

Mom Who Vanished on Hike After Leaving Purse and Keys Behind Is Found Dead 7 Months Later

"She will be missed but she is not forgotten," her son wrote on social media, adding, "I miss you every day"

By [KC Baker](#)

Published on November 29, 2024 03:59PM EST

A hiker who went missing in Arizona's White Tank Mountains in April has been found dead seven months later, though her cause of death is not yet clear, authorities said.

On Sunday, Nov. 24, the body of Amber Barnett was located in White Tank Mountain Regional Park near Waddell, Sgt. Calbert Gillett of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office confirmed to PEOPLE.

"A cause of death has not yet been determined," Gillett wrote in an email.

Barnett was first reported missing by her family after failing to return from a hike on the Mesquite Trail in Waddell.

Deputies had been dispatched to the area on Sunday for "possible human remains reported by a hiker," according to an initial statement from the sheriff's office.

"When deputies arrived, they were able to locate the human remains," authorities said then,

adding, "Homicide unit detectives are investigating."

On Tuesday, Nov. 26, Barnett's son Anthony Merlina paid tribute to her in a post on Facebook.

"My wonderful mother has gone to be with the Lord," Merlina wrote. "She was found in the white tanks mountain doing what she loved to do seeking the Lord."

"I am forever grateful for the example she showed me," he continued. "She lived her life for Jesus and set herself apart to intercede and pray for others. She will be missed but she is not forgotten. Thank you momma. I miss you every day."

A missing person's flyer had stated that Barnett was last seen on April 1 in Phoenix.

An updated missing persons flyer clarified that she was "last known to be hiking in the **White Tank Mountains** on Tuesday, 4/2/2024. Her car was found in Lot 7 at the west end of Ramada Way. Her keys and purse were found in her car."

Human Remains Found In Arizona Mountains

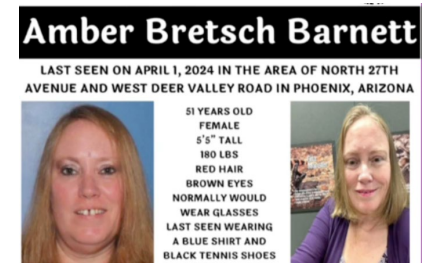
Published Nov 29, 2024 at 8:47 AM EST
Newsweek

A hiker missing in beautiful canyon country since April has been found dead near a trail in Arizona.

The body of 52-year-old Amber Bretsch Barnett was discovered

in the White Tank Mountains near Waddell and was identified by police and a medical examiner.

The Missing in Arizona group updated its [Facebook](#) page on Thursday to announce the tragedy. "Amber's remains were found off a hiking trail in the White Tank Mountains. We are grateful her family can bring her home and lay her to rest. Keeping them close in our hearts," it said.



A missing person's poster for Amber Bretsch Barnett issued by the Sky Alert Foundation For The Missing. The poster identified her last known position before it was established that she had gone hiking in White Tank... Sky Alert Foundation For The Missing

Barnett was a deeply religious woman who had a strong attachment to the park, as did her late husband, Donald. When he died in January, she organized a memorial service for him at the White Tank Mountains Nature Center.

According to the Facebook group's social media alert last April, Barnett's silver Kia Rio car was found at the park on April 4. Her keys, debit card and cellphone were still inside the unlocked car.

Sergeant Calbert Gillett of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, said in a statement that Barnett had been a missing person case since April 2, 2024. Her family had raised the alarm that day after she failed to return from her hike on the Mesquite Trail, which is about 35 miles northwest of Phoenix.

Newsweek sought further comment from the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office via email on Friday.

The Mesquite Canyon Loop trail is around eight miles long and described in by the Hiking Project as: "The perfect hike for someone looking for well-maintained trails, moderate elevation change, and rewarding views ... it offers an out-and-back loop that traverses canyons, crosses dry creek beds, winds around desert mountains and overlooks the western Phoenix area."

The park had offered free entry to anyone who was searching for Barnett up to April 26.

She was described at 5 ft 5 inches tall and 180 pounds, with red hair and brown eyes.

According to the Maricopa County Parks and Recreations website, the **White Tank Mountain Regional Park** has nearly 30,000 acres and is the largest national park in Maricopa County.

The deaths of hikers remains a problem in the U.S.

