

# Father's Day Fishing Plans May Be Affected



**By Chase Newlon**  
AZGFD Fishing R3 Coordinator

The FishAZ Network is filled with events for all skill levels by a variety of great partners. For a full list of up-to-date events, visit: <https://register-ed.com/programs/arizona/239-fishaz-network>.

## Catfish Stockings Resume In Many CFP Waters

Catfish stockings have resumed in the Community Fishing Program (CFP) waters in Phoenix, Tucson, Yuma, and Safford. Approximately 47,000 pounds of catfish were recently stocked in those waters

Sub-catchable largemouth bass and blue-

gill (sunfish) were also stocked,

## Public's Ability To Fish And Launch Watercraft Will Be Impacted In 2026

AZGFD anticipates changes to fish stocking and watercraft access due to low water levels in Arizona's high-country lakes

The Arizona Game and Fish Department advises the public that the ability to launch boats or fish at many reservoirs and lakes in the mountain regions of Arizona will be greatly affected in 2026 due to drought.

While several different lakes in the state's high country will provide great fishing opportunities and remain destinations for anglers to visit in spring and early summer, there will

be significant changes to fish stocking due to low water levels and poor water quality.

The Following Waters Will Not Be Stocked With Trout In Spring And Summer 2026: Black Canyon Lake, Carnero Lake, Lee Valley Reservoir, Scott Reservoir, and Woodland Lake.

Several Waters Will Have Shortened Stocking Seasons And Fewer Stockings Than Anglers Are Accustomed To, Including: Hulsey Lake, Nelson Reservoir, West Fork Little Colorado River in Greer and Sheeps Crossing, the West Fork Black River near the old West Fork Campground, Kaibab Lake, Dogtown Lake, Ashurst Lake, and Blue

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## ON THE COVER



## Go Fish With Fathers

By Carol L. Allen

It's June. So soon? Where did the time go; wasn't it just New Year's Eve? June so soon or not, it's a wonderful time of year here in the Desert Southwest. The weather is transitioning, and the searing summer heat is not yet here. But it will be, so now is the time to get outdoors: hiking, boating, camping, and yes, by all means, fishing!

Is there anything more memorable than fishing with your dad? So many memories are cherished of a father and son out on a lake, casting for fish. Or, of a father and daughter enjoying this same special time together. Whether it's by a river or a stream, on a lake, or on the shore of a Community Fishing Program (CFPO) water site, the joy of sharing with Dad is all the same.

How many fish did you catch?  
Does it really matter? ■

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# Arizona Anglers Invited To Participate In The Fish250 Challenge

250: Fish 2 Community Fishing Program waters, 5 Arizona lakes or streams, have 0 bad days!

Anglers of all experience levels are invited to explore the incredible fishing opportunities found across Arizona by participating in the Fish250 Challenge.

The challenge is part of Arizona's Outdoors250 celebration encouraging people to get outside, try something new, and reconnect with Mother Nature through outdoor recreation. Outdoors250, in turn, is part of America250, a nationwide initiative commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States.

It's easy to participate. Just take selfies



(or have someone take photos of you) at each of these locations and do the following to fulfill the Fish250 Challenge:

- 2 - Fish 2 Community Fishing Program waters

- 5 - Fish 5 Arizona lakes or streams
- 0 - Have 0 bad days

Once you've completed the Fish250 Challenge, fill out the completion form,

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## Fathers Day Fishing & Summer Bass Fishing Trips Are Filling Fast!

Summer fishing is officially heating up here in Arizona, and this is actually one of the BEST times of the year to get out on the water and catch numbers of bass.

The secret? We start EARLY, avoid the heat, and take advantage of some incredible morning bites before the lakes get busy.

Whether you're looking to —

- Catch a ton of fish
- Chase a new personal best
- Get the kids outdoors this summer
- Learn electronics and offshore fishing
- Or just enjoy a fun morning on the water...

Summer trips are some of our favorite trips of the entire year.

Father's Day is also right around the corner.

If you're looking for a unique gift for dad, husband, grandpa, or the fisherman in your life, FishIn48 gift certificates are available now and make an awesome Father's Day gift.

Instead of another tie or grill gadget... give them a morning chasing Arizona trophy bass.

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- Roosevelt Lake
- Apache Lake
- Lake Pleasant

Summer morning dates fill quickly, especially weekends, so if you want to lock something in, reply to this email or send us a text with —

- Preferred dates
- Number of anglers
- Lake preference

We appreciate all the support and can't wait to get more of you on the water this summer.

— FishIn48  
Arizona Trophy Bass Fishing ■

# DOWNSTREAM

## EVENTS CALENDAR



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### AWARDS



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2009 National Water Safety  
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2016 AZGFD Writer of the Year

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## PLANNING AHEAD FOR YOUR JULY 4TH? CELEBRATE AMERICA '26

Join us for our annual July 3rd Fireworks Celebration right here along the shores of Lake Pleasant, located within The City of Peoria. Festivities start at 5pm. FREE Kid activities with inflatable waterslides and bounce houses available! Live Concert by Aaron Nichols! He was an contestant on The Voice! Food trucks, novelty vendors, and more! So come enjoy the fun! Even get there early enough to go down the tallest waterslides in the world right here at Pleasant Harbor Marina. Lawn chairs and coolers welcome.



### SEPTEMBER 5

#### Diamond Back Cleats VFW 3513 Raffle

The VFW Post 3513 Auxiliary is proud to raffle off a one-of-a-kind piece of baseball memorabilia — a pair of autographed Arizona Diamondbacks cleats. This unique item is a must-have for any dedicated fan or collector.

Every ticket purchased supports a greater cause. All proceeds from this raffle will benefit five outstanding nonprofit Veteran Service Organizations:

**Mission 22** – Provides treatment programs and support for veterans suffering from PTSD and traumatic brain injuries, while raising awareness about veteran suicide.

**Soldier's Best Friends** – Pairs veterans with rescued dogs and provides service dog training at no cost, helping both the veteran and the animal heal together.

**The Armor Project (Reigning Grace Ranch)** – A structured, ground-based horsemanship program for Veterans and First Responders, including those coping with PTSD. This is not a riding program, but hands-on, skill-based work with horses that builds awareness, confidence, and calm decision-making.

**Puppy Rescue Mission (PRM)** – nonprofit that helps military members bring home dogs and cats they bonded with while deployed overseas.

**Jimmy's Shoes** – Supplies new shoes and socks to unhoused veterans, helping meet basic needs with dignity and care.

Join us in honoring those who served while getting the chance to take home an incredible piece of Diamondbacks history.

Tickets: [tinyurl.com/3xckf4ka](https://tinyurl.com/3xckf4ka)

### ONGOING

#### Date Night at Ben Avery!

Is the same old dinner-and-a-movie routine missing the mark? Shake things up with a Date Night at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility! Beautiful weather, a little friendly competition, and some safe shooting sports fun set the stage for a night out that's right on target.

Whether you're trying something new or already enjoy time at the range, Ben Avery offers a unique experience with that special someone. Our world-renowned, safety-focused facility, welcoming staff, and easy Date Night packages make planning an unforgettable evening simple.

#### Important details:

These offers are valid Thursdays and Fridays from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. (last check-in at 5:30 p.m.).

We're located just west of the I-17 on Carefree Highway. Questions? We're happy to answer! Give us a call at 623-582-8313.

SCAN FOR MORE EVENTS



### JUNE 5 - 6

#### Show Low Rodeo

Join us for the ultimate Show Low Main Street experience!  
 Linden Valley Arena  
 1068 Pierce Road  
 Friday: Jr. Rodeo  
 Saturday: Open Rodeo



#### Arizona Elk Society White Mountain Chapter Banquet

Note - Show Low White Mountain Chapter Banquet, June 6, 2026

The mission of the Arizona Elk Society is to benefit elk and other wildlife by generating resources for habitat conservation and restoration, and to preserve our hunting heritage for present and future generations.

#### Our Beginning

The first AES meeting was held on June 25, 2001. The group present discussed the desire to ...



PHOTO COURTESY RIVERSCENE

### JUNE 25

#### Tommy's Lake Takeover - Lake Havasu, AZ

Join us Sunday, June 25 at Lake Havasu for our Lake Takeover Day and experience being on the water with all-new 2023 models! Get a chance to get behind a MALIBU, AXIS, CHAPARRAL, STARCRAFT, or ROBALLO boat or bring your boat and tie-up! There will also be a chance to surf the latest boards from Lib Tech, Hyperlite, Liquid Force, and more!

Details - [events@gettommys.com](mailto:events@gettommys.com)



### JUNE 6

#### AZGFD Free Fishing Day at Dead Horse Ranch

Saturday, June 6, 2026 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
 Join us on the first Saturday in June for a morning of free fishing!

AZ Game & Fish will be at Ramada #2 in Jay Loop to teach visitors about fishing and loan out fishing poles with bait. This is a perfect time to catch your first fish, or even your personal best!

Visit from 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. for free admission into the park. No fishing license is required to participate in this event.

