

# BEST OF ARIZONA

Our Photographers' Favorite Places to Make Photographs

# ARIZONA

HIGHWAYS  
ESCAPE • EXPLORE • EXPERIENCE

THE FLIGHT OF THE CONDORS  
page 48

## The State's 10 BEST PHOTO OPS

Shane McDermott suggests the meadows around the San Francisco Peaks.

"You don't take a photograph, you make it." — ANSEL ADAMS

**PLUS:** ARIZONA'S ANASAZI BY DAVID ROBERTS • COTTONWOOD • LOS BURROS  
THE GRASSLANDS OF NORTHERN ARIZONA • COWGIRL JANE McGEARY • RACCOONS

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## 5 THE JOURNAL

People, places and things from around the state, including an ultra-modern place in Pinetop-Lakeside that offers an alternative to the town's typical steakhouse cuisine; the 125th anniversary of the Arizona Geological Survey; and Cottonwood, our hometown of the month.

## 16 EXCELLENCE MARKS THE SPOTS

There are a lot of scenic photo ops in Arizona — the Grand Canyon alone has about a million. But what are the best? The very best? For the answer, we asked some of our most talented landscape photographers to reveal their single favorite place to make a photograph.

EDITED BY JEFF KIDA AND KELLY VAUGHN KRAMER

## 32 WHERE THE DEER AND THE ANTELOPE PLAY

Technically, there aren't any antelopes in Arizona. What people think are antelopes are actually pronghorns, and there aren't a lot of them. In fact, you're more likely to see an elk than the aforementioned ungulate. There are a lot of elk and a lot of mule deer in Arizona, and some of the best places to see them are the grasslands up north.

A PORTFOLIO BY TOM BEAN

## 42 HE STILL CALLS THEM 'ANASAZI'

The Navajos called them "Anasazi." And, for seven decades, so did archaeologists. But, in the 1990s, a new generation of politically correct scholars proposed the term "Ancestral Puebloans," and it stuck. Our writer, however, has "never been able to swallow that awkward mouthful," so he still uses the archaeologically precise term first proposed by Alfred V. Kidder in 1927. Despite the debate about their name, there's no doubt about the indelible mark the ruin-builders left on Arizona.

BY DAVID ROBERTS  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAWN KISH

## 48 BIG BIRDS FLYING ACROSS THE SKY

California condors aren't beautiful, not like elegant trogons or mountain bluebirds, but they are magnificent. In part because they're the largest flying birds in North America, but more because of their resilience. In 1982, there were only 22 California condors left on the planet. Today, there are nearly 250, and many of them are soaring over Northern Arizona.

BY RUTH RUDNER  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN CANCALOSI

## 50 THE ALL-AMERICAN COWGIRL

If the Marlboro Man were a woman, she'd be Jane McGeary. As a wrangler at the Flying E Ranch in Wickenburg, she knows all about roping, riding, ponies, paints and palominos. She has all-American good looks, too, but she's the real deal.

BY KELLY VAUGHN KRAMER  
PHOTOGRAPH BY BEV PETTIT

## 52 SCENIC DRIVE

Mogollon Rim Roads: The world's largest continuous stand of ponderosa pines lives on the Mogollon Rim, and this 38-mile scenic drive cuts through several thousand acres of it.

## 54 HIKE OF THE MONTH

Los Burros Trail: If you've never done this long trail, which winds around Wishbone Mountain in the White Mountains, get to it. It's one of the best in Arizona.



POINTS OF INTEREST IN THIS ISSUE

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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*.

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Follow us @arizonahighways to see our travel photos from around the state.

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Join our creative community on Pinterest to share photo inspiration, outdoors ideas and more.

► Morning dew collects on Western blue flax and blue grama grass near Fay Canyon in Northern Arizona. | TOM BEAN

📷 CAMERA: CANON EOS-5D MARK II; SHUTTER: 1/200 SEC; APERTURE: F/6.7; ISO: 100; FOCAL LENGTH: 100 MM

**FRONT COVER** Lupines color a meadow near the San Francisco Peaks, a favorite photographic destination for Shane McDermott, who often photographs the peaks from the Kachina Wetlands (see page 21). | SHANE McDERMOTT

📷 CAMERA: NIKON D3S; SHUTTER: 0.6 SEC; APERTURE: F/18; ISO: 200; FOCAL LENGTH: 20 MM

**BACK COVER** Maidenhair ferns cloak the walls of a box canyon in the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness in Northern Arizona. | JACK DYKINGA

📷 CAMERA: NIKON D800E; SHUTTER: 1/4 SEC; APERTURE: F/16; ISO: 100; FOCAL LENGTH: 85 MM

# The Stuff in the Hallways

I'm not a photographer. I have a powerful Nikon at home, and I spend a lot of time in breathtaking wilderness areas that belong on magazine covers, but I'm not a photographer. Not anymore, anyway. I used to think I was halfway decent, but walking the hallways of *Arizona Highways* will humble just about anybody. In my office alone I'm surrounded by museum mounts of images by Jerry Jacka, Jack Dykinga, Gary Ladd and Willard Clay. It's an impressive collection. And then there's the stuff in the hallways.

If you're a longtime subscriber, you've seen most of our wall art, but not everything we publish ends up on a hook. Too expensive. If we're lucky, though, some of the shots in this month's cover story will make it there. Arguably, they're among the most beautiful images we've ever featured.

It's a bold statement — "the most beautiful ever" — but that's what we were shooting for when we asked 10 of our most experienced landscape photographers to tell us their single favorite place to make a photograph. Photo Editor Jeff Kida made the initial calls. Knowing Jeff, the conversations went on for hours, but here's the gist of what he was after: *If you could make only one photograph in Arizona, where would it be?*

It was hard to pin them down — there are so many photo ops in Arizona — but, with the tenacity of an alumni association, we finally got them to commit. Their answers are subjective, but it's hard to argue with Havasu Canyon, Madera Canyon, Lake Powell, Kanab Creek, the San Francisco Peaks ...

You saw the Peaks on our cover, and there's another shot of them inside. Both are Shane McDermott's, and both are spectacular. We've come to expect that from Shane. Over the past few years, he's become the premier shooter up there, and his favorite place to set up a tripod is the Kachina Wetlands south of Flagstaff. "[They] have a rare blend of water, grasses, native and migratory birds, ponderosa pines and great views of the

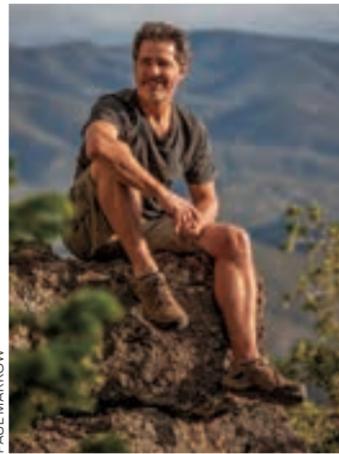
San Francisco Peaks," he says. We see a lot of photos of the Peaks, but none of us had ever seen anything like the shot in our cover story. It's very good. So is Derek von Briesen's shot of Monument Valley.

He was standing on Hunts Mesa when he made the photograph. That's one of many photo ops on the Navajo Indian Reservation. It's a powerful place. Not just for photographers, but also for geologists, archaeologists and writers like David Roberts. David has written a lot of books, including *In Search of the Old Ones*, which explores the Anasazi world of the Southwest. Although his subjects are nonfiction, his books read like screenplays for *Indiana Jones*. I've read them all, and they're all superb. You'll get a taste of that in *He Still Calls Them 'Anasazi'*. It's a story about his Anasazi adventures in Arizona, including a trek to an undisclosed canyon on the reservation.

"Spotting what looked like a metal ring lying on the ground," he writes, "I bent over to pick it up, but it didn't budge. Slowly, I realized that it wasn't metal at all. I carefully brushed away the dirt surrounding it until I uncovered a perfectly intact mug. ... I pondered tucking it away in a safe niche above the ground, but, in the end, I covered it back up with dirt, leaving it right where it had lain for 800 years."

His writing will make you want to retrace his footsteps, but it's not that simple. He's an expert, and there are many restrictions. Nevertheless, he says: "Pick a canyon, get your permit, go out and look. You won't be disappointed."

I encourage you to take his advice, and



PAUL MARKOW

while you're out there, keep your eyes peeled for condors. There are nearly 250 of them flying over Arizona, Utah, California and Mexico. That's not a lot, but considering there were only 22 in 1982, it's a big deal. And the numbers are growing. Every year, a few more condors are set free over the Vermilion Cliffs. Writer Ruth

Rudner was there for the last release, and she was inspired. "It is possible, before you see a condor in the air, to think it ugly," she writes in *Big Birds Flying Across the Sky*. "Afterward, you know it as one of the world's most magnificent creatures."

Ruth's story is a success story about the survival of an endangered species. It's a story of hope, and it's illustrated by John Cancalosi. John is a professional photographer, and, as you'll see, he's a good one. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if one of his images is hanging in one of our hallways. That's where we keep the good stuff.



SCOTT BAXTER

### COMING IN SEPTEMBER ...

Our annual "photography issue," featuring some incredible images of contemporary cowboys and Indians, historic Lake Powell shots and the winner of our photo contest.

ROBERT STIEVE, EDITOR

Follow me on Twitter: @azhighways

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## ARIZONA HIGHWAYS TELEVISION



ELLEN BARNES

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



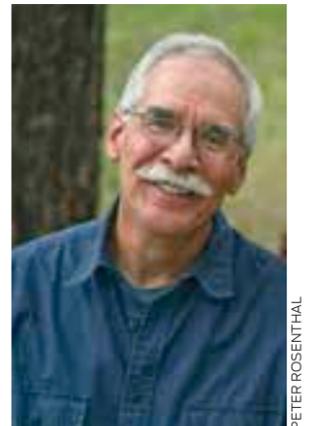
KATHY MCCLAIN

### BEV PETTIT

"I feel fortunate to be able to walk out my back door to capture the beauty all around us on any given day," says photographer Bev Pettit, who specializes in photos of Arizona's cowgirls and cowboys. She met Jane McGeary (see *The All-American Cowgirl*, page 50) while leading a photography workshop at Wickenburg's Flying E Ranch in 2012. "Jane is one of the wranglers at the ranch," Pettit says, "and she makes a darn good model, too." This year, Pettit is taking on a new challenge: She's spending a month in East Africa to photograph the wildlife of the Serengeti. In addition to *Arizona Highways*, Pettit's work has been featured in *Nature Photographer*.

### TOM BEAN

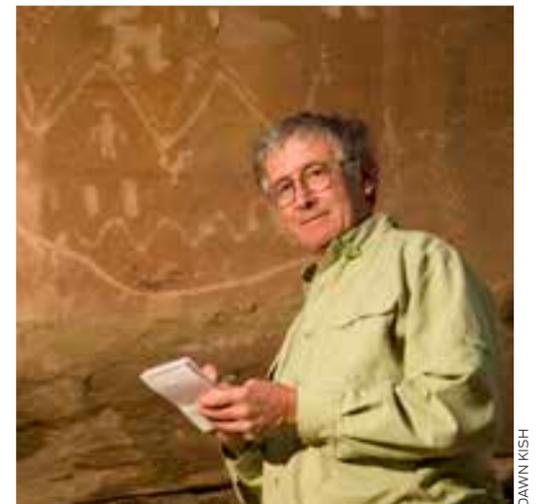
Arizona's canyons, mountains, mesas and deserts get a lot of attention, but it's a different kind of environment — the "horizontal splendor" of the state's grasslands — that appeals to photographer Tom Bean (see *Where the Deer and the Antelope Play*, page 32). "I'm drawn to the unbounded splendor of the grasslands, which are smooth and sweeping, textured with wildflowers in the summer and tweedy colors in the fall," Bean says. He goes on to say that shooting in these open spaces is "a different kind of freedom." Bean is a frequent contributor to *Arizona Highways*. His images have also appeared in several conservation publications and in national-park exhibits across the United States.



PETER ROSENTHAL

### DAVID ROBERTS

A 1987 hike into Utah's Bullet Canyon got writer David Roberts hooked on the Anasazi people. There, Roberts found seldom-visited Anasazi cliff dwellings that contrasted with what he calls the "static, museum-like quality" of restored, heavily trafficked sites. He started looking for similar sites, and he details some of those searches in *He Still Calls Them 'Anasazi'* (see page 42). Roberts is a rock climber, and that's another component of his fascination: "I was dazzled by how hard some of the crannies and cliff dwellings were to get to." Roberts is the acclaimed author of numerous books, including *In Search of the Old Ones*, which explores the Anasazi world of the Southwest. His work has also appeared in *National Geographic*, *Time*, *The New York Times* and other publications.



DAWN KISH

— NOAH AUSTIN

**STUNNING DEVELOPMENT**

I was so captivated by *Perfect Illustrations* in your June 2013 issue that I searched online for more information about Larry Toschik. What I found was nothing short of breathtaking, and I began eBay bidding on the beautiful shorebirds “cover” [February 1982]. It arrived today, and I was thrilled to discover the entire magazine was dedicated to Arizona’s shorebirds and the stunning artwork of Larry Toschik.

Peggy Coleman, Glendale, Arizona

**Perfect Illustrations**

In 1982, *Arizona Highways* featured a beautiful cover illustration by Larry Toschik. The cover depicted a shorebird perched on a rock, with a large, full moon in the background. The illustration was a reproduction of a painting by Larry Toschik, and it was one of the many beautiful illustrations that have appeared in the magazine over the years.



June 2013

**SOMETHING GRAND**

The magic of Shane McDermott’s photo glistens in the starlight while the Grand Canyon remains alive below [*Hike of the Month*, June 2013]. You have truly discovered a visionary artist. My son was born in Arizona, and he gives me *Arizona Highways* every year at Christmas. My dad is buried there, so my heart is there, too. Thanks for keeping the memories alive.

Janet Murray, Walnut Creek, California

**AGAINST THE WALL**

How sad to see what surely was a magnificent animal reduced to a skeleton tacked up on a wall [*Hometowns*, May 2013].

