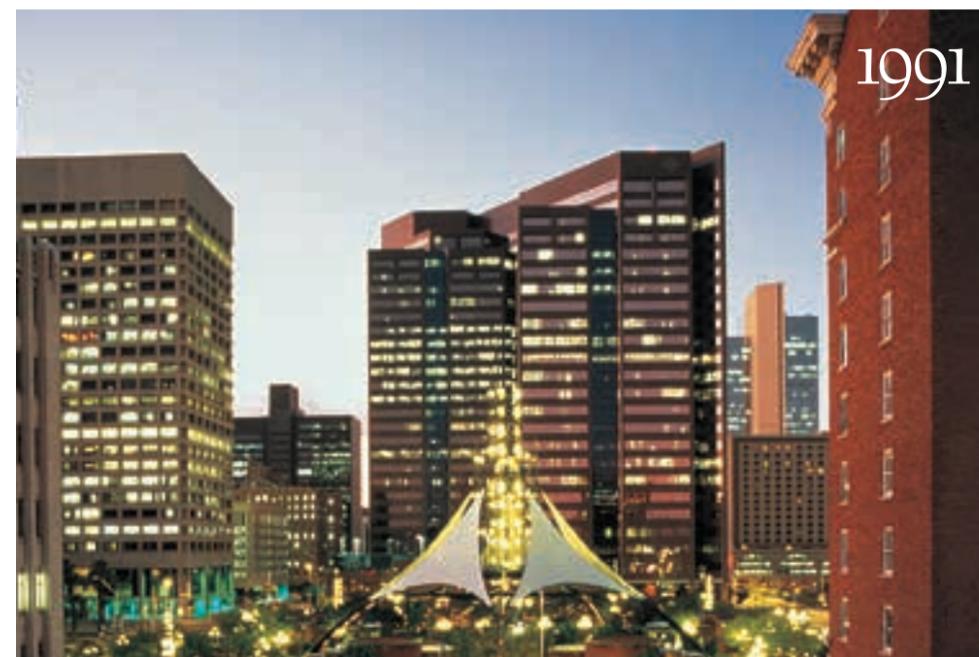
DID YOU KNOW?

- First-class postage cost 20 cents in 1984.
- Arizona State University officials established ASU West in 1984.
- The Arizona Tree Frog was named the State Amphibian of Arizona in 1986.
- Arizona-bred rocker Alice Cooper nearly died in 1987, when one of his stage props malfunctioned.
- One pound of bacon cost \$1.95 in 1991.

cede on behalf of Charles Keating with the federal regulators who were probing Keating's handling of Lincoln Savings and Loan. On December 4, 1991, a state court convicted Keating on 17 counts of securities fraud. Later, he faced federal charges, as well, making him the poster child of the savings-and-loan crisis that rocked America's financial health.

The Biosphere was back in the spotlight in 1991, when four men and four women moved into the facility for two years, with no access to the outside world, as part of the Biosphere 2 project, during which they gathered information that some researchers believed could be used in the exploration of outer space. Today, the facility is open for tours.

Pope John Paul II visited Phoenix in 1987. | ARIZONA JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY



JEFF KIDA



CRAIG SMITH

ARIZONA: THEN & NOW

TALK ABOUT HISTORY REPEATING itself. Constructed in 1976 and named in honor of the fighters of the Revolutionary War, Patriot's Park was designed to help revitalize downtown Phoenix after businesses began moving to other parts of the Valley. Thirty years later, the park made headlines again, and sparked outrage among area residents, when RED Development proposed its plans for CityScape, a retail and residential development intended to invigorate downtown. The park wasn't lost entirely in the battle, but it did get a new look. CityScape opened its doors last November with a newly designed Patriot's Park (not pictured).

IN THE NEWS

Headlines
1982 - 1991

July 8, 1982:

"Don't Send in Troops'
Brezhnev Warns U.S."

— Tucson Citizen

February 20, 1983:

"Behold the Cosmos: Kitt Peak
to Celebrate Quarter Century
As Window to the Stars"

— The Arizona Republic

March 1, 1984:

"Massive Blackout Hits
Arizona, 4 Other States"

— The Arizona Republic

April 1, 1985:

"Navajos Could Earn Tens
of Millions in Accord
With Power-Plant Group"

— The Arizona Republic

May 7, 1986:

"House Extends '55' Speed Limit:
Governor Likely to Sign
Measure; Seat-Belt Bill Dies"

— The Arizona Republic

May 26, 1986:

"Fewer Than Expected
Hold Hands in State"

— Arizona Daily Sun

May 26, 1987:

"High Court Says 'Dangerous'
Suspects Can Be Denied Bail"

— Phoenix Gazette

September 2, 1987:

"Gila River Toxicity
Low in Yuma Area"

— Yuma Daily Sun

October 25, 1988:

"Christian Science Trial Halted:
Case Returned to Grand Jury,
Prosecutor Vows to Continue"

— Mesa Tribune





THE PYEATT RANCH EST. 1890

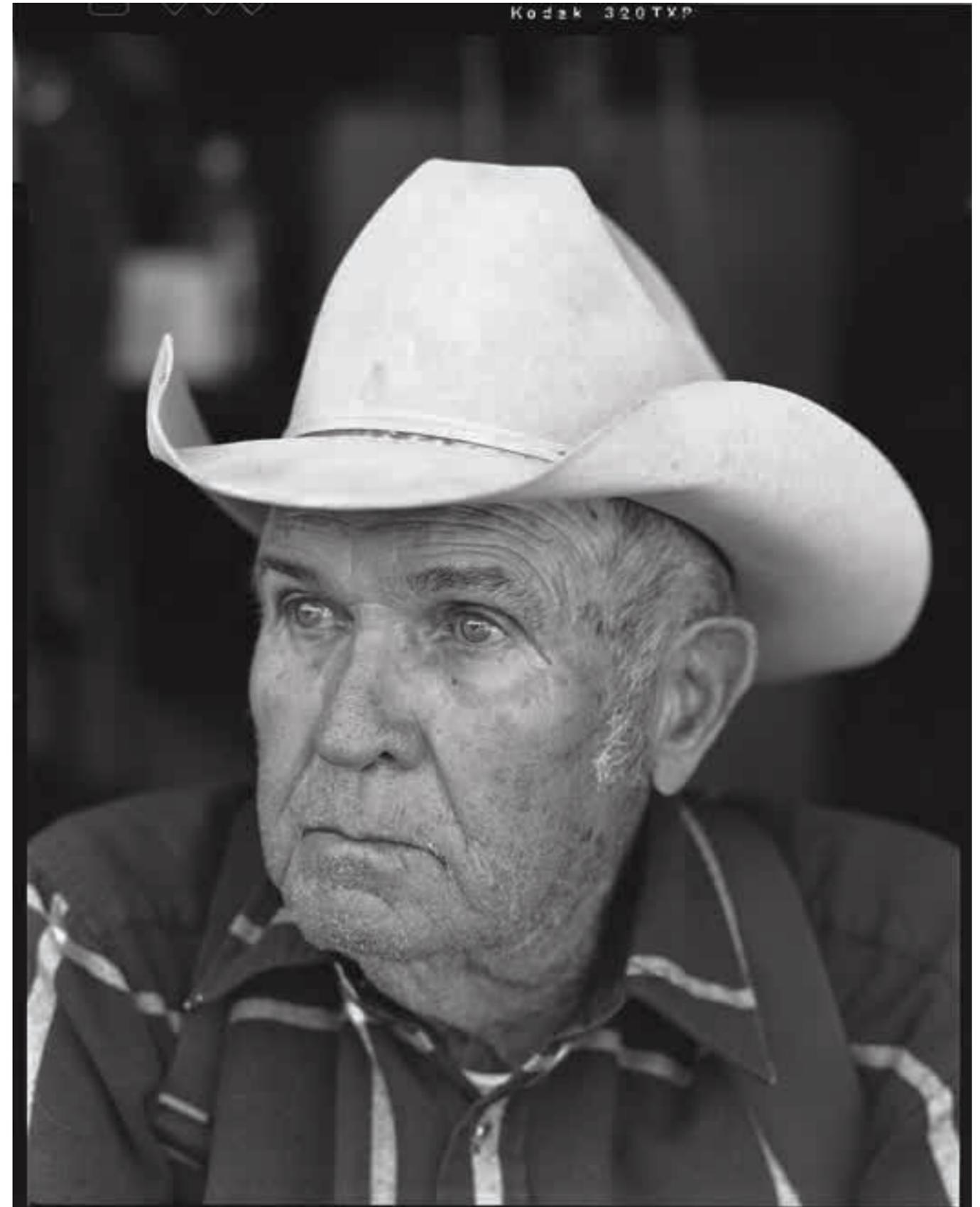
Fort Huachuca, Arizona

BY KELLY KRAMER | PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT BAXTER

There's something about Mother Nature that drives Jim Pyeatt and his wife, Marie. "We ranchers love the land and the bounties that Mother Nature provides," Marie says. "We revel in being able to provide our consumers with safe, nutritional beef and in watching our children and grandchildren grow into the business with us." Indeed, Pyeatts have been ranching near Fort Huachuca since Arizona was just a Territory. Henry Pyeatt, Jim's grandfather, purchased the land from Hugo Igo in the late 19th century. Now, Jim's grandson, Manuel, is the fifth generation to live there. And although nature is the Pyeatts' muse, she's a fickle friend. "Mother Nature is often a challenge," Marie says. "Life here is often spent looking for rain clouds. But lately, government rules and regulations are often more difficult to deal with." Scott Baxter photographed Jim Pyeatt at the Pyeatt Ranch on March 16, 2011.