# Our waterways are ready, but are you?

To learn more about boating safely in Arizona visit [www.azgfd.gov/boating](http://www.azgfd.gov/boating) or call: 623-236-7258

**Wear a life jacket.  
Every trip.  
Every time.**

Under state law, life jackets are required to be worn by children 12 years old and younger, but it's strongly urged that everyone wear one while on the water. Life jackets save lives.

Before heading out on the water, it's important that boaters check to ensure that their life jackets are in good condition and that they are the right size and fit for passengers. Look for:

- Any rips or tears
- Missing straps
- Broken fasteners
- Ensure that the flotation hasn't shifted.

Life jackets should be inspected each boating season due to the environment's impact on their materials and replaced if necessary.

## Register Your Watercraft

Make sure your vessel's registration is current before heading out on the water! Skip the line and renew your watercraft registration online at [www.azgfd.gov/boating](http://www.azgfd.gov/boating)



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## Going Boating Over The Weekend?

Designate a sober operator; alcohol is responsible for 1 in 5 boating deaths.

If time on the lake is part of your weekend plans, stay safe by always designating a sober operator. The weekends are popular times for Arizonans to enjoy the state's waterways, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) wants to remind all boaters to be safe.

According to the National Association for State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), alcohol is responsible for 1 in 5 boating deaths in the United States where the primary cause is known, reinforcing the importance of sober boating during National Safe Boating Week, a nationwide effort to promote boating safety ahead of the busy summer boating season.

Alcohol remains the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating incidents nationwide.

"If alcohol is being consumed on your boat, it's extremely important that you have a sober operator," said Danny Rodriguez, boating law administrator for AZGFD. "Not only will this be safer for you and your passengers, but also it will create a safer atmosphere for everyone on the water."

Although the legal limit for operating a boat in Arizona is a .08 blood-alcohol concentration, an operator is in violation of the law and may be prosecuted for operating a watercraft while impaired to the slightest degree by alcohol and/or drugs. AZGFD officers and those with partner agencies patrol the state's waterways and may stop boaters who are not following the rules of navigation or operating recklessly.

**BOATING**, continued on page 5

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# Have A Worn-Out Lifejacket? Swap It For A New One

Start boating season by inspecting your safety gear.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department's (AZGFD) life jacket exchange program began a statewide campaign this month to ensure everyone in Arizona is safe on the water this summer.

AZGFD held life jacket exchange events at numerous locations throughout the state. One date remains: Friday, June 12: Rotary Park, 2315 Balboa Drive, Bullhead City, 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

During the exchanges, people with



old, worn out and less-effective life jackets can swap them for a new one, while supplies last. Please note that horse collar and off-shore style life jackets will not be accepted.

Before heading out on the water, it's important that boaters check to ensure that their life jackets are in good condition and that they are the right size and fit for passengers. When inspecting life jackets, look for any rips or tears, missing straps, broken fasteners, and ensure that the flotation has not shifted. Based on observations from AZGFD's boating education program, life jackets should be inspected each boating season due to the environment's impact on their materials.

State law requires all passengers 12 and younger to wear a life jacket while on board and each passenger must have a properly fitting, U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket available.

A majority of the recreational boating fatalities were individuals who drowned and were not wearing a life jacket — it is the most important piece of safety gear one can wear, whether on a boat, personal watercraft or paddlecraft.

"Life jackets save lives," said Josh Hoffman, AZGFD's boating safety education coordinator. "The exchange events are an amazing opportunity for Arizona's boaters and paddlers to make sure they have a life jacket that fits correctly and is in good condition."

For more information about boating in Arizona or to sign up for a free safety course, visit [www.azgfd.gov/boating](http://www.azgfd.gov/boating). ■

## BoatUS Foundation Reminds Boaters To Prepare For Season

BoatUS Foundation highlights critical safety tips before hitting the water.

This year, National Safe Boating Week began on May 16 and ran through May 22. This week serves as an important reminder to encourage boaters to be responsible and prioritize safety ahead of the start of boating season. This observance week is the official kickoff of the Before You Boat campaign from the BoatUS Foundation.

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water, a national leader that promotes safe, clean and responsible boating recommends these safety tips for boaters:

- Before You Boat ... Check your fit: Take a few minutes to ensure you have enough right-sized life jackets for everyone aboard and that they are readily available in case of an emergency. While on board, wear your life jacket and ensure

you are meeting your state requirement for life jacket wear by visiting <https://www.boatus.org/life-jackets/state-requirements>.

- Before You Boat ... Inspect your beacon: Confirm your emergency beacon is working and accessible, so help can find you quickly in case something unexpected happens. Pro Tip: Rent a beacon for free through the BoatUS Foundation EPIRB rental program.

- Before You Boat ... File a float plan: Let someone know where you're going and when you'll be back. This can be as simple as texting your trip details to a trusted friend or family member who is ready to act if you're overdue.

- Before You Boat ... Attach your ECOS: If your helm is equipped with an



engine cutoff switch and your boat is 26' or under, attach it to your person. This

will help stop your engine immediately if you're thrown overboard.

- Before You Boat ... Check the weather: Use free apps like Tide Alert (NOAA) to check weather conditions and tides before heading out.

- Before You Boat ... Make safety a priority: Treat safety as part of the trip, not as an afterthought. BoatUS Foundation offers the only free online boating safety course, currently approved in 37 states, register and get started.

"Safe boating doesn't require complicated gear or expert skills. It requires consistency," said Ted Sensenbrenner, Director of Boating Safety at BoatUS Foundation. "Taking a few minutes before leaving the dock to follow these simple tips can make all the difference when conditions change unexpectedly."

To learn more about BoatUS Foundation's programs and courses, visit [BoatUS.org](http://BoatUS.org). ■

## AZGFD Urges Wearing A Life Jacket When Recreating On AZ Waterways

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is urging everyone to wear a life jacket, and follow all safety regulations and laws this summer when recreating on Arizona's waterways.

"A life jacket does exactly what it says — it saves your life when you need it," said Danny Rodriguez, AZGFD's watercraft law enforcement program coordinator. "However, it can only save your life if you're wearing one, and often it's too late to put one on once you realize you need it."

According to the latest U.S. Coast Guard statistics (2024), in cases where the cause of death has been determined, 87 percent of drowning victims in recreational boating accidents were not wearing a life jacket. AZGFD wants to stress the importance of wearing a life jacket and focusing on safe boating practices as the busy boating season gets underway.

To promote the use of life jackets, as well as kick off National Safe Boating Week on Saturday (May 16-22), AZGFD and its partner agencies will be providing life jacket exchange opportunities at various locations throughout the state. Those who have an old, worn out, or improperly fitting life jacket will be able to exchange



it for a new one, free of charge (while supplies last).

"Like anything else, life jackets wear out with time, and these exchange events are a great opportunity for Arizona's boaters and paddlers to ensure they have a life jacket that not only fits correctly, but is in great condition and ready should they need it," said Josh Hoffman, boating safety education coordinator.

AZGFD boating safety partners has been holding life jacket exchange events at numerous locations throughout the state; one remains:

**Friday, June 12:** Rotary Park, 2315 Balboa Drive, Bullhead City, 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**Note:** Type I and Type II life jackets will not be accepted; only ski-type life jackets are eligible for exchange. ■

that wearing a life jacket is the most important safety measure you can take to protect yourself and your family while out on the water.

Boaters looking for an overview of navigational rules, legal requirements and safety information can take an online or in-person course. AZGFD offers free boater safety education courses every month in Phoenix and Lake Havasu City, and a list of online courses approved by the department is posted on [azgfd.gov](http://azgfd.gov). ■

## FIREWORKS

Continued from page 1

"Most of the responsibility for safe boating falls on the operator," Rodriguez said. "The goal of our officers is not to stop people from having fun while boating. We want people to be safe so they can continue to enjoy Arizona's outdoor recreational opportunities."

We would like to remind the public

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FATHER'S DAY GIFT IDEAS

# I'm Here To Help You Shop

By Margie Anderson

June 21st is Father's Day, and I really miss my dad! I used to give him really weird stuff like a clock made from a Spam Can, or a T-shirt that I painted some goofy saying on. He wore them, too! That's the thing about dads – they are pretty easy to please, and they'll usually wear much weirder stuff than moms will. But it's great when you can find an affordable gift that your dad will really like, so I'm here to help you with that if your dad is the outdoor type.

### Boating Dads



The Magcomsen Men's UPF 50+ long sleeve fishing hoodie is lightweight, comes in a variety of colors, and is only \$24 on Amazon! You can also find a variety of great sun shirts at places like Big 5, Cabelas, Bass Pro Shops, and your local sporting goods store.

BOAT NAME  
EST. 20XX

You can find a ton of sun-safe clothing at [coolibar.com](http://coolibar.com) too. They've got stuff for men, women, and kids. While you're looking for great sun shirts for dad, don't forget to check out [Huk.com](http://Huk.com)!