According to the National Park Service statistics, an average of 358 a year died in national parks in the six years between 2014

and 2019, an average of 7 deaths a week.

However, it said that In 2019, the NPS mortality rate was 0.11 death per 100,000 recreational visits, which it said was "very low when compared to the 715 deaths per 100,000 people rate of the overall U.S. population."

State parks, such as White Tank Mountains, are not included in the NPS statistics.

Best Things to Do for Adults and Kids in Mesa, Arizona

By Matthew Lynch
November 26, 2024
TheTechEdvocate.org



For Adults:

Mesa Arts Center: Largest arts center in Arizona with theaters and art galleries.

Goldfield Ghost Town: Restored 1890s gold mining town with tours and attractions.

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

Hiking and mountain biking trails with desert views.

Mesa Farmers Market and Flea: Local produce and artisan goods (seasonal).

Downtown Mesa: Historic district with shops, restaurants, and breweries.

For Kids:

Arizona Museum of Natural History: Dinosaur exhibits and prehistoric artifacts.

Golfand Sunsplash: Water park and miniature golf complex.

i.d.e.a. Museum: Interactive art and science exhibits for children.

Riverview Park: Playground with climbing tower and splash pad.

Mesa Amphitheatre: Outdoor venue for family-friendly concerts and events.

For Both:

Mesa Grande Cultural Park: Ancient Hohokam ceremonial mound and museum.

Superstition Mountains: Scenic hiking and legendary lost gold mine.

Organ Stop Pizza: Unique restaurant featuring the world's largest Wurlitzer organ.

Salt River Tubing: Relaxing float down the Salt River (seasonal).

Mesa Temple Gardens: Beautiful gardens surrounding the Mesa Arizona Temple.

Body found by police in White Tank Mountain Regional Park near Waddell

Sasha Hupka, Arizona Republic
November 27, 2024

Detectives were investigating after human remains were found at **White Tank Mountain Regional Park** near Waddell over the weekend.

Joaquin Enriquez, a spokesperson for the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, said his agency had turned the case over to the Phoenix Police

Department, which was leading the inquiry.

Brian Bower, a spokesperson for the department, said the medical examiner was working to complete a report on the remains. He said the identity of the deceased person remains unclear, and no further information was available.

The Phoenix Police Department did not immediately respond to a records request by The Arizona Republic for 911 audio and other documents.

The Can't-Miss Arizona Hike for Every Nature Lover's Bucket List

This iconic hike in Arizona leads you through Utery Mountain Regional Park and up to a summit with stunning panoramic views.

Written by Jackie Sutherland, OnlyInYourState.com
November 24, 2024

What trails come to mind when you think of iconic Arizona hikes? The hike to Shoshone Point is certainly up there, along with the Broken Arrow Trail in Sedona, and maybe even the Instagram-worthy views from Devil's Bridge.

If you're in the Mesa area, the Utery Mountain Regional Park is a must for hikers. This 3,648-acre park in Mesa, Arizona, is full of hiking trails of varying difficulties that are perfect for nature lovers. One of the most popular hikes in this park is the Wind Cave Trail, and it's one of

those iconic Arizona hikes you just can't pass up.

Before we get to the hike, it's important to point out that **Utery Mountain Regional Park** does charge an entrance fee. Visit the Maricopa County Parks website to see the park fees and the park's hours.

The Wind Cave Trail is a 3.2-mile out-and-back trail in Utery Mountain Regional Park. It's relatively easy for the most part, but there is a 1,043-foot elevation gain to reach the cave. If you want to keep going further up, you're looking at a bit more scrambling and more elevation gain.

It's a perfect trail for nature lovers. You'll be surrounded by Saguaro cacti, Palo Verde trees, barrel cacti, and more. Plus, there is plenty of wildlife that call this area home, including cliff chipmunks! Keep your eyes peeled and you may even catch a glimpse of a hawk soaring around the granite cliffs.

Remains found at White Tank Mountain Regional park

The remains have been identified as Amber Barnett, according to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.
12 News
Updated: 7:17 PM MST
November 28, 2024

GLENDALE, Ariz. — Remains found over the weekend in the West Valley have been identified as Amber Barnett by the medical examiner's office,

according to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

Barnett's remains were discovered on Nov. 24 at White Tank Mountain Regional park.

A hiker at the park reported finding possible human remains and contacted the sheriff's office. Deputies responded and located the remains.