EDITOR'S NOTE: "100 Years, 100 Ranchers" has been designated an official Centennial Legacy Project. Every month, we'll be featuring one of the ranchers. It's part of our own Centennial coverage, which will continue through February 2012. For more information about "100 Years, 100 Ranchers," visit www.100years100ranchers.com.





TIM FULLER

Market Difference

There are all kinds of markets — supermarkets, farmers’ markets, flea markets — but there’s only one Rincon Market, which is a great place to catch lunch with friends, pick up ingredients for dinner or take a Zumba class in the back room.

By NORA BURBA TRULSSON

IT’S LUNCHTIME, AND A pair of University of Arizona music students are well into a Bach cello sonata. Nearby, men of a certain age lounge on leather armchairs, sipping coffee, hashing out politics, while two young women fill a shopping basket with apples and lemons. Across the room, a line forms by the grill as customers patiently wait for their orders of Kobe beef burgers and sesame ahi tuna.

Welcome to Tucson’s Rincon Market, a quirky mashup that’s part deli, part local living room and part vintage grocery store, an institution in the Sam Hughes neighborhood. It’s a place where you can catch lunch with friends, pick up ingredients for dinner or even cha-cha through the occasional Zumba classes held in a back room.

Jack Uvodich Sr. founded the market in 1926 next to UA’s campus. In 1967, his son moved Rincon Market to its present location, a 1940s-era brick-and-tile shopping center on Sixth Street designed by noted Tucson architect Merritt H. Starkweather. The next owners, the Cis-eks, added the deli service and cultivated its neighborhood-hangout status. Present owners Ron and Kelly Abbott bought the market in 2007 and knew enough not to mess with a good thing.

“I used to eat lunch here when I was in high school,” says Ron, whose family has been in Tucson since 1910. “Kelly and I like history, and we knew we’d be in trouble if we changed too much.”

While the market’s old-fashioned setting is charming, it’s the food that draws crowds for breakfast, lunch and early dinner. The menu? Eclectic comfort food, the kind your grandma might have made if she had been Italian, Polish, Greek, Middle Eastern, Jewish, a vegan and cool. The abundant salad bar brims with fresh produce, not to mention hummus, dolmades and crab salad. Daily hot entrées include cabbage rolls, spaghetti and meatballs made by Ron’s 77-year-old mother-in-law, and meatloaf, while homemade soups include a signature vegan cab-

bage soup. Order a sandwich, such as a bagel lavished with lox or a hefty Reuben, and you might not be able to finish it. Weekends, locals start their days with the market’s Belgian waffles and made-to-order omelets.

The pastry case glistens with cupcakes, cookies, brownies and more. There’s even a selection of vegan and gluten-free goodies. “I’m trying to work in a few more vegan, vegetarian and organic options,” says Ron conspiratorially, not wanting to rock the Rincon Market boat too much.

Want more old-school comfort foods? The market offers WondeRoast spit-roasted chicken, as well as scoops of Thrifty ice cream.

After you eat your way through the menu, shop for produce and wine, step up to the butcher’s counter for local grass-fed filet mignon, or chat with the market’s fishmonger, who flies in everything fresh, from arctic char to sea bass.

Then there’s Rincon Market’s hangout factor. The Abbotts encourage local musicians to try new material during lunch or dinner. You’ll see people sitting at tables doing homework, reading or working on laptops. “We have people who eat all their meals here, every day,” Ron says. “Some sit here all day. That’s just the way the Rincon Market is.”

Rincon Market is located at 2513 E. Sixth Street in Tucson. For more information, call 520-327-6653 or visit www.rinconmarket.com.

Reeking Havoc When asked to work on this story, our writer said, “This assignment stinks.” And she had a point. Although skunks aren’t very big, they pack a malodorous punch. **By ALLISON OSWALT**

If you’ve ever been on a road trip, chances are you’ve smelled a dead skunk in the middle of the road, and more than likely, you thought, *Man, if I can smell that stink inside the car, imagine if I actually got sprayed.*

Indeed, you’d smell like ... a skunk. Thus the mammal’s fetid reputation.

A skunk’s main defense against predators — mostly horned owls, coyotes and domestic dogs — is a complex chemical substance that includes sulfuric acid. It can be fired from one of two glands, and the targets can be humans, which pose the largest threat to skunks.

Whether out of fear or by accident, human beings kill large numbers of skunks every year. Many are killed on roadways, to the point of being wiped out entirely from areas with a lot of traffic, while some are hunted for their fine, silky fur.

That fur is usually black and white, but the coats also come in gray, brown and cream colors. The fur coloring varies, but a thick bold stripe is a trademark insignia for all

varieties of skunks, which are members of the weasel family. On average, skunks vary in size from about 15.6 inches to 37 inches long and can weigh 1 pound to 18 pounds. They’re about the size of a house cat.

But unlike Garfield, skunks are true omnivores, consuming insects, rodents, frogs and wild fruit and berries, most of which they find while scavenging at night. Primarily nocturnal, these animals prefer to forage on their own, but occasionally you will see mothers roaming with their young.

Kits, as baby skunks are called, are born in litters of four to seven. They’re born hairless

with closed eyes and ears and look a little like miniature seals. During the colder months, skunks will hole up in their dens for extended periods of time, staying dormant until the weather warms up. Hollow logs, abandoned buildings and burrows can serve as a skunk’s home for multiple winters.

Striped skunks appear throughout the United States and southern Canada. And although malodorous, they can actually be beneficial to humans, particularly farmers. The striped stinkers eat grasshoppers, caterpillars and other pests that can damage or destroy crops.

nature factoid



BRUCE D. TAUBERT

Mr. Howl

Coyotes, which are everywhere in Arizona, like to lay low; however, you will hear their howls, yelps and barks. The predators typically hunt alone or in pairs, but will gather in groups where plenty of food is available. Their pointed ears, narrow noses and black- or white-tipped tails help distinguish them from dogs and wolves.

BRUCE D. TAUBERT



Wings Over the Desert

OCTOBER 14-16 TUCSON

This new festival at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum celebrates creatures with wings: birds, bats and butterflies. The weekend kicks off with the opening of the Raptor Free Flight Program and the "Year of the Bat" celebration. Later, spend the day enjoying raptor programs, live bat encounters and lectures, special presentations, hands-on science exploration and more. *Information:* 520-883-2702 or www.desertmuseum.org



RHONDA SPENCER



Flagstaff Film Festival

OCTOBER 12-16 FLAGSTAFF

For movie buffs looking for something new, the Flagstaff Mountain Film Festival is the perfect stop. The event is a showcase of documentaries geared toward inspiring change and opening viewers' eyes to parts of the world they may not know about. And FYI, these aren't just amateur filmmakers at work; three of the films from last year's festival were nominated for Academy Awards. *Information:* 928-600-6572 or www.flagstaffmountainfilms.org

23rd Annual Fall Festival

OCTOBER 7-9 PATAGONIA

"It takes a village," and that saying is especially apropos when it comes to this festival. Visitors can peruse the 125 arts, crafts and specialty foods exhibitors, and enjoy a range of music, including blues, jazz and classical tunes. Although this festival has a small-town feel, the event is considered one of the best in the state. Proceeds will benefit the town of Patagonia's Park Preservation Fund. *Information:* 520-394-0060 or www.patagoniafallfestival.com

Corvettes & Ghost Riders Run

OCTOBER 5-9 TOMBSTONE

Ride into the Old West at this car show. Corvette clubs from Arizona, California and New Mexico come together to showcase their rides on three blocks of famous Allen Street. Visitors will see some impressive 'Vettes, and have a chance to stroll right past the O.K. Corral, where that famous gunfight broke out between outlaw cowboys and the Earp brothers (as in Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan) and Doc Holliday. If you want to combine hot rods with history, this event is for you. *Information:* www.corvettesandghostriders.com

State Fair

OCTOBER 14-NOVEMBER 6 PHOENIX

Our 126-year-old state fair has changed a lot since its beginning in 1884, when Arizona was still a Territory. These days, visitors can

expect a lot, including new rides, rodeos, arm-wrestling, kid-friendly games, a petting zoo, concerts featuring some of the biggest names in the music industry, and plenty of interesting food. Located on the state fairgrounds in Phoenix, the state fair is a piece of Arizona history that everyone should experience. *Information:* 602-252-6771 or www.azstatefair.com. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.



CYNTHIA LANCASTER

The Colorful Barrios

DECEMBER 17-18 (REGISTER BY OCTOBER 17)

Join longtime Tucson resident and photographer Edward McCain as he leads this two-day photo workshop, which focuses on the culture of the Old Pueblo. McCain has photographed this neighborhood for years and knows how to capture the vibrant colors, interesting textures and architectural details of the buildings that dominate this unique area. *Information:* 602-712-2004 or www.friendsofhighways.com

— Compiled by Daniel Jacka & Kathy Ritchie

Learn From the Photographers of Arizona Highways



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Upcoming Workshops

Preposterous Landscapes

with Gary Ladd
October 11-16, 2011

Photo Boot Camp

with Jeff Kida, Joel Grimes & Rick Burress
October 21-23, 2011

Fall in Sedona

with Derek Von Briesen
October 21-23, 2011

Monument Valley, Canyon de Chelly

with J. Peter Mortimer
October 25-29, 2011



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For more information and a complete calendar of our workshops, visit azhighwaysphotoworkshops.com.