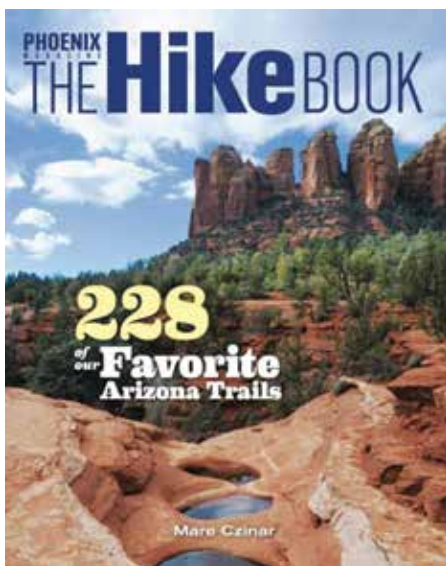
Or how about a personalized plaque for dad's boat? At [Zazzle.com](http://Zazzle.com) you can get one for under \$30!

Here are some more inexpensive gifts for boating dads: floating key ring, a boating towel with a ring so it doesn't blow off the boat, floating tackle box, sun gloves (because having sunburnt hands is painful!), lip balm, a great hat, and UV toe socks. No kidding! Just search Amazon and you'll find socks that dad can wear with his flip flops and not get sunburnt feet.

### Fishing Dads

Honestly, fishing dads can use almost the same stuff as boating dads when it comes to protective clothing and floating stuff. But a dad who fishes from shore would also benefit from having a super lightweight chair that he set up on shore, and you can find plenty of them at outdoor stores.

One of my all-time favorites for shore fishing is the bucket stool because you can carry your stuff inside it, then sit on it when you get there. Amazon has one for \$30 that not only has an organizer on the outside, it also features a seat that swivels



360 degrees!

Also, every fisherman always needs good sharp hooks! Get dad some high quality hooks like Gamakatsu, Eagle Claw, Owner, VMC, etc. If you're unsure what size hooks to get him, just tell the guy at the tackle shop what kind of fish dad goes after and they'll let you know what kind of hooks he needs. Ditto if you'd like to get him some new line.

Another thing a shore fisherman might enjoy having is a pole holder that sticks in the ground so he can walk away temporarily to grab a cold one! Just search for fishing pole holder for ground on Amazon.

### Hiking Dads

As a hiker, I know that one of the crucial needs a hiker has is good socks! A particular favorite of ours is Darn Tough Vermont socks. These socks are made from merino wool – and they are guaranteed for LIFE! No kidding! They have a Father's Day page where you can click on what kind of dad have: hiker, runner, hard worker, hunter, snow lover, first responder, or something else. Then they show you the perfect socks for your dad. They have everything from funny socks to plain socks, and they run about \$26 and up. But guaranteed for life! I get them for the girls and their husbands and they love them. So whether dad likes no show, ankle, or whatever, you are sure to find Darn Tough Vermont socks he will love – even if he's looking for Big Foot!

Another thing a hiker needs is healthy snacks. Hit up the grocery store for some great protein bars small bags of nuts that dad likes. Remember that chocolate might



melt! He also might appreciate some hard candies to keep his mouth from drying out.

Like other outdoor dads, hiker dads need hats, and you can find a variety of styles and colors at your local sporting goods store, or even Walmart or Amazon.

While you're at the sporting goods store, look at maps and books. You can find all kinds of trail maps and books with trails in different parts of the state. I love the National Geographic maps – they show the hiking trails as well as roads and boundaries, etc.

### Hunting Dads

Does your dad have a certain unit he likes to hunt? Go online and see if you can find a book that gives tips for that area. You can also buy maps for each game unit at places like Sportsmans Warehouse or at Wide World of Maps ([maps4U.com](http://maps4U.com)). Wide World of Maps also has a big selection of books that your dad might like, as well as detailed USGS maps of the area he likes to hunt. Another thing they have is rip proof and water proof maps of the National Forests in Arizona – I have a complete set and they are invaluable for navigating the back roads!

A dad who hunts would also benefit from Darn Tough Vermont socks!

### Camping/Backpacking Dads

Odds are, if you camp with your dad you probably have a pretty good idea of what kind of stuff he needs. But there are still plenty of inexpensive gifts for a camping dad! One that springs to mind is some great freeze dried foods. All he has to do is add hot water and wait. My



favorites are Backpacker's Pantry – their stuff is delicious! John and I eat their meals all the time, even on our day trips. It's so nice to just pull out the JetBoil and have a hot meal in 20 minutes! And did you know that you can even get dad packets of freeze dried ice cream to eat in the woods?

Trinity recently introduced us to Peak Refuel freeze dried foods and they are delicious too. What I like most is that you can actually find vegan options in both Peak and Backpackers Pantry! Grab a few pouches, add a camping bowl and fork, and you've got a super cool gift for your dad!

I hope these ideas help you find a great gift for a great guy – your dad! ■

## Boaters/Anglers: Please Help Stop The Spread Of Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are threatening the public's angling and boating recreation and our state's water and electrical infrastructure. It is critical for anyone who owns or uses watercraft, or has a business reliant on watercraft, to understand the essential nature of this aquatic invasive species containment effort by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

The spread of quagga mussels and other aquatic invasive species has far-reaching impacts, both financial and ecological, that can touch virtually every resident of the state. Whether you fish, or boat, or simply get water and electricity to your home, these aquatic invaders WILL affect your lifestyle...and possibly your wallet.

Please contact the Arizona Game and Fish Department Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program at 623-236-7608 if you have any questions or would like to schedule a boat inspection.



For more information on aquatic invasive species, including links to Director's Order #1 (list of aquatic invasive species of Arizona), Director's Order #2 (list of AIS-affected waters in Arizona), and Director's Order #3 (mandatory conditions for movement of watercraft, conveyances and equipment from affected waters), visit [www.azgfd.com/fishing-2/aquatic-invasive-species/](http://www.azgfd.com/fishing-2/aquatic-invasive-species/). ■

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# Don't Put All Your Eggs In The Fall Draw Basket...

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When it comes to getting a shot at an unforgettable hunt, we say, don't let any chance pass you by! After applying for the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Fall Draw, check out the Conservation First USA Big Game Super Draw. It offers hunters another opportunity to pursue some of Arizona's most sought-after species while directly supporting on-the-ground wildlife conservation efforts statewide.



Just \$10 a ticket enters you to win one of 17 special big game hunt permit-tags, and there is no limit to the number of species you can try for or the number of tickets you can purchase!

"For the past 20 years, proceeds from the raffle have directly benefited wildlife and habitat projects. We are proud to say that 100 percent of the sales go to the Arizona Game and Fish Department," says John Koleszar, CFUSA President. "And what some may not know, it only takes



one ticket to win. We've had people over the years who have only purchased one ticket and they have won the hunt of a lifetime! Who wouldn't want the chance to hunt 365 days almost anywhere in Arizona?"

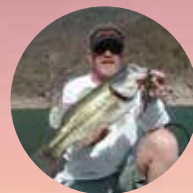
This year's hunt permit-tag opportunities include three winners each for elk, pronghorn, bighorn sheep (2 desert sheep and 1 Rocky Mountain), and bison



(1 Kaibab, 1 Raymond, 1 House Rock); two winners each for Coues' whitetail and mule deer; and one winner for turkey.

### Details

- Raffle tickets are \$10 each, per species (17 hunt permit-tags are available).
- The deadline to purchase tickets is June 30.
- The winner can hunt for 365 days (Aug. 15, 2026, to Aug. 14, 2027).
- Raffle tickets must be purchased online, and the buyer must be 21 years old and in Arizona at the time of purchase.
- The drawing will be conducted in July.
- A complete set of rules can be found online. ■



FISHING



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NEWS

HIKING WITH KIDS

# Different Ages Make A Difference

By Margie Anderson

The American Hiking Society's Annual National Trails Day celebration is always the first Saturday of the month, plus Father's Day is coming up, so I thought this was the perfect time to share some of the things I've learned that can make hiking with kids a lot more fun – for you AND them!

We've been taking our granddaughters hiking with us almost since they could walk, so I have plenty of experience. Also, we used to lead hikes for a trail group in our church, and we had a lot of families, some with really small kids, so I'm familiar with that, too!



2008 - John, me, Trinity, and Emily on our favorite trail - the Kachina Trail on the Snowbowl Road.



Trinity and Emily - kids and climbing are a match made in heaven!

### Babies

Most of the time, very small babies and toddlers will be in a backpack and carried by a parent. I have to admit that every time I led a group that included a baby in a backpack, it made me nervous. I'm a worry wart, and I was always afraid the person carrying the baby might fall. So my best advice if you're carrying a baby is BE CAREFUL.

Wear good hiking shoes and carry a trek pole for extra stability. Stay on the trail and watch for trip hazards. Also,

don't forget that the baby is probably at least partially wrapped in a blanket and is inside a nylon bag, essentially – and it could get hot in there. Don't forget to give the baby frequent drinks of water and make sure he or she is wearing a hat for shade.