The agency's homicide unit is now investigating. No further details have been released by MCSO.

Human remains found at White Tank Mountain Regional Park identified

By: abc15.com staff
Posted 3:27 PM, Nov 25, 2024
and last updated 6:54 PM, Nov 28, 2024

WADDELL, AZ — Homicide detectives are investigating human remains that were discovered at the **White Tank Mountain Regional Park**.

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office says just before 1:30 p.m. Sunday, a hiker alerted them to an area where human remains were discovered.

Detectives arrived at the scene and located the remains.

The remains have since been identified by MCSO as a missing person, Amber Barnett.

The Medical Examiner's Office is working to confirm the cause of death.

ABC15 has reached out to the Phoenix Police Department for additional details on the missing person's case regarding Barnett.

Human remains found in White Tank Mountain Regional Park

By Jessica Johnson
Updated November 27, 2024
8:41pm MST
FOX 10 Phoenix

MARICOPA COUNTY, Ariz. - Human remains were found by a hiker in **White Tank Mountain Regional Park** on Sunday, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office said.

The discovery was reported by the hiker around 1:30 p.m. on Nov. 24. The park is in Waddell, which is west of Phoenix.

"When deputies arrived, they were able to locate the human remains. MCSO Homicide unit detectives are investigating. This is all the information available for release at this time," the sheriff's office said on Nov. 25.

On Nov. 27, the remains were identified as Amber Barnett, 52.

Mattamy Homes opens new community in Surprise, AZ

PR Newswire |
Yahoofinance.com
November 18, 2024 2 min read

Stylish and innovative new single-family home designs make their debut in Phoenix's West Valley with a successful grand opening celebration that promises quick sales

PHOENIX, Nov. 18, 2024 /PRNewswire/ - Mattamy Homes, North America's largest privately owned homebuilder known for creating high-quality lifestyle communities, is excited to share the opening of Tierra Vistoso in highly desirable Surprise, Arizona.

Tierra Vistoso, which offers desert serenity in addition to excellent access to the best of the Phoenix area, showcases nine diverse and creative floorplans in The Sapphire and The Ruby collections. With square footages ranging from 1,837 to 2,878, the new single-family homes are priced from the mid-\$400,000s.

The collections, which make their debut in the West Valley, include Mattamy's signature open-concept floorplan, private owner's suites, large covered back patios, flex rooms and three-car garages.

The vibrant community includes a variety of family-friendly amenities. In addition to the inspiring natural beauty of the surrounding Sonoran Desert, homeowners can enjoy thoughtful open spaces, park areas with play structures and open turf, and shaded ramadas with BBQ grills.

"The Phoenix area is the place to be, and Tierra Vistoso opens a prime opportunity to purchase a new home in a place that has something for everyone and in such a spectacular setting," said Don Barrineau, President of Mattamy's Phoenix Division. "Just based on the great crowds we saw at the community's grand opening event, we know that the new homes in this location, and particularly in Surprise, will sell quickly."

In Surprise, Tierra Vistoso is situated comfortably between an outdoors enthusiast's paradise of recreational and leisure opportunities and the Phoenix area's dining, cultural, historical, educational, shopping and social vitality.

The community is a 10-minute drive from Phoenix-Wickenburg Highway (U.S. Route 60) and the Trilby Trailhead ingress to the Maricopa Trail. Wending through the heart of the valley, the sprawling 315-acre trail is a haven for hikers, cyclists and equestrians. **White Tank Mountain Regional Park** is less than 20 miles from home, and a host of golf courses are nearby.

Everyday conveniences, such as grocery stores, fitness facilities and municipal parks, health care services, marquee retailers and popular restaurants, are virtually around the corner. For commuters, U.S. Route 60 and Loop 303 offer an easy connection to leading employers.

About Mattamy Homes
Mattamy Homes is the largest privately owned homebuilder in North America, with 45 years of history across the United States

and Canada. Every year, Mattamy helps more than 8,000 families realize their dream of homeownership. In the United States, the company is represented in 11 markets – Dallas, Charlotte, Raleigh, Phoenix, Tucson, Jacksonville, Orlando (where its US head office is located), Tampa, Sarasota, Naples and Southeast Florida. In Canada, its communities stretch across the Greater Toronto Area, Ottawa, Calgary and Edmonton. Visit www.mattamyhomes.com for more information.