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ARIZONA STATE FAIR





ONE FOR THE ROADS

We do a lot of stories about where to eat, where to sleep, where to hike ... telling you where to go is a big part of our mission. This time around it's about where to drive. It's one for the roads, and as you'll see, some of Arizona's best scenery can be eyeballed through a car window.

Edited by KELLY KRAMER

Forest Road 209 just west of Payson winds through junipers, oaks and ponderosa pines as it heads toward the Mazatzal Wilderness Area. | SUZANNE MATHIA



(1)
FOREST ROADS 209/406
Payson

The turnoff for this lovely drive just north of Payson is unmarked, so it feels hidden (in plain sight). The first 3 miles of Forest Road 209 are unpaved and wind through a lichen-covered canyon thick with junipers, oaks and occasional stands of ponderosa pines. Where the road crosses the east Verde River, look for a shaded clearing and inviting swimming hole. This makes a great place for a pit stop or picnic lunch. Beyond that, the road becomes rocky and rough, requiring a high-clearance vehicle. The route passes the remnants of the Cracker Jack Mine, and then rises out of the canyon, offering forested vistas that eventually give way to high desert. Near the edge of the Mazatzal Mountains, the road dips back down to the Verde at the Doll Baby Ranch. When the river is passable, you can pick up Forest Road 406 on the other side. This partially paved segment

winds its way up to Green Valley Park and Main Street in Payson.

Getting There: From Payson, drive north on State Route 87 for approximately 1.5 miles to Forest Road 209 and turn left (west). Continue on FR 209 for approximately 7 miles to Forest Road 406. Turn left (east) to return to Payson.

Accessibility: A high-clearance vehicle is required. Use good judgment and exercise caution when crossing the river.

Information: Payson Ranger District, 928-474-7900 or www.fs.usda.gov/tonto

(2)
CHERRY ROAD
Near Prescott

The best thing about being off the beaten path, as the little town of Cherry is, is that residents and scenic-drivers have to take a back road to get there. That means driving scenery-rich Cherry Road. Starting among the rolling hills of Dewey, the meandering dirt road dips in and out of wash bottoms and begins a gentle climb. By dirt-road standards,

this is a parkway, easily navigated by passenger cars. After a couple of miles, drivers are inexplicably treated to a respite of pavement. A 3-mile stretch of orphaned asphalt leads to bigger timber as junipers and scrub oaks surrender to a cluster of ponderosa pines. A few scorched trunks are remnants of a prescribed burn — seclusion demands a proactive fire policy. The pavement vanishes as suddenly as it appeared as you make your way into Cherry. The landscape broadens when you pass through town, with scratchy green hills tumbling away in all directions. The road ends at State Route 260 between Camp Verde and Cottonwood.

Getting There: From Phoenix, drive north on Interstate 17 for 78 miles to Exit 278, turn left onto State Route 169, and drive 5.5 miles to Cherry Road. It's 6 miles to Cherry, and another 11 miles to State Route 260.

Accessibility: Accessible to all vehicles. Beyond Cherry, however, there are several switchbacks and mountain curves, and the road is not protected by guardrails. This section should be avoided when wet.

Information: Prescott National Forest, 928-443-8000 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/prestcott

Quiet roads like Coppinger Road in the community of Cherry give drivers a chance to slow down and catch a glimpse of the surrounding beauty. The road intersects with Cherry Road. | NICK BEREZENKO



A sea of colorful grasses and wildflowers dominates this vast meadow along West Side Mormon Lake Road. | TOM BEAN

(3)

WEST SIDE MORMON LAKE ROAD

Near Flagstaff

Begin this hour-long journey just south of Flagstaff at Lake Mary Road, which offers panoramic views of Lower Lake Mary and Upper Lake Mary. Watch for bald eagles and ospreys that hunt near the water. Turn right onto West Side Mormon Lake Road. The asphalt surrenders to dirt 3 miles past Dairy Springs Campground, at Forest Road 240. Turn right onto FR 240 a few seconds before you get to the sign for Mile Marker 5. The bumpy road immediately angles uphill and crosses into stands of Gambel oaks. Keep left to stay on FR 240. As sharp curves wend

downhill, drive only as fast as your eyes can feast on fallen trees and the shrub-like New Mexico locust. After 9 miles, continue right on FR 240 as it passes a farmhouse and spills into spacious meadows. The next 6 miles make up a flat, easy drive though prairie lowlands frequented by pronghorns.

Getting There: From Flagstaff, go southeast on Lake Mary Road (Forest Highway 3) for approximately 26 miles past Lower Lake Mary and Upper Lake Mary. About 3 miles after the intersection leading to Pine Grove Campground (Forest Road 651), turn right onto West Side Mormon Lake Road (Forest Road 90). After passing Dairy Springs Campground, bear right onto Forest Road 240 and continue to Munds Park and Interstate 17.

Accessibility: Accessible to all vehicles.

Information: Flagstaff Ranger District, 928-526-0866 or www.fs.usda.gov/coconino

(4)

PEEPLES VALLEY

Prescott to Stanton

This route takes you through the granite boulders and juniper-covered hills of Yavapai County. Along the loop, you'll pass through Skull Valley, Kirkland, Kirkland Junction, Peeples Valley, Yarnell and Stanton. As you move through Peeples Valley, the road winds between green pastures and climbs a small hill into the community of Yarnell, some 22.5 miles south of Skull Valley. In Yarnell, signs will direct you to St. Joseph of the Mountain Shrine. The park-like setting is located at the base of a rocky hill amid a desert bouquet consisting of small oaks and pungent juniper trees, red-barked manzanitas, native

grasses, prickly pear cactuses, lichens and ferns. From Yarnell, the highway narrows as it twists its way for 6 miles to the bottom of Yarnell Hill. About halfway down the hill, there's a scenic pullout. The cows you'll see in the distance are part of a dairy farm, which you'll pass as you drive into Stanton, a former gold-mining mecca that's now owned by members of the Lost Dutchman Mining Association.

Getting There: From Prescott, take Miller Valley Road to its junction with Iron Springs Road, bear left onto Iron Springs Road and continue for approximately 20 miles to Skull Valley. Continue south on Iron Springs Road for approximately 7 miles to Kirkland Road and turn left. Follow Kirkland Road for 4 miles to Kirkland Junction, and turn right (south) onto State Route 89 (White Spar Road). Follow SR 89 for 22 miles through Peeples Valley to Yarnell. From Yarnell, follow SR 89 for another

8 miles to Stanton Road (County Route 109) and turn left. Follow Stanton Road for approximately 6.5 miles to Stanton.

Accessibility: This mostly paved route is accessible to all vehicles.

Information: Prescott Office of Tourism, 800-266-7534 or www.visit-prescott.com

(5)

MESCAL ROAD

Near Tucson

Tucson is a big city. Not as big as Phoenix, and nowhere near as big as L.A., but big enough. That's why it's so surprising that Mescal Road, a nearly 16-mile stretch of scenic byway, is so close to the city limits. The drive begins about 40 miles east of Tucson, off Interstate 10 at Exit 297, and meanders

past a few small private properties before opening onto fields of yucca and fragrant creosote. After approximately 2 miles, the paved road crosses a set of railroad tracks, and then becomes rockier as it approaches a former movie set. Past the faux Old West town, the road winds through thick stands of wild grasses, then past sycamores and cottonwoods as it passes over Ash and Paige creeks. At the 9-mile mark, you'll straddle the line between Cochise and Pima counties, where stands of ocotillos appear along the roadside like cryptic fingers emerging from the boulder-strewn soil. After another 3 miles, the road climbs, revealing a spectacular view of the Little Rincon and Galiuro mountains, as well as Happy Valley.

Getting There: From Tucson, drive east on Interstate 10 for 39 miles to Mescal Road (Exit



ABOVE: A crystal clear reflection of the Galiuro Mountains as seen from Bonita-Aravaipa Road. | MOREY K. MILBRADT OPPOSITE PAGE: North of Kingman, the Grand Wash Cliffs dominate the landscape along Pearce Ferry Road. The route passes the cliffs again where the Colorado River forms Lake Mead. | RANDY PRENTICE

297) and turn north. After 2 miles, the road crosses railroad tracks. Continue for 5.5 miles to the Ash Canyon Ranch turnoff, but stay on Mescal Road and proceed another 8 miles to the Miller Creek Trailhead.

Accessibility: A high-clearance vehicle is recommended. Heed creek-crossing warnings in wet weather.

Information: Santa Catalina Ranger District, 520-749-8700 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado

(6)
PEARCE FERRY ROAD
Near Kingman

The terrain outside of Kingman has been stimulating people's imaginations for years. Some people claim to have seen flying saucers, alien creatures and a rock that kills on contact. The back-road route from Kingman to Pearce Ferry cuts through this unusual terrain, which will have you wondering whether you've landed on another planet. Begin this drive at Interstate 40 and Stockton Hill Road in Kingman. As you head out on Stockton Hill

Road, you'll find yourself traveling along one side of a wide valley. In the distance, to your right, the Grand Wash Cliffs stand like a giant bookend holding the valley together. Later, you'll see the cliffs again where the Colorado River forms Lake Mead. On your left are the Cerbat Mountains. Farther on you'll come to dry Red Lake, which gets its color from the soil. Four miles after the paved portion of the road resumes, you'll arrive at Pearce Ferry Road, which leads to South Cove and Pearce Ferry in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

Getting There: From Interstate 40 and Stockton Hill Road (Mohave County Route 20) in Kingman, drive north on Stockton Hill Road for 21 miles to Pearce Ferry Road and bear right. Continue for 7 miles to the Y-junction with Diamond Bar Road, and veer left to stay on Pearce Ferry Road. Continue north on Pearce Ferry Road for approximately 14 miles to the edge of Lake Mead.