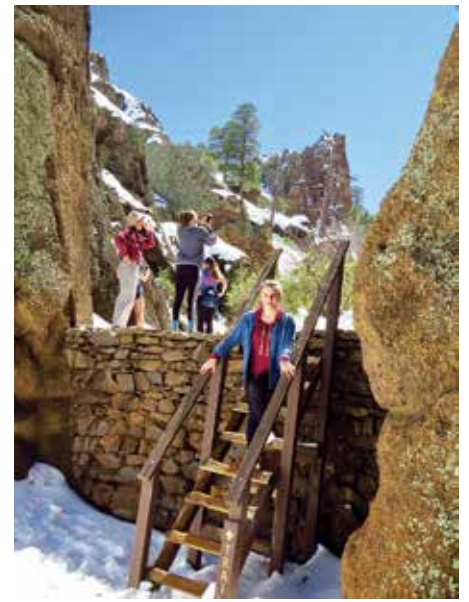
### Toddlers

Trinity is three years older than Emily, so when we started taking them on hikes, Trinity was about five, but Emmy was still a toddler. We'd bring a stroller and let her ride as much as she wanted to. That stroller was great for carrying things, too!

You'd be surprised at the number of trails that you can take a stroller on – Kendrick Park Watchable Wildlife Trail northwest of Flagstaff is one. It has a paved trail that is dynamite with great views and lots of shade. Other good trails for strollers include the trail that circles Lynx Lake, the Waterfall Trail in the White Tanks, and the beautiful trails in the Gilbert Riparian Preserve.

### Young Kids To Pre-Teens

This is when it gets really fun. By the time the girls were 6 or 7, they wanted their own backpacks and water bottles to carry. I took time at home to teach them some basics about safety and survival, and had them help me pack their supplies into their fanny packs or small day packs. Before starting the hike, we insisted on



sunscreen and hats, a habit that has persisted with them.

At this age they want to explore – and let's face it – they're faster than we are! So just in case they ever wandered off and got confused, I put some things in their packs to help. Here's a list of the things I put in their packs. They absolutely loved having their own "survival kit"!

1. Bright orange vest, knitted hat, or bandana. They knew to put this on so they'd be easier to see.
2. Plastic garbage bag or poncho. In case of rain.
3. Emergency blanket.
4. Very loud whistle. They knew that yelling would tire them out, and a whistle could be heard farther.
5. Granola bar or hard candies or trail mix.
6. Water bottle – full.

HIKING, continued on page 12



John, Trinity, Emily, Ericka, and me on the Alfa Fia Trail across from Aspen Corner on the Snowbowl Road.



Trinity with her little pack on the Petroglyph Trail at Lyman Lake.



Trinity and Emily in the Chiricahuas.

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# Maricopa County Residents Get Early Access To Campsite Reservations

Last fall, Maricopa County's Parks and Recreation Department gathered public input as part of its fee and master planning studies. A consistent theme across both efforts was residents' desire for earlier access to campsite reservations, ahead of out-of-state visitors who often secure a large share of available sites.

Under current reservation policies, campsites may be booked up to six months in advance of the arrival date through an online reservation system. After reviewing public feedback and reservation data, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation is pleased to introduce a new benefit for local residents: earlier access to campsite reservations ahead of those who reside outside Maricopa County.

"This update ensures Maricopa County residents have prioritized access to enjoy their parks and campgrounds," said Chair Kate Brophy McGee, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, District 3.

Effective late spring, Maricopa County residents will be able to book campsites up to 2 weeks earlier than out-of-county visitors, expanding access to the County's popular campgrounds, especially during peak seasons. Visitors residing outside the County will continue to follow the standard six-month reservation window.

"Our parks are a valued community resource, and this change reflects our commitment to serving the residents who call Maricopa County home," said Vice Chair Debbie Lesko, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, District 4. "We're proud to

continue welcoming visitors from across the country while also creating earlier access for those who live here."

Maricopa County's Regional Park System Currently Offers 453 Campsites:

- Cave Creek Regional Park — 55 campsites
- Lake Pleasant Regional Park — 173 campsites
- McDowell Mountain Regional Park — 92 campsites
- Usery Mountain Regional Park — 73 campsites
- White Tank Mountain Regional Park — 60 campsites

Visitors can choose from a variety of camping experiences, from RV sites to more rustic desert settings.

"Our regional park system continues to see strong demand for camping, with additional campgrounds under development at Estrella Mountain Regional Park and Vulture Mountains Recreation Area," added Jennifer Waller, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Director. To learn more about the campgrounds and availability, visit [www.exploremaricopacountyparks.org/](http://www.exploremaricopacountyparks.org/).

At approximately 120,000 acres, Maricopa County is home to one of the largest regional park systems in the United States. The parks are located throughout the County and are all within a 45-minute drive of downtown Phoenix. For more information, call (602) 506-2930 or visit [www.maricopa.gov/parks](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks). ■

## HIKING

Continued from page 10

As they got older, I taught them things like how to make a fire without matches and how to use a map, then added a fire striking kit and compass to their bags. Thank goodness they never needed the bag, but I think just having it on reminded them not to get out of sight!

Their favorite hikes at this age (and actually still!) were the beautiful trails around Flagstaff, especially the ones on the mountains: Alfa Fia Trail, Aspen Nature Loop, and Kachina Trail. We hiked the Kachina every year, and each year we got a little further along it. Alfa Fia is not an "official" trail. On the way up to the Snowbowl, watch for the sign on the right that says "Aspen Corner". Across the street from that is a split-rail fence and the trail to Alfa Fia Tank starts there. It's a very gentle slope and the tank looks like a pond. The views are amazing.



Emily on another of our favorite summer hikes - the Aspen Loop Trail near the Snowbowl. Notice she has graduated to a backpack.

At this age, it's really important not to be in a hurry. When the girls were little, they were always finding boulders to climb and things to explore, so getting a mile under your belt could take all morning. But for us, a hike is all about being outside together enjoying the beauty of the outdoors – it was never important to us to reach the end. Sometimes we did, sometimes we didn't, but we always had a good time. We taught them to leave the trail better than they found it, and they'd pick up any trash they found and stash it in their bag until they got back to a trash can.

We always made sure we bought them good hiking shoes and cushy socks, too. There's nothing worse than painful feet on a hike! Also, I was the designated pack mule. I'd carry most of the water and all of the food and first aid supplies. Water is always the most weight – I carry as much as I can. Lunch break was a big deal and for some reason it always had to include fresh cherries. They'd plant the pits and then watch to see if any had grown the next time we hiked the trail.

This is also the perfect age to give them a camera. At first I'd buy each of them one of those disposable cameras, preferably a waterproof one. Later on, our little artist, Emily (who BTW just graduated cum laude from NAU with a B.A.



Me backpacking the Tetons with my dad.

in Studio Art!) would use my camera and get the most amazing photos. Kids have a different point of view and they often see things we don't. They loved taking their own photos.

Once they get their own cell phone, they take even more photos. We'd try to find trails that had spectacular views or cool ruins, or red rocks – anything to make the photos more fun for them. Picture Canyon has amazing waterfalls, Griffith Spring has little cliffs and meadows, and a small stream, West Fork of Oak Creek has an amazing cliff, red rocks, ruins, a creek – it's pretty perfect! Horseshoe Bend is amazing, and Trinity took her college friends there a couple of years ago.

A few other places that have amazingly beautiful trails that are ideal for this age and even younger are the various Nature Conservancy Sites in Arizona, such as the Sonoita Creek Preserve near Patagonia, Ramsey Canyon near Fort Huachuca, Madera Canyon near Tucson, and the Hassayampa Preserve near Wickenburg. These all feature creeks and easy trails that kids will love. To this day, Trinity says that the Hassayampa Preserve is her favorite – we went after a rain and the river was flowing really well, plus the fall foliage was amazing.

### Teens

By now the girls were seasoned hikers and we had worked out a system. Trinity and John would always be in the lead because they are both faster. Emily and I would mosey along behind, stopping to take photos and catch our breath, especially at high altitudes (we both have asthma). John and Trinity always stop somewhere nice and wait for us, and then we all have a drink of water and a bit of a rest until heading out again.

Some of our favorite hikes at this point are the Chiricahuas, along the Little Colorado near Springerville, and tons of trails around Greer.

At this age, they can actually hike more



This is the girls in the Grotto at the Chiricahuas.

serious trails than we can! This is when they started going hiking with friends, showing them the prettiest trails and sending me Snapchats all day. It really gives me a lot of joy to realize that while we were having fun in the woods we were fueling a life-long love of nature in them. Both of the girls are still VERY outdoorsy – camping, hiking, and off-roading with friends – and with us, still, too! We are so blessed. In fact, now Trinity and Emily are both married, and they both married outdoorsy guys!

### General Tips

Before you head out, do some research and find a trail with the right difficulty level. There are all kinds of apps (AllTrails is a great one) and websites that will show you a variety of trails in any area you choose. I eventually bought a trail map of the Flagstaff area because we spend so much time there every summer. Also, the National Geographic maps have trails on them and I love those. The various Arizona State Parks have amazing trails, many of them perfect for kids.