Maricopa County Celebrates National Take a Hike Day

Signals.com
By Staff
on November 13, 2024

National Take a Hike Day, celebrated on November 17, 2024, is a perfect opportunity to reconnect with Maricopa County's regional parks. Not only does this day serve as a reminder of the benefits of hiking for physical health and mental well-being, but it also helps you rack up miles towards the 100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge.



"Hiking offers us a chance to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of our natural Sonoran Desert landscapes," said Jack Sellers, Chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, District 1. "From Lake Pleasant Regional Park to San Tan Mountain Regional Park, Maricopa County is lucky to have so many beautiful regional parks to explore and relax in. So, join me in getting outside and taking a hike!"

"National Take A Hike Day is the perfect time to reconnect with nature. Between **Maricopa County's regional parks** and the Maricopa Trail, we offer more than 615 miles of trails for hiking, trail running, mountain biking, and horseback riding. After months of telling park visitors to hike during the early morning or evening hours to avoid the heat, we can now say, take a hike!" said Jennifer Waller, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Director.

Whether you're a seasoned hiker or a beginner, Maricopa County's regional park system offers trails suited for every skill level, ensuring everyone can participate in this invigorating activity. As you plan your trek, consider gathering friends or family members to make the experience more enjoyable.

On this day, it's important to remember the principles of Leave No Trace, which encourage hikers to respect the environment by minimizing their impact. Simple actions like staying on marked trails, packing out trash, and respecting leaving the parks as

you found them go a long way in preserving the beauty of nature for future generations.

Below are a couple of tips to help you prepare for your outing.

Be sure to ALWAYS:

- Stay on designated trails.
- Tell someone where you are hiking and when you expect to return.
- Carry plenty of water for your entire hike. Remember to bring water for your dog.
- Turn around and return to the trailhead when your water is half gone.
- Carry a cell phone.
- Don't hike alone.
- Wear appropriate footwear and clothing for hiking.
- Use maps, and know where you are going and what kind of terrain you are hiking on.

So, lace up your hiking boots, pack some snacks and water, and prepare for a trek that will refresh your body and help clear your mind. Whether you conquer a challenging trail or stroll along a canal bank of the Maricopa Trail, you'll celebrate the solitude and freedom hiking brings.

In recognition of National Take a Hike Day, the \$7 per vehicle day-use entry fee will be waived at all Maricopa County regional parks on Sunday, November 17, 2024. All other fees apply. To find a regional park near you, visit <https://www.maricopa.gov/parks>.

Discover the wonders of the

Sonoran Desert at Desert Discovery Day Nov. 16

CITYSunTimes
Published on Nov 8, 2024

Embark on a journey through the heart of the Sonoran Desert at the annual Desert Discovery Day, a free family event hosted by Desert Foothills Land Trust. Set against the breathtaking backdrop of Jewel of the Creek Preserve, this immersive experience will take place on Saturday, Nov. 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Desert Discovery Day invites nature enthusiasts of all ages to explore the unique Sonoran Desert ecosystem. Whether you're a curious kid or a seasoned naturalist, there's something for everyone at this free event. Get your hands dirty with interactive learning experiences, come face-to-face with the desert's wild residents and uncover the secrets of desert conservation.

Whether you're a lifetime desert dweller or a first-time visitor, this event offers a rare glimpse into the complex ecosystem that thrives in our backyard. You'll walk away with a newfound appreciation for the resilience and beauty of our desert home.

"Desert Discovery Day is more than just an event; it's a celebration of our desert," said Vicki Preston, president and CEO of Desert Foothills Land Trust. "Desert Discovery Day reflects our ongoing dedication to land conservation and

commitment to connecting people to nature. We're thrilled to offer families and individuals the chance to forge deeper connections with nature, and each other, while exploring the wonders of our unique Sonoran Desert."

As attendees traverse the scenic Jewel of the Creek Preserve, they'll be guided by discovery maps, unlocking the secrets of the desert at every turn. The event features a wide variety of experiences, including up-close encounters with native wildlife and engaging exhibits that bring local history and ecology to life. Interactive displays and hands-on activities cater to curious minds of all ages, ensuring that everyone from seasoned nature enthusiasts to first-time desert explorers will find something to captivate their imagination.