Accessibility: The route, which is primarily dirt, is accessible to all vehicles in fair weather.

Information: Lake Mead National Recreation Area, 702-293-8990 or www.nps.gov/lake

(7)
BONITA-ARAVAIPA ROAD
Near Klondyke

This road winds across fine, rolling countryside studded with clumps of grama grass, sotol and creosote, climbing and descending to between 3,500 and 4,500 feet in elevation. Roughly a dozen miles in, a side road joins the main road. It leads to Eureka Springs, a favorite haunt of cowboys back in the day and now a privately owned ranch that backs onto the rippled Black Hills. Just a bit farther along, the main road turns to run parallel to Aravaipa Creek, which is ablaze with cottonwoods in their fall splendor this time of year. An hour's leisurely drive leads to the little hamlet of Klondyke, which officially boasts a population of five. There's no shortage of beauty here. The same is true as the road winds below the foothills of the Santa Teresa Mountains, the range northwest of the Pinaleno Mountains, and closes in a little as the broad Aravaipa



Valley narrows into a magnificent finale. This section of the road ends about 35 miles northwest of Bonita at the eastern gates of Aravaipa Canyon.

Getting There: From Willcox, take Exit 336 or Exit 340 to Fort Grant Road and drive north to Bonita, about 32 miles north of Willcox. Turn left at the T-intersection onto Bonita-Aravaipa Road and continue 30.5 miles to Klondyke.

Accessibility: Accessible to all vehicles in fair weather. Following a storm, however, a four-wheel-drive, high-clearance vehicle is recommended.

Information: Bureau of Land Management, Safford District, 928-348-4400 or www.blm.gov/az

(8)

WILDLIFE REFUGE

Yuma

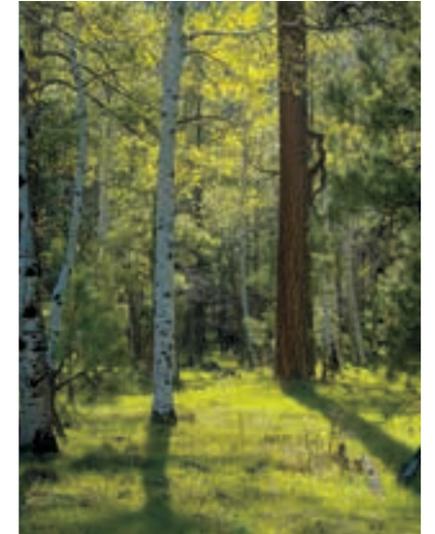
Yuma is often stereotyped as a great place to get gas before heading down the road to San Diego. Like all stereotypes, that one is unfair. There's a long list of reasons to visit Yuma, including the scenic drive to Imperial National Wildlife Refuge. To get there, take U.S. Route 95 north out of the city, where chain restaurants quickly give way to fields and farm stands. Pass the suspension bridge and visit the tiny roadside chapel before turning left at Martinez Lake Road. Turn right at Red Cloud Mine Road and follow it to the wildlife refuge. Once in the refuge, the road is jarring, and the landscape, apocalyptic. All of which makes the sight of the Colorado River, flanked by greenery as bright as a party dress, so unexpected. At the riverbank, the breeze blows a veil of sequins across the water and the occasional sound of a motorboat interrupts the chatter of birds. With any luck, you might spot a big-horn sheep.

Getting There: From Yuma, drive north on U.S. Route 95 for approximately 24 miles to Martinez Lake Road and turn left. Continue on Martinez Lake Road for approximately 10 miles to Red Cloud Mine Road and turn right. Follow the signs to the refuge.

Accessibility: Accessible to all vehicles.

Information: Imperial National Wildlife Refuge, 928-783-3371 or www.fws.gov/refuges

Early morning light reflects off the Colorado River near Smoke Tree Point in the Imperial National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge protects wildlife habitats along the lower Colorado River in Arizona and California. | RANDY PRENTICE



(9)
FOREST ROAD 224
McNary to Vernon

This drive takes you from the center of McNary, on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, to Vernon, a small community 18 miles up the road. No tribal permits are required to travel this stretch, and when you leave the reservation to enter the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests 5 miles later, there's no noticeable change to the landscape, other than a solitary sign. Lush stands of aspens, oaks and ponderosa pines congregate among fields of black volcanic rock. Just beyond the turnoff for Los Burros Campground, a large meadow opens up through the trees to the left. On maps, it's usually called the Naegle Ranch; however, a sign at the gated entrance suggests it's the Bonita Ranch. Another large meadow opens up to the left as you continue north. This is another historic spot — the site of the former Goodman sawmill. Beyond the site, you'll come to the junction with Forest Road 61. From there, it's possible to take a short side trip to Harris Lake, or turn around and retrace your tracks back to McNary.

Getting There: From McNary, take Forest Road 224 for 18 miles to Vernon.

Accessibility: The dirt road is accessible to all vehicles in fair weather.

Information: Springerville Ranger District, 928-333-4372 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/ansf

This picturesque old red barn is located at Los Burros Campground, along Forest Road 224.
| NICK BEREZENKO



(10)

CHEVELON ROAD

Winslow to Heber

The early part of this drive runs along a treeless plain interrupted here and there by an occasional jumble of sandstone boulders. To the east, out of sight, Chevelon Creek inches its way northward to the Little Colorado River. When you're 7 miles south of Interstate 40, the road dips into a little ravine and crosses Clear Creek, another tributary of the Little Colorado. As you continue south, small clumps of shagbark junipers appear on either side of the road, and there are hills in the distance. Six miles after crossing Clear Creek, the valley widens, and Chevelon Butte is clearly visible to the southwest. Eighteen miles south of Interstate 10, a sign indicates the end of State Route 99, but the road continues as Forest Road 34. Ten miles later, FR 34 veers southwest and Forest Road 504 heads southeast toward Mormon Crossing and Chevelon Canyon. Take the left fork and cross the boundary into the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. Heber is 23 miles southeast of the forest boundary, accessible via the switch-backing, ragged FR 504. As you climb up the rim, small meadows appear at irregular intervals, and in the spring and fall, they're bright with wildflowers.

Getting There: From Winslow, drive south on State Route 87 for approximately 2 miles to its junction with State Route 99 and turn left. After 18 miles, SR 99 becomes Forest Road 34. Continue south on FR 34 for approximately 10 miles to its junction with Forest Road 504, turn left, and continue on FR 504 for approximately 23 miles to its junction with State Route 260. Turn left to Heber.

Accessibility: A high-clearance vehicle is recommended.

Information: Black Mesa Ranger District, 928-535-7300 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/ansf



For more scenic drives, scan this QR code or visit www.arizonahighways.com/outdoors/drives.asp

Stunning fall colors are reflected in Chevelon Creek at Chevelon Crossing along the Winslow to Heber Road. | NICK BEREZENKO



A PORTFOLIO BY RANDY PRENTICE

LOCAL COLOR

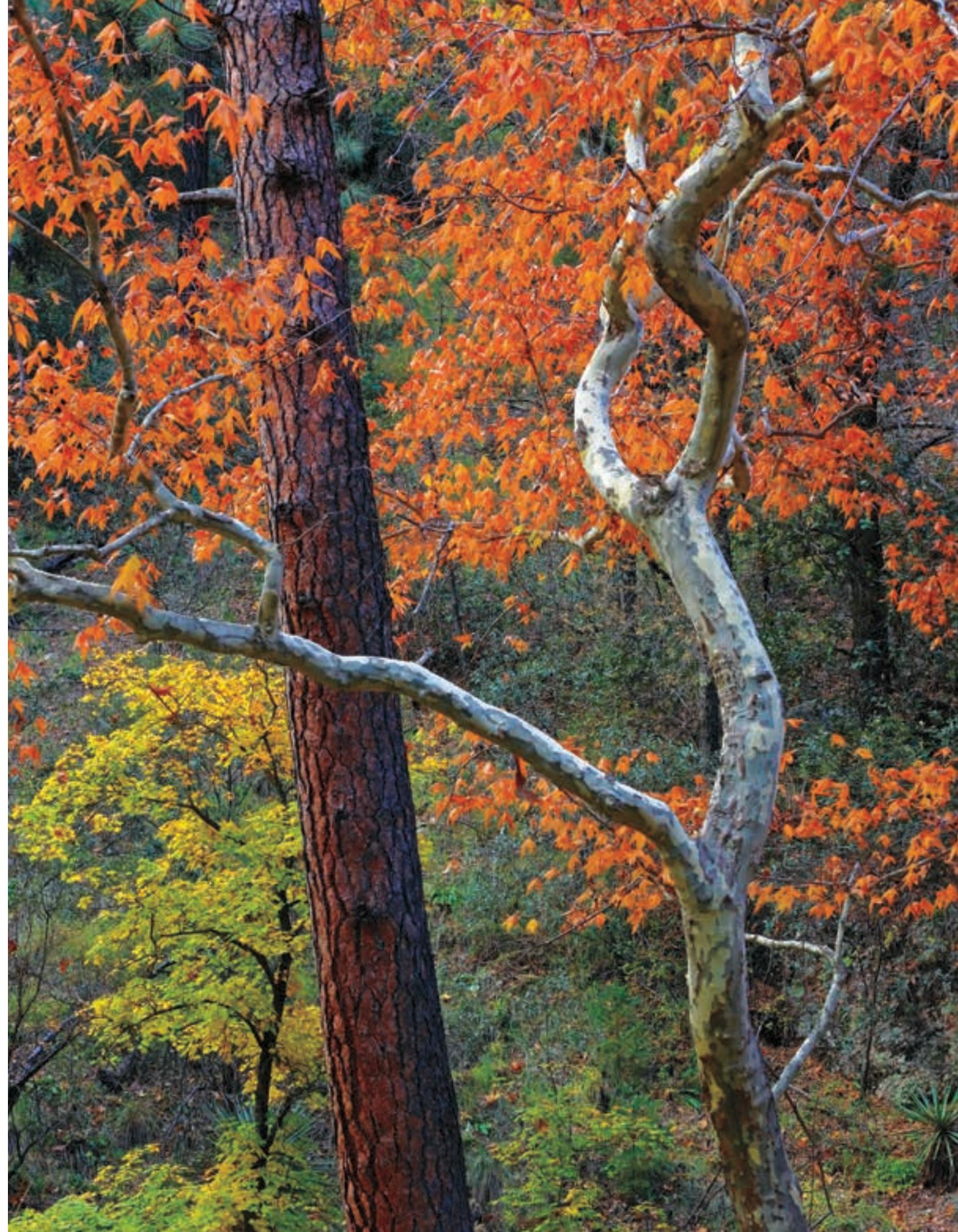
There's something to be said for every season in Arizona, but this month, fall is our favorite. The Sun Devils, Lumberjacks and Wildcats are back on the field, the sweatshirts and sweaters can come out of the closet, and the oaks, aspens, maples and cottonwoods are showing off their colors. Their brilliant reds and yellows. Autumn in Arizona ... it doesn't get any better than this.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following portfolio was shot along the South Fork of Cave Creek in the Chiricahua Mountains. Earlier this summer, the Horseshoe Two Fire scorched parts of the area where the photographs were made. At press time, we still weren't able to get in there to assess the damage. We're hopeful that what you'll see in the next 10 pages survived the flames, but as of right now, we just don't know.