If you take the time to teach your kids about safety, survival, and conservation while they are growing up, you'll worry about them a lot less when they get older and start going off on adventures without you. It's bittersweet having the girls confident enough to strike out into the woods on their own, but we are incredibly proud of both of them. ■

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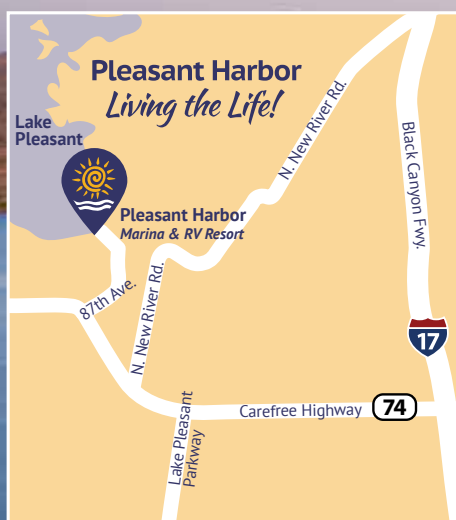
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# 2026 Wildland Fire Season: Prepare and Plan Ahead

As we enter wildfire season, this message provides important information for all Grand Canyon residents and staff to help you stay prepared, informed, and ready. It includes seasonal wildfire outlooks, emergency planning guidance, evacuation procedures, and details on the power shutoff program. Our unique location in the wildland-urban interface makes us especially vulnerable to wildfires and other emergencies that could require swift evacuation.



## Wildfire Awareness

To kick off Wildfire Awareness, we encourage all park residents and staff to review the National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook from Predictive Services. This four-month outlook provides valuable insight into regions across the country—particularly the Southwest—where the risk for elevated wildfire activity is forecast.

Above Normal Significant Wildland Fire Potential is forecasted for May and June 2026, so residents should stay prepared and fire-aware.

## Be Prepared: Build Your Emergency “Go Bag”

Every household should have a “Go Bag” ready in case evacuation becomes necessary. Your Go Bag should be sturdy, easy to carry, and contain essential items to support you and your family for up to 72 hours. Recommended items include:

- Bottled water (one gallon per person per day)
- Nonperishable food and manual can opener
- First aid kit & necessary medications

- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, wipes, etc.)
- Flashlight, radio, and extra batteries
- Copies of important documents in a waterproof container
- Cash in small bills
- Spare keys, local maps, and a whistle
- Supplies for pets and service animals
- Cell phone chargers and backup batteries

For a comprehensive checklist, visit [Build a Kit \(ready.gov\)](https://www.ready.gov) or reference the Grand Canyon National Park Evacuation Checklist.

## Understand READY, SET, GO!

Grand Canyon National Park and Coconino County use the READY, SET, GO! system to guide our community through escalating evacuation alerts:

- **READY:** Always be prepared. Assemble your Go Bag and keep essentials following the 5 Ps: People & Pets, Prescriptions, Papers, Personal Needs, and Priceless Items.
- **SET:** Be aware. When a SET notification is issued, conditions are changing, and you should consider voluntarily relocating to a shelter or to a family/friend’s

house outside the affected area. Keep your vehicle’s fuel tank full and be ready to leave quickly if conditions worsen.

- **GO!:** This is an evacuation order. There is no time to waste; depart immediately using designated evacuation routes. Your safety depends on prompt action. Follow all directions from emergency notifications and personnel.

## Know the Park’s Evacuation Plan

The Grand Canyon National Park Evacuation Plan is designed to ensure the safety of residents, staff, and visitor in the event of wildfire or other emergencies. The plan covers all park areas and includes:

- Clearly identified evacuation routes for South Rim, North Rim, and Desert View
- Procedures for rapid evacuation and transportation
- Designated evacuation centers and safety zones
- Coordination with local, county, and federal emergency services

Also be sure to review the Grand Canyon National Park Evacuation Checklist as well.

## APS Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) Program

As part of ongoing wildfire risk reduction, Arizona Public Service (APS), servicing power to the South Rim, may implement Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). This program is designed to prevent electrical systems from igniting or fueling wildfires during periods of extreme fire weather characterized by high winds, heat, and dry conditions.

### What to Expect:

- Shutoffs are a tool of last resort, used only when weather and environmental conditions create an extreme wildfire risk.
- If a PSPS is anticipated, APS anticipates providing advanced notice, typically starting several days before a possible shutoff using email, text, and phone calls.
- Outages could last up to 20 hours, depending on weather and the time needed

for APS crews to inspect and safely restore power.

### Potential Impacts:

- Loss of electricity can affect refrigeration for food and medications, heating/cooling, communications, and fuel distribution.
- Residents should ensure their Go Bag includes items such as battery-powered lights and backup chargers.

### Stay Informed:

- Make sure your APS account contact information is current to receive PSPS notifications.
- Monitor local emergency notifications and APS updates for the latest information on power status and safety resources.

## Sign Up for Emergency Notifications

Timely information saves lives. All residents and staff should:

- Register with the Coconino County Emergency Notification System to receive critical alerts for wildfires, evacuations, and other life-safety events. Sign up or update your information at the county’s official site.
- Sign up for Grand Canyon National Park’s Everbridge Emergency Notification System for real-time texts, emails, or calls about incidents impacting public safety, travel, work conditions, and significant park-wide events. Everbridge is used for weather alerts, road closures, power outages, evacuations, and more. At any time, you can update your notification preferences by following the link above.

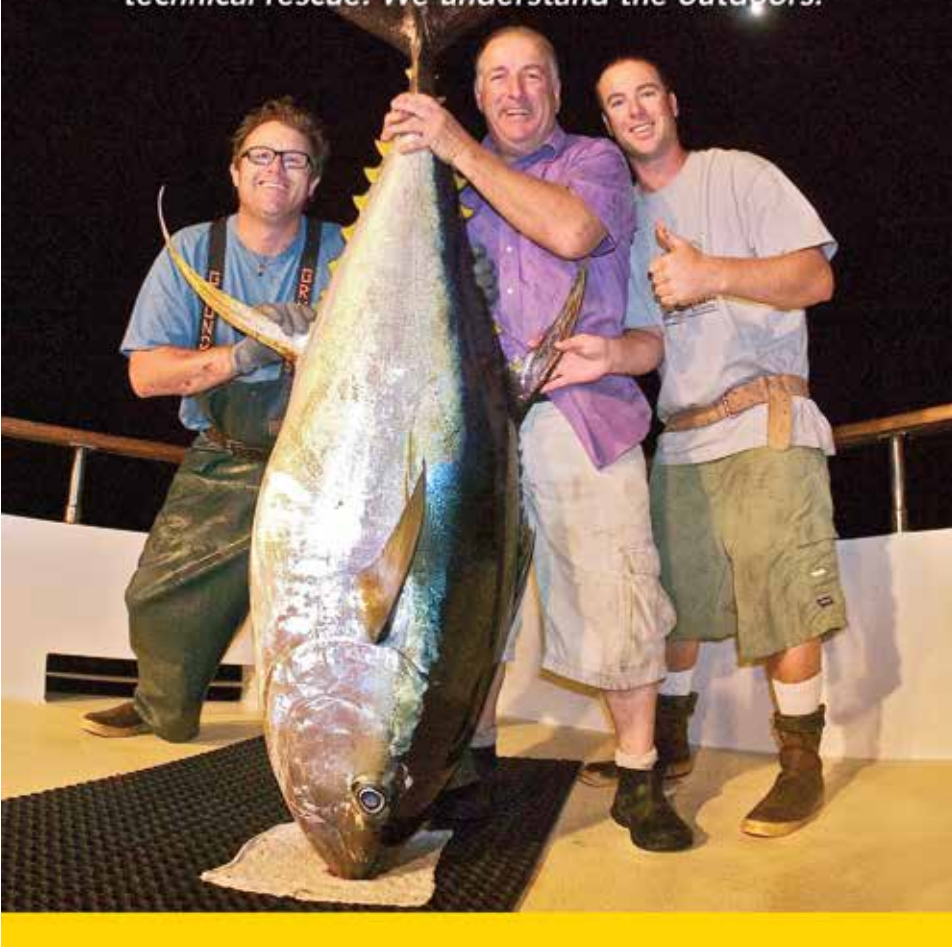
## What We Need From You

- Assemble your Go Bag and review your family’s emergency plan.
  - Review the park’s evacuation plan and know your evacuation routes.
  - Sign up for both the Coconino County and Everbridge Emergency Notification systems (links above).
- The key to an orderly and efficient evacuation is your individual preparedness. Thank you for helping keep our community safe this fire season!

# TripleWall Productions

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*“We pride ourselves in the quality of our videography and editing. We are all avid outdoor enthusiasts with backgrounds in fishing, hunting, mountain and technical rescue. We understand the outdoors.”*



## FISH250

Continued from page 1

download your photos, and click on “submit.” If you send in the form before the end of August, you’ll receive the Fish250 Sticker Pack.