Susan Duffett, Chandler, Arizona

**TOP SECRET**

*Arizona Highways* often stirs fond memories for me, and the June 2013 issue was no exception. I lived in Phoenix from 1971 through 1984 and spent most weekends boating on Saguaro Lake, with many memorable trips to Lake Powell sprinkled in. The Rainbow Lodge story [*The End of the Rainbow*] was fascinating. Rainbow Bridge was always a boating stop on our Powell visits, but I’d never heard of the lodge — I can’t imagine how it would have been accessed in those early days, before the lake existed. I always look forward to your Lake Powell stories. While the recent story was about Barry Goldwater and the lodge, I was more fascinated by the Jerry Foster references. Jerry really was bigger

than life as our “eye in the sky” during my years in Phoenix. I recall him flying Santa Claus to the Saguaro Lake Marina for the Christmas boat parade in 1980. Whenever we were boating and saw a helicopter, someone would jokingly say to my wife, “It’s Jerry Foster, Carole; take your top off.” It became an unfulfilled standard challenge I’ll never forget.

Roger Giles, Knoxville, Tennessee

**DOMESTIC DISPUTE**

I enjoy your magazine. My wife and I spend quite a bit of time at the Grand Canyon and in Wickenburg. In *The End of the Rainbow* [June 2013], the photo caption on page 43 refers to “this burro trek.” The four animals in the photograph are not burros; they’re mules. Thank you for that error. It supports my belief that mules are the most under-appreciated and misunderstood domestic animals in this country.

John Hauer, Moab, Utah

**HORSE POWER**

Thank you for the wonderful article and photographs featuring the wild horses that live along the Salt River [*In the Middle of the Stream*, May 2013]. They are truly a gem in the desert. The beauty and power they exhibit as they live in their family bands is something that brings joy to so many who visit the river. As an oil painter, I travel to the river several times a week to paint them, and there are some days that I’m blessed to see bald eagles

and wild horses. What a thrill to see two symbols of freedom in one area.

Karen McLain, Apache Junction, Arizona

**FROM THE NORTH**

I’m a fifth-year seasonal employee at the Grand Canyon’s North Rim. Last October, a few of us North-Rimmers were sitting around and discussing how cool it would be to write an article about living here and submit it to *Arizona Highways*. The May 2013 issue is more than we could have imagined. Thanks for reading our minds.

Jodi Grinnell, North Rim, Grand Canyon

**THANK-YOU NOTE**

My brother-in-law, Bruce Brown, lives in Phoenix with my sister and kindly pays for our subscription to *Arizona Highways* each year as a Christmas present. We have visited the state a few times now, and your magazine helps to not only bring happy memories, but also encourage visits to new places thanks to wonderful feature stories. The photographs are really some of the best we’ve ever seen. Many thanks for such a fantastic magazine, and we look forward to our next edition. Best wishes to all “across the pond.”

Brenda and Mike Ryan, Cornwall, England

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

DAWN KISH



**THE JOURNAL** 08.13

hometowns > local favorites > history > photography > odd jobs  
dining > nature > lodging > things to do

**Stepping Stone**

Aided by ancient footholds carved into the sandstone, a hiker admires the view atop one of the cliffs at Canyon de Chelly National Monument on the Navajo Indian Reservation.

Information: 928-674-5500 or [www.nps.gov/cach](http://www.nps.gov/cach)

CAMERA: CANON EOS-5D; SHUTTER: 1/200 SEC; APERTURE: F/11; ISO: 200; FOCAL LENGTH: 25 MM



MARK LIPCZYNSKI (2)

local favorites



**ARIZONA STRONGHOLD TASTING ROOM**  
Cottonwood

It's a bit surprising that musician Maynard James Keenan and winemaker Eric Glomski ever crossed paths, but it's a good thing they did. Along with winemaker Tim White, they've created world-class, award-winning wines, and there's no better place to try them than Arizona Stronghold Tasting Room, says Paula Woolsey, director of sales.

**What makes Arizona Stronghold's wine unique?**

We over-deliver on all of our wines, and we take real pride in showing the country that wines from Arizona can be quality-driven. Our mission is to bring the quality and the potentiality of what Arizona has to offer to everybody.

**Why is Arizona good for growing grapes?**

The state has a variety of terroirs — the French term that means the climate, the dirt and the environment. Arizona has the second-biggest diurnal shift in the world, which means grapes can get hot during the day and cool off dramatically during the night. It's that struggle, combined with high elevation, rich soil and dry climate, that creates this really interesting flavor.

**What's in the Tasting Room?**

At any time, we have close to 20 wines to taste. The Tasting Room carries our flagship wines and also wines called Site Archives — small-run, vineyard-specific, seriously focused wines. Out of those, the most popular are the flagship Tazi, an aromatic white blend, and the Lozen, a rich Bordeaux blend.

— KAYLA FROST

Arizona Stronghold Tasting Room is located at 1023 N. Main Street in Cottonwood. For more information, call 928-639-2789.

# COTTONWOOD

FOUNDED	AREA	ELEVATION	COUNTY
1874	10.7 square miles	3,314 feet	Yavapai

COTTONWOOD GREW UP around a circle of 16 trees of the same name, as well as an adobe building that housed soldiers from nearby Camp Verde. Although the setting was, in theory, idyllic — the town site was located just a quarter-mile from the Verde River — it was problematic. Mosquitoes,

bred in floodwater, led to the spread of dysentery and malaria. But, thanks to quinine and settlers of good stock, the settlement grew, and in 1879, it was officially incorporated. Farms and ranches abounded, and the town eventually became known for its liquor. "Cottonwood

was known to have the best bootlegging booze within hundreds of miles," according to historical records. Today, it's known for its vineyards and historic small-town charm.

— KELLY VAUGHN KRAMER

[www.cottonwoodaz.gov](http://www.cottonwoodaz.gov)

# And the Survey Says ...

Mapping earth fissures isn't a topic that comes up very often, unless you're in the halls of the Arizona Geological Survey, which celebrates its 125th anniversary this year.

What began as a lot of work with no pay for one man, John F. Blandy, would ultimately become the Arizona Geological Survey. In 1888, Blandy was appointed Arizona's Territorial geologist, a position created five years after Governor Frederick A. Tritle asked Congress to establish a geological survey for the Arizona Territory.

One of Blandy's duties was to collect mineral-production statistics, and it wasn't always easy. "Blandy complains that miners of this section are negligent about forwarding to him the information recently asked for," according to a March 1890 article in the *Arizona Weekly Journal-Miner*, perhaps nudging the miners of Yavapai County into action.

But things finally fell into place, and, since Blandy's tenure, the position of Territorial geologist has evolved into the University of Arizona Bureau of Mines, then the Arizona Bureau of Mines, then the Arizona Bureau of Geology and Mineral Technology. Finally, in 1988, the agency became the Arizona Geological Survey.

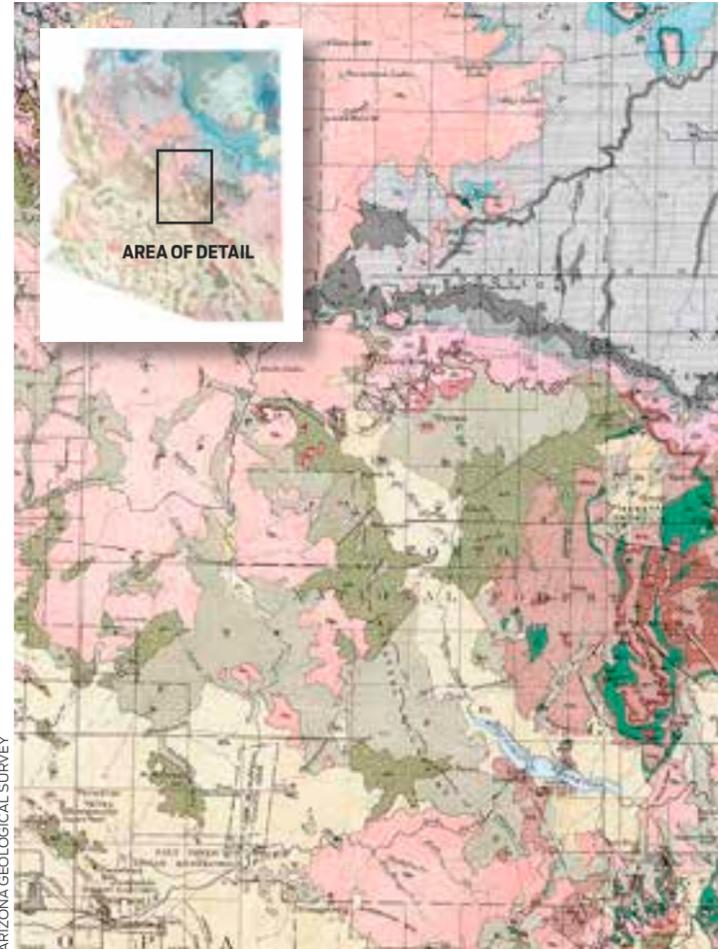
This year, the survey celebrates its 125th anniversary, which makes it only nine years younger than the U.S. Geological Survey. Arizona's survey is in charge of fine-scale geologic mapping and hazard analysis, says Michael Conway, chief of the agency's Geologic Extension Service.

The AZGS excels at mapping earth fissures, which result from water-table depletion. As groundwater is removed, loose sediments collapse because "the water is partly responsible for holding the ground up," according to the USGS. Sometimes, areas collapse at different rates, causing cracks in the Earth's surface.

Fissures can cause extensive damage to property and infrastructure. To help homeowners, real estate agents, conservation advocates, and city and water planners, the AZGS provides online, interactive maps of the state's fissures.

"We're the only show in town for that," Conway says.

— KAYLA FROST



ARIZONA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Published in 1924, this was the first statewide geologic map of Arizona. It was re-released in honor of the Arizona Geological Survey's 125th anniversary.

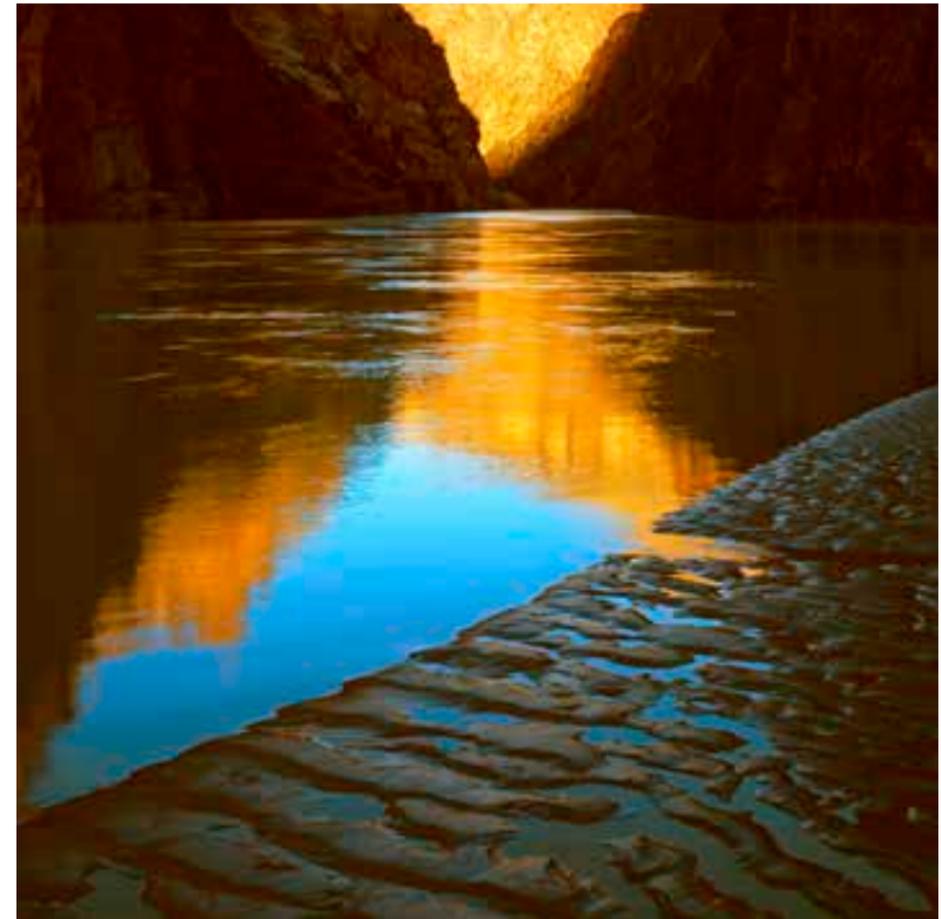
## this month in history

- Phoenix founder Jack Swilling dies on August 12, 1878. After seeing the ancient Hohokam canals in the area, Swilling organized the Swilling Irrigation Canal Co., which drew farmers to the area, ultimately creating a town site.
- The first aviation class from Luke Field in West Phoenix graduates on August 15, 1941, with 45 students. Luke Field would become Luke Air Force Base in 1951.
- The first mail to ever travel through Arizona arrives in Tucson by horseback on August 19, 1857.
- On August 27, 1918, the Battle of Ambos Nogales takes place between the Mexican forces of Nogales, Sonora, and the U.S. Army stationed in Nogales, Arizona. Approximately 130 Mexicans and five Americans are killed.

## ARIZONA HIGHWAYS 50 Years Ago



The Coronado Trail (U.S. Route 191), which includes 400 switchbacks and was the route used by Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, was featured in our August 1963 issue. Arizona's roadside rest areas were also included.



WES TIMMERMAN

Evening Sandbar, Granite Rapids, Grand Canyon

CAMERA: TACHIYARA 4X5; FILM: FUJI PROVIA; SHUTTER: 1/4 SEC; APERTURE: F/45; ISO: 100; FOCAL LENGTH: 90 MM

## This Photo Reflects Well

WES TIMMERMAN DOESN'T LIVE IN ARIZONA, but he visits regularly to photograph one of his favorite subjects — the Grand Canyon. It was there that he began to appreciate the magnificence of reflected light. On most trips, he takes his 4x5 view camera and two lenses: a 90 mm and a 210 mm. That combination, he says, gives him the visual options he needs to shoot the Canyon and its many side canyons.