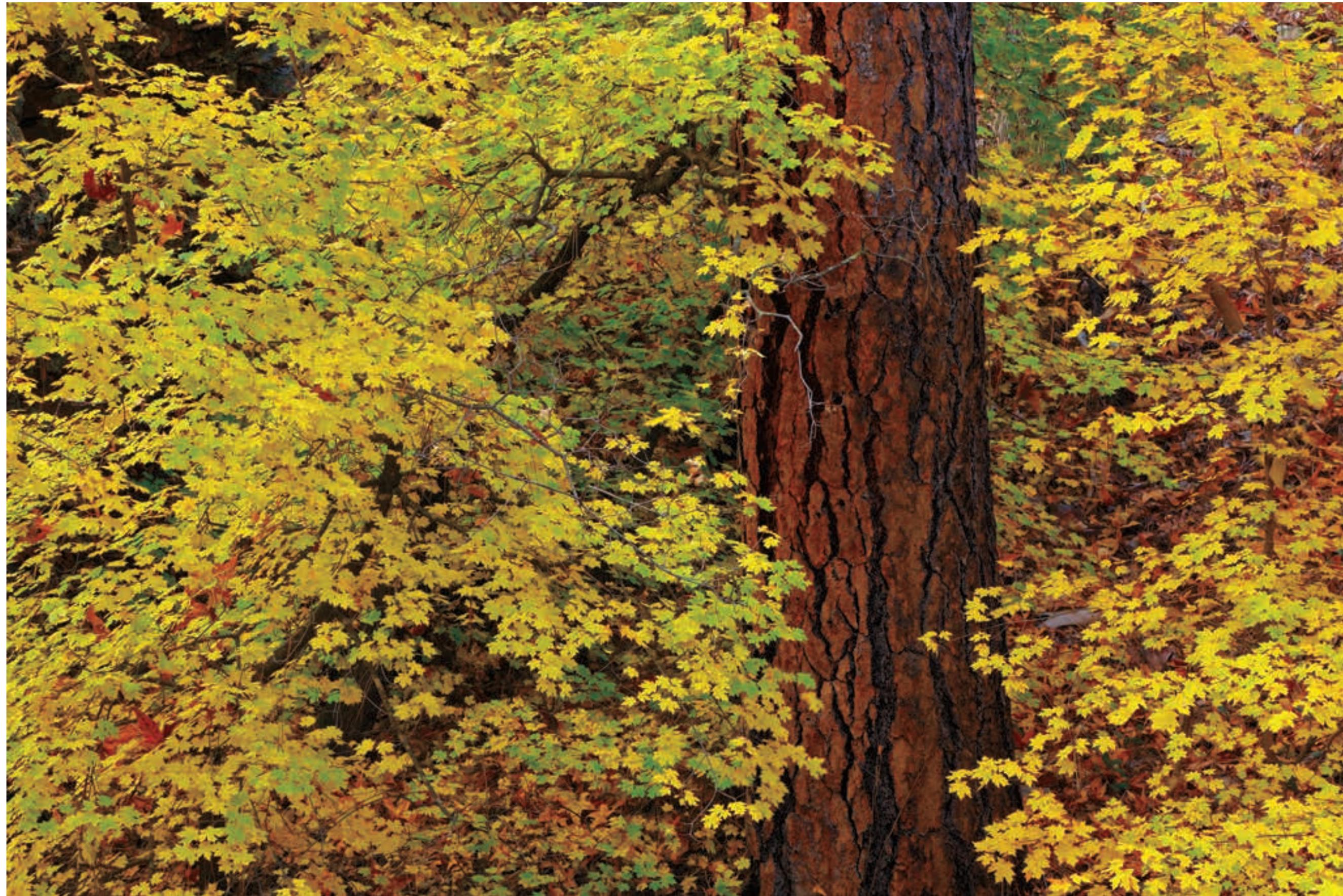
PRECEDING PANEL: *Conifer needles float among the sycamore and maple leaves in a quiet pool of water in Cave Creek Canyon.*

BELOW: *The smooth, cascading water of Cave Creek provides a dramatic contrast to the thick blanket of maple leaves covering the canyon floor.*

RIGHT: *A juxtaposition of nature: the trunk of a mature ponderosa pine next to a sycamore trunk surrounded by a canopy of autumn orange leaves.*



Gold maple leaves surround the trunk of a ponderosa pine in Cave Creek Canyon.

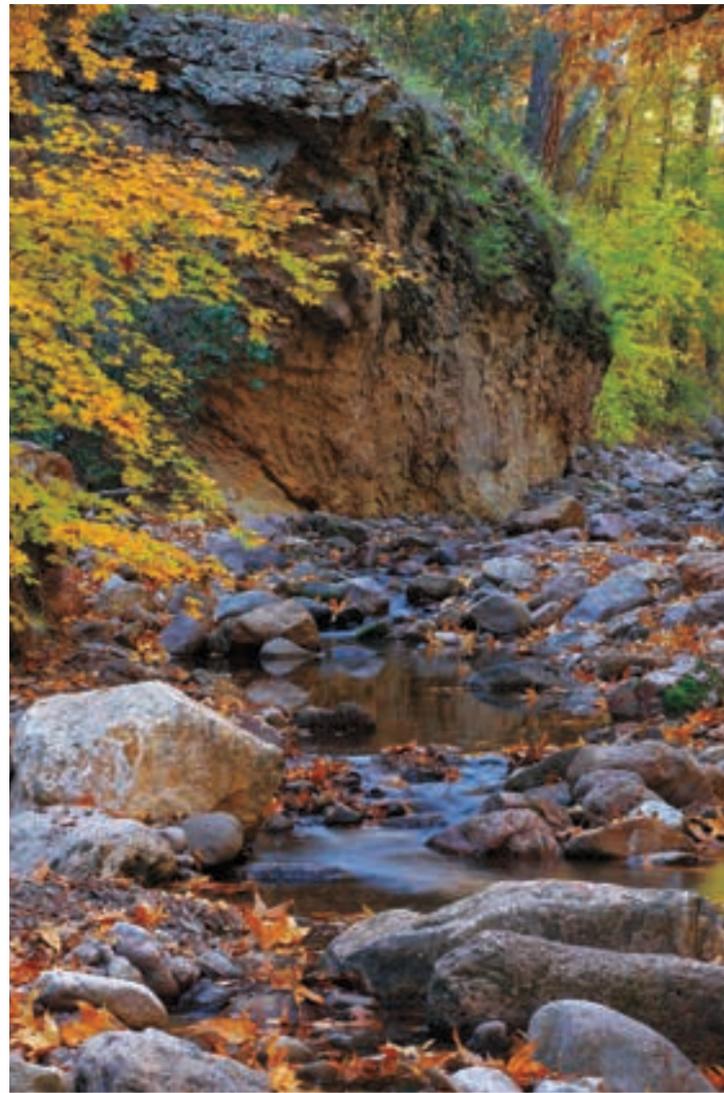




ABOVE: Still bracken ferns cast delicate shadows on the trunk of an Arizona white oak.