“What a wonderful way to celebrate fishing in Arizona. This challenge is about more than the catch — it’s about discovering new places, enjoying the outdoors and recognizing the role an-

glers play as conservationists who help protect healthy fisheries and waters for generations to come,” says Alec Young, Trout Unlimited’s Angling Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation Manager.

For more information on the Fish250 Challenge, including information on where to fish, license requirements, regulations, how-to videos, and more, visit <https://www.azgfd.com/fish250/>.

For more information on Arizona’s Outdoors250, visit <https://azstateparks.com/Outdoors250>. ■

## FISHING

Continued from page 1

Ridge (C.C. Cragin) Reservoir.

Department Staff Recommends Anglers Visit Big Lake, Fool Hollow Lake, Show Low Lake, Willow Springs Lake, Woods Canyon Lake, City Reservoir, Santa Fe Reservoir, Cataract Lake, Kinnickinick Lake, or Knoll Lake as alternative waters that are likely to provide good fishing in 2026.

Low water levels have impacted opportunities to launch watercraft. The Following Boat Ramps Will Not Be Usable Until Water Levels Rise: Black Canyon Lake, Fool Hollow Lake, Lee Valley Reservoir, Nelson Reservoir, Scott Reservoir, and Woodland Lake.

In Addition, The Boat Ramps At The Following Reservoirs Will Likely Be

Difficult To Launch At By The End Of June Or Early July: Becker Lake, Big Lake, Bunch Reservoir, Luna Lake, River Reservoir, Tunnel Reservoir, Blue Ridge (C.C. Cragin) Reservoir, Knoll Lake, Dogtown Lake, Kaibab Lake, and Upper Lake Mary.

Although these changes may affect summer recreation plans, it is important that the public is informed about the conditions of Arizona’s high-country waters. The department will continue to stock fish wherever water quality is good and will continue to provide excellent fishing opportunities where lakes have sufficient water.

For the most up-to-date information on trout stocking in Arizona, please visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s Fish Stocking Schedule at <https://www.azgfd.com/fishing-2/where-to-fish/fish-stocking-schedule/>. ■



## Dear Friends Of Wildlife For Tomorrow

Arizona's wildlife belongs to all of us - from the iconic species we know and love, to the quiet, hidden creatures that make our deserts, forests, wetlands, rivers and wild places so extraordinary.

At Wildlife for Tomorrow, we are proud to serve as the official nonprofit partner of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, helping accelerate and magnify conservation impact through partnerships, philanthropy and public engagement. This season, we have several meaningful opportunities for you to celebrate Arizona's outdoor heritage, support wildlife conservation and connect with others who care deeply about the future of Arizona's wild places.

We hope you will mark your calendars and join us for one - or all - of these upcoming events.

### Together in Conservation, Wildlife for Tomorrow

**820 Day™ - Arizona's Day of Giving for Wildlife - August 20 |**

Arizona is home to more than 820 diverse wildlife species, and on 8/20, we are dedicating the day to celebrating, supporting and conserving them.

820 Day™ is Wildlife for Tomorrow's annual statewide day of giving for wildlife - a chance for every Arizonan to become part of the conservation story. Whether you are a hunter, angler, birder, hiker, wildlife watcher, business owner, parent, teacher or someone who simply loves Arizona's wild spirit, there is a place for you in this effort.

Your gift of \$8.20, \$82, \$820, \$8,200 or any amount meaningful to you helps support wildlife conservation efforts across Arizona. You can also participate by spreading the word, sharing your support on social media using #AZ820Day, or getting your business involved as a partner in conservation.

On 820 Day, every donation, post and pledge helps shine a spotlight on Arizona's incredible biodiversity and the urgent need to conserve the habitats and wild places that make our state so special.

### 2026 Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame - August 22

Just two days after 820 Day, we will gather for the 28th Annual Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame Induction Banquet on Saturday, August 22, 2026, at The Wigwam Resort.

Established in 1998 through a partnership between Wildlife for Tomorrow and the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame honors individuals and organizations whose work has made a significant and lasting impact on Arizona's wildlife, natural resources and outdoor heritage.

Past inductees represent a wide range

of backgrounds, including wildlife volunteerism, corporate leadership, public service, media, education, conservation advocacy and community leadership. Each honoree reflects a deep commitment to conserving Arizona's natural beauty and wildlife heritage for future generations.

This year's inductees will be announced soon, and we look forward to celebrating another outstanding class of conservation leaders. Tickets and partnership opportunities are available now. Event partnerships help cover the cost of the evening while allowing more funds to be directed toward essential conservation initiatives throughout Arizona.

This is always a special night to celebrate the people, organizations and partnerships that keep Arizona's outdoor legacy moving forward.

### 20th Annual Fly Fishing Film Tour - September 20

Join us on Sunday, September 20, at 4:00 p.m. for the 20th Annual Fly Fishing Film Tour at Desert Botanical Garden, located at 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix, AZ 85008, in the Dorrance Center.

This exciting evening brings together outdoor adventure, stunning fly fishing films, community and conservation. Whether you are an experienced angler, an outdoor enthusiast or simply someone who loves beautiful wildlife footage and wild places, this event is not to be missed.

Tickets to the Fly Fishing Film Tour include complimentary admission to Desert Botanical Garden before and/or after the event, making it a great opportunity to enjoy one of Arizona's most beautiful venues while supporting conservation.

Partnership opportunities are also available, including Venue Partner, Bar Partner and Table Partner options. The event proceeds benefit Wildlife for Tomorrow and support conservation efforts across Arizona.

We are excited to partner with AZ Fly Shop to bring the outdoor community together for an evening of film, fun and purpose - all in support of Arizona's wildlife and wild places.

### We hope you will join us.

From 820 Day to the Arizona Outdoor Hall of Fame to the Fly Fishing Film Tour, each event offers a meaningful way to make an impact. Together, they celebrate what makes Arizona extraordinary: our wildlife, landscapes, outdoor traditions, and the people who step up to conserve them.

Thank you for being part of this growing conservation community. Your support helps Wildlife for Tomorrow build partnerships, raise awareness, and mobilize resources for Arizona's wildlife. ■

# Help Protect What Matters

Right here in the White Mountains, Arizona Elk Society is working to protect what matters most.

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To learn more about us:  
[ArizonaElkSociety.org](http://ArizonaElkSociety.org)

# Grand Canyon National Park Hosts 33rd Annual Star Party

The thirty-third annual Grand Canyon Star Party will be held Saturday, June 10 through Saturday, June 17, on both the South and North rims of Grand Canyon National Park. National parks such as Grand Canyon are protective havens for some of the last remaining dark skies in the United States.

The event is sponsored by the National Park Service, Grand Canyon Conservancy, the Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association, and the Saguaro Astronomy Club of Phoenix. Numerous telescopes will offer views of planets Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars, as well as double stars, star clusters, nebulae, and distant galaxies. By day, keep an eye out for solar telescopes pointed at the sun. Weather permitting, expect spectacular views of the universe!

## On The South Rim

On the South Rim, events include a nightly slide show from a special guest speaker at 8 p.m. in the plaza of the Grand Canyon Visitor Center. The list of speakers can be found on our webpage: Grand Canyon Star Party 2023, June 10-17 - Grand Canyon National Park (U.S. National Park Service) ([nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov)) The talks are followed by free telescope viewing behind the building. Green-laser constellation tours will be offered nightly at 9, 9:30, and 10 p.m.

Parking is available in Lots 1 through 4, or arrive by the free Village Route shut-

tle bus, which runs until 11 p.m. To get a good seat for the speaker presentation, arrive early. Telescope viewing is best after 9 p.m. and continues well into the night; visitors may arrive any time after dark. A light source is recommended for the walk to the viewing area, but white lights are not permitted on the Telescope Lot. Give your eyes time to dark-adapt, or use a red flashlight, easily made by covering any flashlight with red cellophane.

## On The North Rim

On the North Rim, telescopes will be set up on the terrace of the Grand Canyon Lodge every evening. Astronomers will also use green lasers to point out constellations. By day, look for solar telescopes on the terrace and elsewhere. Check the Visitor Center and park bulletin boards for program topics and additional details.

Nighttime temperatures on both rims can be cool, even in summer. Those attending the star party are encouraged to bring warm layers of clothing. When traveling in the park on the South Rim, it is best to find a parking space and use the free shuttle bus system to access points of interest in the Grand Canyon Village area. For shuttle bus information, visit <https://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/shuttle-buses.htm>.

## Dark Sky Status

Grand Canyon National Park achieved



“Starry Night” by Vincent Van Gogh

International Dark Sky Park status in 2019 through the International Dark-Sky Association. The certification is awarded to parks that have retrofitted at least 67% of their exterior lights to be dark-sky-friendly and maintain outreach programs like star parties throughout the year. Grand Canyon National Park was also

awarded International Dark Sky Place of the Year in 2019 for its extraordinary efforts in both dark-sky-friendly lighting and outreach programs.