Desert Discovery Day is made possible through the support of the Kiwanis Club of Carefree, the town of Cave Creek, and the participation of local community organizations. The partners include: the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Carefree Physical Therapy, the Cave Creek Museum, Daisy Mountain Fire Department, Desert Awareness Committee, **Maricopa County Parks and Recreation**, and Wild at Heart Raptors. Each organization brings its unique perspective and expertise, enriching the event with diverse insights into desert life and conservation.

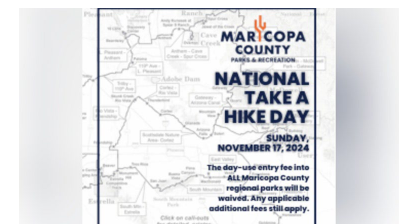
Desert Discovery Day promises an unforgettable experience for everyone, offering a unique blend of education, exploration and family fun. This event

exemplifies the Desert Foothills Land Trust's commitment to connecting people with nature and fostering a sense of stewardship for the Sonoran Desert, according to the organization.

Don't miss this opportunity to immerse yourself in the wonders of the desert, learn about vital conservation efforts, and create lasting memories with your family and community. For more information and event details, visit dflt.org.

Maricopa County Invites Residents to Celebrate National Take A Hike Day with Free Entry to Regional Parks

By Taylor Johnson
Published on November 08, 2024
Hoodline.com



Source: Maricopa County
Maricopa County is preparing to celebrate National Take A Hike Day on November 17, encouraging residents to explore its extensive park system. The event offers a chance to enjoy the county's diverse landscapes, including the Sonoran Desert and regional parks like Lake Pleasant and San Tan Mountain. Jack Sellers,

Chairman of the [Maricopa County](#) Board of Supervisors, emphasized the benefits of hiking, saying, "Hiking offers us a chance to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of our natural Sonoran Desert landscapes."

Jennifer Waller, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Director, welcomed cooler temperatures that make hiking more comfortable. "After months of telling park visitors to hike during the early morning or evening hours to avoid the heat, we can now say, take a hike!" she said. With over 615 miles of trails for hiking, running, biking, and horseback riding, visitors are encouraged to explore the outdoors and join the 100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge, according to the [Maricopa County](#).

[Maricopa County](#) offers trails for all skill levels on National Take A Hike Day, with a focus on physical activity and environmental care. Hikers should stay on marked trails, clean up after themselves, and follow Leave No Trace principles. It's important to inform someone of your plans, carry enough water, wear proper footwear, and not hike alone. A cell phone and map are also recommended. The county will waive the \$7 vehicle day-use entry fee at regional parks, though other fees may apply. For more information, visit the county's parks website.

Events For Prescott Valley and Beyond: November 8, 9, & 10

By Joseph Rollins
on November 07, 2024
[Signalsaz.com](#)

Clay Mine Hike and Tour – Cave Creek



Join Ranger Kevin for a hike and mine tour that offers a fascinating glimpse into Arizona's past. Click the program title for more details.

We'll be hiking roughly 1.8 miles round trip to the Clay Mine, site of a fortune made not of gold but of snake oil. The program features a tour of the mine itself. If you've never been to the mine at night, you're in for an extra special treat! Please wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes and bring water and a flashlight. Restrooms are available at the Nature Center. Please do not bring pets.

MEETING LOCATION: Nature Center

There are a maximum of 20 participants. To register, please call the Nature Center at 602-506-2930 ext. 8 with your name, phone number, and the number of people attending. If you cannot attend a program after you have registered, please call the Nature Center ASAP so we may contact those on the waiting list.

Registration for this program will close on 11/06.

Cave Creek Regional Park
37019 N Lava Ln
Cave Creek Arizona 85331
United States

Discovery Station: Recycling Rocks!

[Signalsaz.com](#)
November 7, 2024

Join Ranger Kevin at the **Cave Creek Regional Park** on National Recycling Day to learn how to properly recycle, and why it is so important!

This is a casual drop-in program that will provide some guidance on how to recycle, how to teach others about recycling, and how important recycling is not only on a personal level but also on a global level!

Come with any questions or concerns you might have and be ready to discover how small acts can have big impacts.

MEETING LOCATION: Nature Center

No registration is required, drop by anytime between 10 pm-2 pm!

National Take a Hike Day Hike!