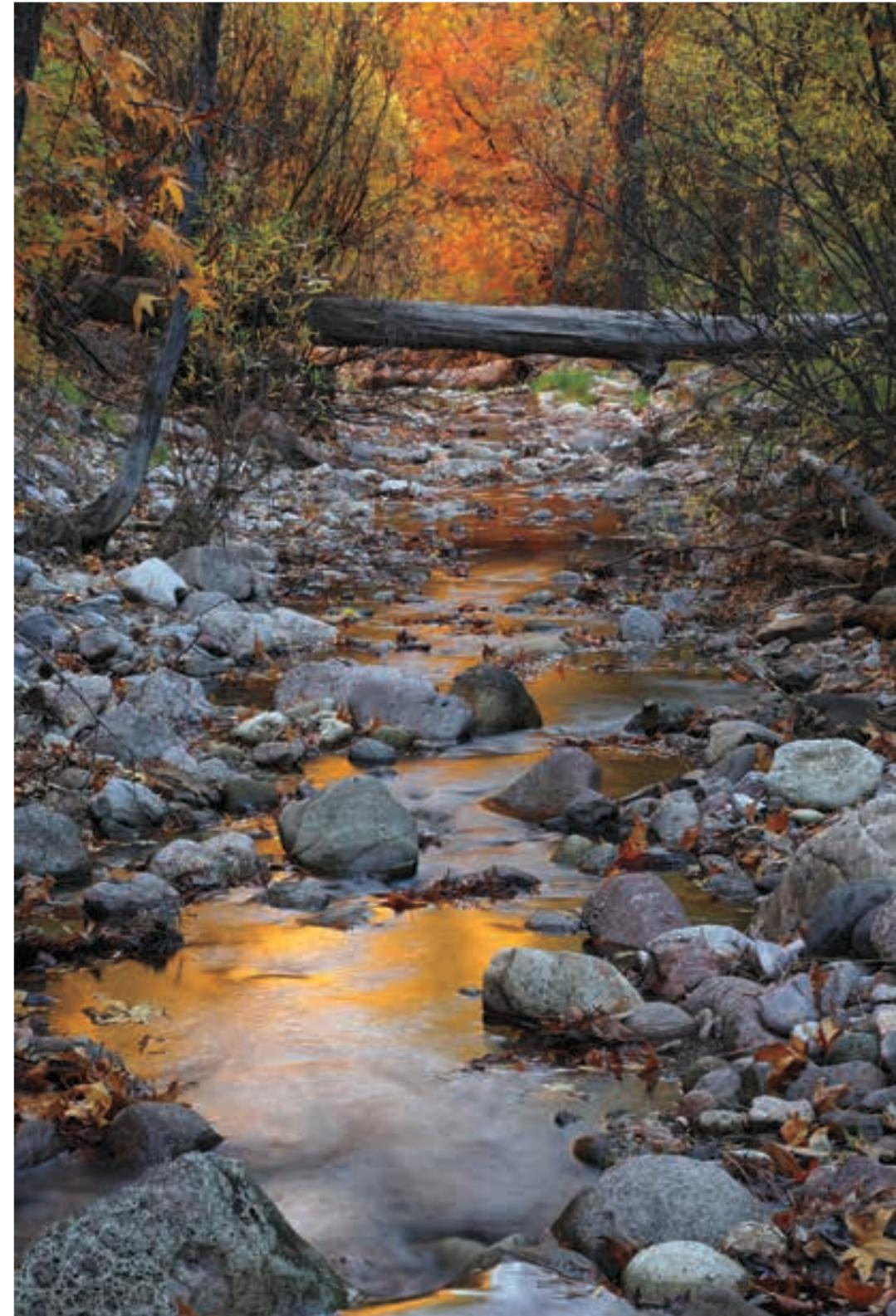
RIGHT: Brown, yellow and orange sycamore leaves decorate a section of Cave Creek near a water-carved wall.

OPPOSITE PAGE: A curtain of red maple leaves creates a vibrant backdrop as a giant boulder and a yucca plant take center stage.



“Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the Earth seeking the successive autumns.”

— GEORGE ELIOT



OPPOSITE PAGE:
Clusters of red maple
leaves appear even
more magical as star-
bursts, created by the
sun, highlight the leaves
floating in a pool along
Cave Creek.

LEFT: Warm tones of
sycamore, maple and
willow trees are subtly
reflected in the placid
pools of Cave Creek. ■

■ Freelance archaeologist
Tim Gibbs brushes away the
fine sand at Furnace Flats.

BY ANNETTE MCGIVNEY ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAWN KISH

Digging DEEP

The Grand Canyon is known around the world for its scenic beauty, but there's more there than meets the eye. Deep inside, along the Colorado River, is a rich human history that dates back to 12,000 B.C. Although archaeological digs in the Canyon are rare, a recent project unearthed nine sites in 136 days. It was the first dig in 40 years, and photographer Dawn Kish was there to capture the moments.



From a geological perspective, the Grand Canyon is the world's biggest treasure chest. The 20-mile-wide, 5,000-foot-deep chasm cut by the Colorado River exposes the Earth's history going back millions of years. But what many people who gaze upon this spectacle of rock and color don't realize is that the Grand Canyon is also a rich repository of human history, with evidence of occupation dating to 12,000 B.C. Yet, unlike the visible rock strata, this long-buried archaeological archive had been mostly a mystery until a recent excavation project literally unearthed answers to questions about the lives of the Grand Canyon's ancient inhabitants.

"Who lived in the Grand Canyon in the past? When did they live there? How did they make a living? What were their houses like? Did they even have houses?" asks Museum of Northern Arizona principal archaeologist Ted Neff, summing up some of the driving questions behind the excavation project, which was conducted by the Flagstaff-based museum, in cooperation with Grand Canyon National Park, between 2007 and 2009. In all, nine sites located along or just above the Colorado River in the park were excavated over a period of 136 gritty days in the field. It was the first major excavation in the Grand Canyon in nearly 40 years, and it was funded entirely through revenues from park entrance fees.

Although the national park has a "preservation in place" policy that



■ **TOP:** After a long, hot day, the archaeologists hop into a speedboat and head back to their campsite. **ABOVE:** Pottery shards, gaming pieces, tools and bones are discovered at Furnace Flats. **RIGHT:** Archaeologists use a total station (mounted on a surveyors tripod) to measure distances and record data at an excavation site.



mandates leaving resources like archaeological artifacts undisturbed, erosion along the Colorado River in the Canyon caused by the Glen Canyon Dam upstream was threatening to destroy the ancient sites. Buried for centuries beneath heavy sediment deposits and hidden from view, the archaeological resources along the river had become dangerously exposed since the dam was completed in 1963.

“We had been monitoring sites along the river for 15 to 20 years and erosion was increasing,” says Lisa Leap, who was the lead archaeologist for Grand Canyon National Park on the project. “The nine sites we identified for excavation were the places most threatened, and we were at risk of losing the cultural information that was there. Artifacts were washing down the river.”

Some of the locations that were excavated are familiar stops for Grand Canyon river runners, including Palisades Creek, Furnace Flats and Unkar Delta. The excavation crew traveled by raft to reach the sites and camped along the river for up to 10 days at a time. In order to avoid damaging 1,000-year-old masonry walls and brittle artifacts, they did all their digging and sifting work by hand with trowels, shovels, buckets, wheelbarrows and screens. Artifacts recovered from the sites include stone tools, pottery, jewelry, seeds, ash from hearths, and even a buffalo bone (probably traded from elsewhere). Numerous dwelling and adjacent trash midden sites were excavated, and one kiva, probably used for ceremonial purposes, was discovered.

While the project produced evidence of human habitation in the Grand Canyon ranging from Paleo-Indian nomadic hunter-gatherers up to historic Southwest Native cultures, most of the findings were from a specific 250-year period between A.D. 1000 and 1250, when Ancestral Puebloan people lived and farmed along the Colorado River.

“It looked like people were living permanently in the river corridor during that time,” Neff says. “The dwelling sites were hamlets up in the hills above the flood line that probably consisted of two to three extended families at one site.”

Charred remains in the excavated hearths included proof that the ancient farmers were growing not only squash and corn, but also cotton.

“We assume cotton was a big part of their life,” Neff says. “They likely made textiles with cotton using looms, but they also probably ate the seeds and used it for oil. They could grow this thirsty crop while their neighbors in drier locations couldn’t, so they probably used cotton as a primary trade item.”

In addition to the surprisingly abundant evidence of



■ **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Ivo Site in the early morning light — the archaeologists start when the sun rises and finish at sunset. The floor made of rock slabs at Ivo Site, Upper Unkar, shows the impressive masonry skills of the past. Brian Krantzler from the Museum of Northern Arizona examines a pottery shard through a hand lens at Blacktail. Carissa Tsosie, a Museum of Northern Arizona volunteer, digs in the hot desert at Furnace Flats. Videographer and volunteer Tom Bartel cools off in the river after long hours of digging in the sun. Miles and miles of digging wore away the metal of this trowel.

■ Team members share their discoveries during a mass screening of dirt and sand. The arrowhead point is from the Ivo site, Upper Unkar.



■ Photographer Dawn Kish works late into the night on the National Park Service boat at Furnace Flats.

BELOW: The smaller pot is only 2 inches in diameter and was possibly made by a child. The pottery shard is just the lip of what was once a large pot.

cotton, another important discovery for the archaeologists was the wide variety of pottery designs.

“The Grand Canyon is on the boundary of three distinct Ancestral Puebloan groups,” Neff explains. “The different types of pottery we found show multiple cultural influences in one location.”

A critical part of the excavation involved 11 Southwest Native tribes who have ties to the Grand Canyon. Park archaeologists consulted with tribal representatives before the dig took place, and then sought advice on the interpretation of artifacts and other information from the sites. Neff says members of the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Paiute and Hualapai tribes visited the excavation or attended workshops hosted by the museum and park staff where they examined the findings from the project and shared cultural stories. When the excavation of a specific site was completed, the area was back-filled with dirt and revegetated to return the area to its natural condition — it’s hoped that the vegetation will help slow erosion.

Counting park staff, museum scientists, river guides, volunteers and tribal members, nearly 100 people in all had a hand in the excavation.