The latter are among Timmerman's favorite

places because he can photograph them any time of year and just about any time of day. If there's too much contrast in one location, he simply moves down the trail, and the dynamic range between light and shadows moves with him.

For this photograph, Timmerman found himself in deep shadows just off the Hermit Trail. It wasn't quite right, but he knew that if he dropped down close to the river, he could take advantage of a number of compositional elements. Visual-

izing the amber light reflected off the distant rock wall, he saw that three triangulated forms were mirrored on the surface of the river. Those shapes were anchored by another strong diagonal line, with repeating textures, formed by the sandbar in the foreground.

Light shapes everything that's captured by a camera, and no one is better than Timmerman at knowing how to use that light with Mother Nature's most impressive reflectors. — JEFF KIDA, photo editor

## PHOTO TIP

### MODES OF OPERATION

There are five main shooting modes on most DSLR cameras: Auto, Program, Shutter-Priority, Aperture-Priority and Manual.

In Auto, the camera controls everything to, theoretically, keep your photos mistake-free. In Program, the camera still automatically adjusts aperture and shutter speed, but the photographer can

choose from several combinations that will produce the same exposure. Shutter-Priority allows the photographer to control the shutter speed while the camera adjusts aperture, and

Aperture-Priority does the opposite of that. Manual leaves the photographer in full control of both aperture and shutter speed. Our advice: Move the dial off of Auto and start to explore your creativity.



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



# HATCHERY MANAGER

Randy Shine,  
near Payson

THE LAST THING RANDY SHINE WANTS to do on his day off is fish. That's because he spends his days managing the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Canyon Creek and Silver Creek fish hatcheries. "I'm with fish every day," he says. While you won't lure Shine into a game of go fish, he's as dedicated as they come. Shine grew up fishing, and, for the past 32 years, he's worked in hatcheries across the country. Last year, he was hired by Game and Fish to raise rainbow trout and Arctic grayling from eggs acquired from the Ennis National Fish Hatchery in Montana. Ask Shine about his work, and he'll tell you it's a lot like farming: "There are a lot of variables, like temperature — which affects growth rates — the amount of water we have, and water quality, and you have to make adjustments based on the conditions you have." Of course, like any good farmer, Shine is willing to get his hands dirty, which means there's a good chance you'll find him scooping fish feed from 5-gallon buckets.

— KATHY RITCHIE

For more information about the Canyon Creek and Silver Creek fish hatcheries, call 602-942-3000 or visit [www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov).

DAWN KISH

# Uncommon Salt

In a town where steakhouses and Mexican restaurants are the norm, Salt Restaurant and Wine Bar stands out as something different, with an ultra-modern atmosphere and a menu that includes risotto and lobster with puréed asparagus.

“NOT EVERYONE HERE WEARS FLANNEL,” Rica Girardi says with a laugh.

Girardi, a longtime Pinetop-Lakeside resident, wanted to give the town something pointedly different from the steakhouses and Mexican restaurants that are so common in this rustic White Mountains community. In May 2012, she and Rich Crockett opened Salt Restaurant and Wine Bar on the town’s main drag. And, on a Wednesday evening,

there’s no flannel in sight.

Salt’s ultra-modern atmosphere — soft lighting, exposed ceiling beams and a jazz trio playing in the corner — is unusual in Pinetop-Lakeside, and that’s the whole point. But the décor and the entertainment would feel like window dressing if the food didn’t match that fish-out-of-water vibe.

For that, Girardi turned to executive chef Spencer Gorman-Prow, a Chicago native who worked at restaurants in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and Athens,

Georgia, before coming to Arizona. Gorman-Prow’s menu includes old favorites with unique twists — so unique, he and Girardi say, that they sometimes butt heads. “But we make it work,” he says.

If the chicken and waffles are any indication, he’s right. Perfectly fried chicken breast is paired with light, airy herb waffles topped with a spicy honey that provides an unexpected kick. Combined with a beer from Arizona’s Four Peaks or Nimbus breweries, or with a selection from Salt’s extensive wine list, it’s a can’t-miss guilty pleasure.

Other favorites include a pork belly appetizer that’s served with a balsamic reduction and honey ricotta; risotto and lobster, with puréed asparagus; and Salt’s cheeseburger, topped with crispy prosciutto, pears and fontina cheese, and served on a toasted fennel bun. That one’s served with polenta fries, which are garnished with Parmesan and fresh herbs.

But Gorman-Prow has something for steak-lovers, too: “The Filet,” served with a truffle mushroom and faro risotto, has been a huge hit among the locals. “I’ve had people tell me it’s the best steak they’ve ever had,” he says.

The menu has evolved since Salt opened, and the clientele has followed suit. The jazz trio plays every Wednesday and attracts a devoted following of diners who tap their feet along with the beat. And patio seating is popular during the warm summer months, when business really heats up.

So, why the name “Salt”? The answer, predictably, goes back to a desire to break the mold in Pinetop-Lakeside.

“I wish I had some grandiose story,” Girardi says, “but I just wanted something different. Plus, people put salt on everything.” — NOAH AUSTIN

Salt Restaurant and Wine Bar is located at 476 W. White Mountains Road in Pinetop-Lakeside. For more information, call 928-367-1819 or visit [www.saltpinetop.com](http://www.saltpinetop.com).



PAUL MARKOW



BRUCE D. TAUBERT (2)

## Smoky-Colored Bandit

Raccoons are intelligent creatures, as anyone who’s had their industrial-strength, securely lidded trash can attest. But there’s more to these creatures than their infuriating ability to tear a garbage bag to shreds — and we don’t only mean the panicked, split-second glance they give you before scurrying into the night when you turn on the porch light at 3 a.m.

Prevalent in most of Arizona’s wooded areas, raccoons can grow as large as 28 inches long — not including their trademark ringed, bushy tails, which usually aren’t longer than 10 inches. Besides what’s left of last night’s family dinner, they eat fruit, nuts, insects, worms and fish, but they’ll occasionally supplement their diet with small birds and mammals. Hunting anything that can run or

fly, however, is difficult, because raccoons hit speeds of only 10 to 15 mph over short distances. Despite that, they are adept swimmers, and an adult raccoon can spend several hours in the water.

A highly developed sense of touch, hypersensitive front paws and the aforementioned intelligence make raccoons natural problem-solvers. A 1908 study found that raccoons are able to open complex locks with relative ease, and subsequent studies showed the animals can remember solutions to problems for as long as three years.

So, even if you think your new trash can will deter them, you might consider keeping your garbage in the garage until morning. Just make sure the doors are locked.

— NOAH AUSTIN

### nature factoid



#### CREOSOTE

The creosote bush produces a camphor-like odor when raindrops hit its waxy leaves. The evergreen shrub can grow to 6 feet tall or taller, and it has green leaves, yellow flowers and fuzzy fruit. It’s considered a medicinal plant by some Native Americans, who use it as a treatment for various maladies, including snakebites.

— ANDREA CRANDALL



JOHN BURCHAM

## Grand Living B&B

*MI CASA ES SU CASA.* That phrase just about sums up Gloria Jobs' business philosophy. When guests stay at Grand Living Bed and Breakfast, which she owns with her husband, Bill, Gloria wants them to feel right at home. "We treat them like family," she says. "A lot of our guests extend their stays because they feel so comfortable with us."

williams

Or maybe they stay for her gourmet breakfasts, which she prepares from scratch daily. After Gloria declared that her dream was to own and operate a

B&B, the Jobses relocated from Minnesota to start their next chapter. The 8,000-square-foot, six-room house sits just outside downtown

Williams and reflects their love of beautiful things. Rooms are filled with artwork and antiques from their travels around the globe, and, despite being a log home, the place is hardly rustic — creature comforts such as plush linens, Wi-Fi and, yes, television are available. For Gloria, this home truly is where her heart is, and she and Bill plan to stay at Grand Living for the long haul. "I put my love into it," she says. "And here we are."

— KATHY RITCHIE

Grand Living Bed and Breakfast is located at 701 Quarter Horse Road in Williams. For more information, call 928-635-4171 or visit [www.grandlivingbnb.com](http://www.grandlivingbnb.com).

## ~ things to do in arizona ~

**Navajo Festival**  
August 3-4, Flagstaff  
Celebrating its 64th year, this festival will feature more than 70 artists, storytellers and cultural interpreters at the Museum of Northern Arizona. Information: 928-774-5213 or [www.musnaz.org](http://www.musnaz.org)

**Cowboy Poets Gathering**  
August 8-10, Prescott  
More than 70 performers will take their cowboy poetry and

music to the stage as they share their heritage and the culture of the American cowboy. Information: [www.azcowboypoets.org](http://www.azcowboypoets.org)

**Vigilante Days**  
August 9-10, Tombstone  
This yearly event celebrates Tombstone's Wild West heritage as history comes to life in "The Town Too Tough to Die." Information: [www.tombstoneweb.com](http://www.tombstoneweb.com)

**River Regatta**  
August 10, Bullhead City  
Enjoy live entertainment, carnival games, food and a floating parade down the Colorado River. Information: [www.bullheadregatta.com](http://www.bullheadregatta.com)

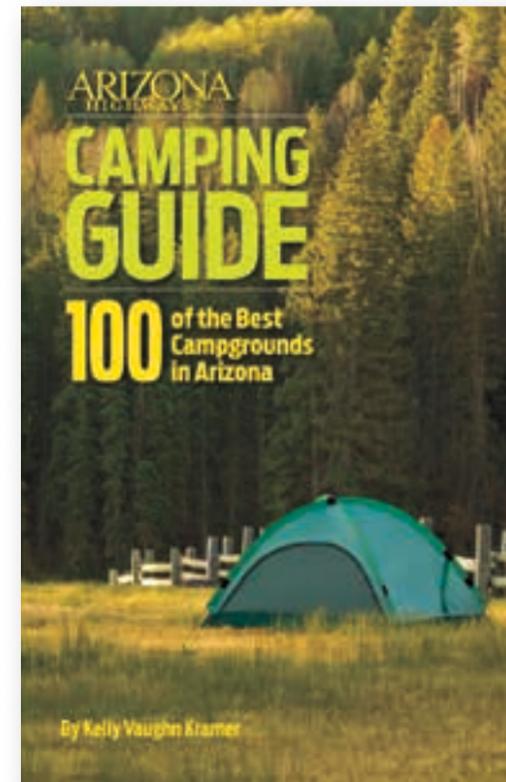
**World's Oldest Continuous Rodeo**  
August 15-18, Payson  
Featuring bull-riding, calf-roping, barrel-racing and more, this event is considered the country's best small rodeo. Information:

928-474-4515 or [www.paysonrimcountry.com](http://www.paysonrimcountry.com)

**Photo Workshop: Lake Powell**  
October 14-18, Lake Powell  
Join Arizona Highways contributing photographer Gary Ladd as he shows how to explore and photograph Lake Powell's stunning landscapes. Information: 888-790-7042 or [www.ahpw.org](http://www.ahpw.org) **AH**

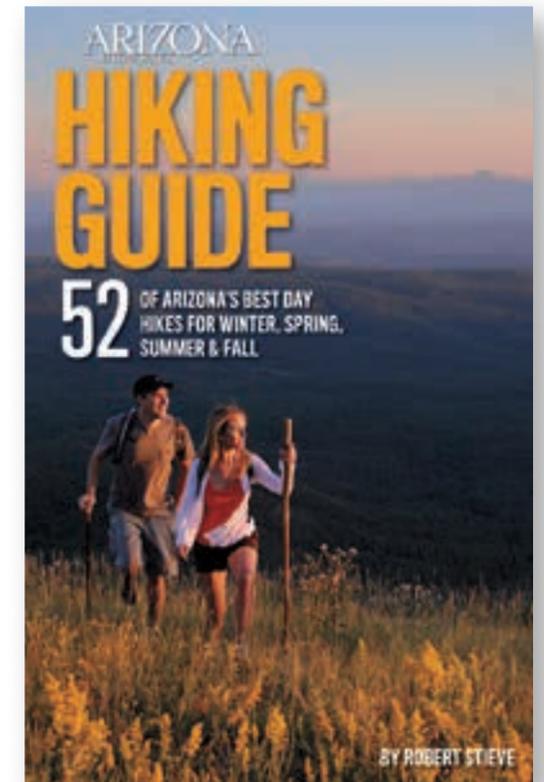
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BEST OF ARIZONA

# EXCELLENCE MARKS THE SPOTS

There are a lot of scenic photo ops in Arizona — the Grand Canyon alone has about a million. But what are the best? The very best? For the answer, we asked some of our most talented landscape photographers to reveal their single favorite place to make a photograph. Here's what they had to say.

EDITED BY JEFF KIDA AND KELLY VAUGHN KRAMER

[PRECEDING PANEL]

## LAKE POWELL

*Gary Ladd*

**CAMERA:**

Tachihara 4x5 with 125 mm lens

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

Because fog on Lake Powell is rare, and witnessing a golden beam of sunlight spotlighting a butte on the lake is even more unusual. I was very lucky to have been on an ephemeral island east of the mouth of Face Canyon at the right moment.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**

I'm always trying to photograph the lake when there are clouds that produce changing light, cloud shadows, reduced contrast on the landscape and interesting skies. This makes the winter storm and the summer monsoon seasons best for shooting.

This image was made during a storm in mid-December.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**

Almost always, it is sunrise and sunset. This image was made at sunrise.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**

I've been there hundreds of times, because the location lies along the main channel of the lake.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**

No "discovery" was needed. The view is a common one; being there to photograph the scene during a rare moment was the key.

**DIRECTIONS:**

The route is mundane but does require a boat. Begin from Antelope Point Marina or Wahweap Marina, and follow the buoys to about Mile 26, just up-lake from the mouth of Face Canyon. Then, look northwest.

**INFORMATION:**

Lake Powell, [www.powellguide.com](http://www.powellguide.com)

"To put your hands in a river is to feel the chords that bind the Earth together."