For additional information on the Grand Canyon Star Party visit:

[www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/grand-canyon-star-party.htm](https://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/grand-canyon-star-party.htm). ■

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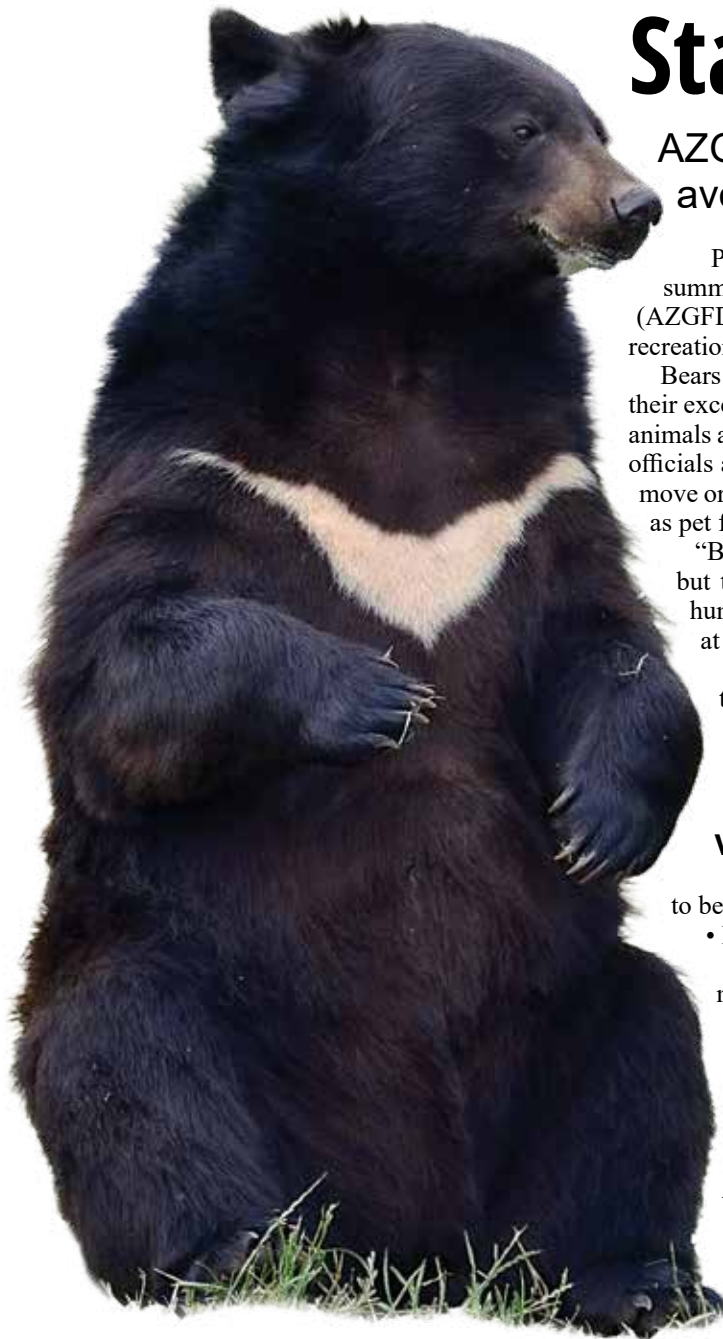
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# Stay “Bear Aware” This Summer

AZGFD offers essential tips for avoiding conflicts with bears.

PHOENIX — With Memorial Day weekend past and summer begins, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is reminding campers, hikers and other outdoor recreationists to be “bear aware.”

Bears are typically shy and tend to avoid humans, but their excellent sense of smell can be problematic for both the animals and humans as they search for an easy meal. AZGFD officials advise those living in or visiting bear country to remove or block access to trash, food or other attractants (such as pet food or bird seed).

“Bears are dangerous. They might look cute or cuddly, but they certainly have the capacity to inflict harm on humans,” said Paul Greer, wildlife manager supervisor at AZGFD’s Region 1 office in Pinetop.

“If humans do their part, then the bears may pass through without getting the reward of those attractants, the trash and the human sources of food — the bears will just move on,” said Greer.

Here are some tips to avoid attracting bears —

### When camping...

- Keep food and attractants secured and inaccessible to bears. Do not keep food in a tent.
- Don’t burn left-over food or trash on the grill.
- Set up a campsite away from places where bears might forage for food, such as creeks, rivers and other bodies of water.

### When hiking...

- Don’t wear scented lotions or perfumes.
- Make noise or hike in groups.
- Hiking with a pet? Keep it on a leash at all times.

### In case of a bear encounter...

- Do NOT run and never play dead with a black bear.
- Back away slowly while maintaining eye contact with the bear.



- Make yourself look bigger than you are by flaunting your arms or pulling your shirt/jacket up higher than your head.
- Throw items and yell at the bear.
- If attacked, fight back.

### What should I do if I see a bear or one in my neighborhood?

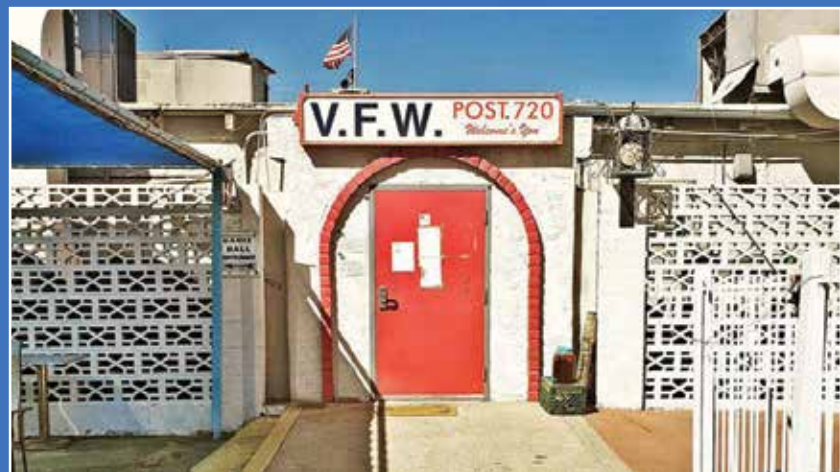
- Never approach a bear. Black bears typically avoid people, but if they associate people with food, they may become aggressive.
- If a bear enters your neighborhood or property, try to determine what might be attracting the bear, such as unsecured trash or a low-hanging bird feeder, and remove it.
- Deter the bear from the area by making loud noises, such as yelling, whistling or banging pans.
- Give the bear a chance to leave the area. If the bear does not leave, stay calm, continue facing it, and slowly back away.

Unacceptable bear behavior, such as entering or attempting to enter human dwellings, tents or vehicles, approaching a human after it becomes aware of the human’s presence and any other aggressive behavior should be reported to AZGFD’s dispatch center at 623-236-7201. In an emergency, call 911.

People should also call to report situations where bears continue to frequent and access human attractants after measures have been taken to secure the attractant. ■



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## Leave It To Kids: There's Still Hope

Shared By Tom Cole, USMC, Retired

At school, my grandson was tasked to write a short essay on what he felt was the best of him. Sort of a daunting task for a young person of 11, but as usual with kids, he came up with something that few would think of and I thought that it was rather whimsical, until the last sentence which I thought was incredibly insightful.

I hope you all enjoy this.

### THE BEST PART OF ME - Don Genco

My elbows are rugged and rough,  
But I still love them for what they do.  
They help me write and they help you too.

I put my hands on my face to think,  
but how would I do that without my elbows.

My arms would be useless sticks and  
Useless mitts without my elbows.  
A waste of space and room.

I don't have that problem because of my elbows.

I can drink and eat and write and sleep all because of my elbows.

The things I always look over and don't think much about  
are the things I need the most. ■



**FLAG DAY JUNE 14**

# Business Directory

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**Hale's Marine Service**  
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halesmarineservices.com  
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bartlettlake.com/index.html  
info@bartlettlake.com

**Pleasant Harbor RV Resort & Marina**  
Peoria, AZ  
(928) 501-5263  
(602) 269-0077  
pleasantharbor.com

## PUBLICATIONS

**Arizona Boating & Watersports**  
480/947-6219  
jim@azbw.com  
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Lukeville, AZ 85341 U.S.A.

By Tom Cole, Marine, Retired  
Commander VFW Post 3513  
Special Features Writer

The Draft; popular with some not so much with others. We already have draft registration so why or why not go to a full blown draft? Let's take a look at the pros and cons.

A draft would place all eligible men AND women in the active service for a minimum of two years. All of these people would be trained and then, when discharged from active duty, would be required to be in the inactive reserve for four years (no meetings; you just have to maintain your uniforms).

All who received an honorable discharge would be eligible to put in for medical, monetary and educational benefits through the VA. And, while active, you accrue 30 days paid vacation per year. There are also other benefits such as the possibility of being able to join the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans and in cases of war service, the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Another benefit to the nation is that the nation would have a trained and ready-to-hand armed force if required. A wonderful side benefit is that the men



**FLAG DAY JUNE 14**

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# Is There A Draft In Here?

and women who serve would all have a common ground when they later meet at work or socially, bringing the people of our nation closer to each other -- not to mention possible travel within and outside of the United States.