[Signals.com](#)
November 7, 2024

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area
44000 N Spur Cross Rd
Cave Creek Arizona 85331
9:00 am-10:30 am

Join Ranger Olivia on National Take a Hike Day for a hike at **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area** which will explore the beautiful environment around us.

This hike will be about 2 miles long on mostly flat terrain with occasionally uneven surfaces. This easy-rated hike also comes with beautiful views of our conservation area and the possibility of seeing some wildlife! Please wear close-toed shoes and bring plenty of water. There will be restrooms at the trailhead.

Limit 15 participants. To register, please call the Nature Center at (602) 506-2930 ext. 8 with your name, phone number and number of people attending. If you find you cannot attend a program after you have registered, please call the Nature Center ASAP so we may contact those on the waiting list. Registration for this program will close on 11/15/24.

National Take a Hike Day is celebrated each year on November 17 in recognition of the National Trails System Act of 1968. This Act designated a series of scenic, historic, and recreation trails in both backcountry and urban areas to provide outdoor opportunities for the public. Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department encourages you to connect with nature on a ranger-led hike, on this day or any day, to explore and learn about our beautiful Sonoran Desert. To ensure everyone can enjoy this nationally recognized day, the regular day-use entry fee for all of Maricopa County's regional parks will be waived on November 17.

National Take a Hike Day hikes are happening across Maricopa County parks. Visit the Maricopa County Parks and Rec website for information.

Police identify four of five who died after Mesa plane crash near Falcon Field

Aerial footage showed the plane on fire near a road, along with a damaged car

By: abc15.com staff

Posted 4:53 PM, Nov 05, 2024

and last updated 3:11 PM, Nov 06, 2024

MESA, AZ – Mesa officials say five people have died after a plane crash near Falcon Field on Tuesday afternoon in Mesa.

Police say the crash happened near Greenfield and McKellips roads.

Aerial footage showed the plane of fire and at least one damaged vehicle that was involved.

On Wednesday morning, Mesa police released the names of the four people on the plane that died in the crash.

They were identified as 43-year-old Spencer Lindahl, 48-year-old Rustin Randall, 44-year-old Drew Kimball, 12-year-old Graham Kimball.

The flight-tracking website, FlightRadar24, showed the flight was on its way to Provo when it crashed.

ABC15 viewer Terri Fairfield was hiking at **Usery Mountain Regional Park** when she saw the smoke minutes after the crash.



The driver of the vehicle who also died has not yet been identified.

It is not yet known what led up to the crash.

The NTSB is now investigating the crash.

“Your favourite runner’s favourite runner” – FANTASTIC footage as David Roche earns Golden Ticket for Western States

Jonathan Turner, News Director
Published on 1 November 2024
Run247.com

David Roche is renowned in trail running circles as pretty much the greatest coach out there.

It's easier to compile a list of the top athletes he hasn't coached rather than those he has.

Barkley Marathons legend John Kelly is just one of the many to benefit from Roche's expertise.

But until this year there was just one thing missing from Roche's resume – if indeed that mattered – and that was running a 100-mile race himself.

Record breaker

He's helped so many to excel at the distance but his own bow didn't come until August and what a debut that was.

For he rewrote the record books with an amazing performance at the Leadville 100, eclipsing what had long been thought of as an unbeatable mark – Matt Carpenter's 15 hours, 42 minutes and 59 seconds which had stood since 2005.

And just a couple of months on he lined up for his second – the Javelina Jundred at the end of October.

Again the result was mind-blowing and there's now some stunning footage of him in action thanks to the Freetrail YouTube channel and Ryan Thrower's beautiful camerawork. It's embedded below for you to enjoy.

Watch out for the aid station refuel too – and especially David taking time to turn around before heading back out in order to fist-bump his young son!

'I'm in it to win it'

While watching him seemingly glide through the desert course at **McDowell Mountain Regional Park**, remind yourself the

temperature was pushing very close to 100°F, a new high for the event.

Despite the searing heat he would go on to finish in 12 hours, 45 minutes, and four seconds, nearly 10 minutes ahead of the rest and within two minutes of another course record.

Indeed the heat prep was what made the performance even more special – see the X post below for lots more detail.

It was another masterclass so watch out for him at Western States next year – "I'm in it to win it" he says!