— BARRY LOPEZ

[RIGHT]

## OAK CREEK

*Mark Frank*

**CAMERA:**

Canon EOS-5D Mark II with polarizer and neutral-density filter

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

Oak Creek has perennial water that can add reflections and movement to an image. To the right of this image are large rocks and a cascade. Just before the cascade was a large volume of water that was flowing very smoothly and provided some interesting bending of the reflected light. I tried multiple camera and polarizer positions to make the most of the bending light. This was my favorite.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**

Fall has the most color.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**

Near sunrise or sunset.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**

I've been three times to this exact location, but possibly 100 times to Oak Creek.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**

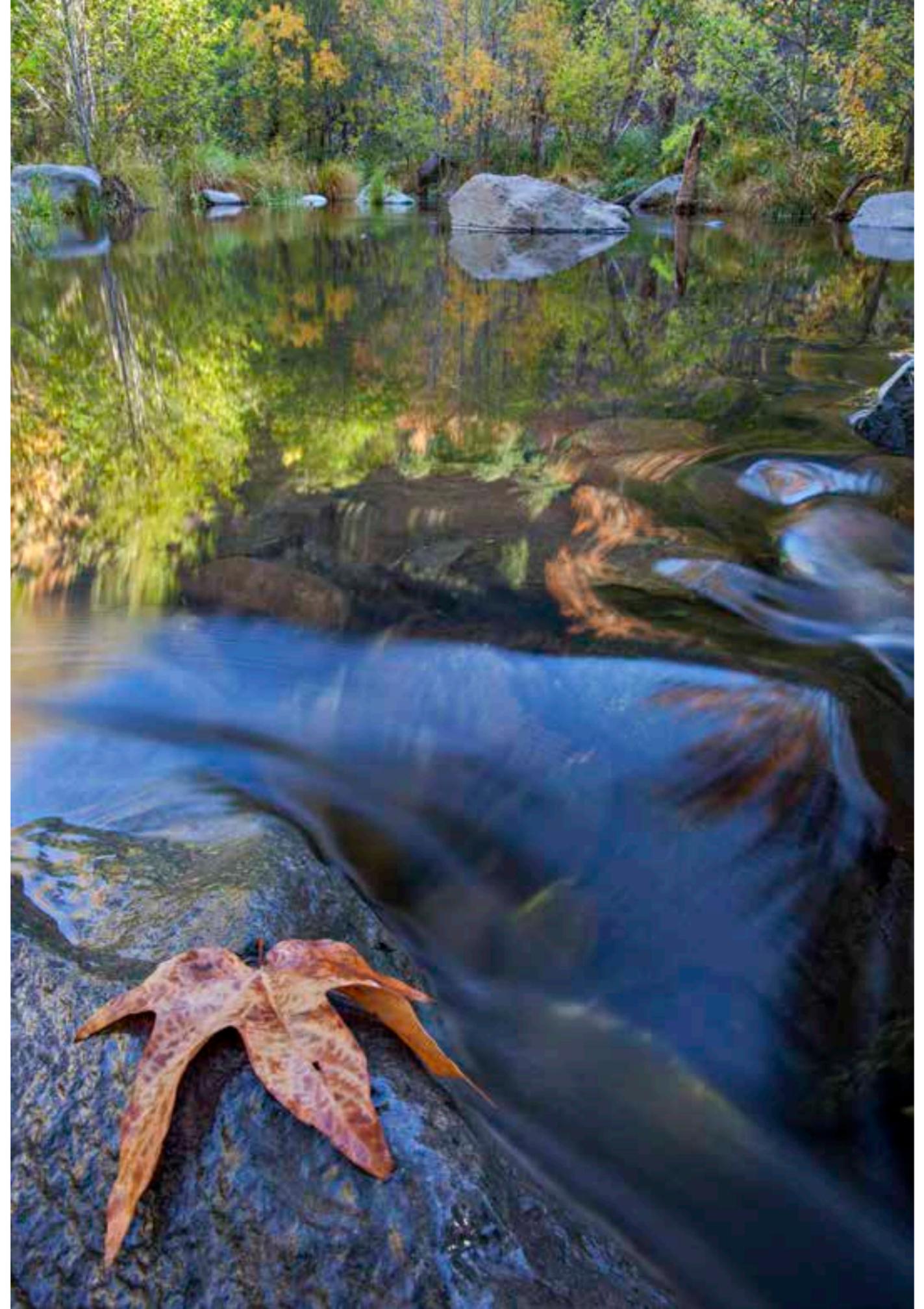
I found this location during one of many exploratory hikes.

**DIRECTIONS:**

This area of Oak Creek is accessible via a short walk from the Encinoso Picnic Site. From Sedona, drive north on State Route 89A for approximately 5 miles to the site.

**INFORMATION:**

Coconino National Forest, 928-203-2900 or [www.fs.usda.gov/coconino](http://www.fs.usda.gov/coconino)



## SAN FRANCISCO PEAKS

*Shane McDermott*

**CAMERA:**  
Nikon D3

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**  
The Kachina Wetlands have a rare blend of water, wetland grasses, many native and migratory bird species, ponderosa pines and great views of the San Francisco Peaks.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**  
Summer.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**  
Either morning or evening.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**  
I've been there about a half-dozen times.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**  
A local Kachina resident showed it to me.

**DIRECTIONS:**  
From Flagstaff, drive south on Interstate 17 for 5 miles to Exit 333 (Kachina Village/Mountainaire) and turn west. Turn right off the access road and take another immediate right on Tovar Trail. Take this road until it ends. The Kachina Wetlands are located at the intersection of Tovar Trail and Lohali Trail.

**INFORMATION:**  
Coconino County Parks and Recreation, 928-679-8000 or [www.coconino.az.gov/parks](http://www.coconino.az.gov/parks)





[LEFT]  
**HAVASU CANYON**

*Suzanne Mathia*

**CAMERA:**  
Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

This area is known around the world for its blue waters and spectacular waterfalls. Havasu Creek, a year-round stream with incredible aquamarine water, flows by Supai village and descends another 1,400 feet as it passes over five waterfalls, the highest being Mooney Falls. The 100-foot-tall Havasu Falls has a beautiful deep-blue pool beneath, surrounded by thick, green vegetation. Despite the effort required to reach the falls, I consider Havasu Canyon to be one of the most beautiful places on Earth.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**  
Spring and fall.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**  
All day. Due to the steep canyon walls, you can photograph all day long.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**  
Six.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**  
When my son was young, his Boy Scout troop wanted to hike down there. There were no dads available to make the hike at the time, so I led the group on a four-day hike/camp. I didn't have any photography equipment with me then, so after I made photography a full-time passion and occupation, Havasu was one of the first places on my list.

**DIRECTIONS:**  
Havasu Canyon is accessible via a 10-mile hike from the Hualapai Hilltop, 65 miles north of Historic Route 66 off Indian Route 18. Helicopter, horse and mule rides into the canyon are also available.

**INFORMATION:**  
Havasupai Tribe,  
928-448-2121 or  
[www.havasupai-nsn.gov](http://www.havasupai-nsn.gov)



[ABOVE]  
**GRAND CANYON**

*Jack Dykinga*

**CAMERA:**  
Arca-Swiss

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

The Grand Canyon always shows you something different — different emotions, different personalities. It generates its own weather. I looked at this spot — on the way to Cape Royal — for a really long time and could never figure out how to shoot it. Ultimately, I used a fixed rope and sort of rappelled down and tied in the camera on the rope. While I was rappelling down, my wife said, “I can't watch.” It may have been a near-divorce experience.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**  
There isn't one — that's why it's so wonderful. You never know what you're going to get.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**  
Very early and very late.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**  
That number is beyond my memory — hundreds, and probably thousands.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**  
I saw it several times on my way to Cape Royal. It's very dramatic.

**DIRECTIONS:**  
Cape Royal, the southernmost viewpoint on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, is accessible via the 0.5-mile Cape Royal Trail. From Grand Canyon Lodge on the North Rim, drive 3 miles north on State Route 67 and turn right onto Cape Royal Road. Follow the road for 19 miles to the trailhead.

**INFORMATION:**  
Grand Canyon National Park, 928-638-7797 or [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)



[ABOVE]

## SOUTHERN ARIZONA GRASSLANDS

*Randy Prentice*

**CAMERA:**

Toyo 4x5 with 150 mm Fujinon lens and Fujichrome 50 film

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

I made this photograph in the grasslands near Madera Canyon, below the western face of the Santa Rita Mountains. I like the dense, clean look of the grass — it's almost like a carpet.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**

Every season has its attributes. This scene was taken in February. It snows fairly often in this area, too. Summer would provide some dramatic thunderstorm activity and good barrel-cactus blooms.

Spring can exhibit an abundance of wildflowers. However, in early fall, I've seen massive patches of summer poppies.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**

I usually photograph at first light and last light. However, a cloudy or partly cloudy day would provide some dramatic light, as well as soft light, which is good for flower photography.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**

I've photographed this area at least a dozen times. Maybe more.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**

Early on in my photographic career, I was on a quest for wildflowers, particularly Mexican goldpoppies. That year, this area had an abundance. Many times, a photographer will discover a road that looks promising and just go for it. That's part of the joy. It's the discovery and exploration.

**DIRECTIONS:**

From Interstate 19, drive east on Continental Road and follow the signs to Madera Canyon.

**INFORMATION:**

Coronado National Forest, 520-749-8700 or [www.fs.usda.gov/coronado](http://www.fs.usda.gov/coronado)

[RIGHT]

## MONUMENT VALLEY

*Derek Von Briesen*

**CAMERA:**

Canon EOS-1DS Mark III

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

The vista of Monument Valley from Hunts Mesa is simply thrilling. Late-afternoon and early morning light sweeps across the landscape from the side, creating an amazing interplay between the colorfully lit sandstone mesas and monuments, with their lengthy shadows. Combined with a harrowing, two-hour, four-wheel drive on a "jeep trail" and the serenity of camping under starry skies miles from worldly concerns, an overnight on Hunts Mesa is a photographic adventure of the highest order.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**

I've photographed during every season there. Hot in the summer, delightful in fall, cold but spectacular with snow in winter and often windy in spring, Hunts Mesa can yield great photos any time of the year.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**

Within a couple of hours of sunrise and sunset.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**

I would guess a dozen times or more. I lead two or three photo workshops there each year, and it's always exciting to see photographers from all over the world experience the vista for the first time.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**

The shot from Hunts is much sought-after. Setting foot there, one can practically feel the history, recalling the catalog of shots made famous by some of the greatest photographers ever, the first being the legendary Josef Muench.

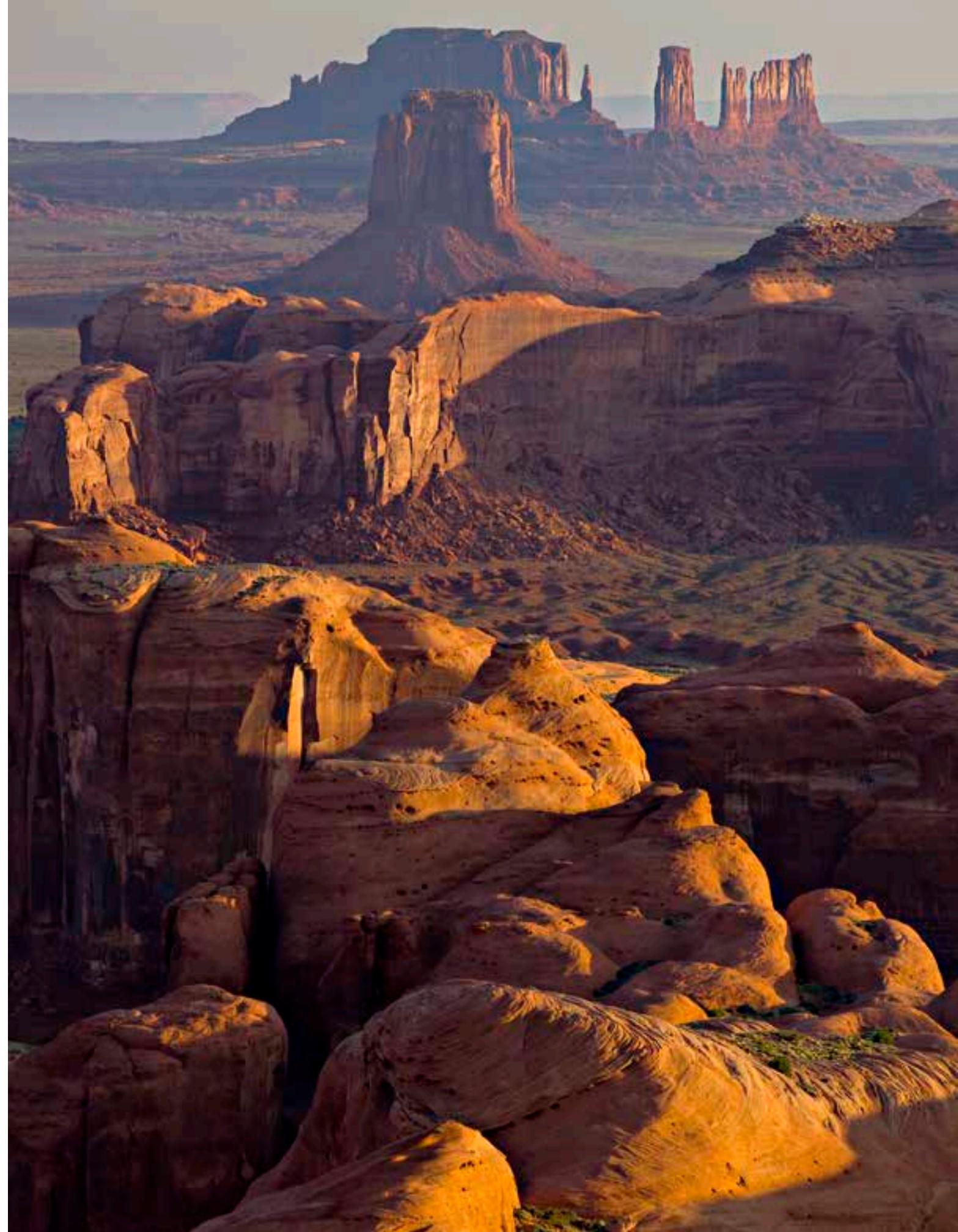
**DIRECTIONS:**

From Flagstaff, drive north on U.S. Route 89 for 62 miles, then take U.S. Route 160 east for 82 miles. Take U.S. Route 163 north for 22 miles to Monument Valley, which is near the Arizona-Utah border.