“With this project we’re getting to tell stories about people from the past,” Neff says. “And the storytellers come from all over.” ■



ON DISPLAY

To learn more about this project, make plans to visit the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff. *Grand Archaeology: Excavation and Discovery Along the Colorado River*, an exhibit that shares artifacts, findings and photographs from the excavation, opens to the public on October 1. For more information, call 928-774-5213 or visit www.musnaz.org. To view a virtual tour of the project, visit <http://www.nps.gov/features/grca/001/archeology/index.html>.

Woolly Mammals

Bringing an animal species back from the brink of extinction isn't unprecedented, but wait until you hear the story about Navajo-Churro sheep. These fascinating creatures were saved by a stroke of serendipity. Or maybe it was divine intervention.

BY KATHY RITCHIE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SUZANNE MATHIA

Navajo-Churro sheep always appear to have a slight smile on their faces. These gentle-looking creatures are deeply cherished, even respected, by the Navajo people, because they are, in the simplest of terms, life givers. The sheep not only provide much that is necessary to survive in the more rugged areas of the state — from food and milk to clothing and wool for weaving rugs and tapestries — but they also play a role in Navajo spirituality and philosophy.

"In all of our creation stories, we believe that the sheep were a gift from our deity, so they have a central role in our ceremonies and our way of life," says TahNibaa Naataanii, a Navajo weaver, sheepherder and project director for Diné bé Iiná Inc. (Navajo Lifeway), a nonprofit organization that works to preserve and protect the sheep and their role in Navajo life.

Gifts from the divine? Might explain the smile.

Yet, despite their holy lineage, these sacred animals, the lifeblood of the tribe, were nearly wiped out in an episode that would dramatically change the lives of an entire group of people.

Beginning in the early 1930s, in an attempt to spur economic growth in the wake of the Great Depression, the U.S. government began a series of massive projects, including the construction of Hoover Dam. That project, it turned out, was threatened by excessive levels of silt in the water. The silt, it was believed, came from the overgrazing of the Navajo-Churro sheep, so the government enforced a harsh stock-reduction policy.

Referred to as the Stock Reduction Program, this government-sanctioned initiative eventually came to a halt in 1948, some 15 years after it had begun. But the damage had already been done. Between 600,000 and 800,000 Navajo-Churro sheep had been slaughtered, and in some cases, these sacred gifts were shot in front of their owners.



From an emotional standpoint, the loss was heartbreaking. From an economic one, the reduction bankrupted many Navajos. In fact, despite promises by the government, few were actually compensated for their losses, and a once self-sufficient group of people lost their livelihood, their wealth, in a single stroke.

"It was devastating for these pastoral people who relied on the sheep," says Bruce Burnham, a fourth-generation Indian trader who is married to a Navajo. "There's a saying in Navajo that literally translates to 'sheep is life.' It's such a simple statement, but the lives of the Navajo people are intertwined and caught up in the plight of the sheep."

Of course, history is written by the victors, and as such, is subject to point of view. The Stock Reduction Program is no exception. Depending on whom you talk to or what pops up on a Google search, the program was either an arrogant act of government interference or an attempt by a New Deal government to improve the lives of the Navajos,



OPPOSITE PAGE: The Navajo-Churro sheep is renowned for its hardiness and adaptability to extreme climates.

LEFT: Its wool consists of a protective topcoat and soft undercoat. Some rams have four fully developed horns. The Navajo consider the number four to be a sacred number.

at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, California, where he also served as an advisor to the animal science club. On an outing with his students, McNeal ended up at a ranch in Gonzales, California, where four-horned rams were kept — and used as sport by Hollywood celebrities who would come looking for that Wild West experience. Intrigued by the animals, McNeal asked the rancher where he obtained his sheep. His response would prove to be ironic: the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The government had set aside 18,000 acres for a sheep experiment station in New Mexico. The goal was to crossbreed sheep, including purebred Navajo-Churros, to find a suitable breed for the Navajos. But when the station closed in 1967, the remaining animals were auctioned off. The rancher happened to be one of the bidders, and it was from his flock

while protecting the environment from further damage.

What is clear is that the federal government failed to understand the importance of the Navajo-Churro sheep to the tribe. From Uncle Sam's point of view, the wool was too coarse, too difficult to work with and undesirable to buyers outside the reservation. But to the Navajos, the animals themselves were hardy, and the wool was ideal for weaving their rugs and tapestries — it was not greasy like merino or Rambouillet wool. Instead, it was durable, long in staple length and, perhaps more importantly, the wool worked well with the drop spindle and vertical loom, instruments said to be given to the Navajo by their deity, Spider Woman, who also taught them how to weave.

As the Navajo-Churro sheep began vanishing from the landscape, many men were forced to leave home to find work off the reservation. Families were being torn apart. "The old folks still get teary-eyed when they start talking about how life has changed on the reservation because they couldn't maintain these sheep," Burnham says.

With extinction inevitable, a resurgence of the species seemed a long shot — but then, as if by a miracle, it happened.

Dr. Lyle G. McNeal, a Carnegie professor and founder of the Navajo Sheep Project, never set out to save sheep, but in 1969, he was working

that McNeal procured his first donation of sheep: six breeding ewes and two, four-horned rams. And thus began the Navajo Sheep Project.

"Stock reduction put the Churro on the bottom rung," says McNeal, who, after realizing how rare the sheep were, decided to breed the animals back. He sought donations, dedicated his time and even risked his life — he contracted hepatitis and the hantavirus looking for sheep that were essentially off the grid, animals hidden by their owners during the reduction — to find purebred Churro. "Sheep is life," he says simply.

Today, the purebred Navajo-Churro sheep are making an impressive comeback. Before the Navajo Sheep Project began, it was estimated that there were only 450 sheep left. By 1982, McNeal began returning the sheep he bred to the Navajo people. There are now some 5,500 Navajo-Churro sheep living across the U.S., with more than 1,200 back on the reservation.

"We need to take care of the sheep because they will take care of you," McNeal explains. And the sheep are once again providing for the Navajo people.

"The resurgence of the Navajo-Churro is like a thread to our past," says Naataanii. "Although many of our young people are not weavers or herders, there are some who are, and this resurgence serves as a bridge to reconnect, to re-educate them on the way of life their grandmothers and grandfathers practiced."

Perhaps the gods are smiling, too. ■



HART PRAIRIE ROAD Of all the scenic drives in this issue — and there are some beauties — this one might be the most picturesque.

BY LEAH DURAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM BEAN

Aspens are the essence of fall in Arizona. If you're not of that opinion, you might change your mind after driving along Hart Prairie Road (Forest Road 151). This 10-mile scenic stretch is an easy addition to a day in Flagstaff or a worthwhile diversion on the way to the Grand Canyon. The journey into golden splendor begins approximately 10 miles north of town, just off U.S. Route 180.

A medley of yellow-tipped mullein, purple thistles and lavender asters offers the first splashes of color beneath an

awning of ponderosa pines. As the dirt road crests the hill after 1 mile, you won't miss the first glimpse of aspens, neon beacons shining through a sea of pines on the right. These saplings herald a small taste of the treasures to come.

Add a half-mile along a road that curves like a river, and the pines part to reveal open skies and meadows accented by the San Francisco Peaks. When the Grateful Dead wrote *Fire on the Mountain*, the band's inspiration could have been Humphreys Peak. With bright plumes of aspens flanking its sides, the mountain appears swathed in a vibrant flame.

Intimate views — close enough to see carvings of names and hearts marring the trees' white bark — first appear around 3 miles. The air might be chilly, but it's worth rolling your window down to view autumn's brilliant colors, as orange leaves mingle with green grasses and auburn ferns. Pass over a cattle guard, and clumps of aspens dominate

fields to the left as the road reaches a plateau.

When the scenery morphs into meadows, look for songbirds like swallows and flycatchers near Hart Prairie Preserve, a former homestead. From 1892 to 1901, stagecoaches taking visitors from Flagstaff to the South Rim stopped here for rest and refreshments. Now, herds of elk and deer frequent the area. The Nature Conservancy offers guided tours of the preserve until early October.

Barbed wire and wooden fences farther along mark private property; be alert to runners, walkers and ATV riders sharing the occasionally rutted and rocky road. At 6 miles, FR 151 intersects Bismarck Lake Road (Forest Road 627). For those wanting to hike, this detour leads to a trailhead in the Kachina Peaks Wilderness.

Nature showcases her own magical version of the yellow brick road as aspen leaves line the way forward. More still swirl downward at the slightest breeze and create a melody of soft bells. Those that don't reach the ground cling like ornaments to the needles of subalpine fir. Wait to pull over and take pictures when the road widens to fit two cars at 7 miles.

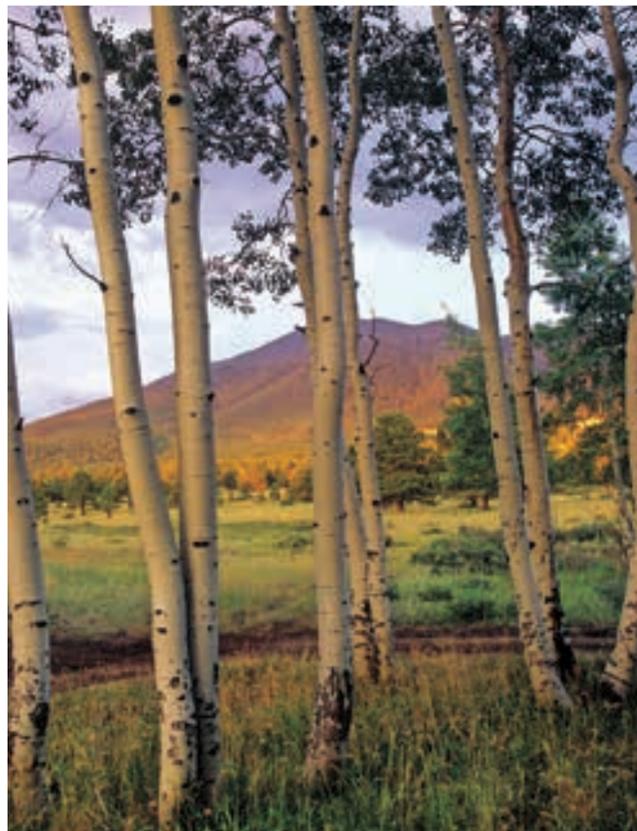
The steadily descending drive passes an idyllic log cabin just before intersecting Forest Road 418. Stay left and follow the signs for U.S. 180, noting the dark-red shade the road imbues as it trades a tunnel of aspen for fire-scarred land.