Personally, I find travel to always be educational, maturing and somewhat broadening in nature for young people. Plus when the young people are discharged and they choose to go to college, they would have a more mature approach, have a better incentive to succeed in school and likely do much better than they would have straight out of High School. These are all what I see as positive points to the draft discussion.

On the other side of the coin, the military is not easy. Depending on what service you are assigned to, the initial training can range from not-so-bad to "Omigod!" tough. The young people would be away from home for two years, with time allotted for leave home (30 days per year). Moms and Dads will of course be concerned/worried a bit about their child, but they are moving toward adulthood and this actually provides a boost; they're on their own hook. The pay is not high and based on rank, and rank in most cases is based on productivity.

Some of the bases you can be assigned to are pretty darn good with surroundings that are very nice (you usually get off work and can frequent the local establishments in town). However, there are some bases which are pretty remote and liberty is not exactly wonderful. Living accommodations in this day and age are generally nice and usually two-person rooms. However, you do have week-




ly room inspections to put up with and you're hoping you have a good roomie (not guaranteed). Finally the cost to the government (i.e., the tax payers) is high. Training (boot camp and then technical), uniforms (dress and utility), living accommodations, dining facilities and food, travel between bases, and processing and administration all come at a price and are not cheap. I don't have a number to hand, but you may imagine the selection and training of millions of people. Oh and let's also not forget that there will be the protesters who will march in the streets crying about the Draft which will cost cities some cash to monitor and quell. Hm. ■




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# Come On Out June 6th, It's Free Fishing Day

## A Great Time To Introduce A Novice Or Youngster To Fishing

Many anglers have friends who have never been fishing but are curious to learn. One of the best ways to introduce them to this long-standing pastime is to take them out on Arizona's Free Fishing Day.

This year, Saturday, June 6, is the perfect time to do it, as the Arizona Game and Fish Department will not require fishing licenses at any state waters or community lakes as part of National Free Fishing Day.

"The goal of Free Fishing Day is to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors, spend quality time with friends and family, and experience the fun of fishing," says Chase Newlon, AZGFD fishing R3 coordinator. "Many people who experience fishing for the first time enjoy it so much that they buy a license so they can continue enjoying it all year."

Fishing is already a bargain. Arizona fishing licenses start at just \$37 for resident adults (18 and older) and \$55 for nonresident adults. A combination hunt and fish license for youths (ages 10-17, residents or nonresidents) is only \$5.

While a fishing license is not needed on June 6 this year, bag limits and other Arizona fishing regulations still apply and must be observed on Free Fishing Day. Children under 10 can fish for free all year in Arizona.

Here are a few events taking place on Free Fishing Day:

Saturday, June 6, 9 a.m. to noon - AZGFD Fly Fishing Clinic at Whitehorse Lake near Williams, Ariz. Ready to cast a line and have a good time? Join us at Whitehorse Lake for a free fly fishing clinic that's perfect for beginners or experienced anglers looking to brush up on their skills. All gear is provided - just bring yourself! No licenses are required for this event on this day. Day-use fees at Whitehorse Lake will be WAIVED for



registered participants. The event is recommended for anyone 12 or older. To get to Whitehorse Lake from Williams, turn south onto 4th Street/County Road 73 and drive about 9 miles to Forest Road 110. Turn left and proceed for approximately 7 miles to FR 109. Turn left again and follow for about 3 miles to the campground). Preregistration is required; click [HERE](#) to register for the June 6 event. (There is another Fly Fishing Clinic to be held at Whitehorse Lake from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, June 20. Click here for details of the June 20 event).

Saturday, June 6, 6 a.m. to noon - AZ-SCI Free Fishing Day Event, Silverbell Lake, 2955 W. Calle Agua Nueva, Tucson. Come out and enjoy Arizona Free Fishing Day with the Arizona Chapter of Safari Club International. We will have fishing equipment and volunteers helping

teach fishing techniques. This event is for all skill levels, so please come out and say hello! We will provide lunch at Ramada #5 at the north end of the lake. Preregistration is required; click here to register.

Saturday, June 6, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Reel It In - A barrier-free fishing program by AAWS, Bartlett Lake Marina, 20808 E. Bartlett Dam Rd, Rio Verde, Ariz. This program is conducted by Arizona Adaptive Water Sports, a cross-generational outdoor adaptive watersports program for people with disabilities. Reel It In provides inclusive, structured opportunities for youth, adults, and veterans with physical and cognitive disabilities along with their families to learn and enjoy the sport of fishing. It focuses on beginner-level instruction, with hands-on, supportive teaching in basic fishing skills, equipment use, fish handling, and outdoor safety.

Program staff and volunteers will guide participants through each stage of the experience — from casting a line to cooking their catch. Preregistration is required; click here to register.

Saturday, June 6, 8 a.m. to noon - Free Fishing Fun Day - hosted by AZGFD, Deadhorse Ranch State Park, and Prescott National Forest. Held at Dead Horse State Park Ponds, 675 Dead Horse Ranch Road, Cottonwood, Ariz. Waters will be freshly stocked with channel catfish. Bring your own equipment, or loaner rods and reels will be provided. Instruction available and bait provided. No fishing license required. For more information, contact Dead Horse Ranch State Park at 928-634-5283. Preregistration is required; click here register.

For information about fishing and license regulations and places to go, visit <https://www.azgfd.com/fishing-2/>. ■

## AZGFD Partnership Project Restores Arizona's Wetlands

### New ponds will support imperiled native amphibians and other species

SPRINGERVILLE— A large habitat restoration project will provide new and improved wetlands for the federally-protected Chiricahua leopard frogs in Arizona Game and Fish's White Mountain Grasslands Wildlife Area - bringing much-needed surface water for native wildlife amid the ongoing drought.

The project was possible through a partnership between the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), the Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy (ARC) and Wetland Restoration and Training, LLC, with assistance from a group of dedicated volunteers and crews from the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management and the U.S. Forest Service.

For two weeks in May, the team worked together to deepen and add aquatic-safe liners to six pond sites within the wildlife area, which will prevent seepage and keep water on the surface longer to aid in the recovery of the imperiled amphibian species.

Chiricahua leopard frogs are a native species to Arizona that are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The White Mountain Grasslands Wildlife Area has supported a small population of the threatened frogs since 2021.

Drought is an ongoing threat for



Chiricahua leopard frogs because they require permanent water sources on the landscape, like springs, streams, ponds and stock tanks, to thrive. Other threats to the species include disease and competition from invasive species.

"Having six ponds in close proximity to each other provides habitat redundancy for the frogs. During drought, one or more of the ponds can dry without the whole population disappearing," said Ian Latella, AZGFD ranid frogs project coordinator.

Crews help unroll an aquatic safe liner at the bottom of a reconstructed pond.

Maintaining and restoring aquatic habitats is the best tool to combat the continuing drought. Although these projects may be identified for one species, like the Chiricahua leopard frog, increasing water availability and permanency benefits all wildlife.

"Don't let the size or relatively simple appearance of the wetlands here fool you; they're biodiversity hotspots," said Becca Cozad, ARC Southwestern Program Coordinator. "Every pond we re-



store increases the odds that these species will survive into the future."

AZGFD have focused efforts towards restoration of springs, ponds, and cattle tanks & protection of habitat to mitigate effects of drought since 2007.

Since 2007, AZGFD and partners have enhanced, protected, or restored habitat at 48 sites throughout the range of Chiricahua leopard frogs in Arizona.

The White Mountain Grasslands Wildlife Area is managed by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and includes plains grassland habitat on gently rolling hills, knolls and flat terrain.

Five of the improved ponds will be filled naturally from precipitation, and one will be connected to a nearby well to ensure a year-round water supply. Once

the ponds are sufficiently filled, Chiricahua leopard frogs will be translocated to the wildlife area to bolster the local population. AZGFD did 12 leopard frog salvages in response to the drought in 2025, moving over 3,700 frogs to more resilient sites.

"Chiricahua leopard frogs are unique to the desert Southwest and are an important part of our state's natural heritage," said Audrey Owens, amphibians and reptiles program manager for the Arizona Game and Fish Department. "Projects like this, where we partner with other organizations to restore aquatic habitat, are critical for recovery of the leopard frog, but also improve habitat for all species that rely on water across the landscape." ■

VOLUME 21 | ISSUE 6

WESTERN

JUNE 2026

# OUTDOOR TIMES

A PUBLICATION OF ARIZONA BOATING & WATERSPORTS



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Outdoor enthusiasts frequent Bartlett Lake for a variety of recreational opportunities, including shoreline camping in Arizona's natural desert terrain. While in this part of the Tonto National Forest, visitors may see mule deer, bald eagles, javelina, coyotes, and many indigenous desert plants, including the majestic saguaro, mesquite trees, and blooming ocotillo.



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