All roads to Hunts Mesa are on private Navajo land, and are accessible only with authorized guides.

**INFORMATION:**

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



## WATSON LAKE

*Lonna Tucker***CAMERA:**

Arca-Swiss Rm3di technical camera with Leaf Aptus digital back; three captures stitched together for panoramic format

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

It's unique, but there are a few other places in Arizona with similar boulder formations scattered about the landscape, mainly in the central part of the state. The balanced rocks are always a mystery, and you wonder how long they have been there and how long they'll stay put.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**

Monsoon season — mainly for the added drama of great skies. But it's definitely best working when the winds are light, for great reflections.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**

Early or late day, depending on your point of view. I like softer sun that delicately shapes the boulder formations with wraparound light.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**

Four.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**

I met Jay Dusard in the early 1990s after attending one of his workshops. He later invited me to visit him at his home in Prescott, and we made a side trip over to the Granite Dells area. Jay had photographed there many times.

**DIRECTIONS:**

Watson Lake Park is located at 3101 W. Watson Lake Park Road in Prescott.

**INFORMATION:**

Prescott Visitors Center,  
800-266-7534 or  
[www.visit-prescott.com](http://www.visit-prescott.com)



“Nature reserves some of her choice rewards for days when her mood may appear to be somber.”

— RACHEL CARSON



[PRECEDING PANEL]

## SONORAN DESERT

*George Stocking***CAMERA:**

Canon 5D Mark III

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

I watched this storm cross from east to west on the Internet. About 4 p.m., after watching the radar loop, I determined there was a chance that the clouds in the west might clear the horizon just about sunset.

Given that an intense storm was being pushed in front of it, I knew a rainbow wasn't out of the question. I hiked out there — to the southern face of the Superstition Mountains, near the Peralta Trailhead — and stood in the rain for an hour while

I watched the crack in the clouds form on the western horizon. The sun hit the crack, giving me two minutes of one of the most intense rainbows I have ever witnessed.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**

Spring or during the summer monsoon.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**

Evening — the sun comes up behind the mountains in the morning.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**

Three.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**

I drove out to Apache Junction and returned to a place I had previously photographed. I knew the desert was open there — not much vegetation — with a few chain fruit chollas spread around. I also knew it would be as green as a lawn from the rains.

**DIRECTIONS:**

From Apache Junction, drive east on U.S. Route 60 to Peralta Road and turn left (north). Continue on Peralta Road for approximately 8 miles to the Peralta Trailhead.

**INFORMATION:**

Tonto National Forest, 480-610-3300 or [www.fs.usda.gov/tonto](http://www.fs.usda.gov/tonto)

“The finest workers in stone are not copper or steel tools, but the gentle touches of air and water working at their leisure with a liberal allowance of time.”

— HENRY DAVID THOREAU

[RIGHT]

INNER BASIN  
(GRAND CANYON)*Wes Timmerman***CAMERA:**

Tachihara 4x5 with Fuji Provia film

**WHY IS THIS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE?**

The Grand Canyon will always be a source of inspiration, art and science for me. Kanab Creek is a large, magnificent side canyon.

**BEST SEASON TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS LOCATION:**

This was made in April; spring is a lovely season there.

**BEST TIME OF DAY TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE:**

This depends on weather, season and the photographer's vision. This was taken midmorning.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?**

I've passed by there three times. It's a 9-mile hike from the river and a one- or two-day hike (one way) from the trailheads to the north. Overnight permits are required.

**HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS LOCATION?**

On a 10-day, 56-mile backpacking hike down Jumpup Canyon to the confluence with Kanab Creek, down to the Colorado River and back.

The trip included, on the return, going from Jumpup Canyon up Kwagunt Hollow and over to, and down, Sowats Canyon — to then resume the hike out of Jumpup.

**DIRECTIONS:**

From Jacob Lake on U.S. Route 89A, drive 43 miles south on State Route 67, also known as the North Rim Parkway, to the entrance of Grand Canyon National Park.

**INFORMATION:**

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

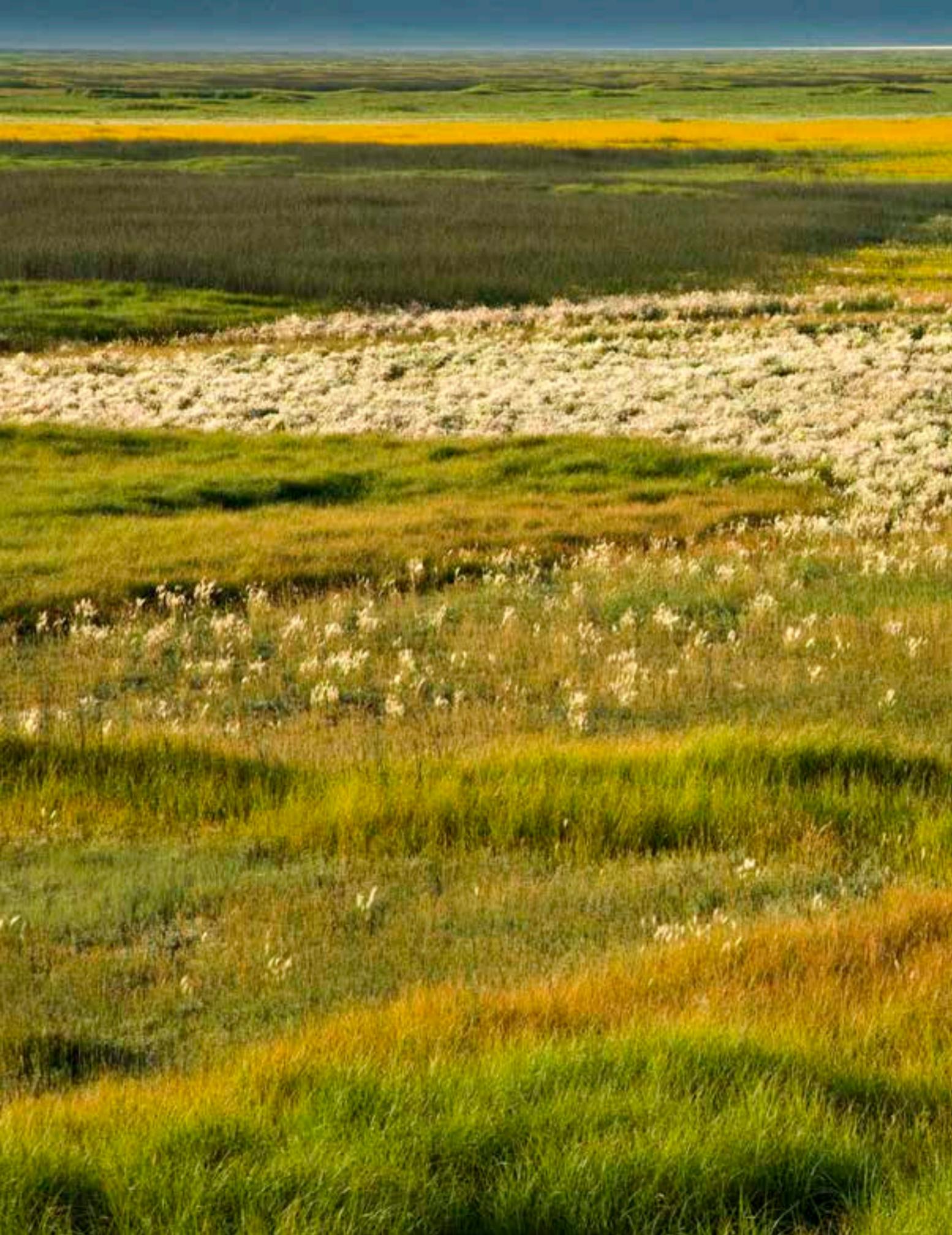


# WHERE THE DEER *and the* ANTELOPE PLAY

Technically, there aren't any antelopes in Arizona. What people think are antelopes are actually pronghorns, and there aren't a lot of them. In fact, you're more likely to see an elk than the aforementioned ungulate. There are a lot of elk and a lot of mule deer in Arizona, and some of the best places to see them are the grasslands up north.

A PORTFOLIO BY TOM BEAN

"Grasslands cover more area than any other plant community in the world," photographer Tom Bean says. "They make up almost a quarter of the Earth's vegetation." Here, a sunset monsoon storm dominates the sky above Lower Lake Mary, in the Coconino National Forest south of Flagstaff. "The sinuous curve of the water drew me into this landscape," Bean says.



[above] A bull elk and his harem of females make their way through tall grass in the basin of Mormon Lake, along Forest Road 90 in the Coconino National Forest. "Watching these massive animals moving through the shoulder-high grass evokes an image of an Arizona Serengeti," Bean says.  
[right] An Indian paintbrush blooms near Fay Canyon.  
[left] Mormon Lake comes alive with grasses and wildflowers. "The rich colors and varied textures of this image suggest a Monet painting," Bean says.





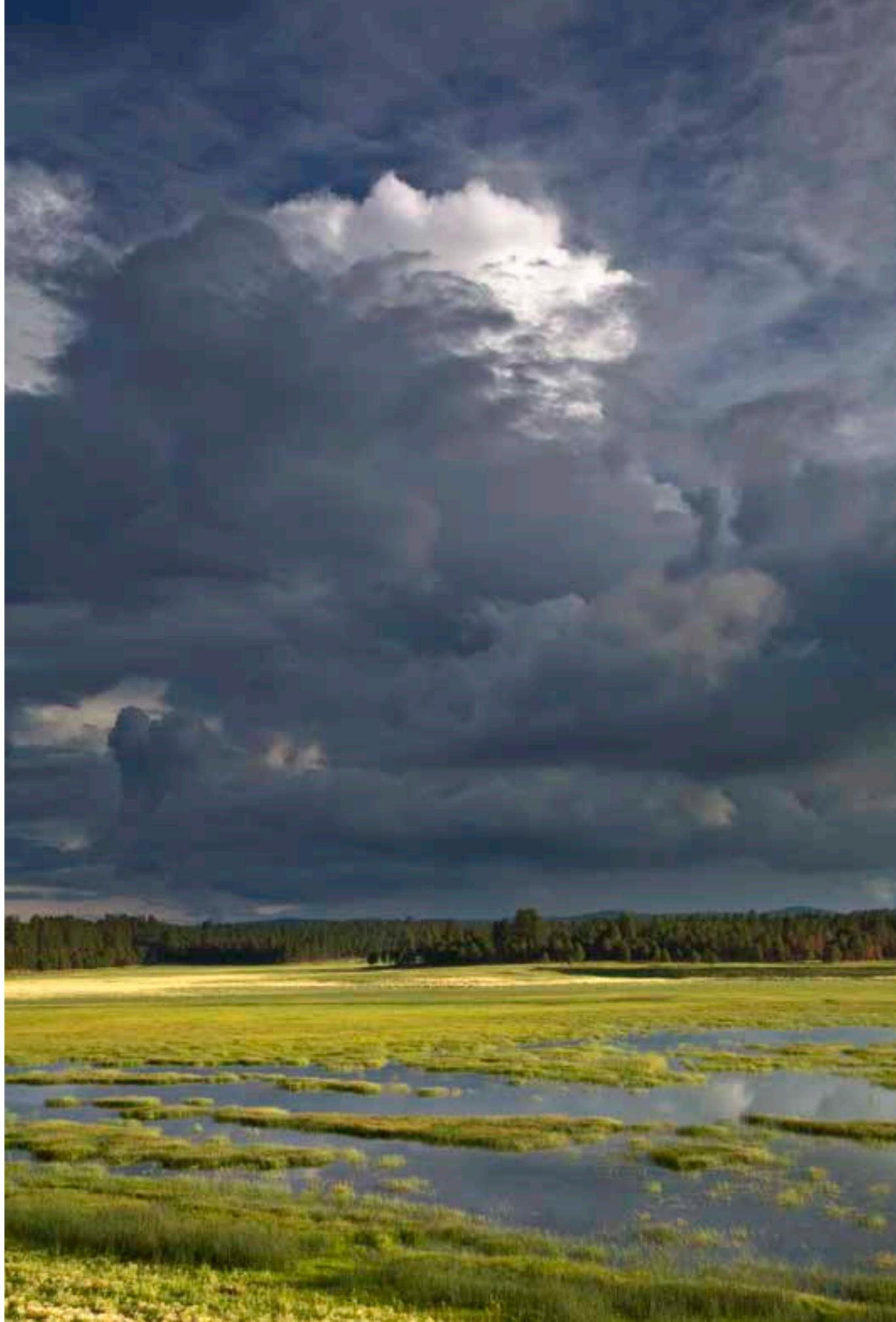


[preceding panel] Golden tickseed flowers sprout amid foxtail barley in the Mormon Lake basin. Both plants flourish in moist habitats.

[above] A monsoon storm unleashes rain at day's end, as seen from the Marshall Lake wetlands. "This graceful landscape is one of my favorite views of the San Francisco Peaks," Bean says.

[right] Dairy Springs keeps this portion of the Mormon Lake basin perennially wet. "For me," Bean says, "the sprinkling of pink and yellow wildflowers intensifies the saturated green and swirling textures of these grasses."





[above] Indian paintbrush blooms at Government Prairie, in the Kaibab National Forest. "I was attracted to this mixture of color and texture," Bean says, "which only occurs in late summer, after a good rainy season."

[left] A summer thunderstorm forms over Lower Lake Mary. "I love the drama of a monsoon sky," Bean says, "especially when reflected in the still waters of this intermittent wetland." [AH](#)



Three Turkey Ruin, in Canyon de Chelly National Monument on the Navajo Indian Reservation, is one of many Northeastern Arizona cliff dwellings once inhabited by the Anasazi (or the Ancestral Puebloans, if you prefer).