Ghostly spires of charred pines are jagged tombstones giving way to aspens, early successional species that thrive after natural disturbances. Glide smoothly along gently rolling roads as you bid farewell to the last sprinklings of fall foliage.



RIGHT: This drive, which features great views of the San Francisco Peaks, has an especially idyllic fall feel.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The San Francisco Peaks rise above fall-colored aspen trees. The peaks are sacred to several Native American tribes.



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, visit www.arizonahighways.com/books.



KEVIN KIBSEY

tour guide 

Note: Mileages are approximate.

LENGTH: 10 miles one way

DIRECTIONS: From Flagstaff, drive west on U.S. Route 180 for approximately 10 miles, and turn right onto Hart Prairie Road (Forest Road 151), which is just before Mile Marker 226. Continue on FR 151 for approximately 8 miles to the intersection of Forest Road 418, veer left to stay on FR 151, and continue approximately 2 miles to U.S. 180.

VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS: Although the dirt road is rutted and rocky in some places, it is accessible to all vehicles. As with most back roads, however, a high-clearance vehicle is recommended.

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: Flagstaff Ranger District, 928-774-1147 or www.fs.usda.gov/coconino

511 Travelers in Arizona can visit www.az511.gov or dial 511 to get information on road closures, construction, delays, weather and more. ■



OAKS & WILLOWS TRAIL

There's a good chance you've never heard of this hike, but now that you have, put it on your list. It's one of our favorites.

BY ROBERT STIEVE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICK BEREZENKO

This is the best hike you've never heard of. People in Prescott are probably familiar with it, but the rest of the population ... probably not. There's a reason for that. The Oaks & Willows Trail is located in the remote Juniper Mesa Wilderness Area, which sits in the northern part of the Prescott National Forest. Ironically, despite the trail's secluded nature, it's relatively easy to get to. And the drive that takes you there — along Williamson Valley Road — is one of the most scenic in Central Arizona.

The trail begins at the north fork of Walnut Creek. Just before you get to the creek you'll pass

an enormous alligator juniper. The vegetation in this wilderness area varies according to exposure. On the southern slopes you'll find mostly piñon pines and Utah junipers, while the northern slopes feature alligator junipers and ponderosa pines. And, of course, the wilderness is home to a variety of oaks.

When you cross the creek, veer right and scale the small embankment. A few minutes later you'll come to an intersection with the Bull Springs Trail, from which you can see Aztec Peak, an important early pioneer route. From there, the well-maintained trail climbs gradually onto a small mesa. As the name implies, the Juniper Mesa Wilderness is essentially a broad, flat, juniper-clad mesa; however, most of the Oaks & Willows Trail keeps to the woods.

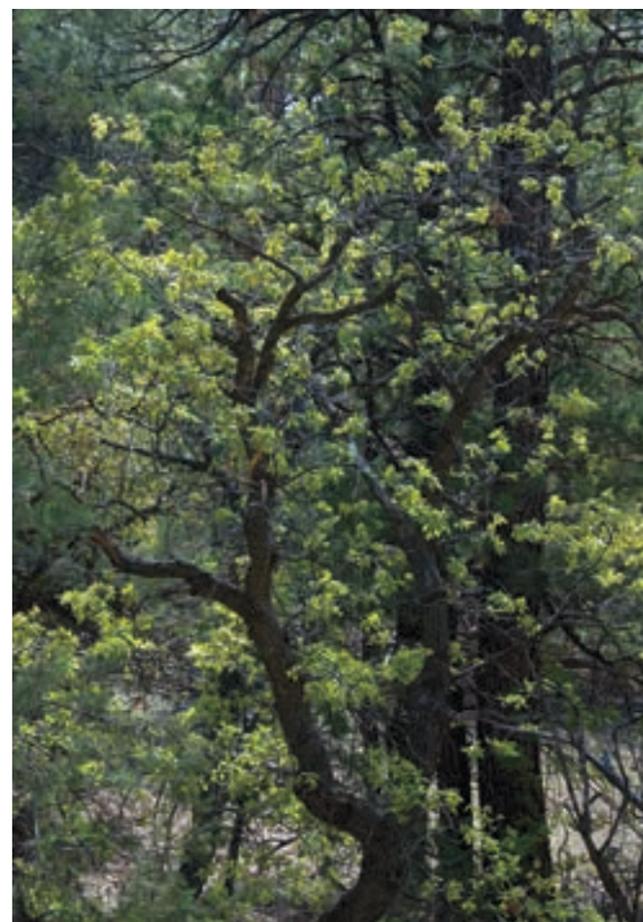
About 20 minutes into the hike, the trail leaves the small mesa — not to be confused with Juniper Mesa, which is yet to come — and drops down into George Wood Canyon. After crossing a small creek, the trail passes a pair of ancient alligator juniper twins. There will be others, along with some hefty ponderosa pines, followed by a nice grove of oaks. Just beyond the oaks, the trail merges into a creekbed and begins a series of steep but moderate switchbacks. This is where most of the elevation gain occurs. The last switch marks your arrival on Juniper Mesa. From there, the trail winds through an open forest of mostly evergreens. There are a few places on the mesa where the trail is hard to follow, but there's a nice contingent of cairns to point you in the right direction.

Continuing across the mesa, the route passes an intersection with the Happy Camp Trail, and a little farther on, an intersection with the Juniper Mesa Trail, which heads eastward into the wilderness area. Along this stretch, the Oaks & Willows Trail follows an old fence line — the wire is mostly gone, but many of the old fence posts (dead trees) remain. In terms of elevation, the Juniper Mesa intersection marks the high point of the hike. Normally, when you hit the apex, your work is done. But not on this trail. From the intersection, the trail parallels Pine Creek and heads downhill for a little more than 2 miles, losing about 800 feet in elevation. Of course, those are feet you'll have to reclaim on your way back out.

It's worth it, though, especially when you're sitting at Pine Spring, which marks the end of the trail. It's a lush area dominated by ponderosas and oaks. Like the trail itself and the surrounding wilderness, you've probably never heard of Pine Spring. But once you've seen it, you'll never forget it.

BELOW: The Oaks & Willows Trail winds past Gambel oaks, like these, in lower George Wood Canyon.

RIGHT: On the early part of the Oaks & Willows Trail, hikers will see the blue ram-parts of the Juniper Mesa Wilderness in the distance.



ADDITIONAL READING: For more hikes, pick up a copy of our newest book, *Arizona Highways Hiking Guide*, which features 52 of the state's best trails — one for each weekend of the year, sorted by seasons. To order a copy, visit www.arizonahighways.com/books.



trail guide

- LENGTH:** 11.5 miles round-trip
- DIFFICULTY:** Moderate
- ELEVATION:** 6,019 to 7,065 feet
- DIRECTIONS:** From Prescott, go north on Williamson Valley Road for 22 miles, at which point the pavement ends and the road becomes Forest Road 6. Continue north on FR 6 for 14 miles to the junction with County Road 125 (Forest Road 95). Turn left onto CR 125 and continue for 1.5 miles to the Walnut Creek Ranger Station. From there, continue west on Forest Road 150 for 3.7 miles to a fork in the road, veer right, and continue on FR 150 for 2.8 miles to the trailhead.
- VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS:** None
- DOGS ALLOWED:** Yes (on a leash)
- HORSES ALLOWED:** Yes
- USGS MAP:** Juniper Mountains
- INFORMATION:** Chino Ranger District, 928-777-2200 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/prescott
- LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES:**
 - Plan ahead and be prepared.
 - Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
 - Dispose of waste properly and pack out all of your trash.
 - Leave what you find.
 - Respect wildlife and minimize impact.
 - Be considerate of others. ■

KEVIN KIBSEY

where
is this?

Test Your Metal

BY KATHY RITCHIE
PHOTOGRAPH BY
SUZANNE MATHIA

Before the boom went bust, this site was instrumental in producing the raw materials necessary to give rise to an independent America. During its heyday, this site yielded an impressive 3 million pounds of copper each month. Although this tourist destination may not look like much today, visitors wanting to take a trip back in time will see antiques and other rarities (and maybe even a few oddities) inhabiting this ghost town.



August 2011 Answer: Desert View Watchtower. Congratulations to our winner, Brandy Nuss of Glendale, Arizona.



Win a collection of our most popular books! To enter, correctly identify the location featured above and email your answer to editor@arizonahighways.com — type “Where Is This?” in the subject line. Entries can also be sent to 2039 W. Lewis Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85009 (write “Where Is This?” on the envelope). 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 October 15, 2011. Only the winner will be notified. The correct answer will be posted in our January issue and online at www.arizonahighways.com beginning November 15.

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