# He Still Calls Them 'Anasazi'

The Navajos called them "Anasazi." And, for seven decades, so did archaeologists. But, in the 1990s, a new generation of politically correct scholars proposed the term "Ancestral Puebloans," and it stuck. Our writer, however, has "never been able to swallow that awkward mouthful," so he still uses the archaeologically precise term first proposed by Alfred V. Kidder in 1927. Despite the debate about their name, there's no doubt about the indelible mark the ruin-builders left on Arizona. 🌞 BY DAVID ROBERTS | PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAWN KISH



**S**TARTING IN THE 1870s, the explorers and anthropologists who stumbled upon their enigmatic ruins called them “the Cliff Dwellers.” In December 1888, while out chasing stray cows on top of Mesa Verde, ranchers Richard Wetherill and Charlie Mason discovered the biggest ruin of all, which they called Cliff Palace. The same day, Wetherill rim-walked another canyon and found Spruce Tree House.

Mesa Verde National Park, in Southwestern Colorado, remains the region where tourists are most likely to encounter the alcove-guarded villages wrought by the ancients out of shaped sandstone blocks, wooden beams and sticky mud. But you can tour Cliff Palace today only as part of a group, with up to 50 fellow visitors, guided through the site by a ranger in an hour flat.

All across Northern Arizona, however, the canyons enclose cliff dwellings built by the close kin of the people who crafted Cliff Palace and Spruce Tree House. The finest of them all is Keet Seel, one of the twin jewels of Navajo National Monument. It was discovered in 1895 by the same two ranchers who found Cliff Palace, along with Richard’s brother, Al — the Wetherill clan having converted themselves into competent self-taught archaeologists.

Cliff Palace, still regarded as the largest cliff dwelling in North America, was once thought to contain 220 rooms, though more rigorous research in recent years has reduced that estimate to as few as 150. Keet Seel is composed of at least 150 rooms ranged across a lordly shelf some 80 feet above the canyon floor. Overzealous reconstruction, starting in 1909, made something of a botch of Cliff Palace. But Keet Seel was restored in the 1930s by archaeologists with a lighter touch, and it looks today

**LEFT:** The overhanging cliffs of the canyon provided protection from weather, while the inaccessibility of the dwellings made it easier to protect food supplies.

**RIGHT:** Pottery fragments abound at cliff-dwelling sites; if you find one, resist the urge to take it with you.

very much as it must have in A.D. 1280. To reach Cliff Palace takes only a five-minute stroll from the park’s paved loop road. Keet Seel, by contrast, requires a 17-mile round-trip hike through magnificent canyons lined with piñon pine and juniper trees.

Who were the ancients who built these wonders, and where did they go? At the 1927 Pecos Conference, the first formal gathering of Southwest archaeologists, Alfred V. Kidder proposed the term “Anasazi.” We now know that the architects of the cliff dwellings (and of thousands of other open-air sites not preserved under arching alcoves) flourished for millennia all across the Colorado Plateau, in what today are Southwestern Colorado, Northwestern New Mexico, Southern Utah and Northern Arizona. But the people abandoned that homeland en masse and for good just before A.D. 1300. The last tree-cutting date found anywhere in an Anasazi ruin on the Colorado Plateau is A.D. 1286, from a pair of timbers — one at Keet Seel, another at the Navajo National Monument’s second gem, Betatakin. Drought, famine, deforestation, the hunting to near-extinction of big game, and, perhaps, religious renewal contributed to the abandonment, but it remains the central Anasazi mystery.

“Anasazi” is what the ruin-builders were called by the Navajos, who came to the Southwest at least a century after the abandonment. The term, which means “ancient enemies” or “enemies of our ancestors,” perfectly captures the ambivalence the Navajos

felt toward their predecessors, whose ruins were redolent of death and spiritual danger. “Anasazi” was the term uniformly used by archaeologists for seven decades after the first Pecos Conference. But, in the 1990s, a new generation of politically correct scholars, reinforced by Puebloan activists, lobbied hard to extinguish the term, arguing that it was ethnically pejorative in the same way that names such as “Eskimo” and “Indian” were. In its place, the PC folks proposed “Ancestral Puebloans.”

The ancients on the Colorado Plateau did not vanish. Many of them simply migrated south and east, merging with the inhabitants of Pueblo villages ranging from Hopi to Taos. Hence the term “Ancestral Puebloans.” But I’ve never been able to swallow that awkward mouthful. The Hopi call their northern ancestors “Hisatsinom.” But that’s not the term the Zuni use, or the Acomans, or the residents of Jemez.

In any event, as a somewhat derogatory Spanish word, “Puebloan” sounds more inept, to me, than “Anasazi.” So, I go on blithely using the archaeologically precise term Kidder first proposed, even though readers write letters to editors scolding me for my backwardness.

Northern Arizona is so rich in Anasazi ruins that it was inevitable that some of the finest ones would be set aside in national parks and monuments, including Betatakin and Keet Seel, as well as White House and Antelope House in Canyon de Chelly. But parks breed bureaucracy, and popularity inevitably leads to stringent protection of the fragile and irreplaceable sites. Twenty years ago, I was free to hike into Anasazi sites in Canyon del Muerto, the northern branch of Canyon de Chelly. Today, you can hike del



Muerto only with a Navajo guide, and you can look at those ruins and rock art only from a distance, with binoculars.

To visit Keet Seel, you need to get a permit in advance (limited to 20 per day), and at the ruin, you can tour only a small, cordoned-off sector with the ranger who stays at the campground below the spectacular village. During the best seasons for hiking in the Southwest — April through May, and September through October — both Betatakin and Keet Seel are shut down, because the Park Service limits visitation to the broiling heat of summer. On the ranger-guided tour of Betatakin, you can no longer enter the ruin, only stare at it from the “front door,” because the Park Service is worried that rockfall from the massive roof of the giant alcove might take out a visitor or two. Another marvel, called Inscription House, which is part of Navajo National Monument, has been closed to all visitors for decades, ostensibly out of sensitivity to the Navajos across whose land you might traipse to get to the ruin. However, I’m convinced it’s because its location, 15 miles west of the monument headquarters, would make it a bureaucratic nightmare to supervise.



Pictographs and petroglyphs often adorn the cliff dwellings.

Over the past 25 years, I’ve worked out my own solution to the dilemma of communing with the Arizona Anasazi. It has everything to do with the Navajo Indian Reservation. On dozens of forays lasting from one day to eight, many of them solo, I’ve pushed into the backcountry in search of ruins and rock art. To hike anywhere on the reservation, you need to get a permit from the Navajo Nation headquarters in Window Rock. That small obstacle, and a nagging discomfort about entering what feels to some like a Third World hinterland, prevents the vast majority of Anasazi devotees from setting off into such splendid wildernesses as Navajo Canyon or the Rainbow Plateau. It’s true that if a traditional Navajo finds you walking across his land, a piece of paper from Window Rock may carry little weight. But, even though I’ve sometimes been stopped and asked what I was doing, I’ve never had a Navajo turn hostile or order me to go away.

On none of those trips have I ever run into another Anglo. But I’ve discovered so many obscure and exquisite ruins and sprawling panels of petroglyphs and pictographs that I can’t keep them

all straight in my memory. Those days have provided some of the keenest joys of my life.

The cliff dwellings mostly date from the 12th and 13th centuries. Their pristine preservation is due to the overhanging cliffs that protect them from rain, snow and wind. Yet, though we see the ruins as beautiful, they were born not so much of an aesthetic impulse as out of fear. In the hard times leading up to the abandonment, the safest place to live, and to guard your food supply, was on high, defensible ledges. For decades, archaeologists postulated that the enemy that drove the Anasazi off the Colorado Plateau was one of several nomadic tribes migrating into the Southwest — Utes, perhaps, or Comanches or Navajos. But the best research now indicates that those nomads did not enter the Colorado Plateau until after A.D. 1300.

It was the Anasazi themselves who were the enemy. The bad guys were the dwellers in the next valley over, who, having run out of corn and beans, were determined to raid and steal yours.

Rock art, on the other hand, spans a vast chronology dating back into the Archaic period, as early as 6500 B.C. You cannot assume that the petroglyphs at a site were carved by the same Anasazi who built the room blocks — they could have been chiseled thousands of years before, when the ancients themselves were still nomadic.

The other great boon of hiking on the reservation is that the artifacts are still mostly in place. On Cedar Mesa in Utah — as rich an Anasazi domain as any in the Southwest — decades of visitors have all but denuded the sites of potsherds and chert flakes, even though the pilfering of a single piece of molded clay has been illegal since 1906. One imagines each otherwise well-intentioned hiker picking up a pretty shard of Mesa Verde black-and-white and sticking it in his pocket, thinking to himself, *I’ll just take one. They’ll never miss it.*

The Navajos, on the other hand, regard the stuff left behind by the Anasazi as carrying some of the danger of the ruins themselves. The possessions of the dead are not to be messed with. Thus, I’ve spent many happy hours in backcountry canyons on the reservation, finding scatterings of painted shards, flakes ranging in color from milky-white chert to black obsidian, arrowheads and atlatl darts, manos and metates for grinding corn, and even the occasional stone axe head. I pick up each object, turn it over in my fingers, try to conjure up the artisan who shaped it and drop it back where I found it.

A few vignettes from my search for the Arizona Anasazi — though I will here indulge in a topographic vagueness that may annoy some readers. It’s a no-no among Anasazi enthusiasts to give directions in print to ruins and rock art that have managed to stay obscure and little-visited. Sadly, some of the finest of these out-of-the-way prodigies are starting to pop up on the Internet, complete with GPS coordinates. I say instead: Pick a canyon, get your permit, go out and look. You won’t be disappointed.

Three years ago, a pair of friends and I spent two days hiking the length of a 13-mile-long canyon somewhere south of Canyon de Chelly. Near its upper end, we spent hours gazing at and photographing a 30-room ruin that archaeologist Stephen Jett calls the best-preserved in all the Southwest. The Navajo Nation has forbid-

The ruins, some nearly 10 centuries old, owe their preservation to the protection of the surrounding cliffs — and to the respect of visitors who stumble upon the sites.



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den entry to the site, and we abided by that stricture. Then, downstream, we stumbled upon one panel after another of graven and painted images: duck-headed humanoids, atlatl symbols, bighorn sheep, zigzag snakes, spirals, handprints, and all kinds of abstract designs whose meaning is forever lost. I’m sure we found only about half the art that canyon contains.

The backcountry may be wild, but it’s full of Navajo cattle and sheep. On my third day solo in a convoluted side canyon, some 15 years ago, I walked through a small room block, disgusted by the cow pies everywhere and by the miscellaneous junk the ranchers had left behind. Spotting what looked like a metal ring lying on the ground, I bent over to pick it up, but it didn’t budge. Slowly, I realized that it wasn’t metal at all. I carefully brushed away the dirt surrounding it until I uncovered a perfectly intact mug, complete with its coffee-cup handle, painted in the gorgeous orange-and-black patterning called Tusayan Polychrome. Somehow, the cows had failed to crush it. I pondered tucking it away in a safe niche above the ground, but, in the end, I covered it back up with dirt, leaving it right where it had lain for 800 years.

Other glories: a ruin 5 miles in with the strangest Anasazi structure I’ve ever seen — a massive wooden platform 40 feet up a huge, flaring chimney, wedged tight against the bulging walls like some

vision-starved shaman’s lookout post. Many a granary sealed tight into a tiny cubbyhole as high as 100 feet up an overhanging wall. Hand-and-toe trails gouged into near-vertical cliffs by daredevils with quartzite pounding stones — shortcuts to the mesas above that I would never dare to scale today. A free-standing butte in the middle of a flat plain — really, almost a pinnacle — with 20 rooms spread across every nook of its summit, and shards and flakes everywhere.

And, of course, the Lost City of the Lukachukais. The old legend had it that, in 1909, a pair of Franciscan missionaries out of Farmington, New Mexico, rode west into Arizona to convert the heathen Navajos. Stymied by a sandstone labyrinth, they came to a canyon rim and beheld a huge ruin in the alcove opposite, but they had no way to get to it. It was the equal of Cliff Palace, the padres swore. But, on several subsequent journeys, they could not find it again.

In the 1930s, the great archaeologist Earl Morris spent months looking for the Lost City. If he found it, he never mentioned his discovery in print.

In 1996, in the course of a six-day ramble with friends into the Lukachukais, I think I found the Lost City. It’s no Cliff Palace, but it’s a stunning ruin with one of the finest intact kivas I’ve ever seen. And it’s really hard to get to. But that’s another story. [AH](#)



# BIG BIRDS FLYING ACROSS THE SKY

**California condors aren't beautiful, not like elegant trogons or mountain bluebirds, but they are magnificent. In part because they're the largest flying birds in North America — their wings stretch to almost 10 feet — but more because of their resilience. In 1982, there were only 22 California condors left on the planet. Today, there are nearly 250, and many of them are soaring over Northern Arizona.**

BY RUTH RUDNER | PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN CANCALOSI

**T**he coolest thing about us as a society," Chris Parish says to the 400 people gathered before him, "is that we did not let the condor slip by." Almost extinct by the 1980s, the last 22 California condors were captured in 1982, then bred in captivity at the Los Angeles Zoo, the San Diego Wild Animal Park, the Oregon Zoo and The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho. In 1996, the first condors raised at the center were released at the Vermilion Cliffs in Northern Arizona. Currently, nearly 250 condors — some bred in captivity, others hatched in the wild — fly free over Arizona, Utah, California and Mexico. At last count, 89 of them were in the Arizona-Utah region.

The 400 of us at the Bureau of Land Management's Vermilion Cliffs viewing site are here for the 17th annual public condor release. The excitement is palpable — like waiting for a spaceship to touch down. Spotting scopes stretch hundreds of feet across the area, focused on the release pen on a cliff less than a mile away. Condors from earlier releases circle the cliffs.

Dr. Jan Ove Gjershaug, a Norwegian ornithologist visiting the United States to talk in Phoenix about great horned owls, sits rapt

behind his scope. A birder for 50 years with more than 2,000 birds on his life list, he is seeing his first condors.

Ninety-something Virginia Reynolds, a former naturalist from Palo Alto, California, saw the last six condors before they were captured in the 1980s. "We're responsible for their near-demise," she says, "but, through science, we can learn to bring them back."

"Welcome to another condor release," Parish continues. "It's one step closer to success."

A day earlier, I had hitched a ride with Parish up to the pen area at the end of 13 miles of rough road carved from sand and rock. On top, a high world of sand, rock, creosote, juniper and piñon pine extended back from the cliffs holding the pens. The view of House Rock Valley, and beyond to the Kaibab Plateau, was vast. Five condors soared above us. With wings spread almost 10 feet across, these are the largest flying birds in North America — they weigh up to 26 pounds. It is possible, before you see a condor in the air, to think it ugly. Afterward, you know it as one of the world's most magnificent creatures. Ten years ago, I saw my first condors at the Grand Canyon — huge, splendid birds seeming to float up from below me, turn, and float lower and up again, like something born of the wild, ancient formations of the Canyon.

From a blind offering a clear view of the flight pen, I had watched three condors pacing the pen. Their postures and movement seemed to portray an eagerness for the world. The blind offered no view of the release pen. According to Parish, the birds to be released must sense nothing different in their world the day before that world is revolutionized.

The condors — both those scheduled for release and those in the flight pen, whose release comes without fanfare later — live in 40-by-60-foot pens. They're hatched in captivity at the birds-of-prey center in Idaho, raised by their parents until they're nearly a year old and trucked up to the Vermilion Cliffs several months before release. There, they are monitored and fed through one-way doors under cover of darkness, mostly with carcasses of still-born dairy calves brought to the pen site in the back of a truck that smells dreadful. They have been getting used to the view that will, ultimately, be their world.

"Given the size of the crowd, they're checking us out for food," Parish comments over the microphone, watching the already-released birds soaring over the cliffs.

**C**ondors' history with humans is long. Highly intelligent, they have always followed hunters and other scavengers for leftovers. For most of history, humans could be trusted not to poison them. Condors, scavengers like eagles and ravens, clean up hunters' leavings — the "gut pile" left behind, the wounded animal not followed. They also clean up injured domestic or wild animals dispatched in the field. Scavengers are an essential part of any ecosystem.

When shooters began using lead-based ammunition, condors and other scavengers began having problems. Lead poisoning is the leading cause of death in condors. Some, sickened, are recap-

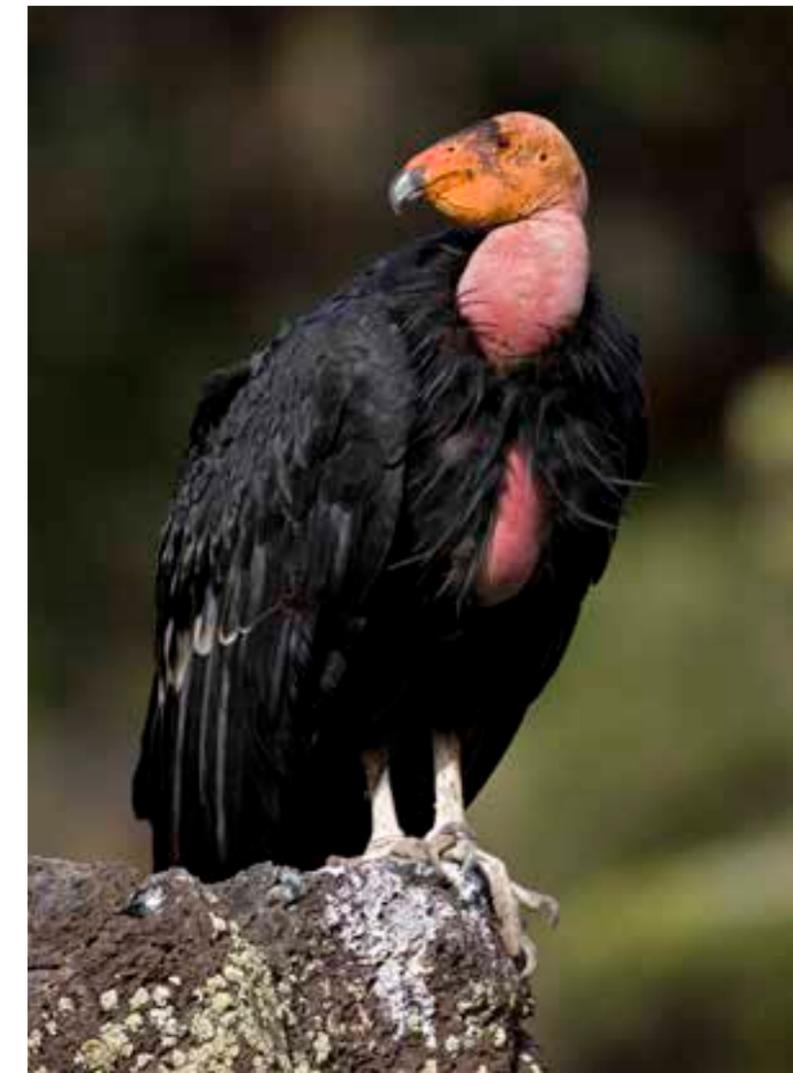
tured, treated and returned to the wild. And some die.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department, a leader in educating hunters about non-lead ammunition, publishes a brochure presenting facts about increased lead levels in scavengers after hunting season. Seeking to engender change — not to ban hunting — the department gives two free boxes of ammunition to hunters switching to non-lead. In 2011, the program saw 90 percent compliance by hunters in the Kaibab area. But until compliance is closer to 100 percent, lead remains present. Although the condor program has been hugely successful, vital agency support for it could be withdrawn unless the loss of birds to lead poisoning ends.

Three of the condors to be released today are young. The fourth is a re-release — a condor experienced in the wild, captured after it became another victim of lead poisoning, treated and restored to health. This one understands the meaning of the gate-opening. Without hesitation, he spreads his huge wings and lifts his large, magnificent body into the sky.

Most of us imagine the young birds will follow him, but they take their own — and considerable — time. Perhaps freedom requires experience to understand. The re-released bird understands. The young ones will learn.

A recently released documentary, *Scavenger Hunt*, provides an in-depth look at The Peregrine Fund's condor-recovery effort in Arizona, with an emphasis on the link between lead ammunition and condor illness. Boise, Idaho, nonprofit Wild Lens produced the film, which features Chris Parish. For more information and to view the trailer, visit <http://scavengerhuntfilm.com>. **AH**



**OPPOSITE PAGE:** A mature California condor soars over the Vermilion Cliffs in Northern Arizona. By riding thermal columns, condors can travel as many as 150 miles in one day. **RIGHT:** An immature male raised in captivity gets its first taste of the wild.

☛ A TIN SIGN HANGS on the wall at Wickenburg's Flying E Ranch, advertising a fictitious Buck-o-Rama Brewing Co. brand.

"Drink Cowgirl Beer," it reads. "It's cheaper than therapy."

The illustrated cowgirl who accompanies the ad could have been pulled straight from a Dale Evans album cover — she's wearing a skirt, a cowboy hat and boots, and she's playing guitar with a look on her face that a person could reasonably construe as either cutesy or come-hither.

Jane McGeary is not that cowgirl.

Born in Bismarck, North Dakota, McGeary can't remember the name of the first horse she ever rode, just that it was likely a pony, one her parents plopped her on at the state fair. There have been plenty of others since then.

"I've always been interested in horses," McGeary says. "As a kid, I'd visit my aunt in Scottsdale, and riding was always a big part of those trips."

Now working as a seasonal wrangler at the Flying E, McGeary has seen her share of ponies, paints and palominos, along with the visitors who venture to the guest ranch for trail rides, cowboy cookouts and campfire tales.

"It's a pretty laid-back lifestyle," she says. "We're up at 6 a.m. and having breakfast with everyone at 7. By 7:30, we're gathering the horses and preparing for the first ride."

McGeary and a handful of other wranglers oversee two trail rides every day at the Flying E, tailoring the desert treks to the crowd, which commonly is composed of families, couples and return visitors.

"It's funny, because the novices are usually the best," McGeary says. "They'll listen to you, let you help them onto the horses. Sometimes, the people who've ridden before, they're a little, well ..."

☛ ON THIS MID-SPRING DAY, wisps of clouds linger over Vulture Peak as though they have nowhere else to go, and the Sonoran Desert pops gold with blooms of brittlebush and creosote — gifts left behind by plenty of winter rain.

Dust tumbles through broken light as the wranglers brush and ready the horses — 16 patient, plodding equines whose names run the gamut from Bandit to Huckleberry to Zeb.

McGeary has saddled Tater, a handsome buckskin guide-horse that she rotates out for two others over the course of the season.

Tater seems a fitting sidekick to McGeary, who, tall and blonde and more than a little bit pretty, is the all-American girl personified. And, though she admits that she gets a bit of extra attention from the occasional slick city-slicker, she's clearly not just playing dress-up.

"Jane is the real deal," says Aaron Adamson, the Flying E's head

wrangler. "She rides all the wild [horses] and doctors them, too. She's one of only two ladies working here, and she and her future husband have run a lot of horses."

As it goes in nature, horses know their pecking order, but every now and then, the mustangs get a little feisty.

"The horses are content, and they do their jobs," McGeary says. "But they know how to fight, too. It's a herd environment, so they fight and play. You have to keep an eye out for cuts or sores, little aches and pains."

Indeed, McGeary and her fiancé, known as "Gibb," run 20 horses back and forth between Wickenburg and Park City, Utah, where they spend half the year. After leaving North Dakota, McGeary went to work for her aunt in Scottsdale, staying on even after her aunt sold the property.

She tried her hand at team roping, learned it was tougher than she thought and gave it up. It's a cowgirl hobby — working in tandem with another rider to rope one very ornery steer — she's thinking of revisiting. She might even enter a rodeo or two.

From Scottsdale, McGeary traveled to Park City to work trail rides in the summer. She and Gibb met there and made stops at ranches in Tucson and Sedona before settling part time in Wickenburg. When they marry on November 2, they'll do it right here in Arizona.

Although the couple lives "six months at a time," McGeary says, it's a lifestyle that affords them the opportunity to experience nature from a different perspective.

"We have 20,000 acres to explore," McGeary says. "When you're going through the desert on horseback, you get to just sit back and enjoy the ride — literally — and enjoy the view.

There are so many cactuses. It's kind of fun to wonder about what they may have seen out there."

But it's not just about the flora; there's fauna, too.

"When you're hiking, you have your head down, being careful with your next step," McGeary says. "On a horse, wildlife is much easier to see. There are plenty of deer out here, a lot of bobcat and coyotes, and now, the Gila monsters are starting to come out."

As McGeary moves among the horses, they are as at ease with her as she is with them, flicking their tails and nuzzling her hands. They have, it seems, an unspoken understanding: *You take care of me; I'll take care of you.* For the cowgirl, though, it's just part of the job.

"I'm around these horses every day, and I can read their body language," she says. "They're happy."

And so is she. It's a feeling that's much cheaper than therapy.

**The Flying E Ranch is located at 2801 W. Wickenburg Way in Wickenburg. Its season runs from November through April. For more information, call 928-684-2690 or visit [www.flyingeranch.com](http://www.flyingeranch.com). AH**

## THE All-American Cowgirl

If the Marlboro Man were a woman, she'd be Jane McGeary. As a wrangler at the Flying E Ranch in Wickenburg, she knows all about roping, riding, ponies, paints and palominos. She has all-American good looks, too, but she's the real deal.

By Kelly Vaughn Kramer  
Photograph by  
Bev Pettit



# Mogollon Rim Roads

The world's largest continuous stand of ponderosa pines lives on the Mogollon Rim, and this 38-mile scenic drive cuts through several thousand acres of it. **BY NOAH AUSTIN PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL GILL**

Arizona has a lot of scenic beauty, but, unless you count lakes, streams and the Colorado River on its western border, it lacks a coastline. However, get out of your car at any point along this 38-mile scenic drive on the Mogollon Rim, and you might start to wonder. If you close your eyes, you'll be hard-pressed to tell the difference between the sound of the wind whooshing through the ponderosas and the sound of waves crashing against some tropical beach.

Of course, it's not really a beach; it's a back road with rocks, and some of them are pretty sharp. That's why you'll want to take a four-wheel-drive vehicle and tread carefully and slowly. The sweeping panoramas you'll see atop the Rim are worth the extra time it might take you to get there.

The drive begins in Heber, and after you pass a few houses and businesses, you'll enter the Sitgreaves National Forest. A creek parallels the early part of the drive and crosses the road in a few places. It's there that you'll start see-

ing reminders of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire, the second-largest wildfire in Arizona's history, which burned more than 450,000 acres in the summer of 2002. There's plenty of living forest left to see here, but appreciate the burned-out areas for what they are: a reminder to put out campfires and dispose of cigarettes properly.

In addition to the scenery, the route features a number of informational markers. One of them, about 9 miles in, tells the story of Baca Meadow, a clearing where Juan and Damasia Baca built a home and raised eight children in the late 1800s. The meadow is also a great place to listen to the aforementioned wind through the ponderosas.

At Mile 12, you'll see a turnoff for Black Canyon Lake, a popular fishing spot. A few miles later, you'll find yourself on Forest Road 300, and at two points along it, you'll see stunning scenery on both sides of the road. The wildfire robbed this drive of a lot of trees, but it also opened up the canopy, and the views of summer greenery to the

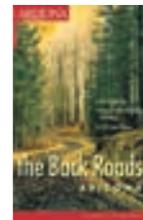
north and south are spectacular.

Gentry Lookout, a wildfire watchtower, is located at Mile 18. There are picnic tables and grills there, so stop for lunch, say hello to the ranger on duty and enjoy another great view to the north. And don't leave the Rim without checking out the view to the south from the pullout at Mile 25. It's impressive.

Toward the end of this drive, you'll arrive at Phoenix Park, a large, lush meadow ringed by ponderosas and other evergreens. Look for a sandstone chimney that marks where an old ranch building once stood. From there, it's just another few miles to the end of the drive — 10 miles east of where you started, and even farther from the beach.

#### ADDITIONAL READING:

For more scenic drives, pick up a copy of our book *The Back Roads*. Now in its fifth edition, the book features 40 of the state's most scenic drives. To order a copy, visit [www.shoparizonahighways.com/books](http://www.shoparizonahighways.com/books).



## tour guide

Note: Mileages are approximate.

**LENGTH:** 37.7 miles one way

**DIRECTIONS:** From Payson, drive east on State Route 260 for 51 miles to Black Canyon Lane. Turn left onto Black Canyon Lane, a dirt road that soon turns into Black Canyon Road (Forest Road 86), and continue for 15.3 miles to Forest Road 300. Turn left onto FR 300 and continue for 14.3 miles to Forest Road 125. Turn left onto FR 125 and continue for 4.9 miles to Forest Road 124. Turn right onto FR 124 and continue for a half-mile to Forest Road 144. Turn left onto FR 144 and continue 2.7 miles back to SR 260 near Overgaard.

**VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS:** A high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicle is required.

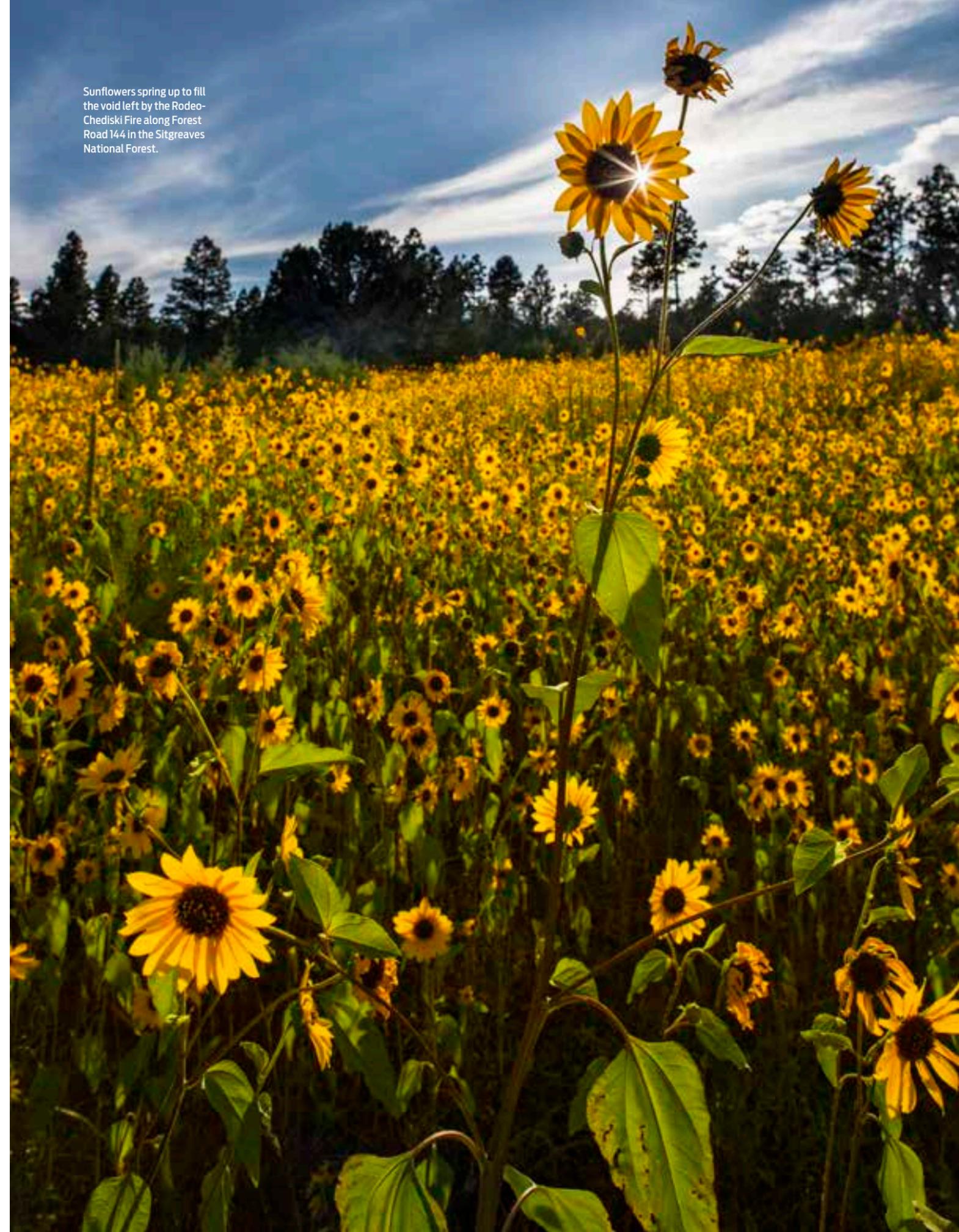
**WARNING:** Back-road travel can be hazardous, so be aware of weather and road conditions. Carry plenty of water. Don't travel alone, and let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.

**INFORMATION:** Black Mesa Ranger District, 928-535-7300 or [www.fs.usda.gov/asnf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/asnf)

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



KEVIN KIBSEY



Sunflowers spring up to fill the void left by the Rodeo-Chediski Fire along Forest Road 144 in the Sitgreaves National Forest.

# Los Burros Trail

If you've never done this long trail, which winds around Wishbone Mountain in the White Mountains, get to it. It's one of the best in Arizona. **BY ROBERT STIEVE PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL GILL**

“Killer hike” is how you’d describe Los Burros if you were writing a postcard. Even the historic red barn, which greets hikers at the trailhead, is alluring. Or maybe “mystical” is a better word. It’s the kind of place Django Reinhardt might have hunkered down with a bottle of Château Margaux, despite the “no trespassing” sign.

From the trailhead, a wide, needle-covered path crosses a beautiful meadow and quickly arrives at a gate that parallels a forest road. It’s the first of many forest roads you’ll cross. Don’t worry about their FR numbers. Instead, focus on the blue-diamond trail tags that identify this hike as part of the White Mountains Trail System. Although the route is obvious in most places, the markers come in handy — there are a lot of right- and left-hand turns on this long

and winding trail, which ultimately wraps around Wishbone Mountain.

Beyond the gate, the trail begins a gradual uphill climb through a forest of oaks, aspens and ponderosas. The pines are being thinned out and loaded onto diesel trucks. It’s something you’ll see, on and off, on this trek. Twenty minutes later, you’ll arrive at a signed junction that’ll make you wonder where to go. For an abbreviated loop, go straight, but to get the most mileage out of Los Burros, go left and keep your eyes peeled for the blue diamonds. More trees, more meadows and more evidence of logging will hold your attention as you continue. Then, after another 20 minutes, you’ll come to a grassy hillside and a stock tank, followed by a couple of 90-degree turns and an intersection with another forest road.

From there, the route meanders

through the woods, and the scene stays about the same until the single-track trail transitions into a two-lane jeep road that follows the ridge of a small canyon. Ferns, firs, spruce and aspens make this stretch the best stretch of the day. The boreal forest is lush, and it’s the most likely place to see black bears. Even if you don’t, you will see their claw marks on the aspens.

That show lasts for about a half-hour. It’s beautiful, and the denouement is a long downhill run. Appreciate the benefits of gravity — it’s not just a good idea; it’s the law. At the bottom of the hill, the trail arrives at a cluster of buildings. Just beyond them, it crosses yet another forest road and skirts a meadow that’s fenced off as a “Wildlife Forage Monitoring Area.” Back in the woods, you might hear a few of the resident

**RIGHT:** A historic red barn marks the start of the Los Burros Trail, an ideal hike for escaping the heat of summer.  
**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Ponderosa pines surround a meadow near the trailhead.



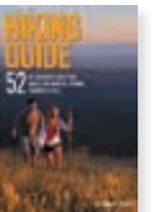
Steller’s jays. They’re loud and outspoken — editorializing, perhaps, about the extensive logging in the area. You might also see some of the mule deer and elk that are being kept out of the segregated meadow behind you.

Oaks and ferns dominate the landscape for the next mile, which leads to an intersection with the Lake Mountain Spur — a route that climbs to the Lake Mountain Lookout Tower, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. Veer left for Los Bur-

ros, and continue to the crest of a ridge that offers some long views to the southwest. Ten minutes later, you’ll arrive at an open area that features a secondary trailhead for Los Burros. It’s a good place to do a dance in the sun. From there, the trail crosses a big meadow, passes a few more piles of logs and eventually arrives at a power-line road. Turn right, hike beneath the electricity for about 100 yards and turn left into the woods. It’s a quick trip from there to the old red barn. If you have the luxury of

time, snag one of the 10 campsites at the trailhead, unfold a folding chair, pour a glass of Château Margaux and fill out a few postcards. This killer hike is worth writing home about.

**ADDITIONAL READING:** For more hikes, pick up a copy of *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.shoparizonahighways.com/books](http://www.shoparizonahighways.com/books).

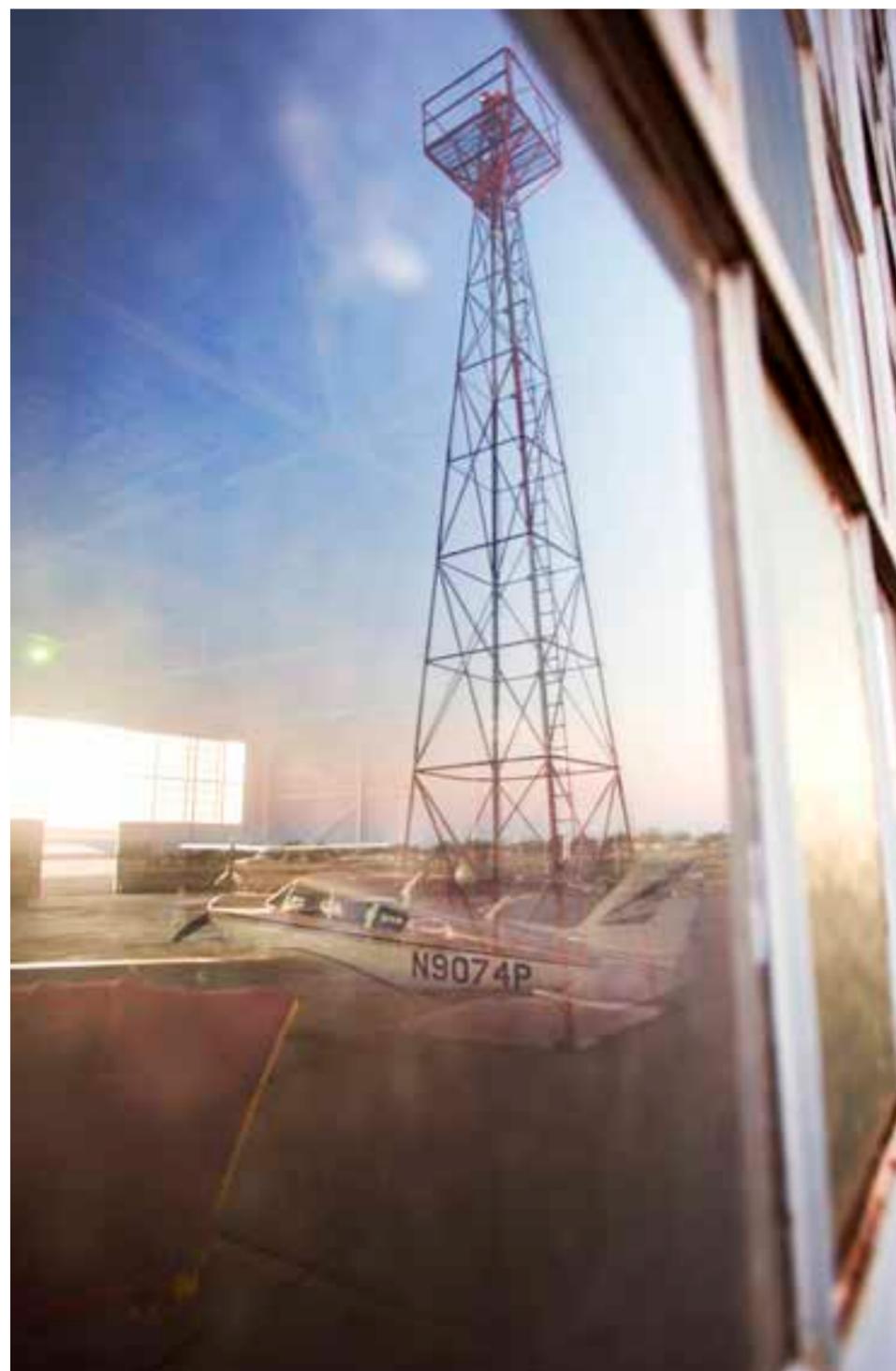


## trail guide

**LENGTH:** 13.8-mile loop  
**DIFFICULTY:** Moderate  
**ELEVATION:** 7,838 to 8,370 feet  
**TRAILHEAD GPS:** N 34°08.359', W 109°46.631'  
**DIRECTIONS:** From Pinetop-Lakeside, drive east on State Route 260 for 5.2 miles to Cady Avenue. Turn left onto Cady Avenue, which becomes Forest Road 224, and continue for 7.1 miles to Forest Road 20 (look for the Los Burros Campground sign). Turn right onto FR 20 and continue 0.5 miles to the trailhead, which is located at the far end of the campground.  
**VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS:** None  
**DOGS ALLOWED:** Yes (on a leash)  
**HORSES ALLOWED:** Yes  
**USGS MAPS:** Sponseller Mountain, Boundary Butte  
**INFORMATION:** Lakeside Ranger District, 928-368-2100 or [www.fs.usda.gov/asnf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/asnf)

- 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. **AH**

# where is this?



MARK LIPCZYNSKI

## Cleared for Takeoff

This Northern Arizona facility, located off Historic Route 66, owes its existence to two famous aviators. One of them financed it as part of his air-travel empire; the other helped design it while he was on his honeymoon.

📷 CAMERA: CANON EOS-5D MARK II; SHUTTER: 1/25 SEC; APERTURE: F/4; ISO: 200; FOCAL LENGTH: 20 MM — NOAH AUSTIN

### June 2013 Answer & Winner

Taliesin West. Congratulations to our winner, Joyce Jones of Norway, Maine.



ANDREW PIELAGE

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