David Roche in action at the Javelina Jundred [Photo credit: Aravaipa Running]

Discovery Station: Meet the Critters

Signals.com
October 30, 2024

Join Ranger Olivia to meet some of the animal ambassadors who reside at Usery's Nature Center! This is a casual drop-in program that allows you to meet some of the animals at Usery, such as snakes, scorpions, tarantulas, and even a tortoise! You will get to ask questions, learn new things, and possibly even touch a snake.

MEETING LOCATION: Nature Center

No registration is required; drop by anytime between 12 pm-2 pm!

November 9, 2024, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Venue: **Usery Mountain Regional Park**
Address: 3939 N Usery Pass Rd
Mesa Arizona 85207
United States
Time: 12:00 pm-2:00 pm
Phone: 602-506-2930 ext 4

Clay Mine Hike and Tour – Moonlight Edition

Signalsaz.com
October 30, 2024

Join Ranger Kevin for a hike and mine tour that offers a fascinating glimpse into Arizona's past. Click the program title for more details.

We'll be hiking roughly 1.8 miles round trip to the Clay Mine, site of a fortune made not of gold but of snake oil. The program features a tour of the mine itself. If you've never been to the mine at night, you're in for an extra special treat! Please wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes and bring water and a flashlight. Restrooms are available at the Nature Center. Please do not bring pets.

MEETING LOCATION: Nature Center
There are a maximum of 20 participants. To register, please call the Nature Center at 602-506-2930 ext. 8 with your name, phone number, and the number of people attending. If you cannot attend a program after you have registered, please call

the Nature Center ASAP so we may contact those on the waiting list. Registration for this program will close on 11/06.

November 8, 2024, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Cave Creek Regional Park

Address: 37019 N Lava Ln
Cave Creek Arizona 85331
Phone: 602-506-2930 ext 8

"This dude is an absolute machine" – 99°F heat no match for ultra runner David Roche, who snatches victory at Javelina Jundred

By Julia Clarke
last updated October 30, 2024

The Boulder-based runner is quickly cementing his place as one of the best ultra runners in the world right now

Itra runner David Roche got back on the course this weekend to prove that his Leadville 100 win was no fluke. The runner snatched victory at The Javelina Jundred yesterday, just two months after smashing the long-running Leadville 100 race by more than 15 minutes in August.

The Boulder-based runner took gold in the 100-mile trail race in Arizona's **McDowell Mountain Regional Park** despite record temperatures – the forecast saw highs of 99°F on Saturday – finishing in just 12:45:04.

"This dude is an absolute machine. His cadence never wavered the entire last 20 miles," writes crew member Joe Shea on Instagram, who is part of the Aravaipa Rides race team.

This Week In Running: October 28, 2024

This Week in Running's trail and ultra recap for October 28, 2024. By Justin Mock on October 28, 2024

IrunFar.com

There were costumes in Arizona, championships in South Korea, and an Olympic bronze medalist racing trails in Ohio. Our Halloween bucket is already overflowing.

You can also check out our greater race coverage from earlier this past week: Asia Pacific Trail Running Championships – Ulju, South Korea

The inaugural championships included Short Trail and Long Trail races in the Yeongnam Alps, with runners from 19 different countries. The biennial event next happens in 2026.

Short Trail

Running on a rocky 41-kilometer course with 2,783 meters of elevation gain across two major climbs, Takako Takamura (Japan) led all of it to earn individual gold in 4:36. Priya Rai (Nepal) was second in 4:41 and Honoka Akiyama (Japan) was third in 4:53.

Men's winner John Ray Onifa (Philippines) gained his lead on the technical descent from the course high point. Onifa then held off a late race challenge to win in 3:47. Koken Ogasawara (Japan) was second in 3:49 and Blake Turner (Australia) won a sprint to finish third in 4:00.

Long Trail

A day later runners tackled a 76k course with 4,870 meters of elevation gain. That's 47 miles and nearly 16,000 feet of climbing.

Fu-Zhao Xiang (China) overtook Ha Thi Hau (Vietnam) with 30k to go and cruised to victory in 8:26. Hau was second in 8:36, and Yuri Yoshizumi (Japan) was third in 8:57.

Men's winner Min Qi (China) grabbed the lead 50k into the race and barely held off fast-closing Kai Hiroki (Japan) at the end. Qi ran 7:37 and Hiroki 7:40. Mikey Dimuantas (Australia) was third in 7:44.

Javelina 100 Mile – Fountain Hills, Arizona

The Halloween-themed 100-mile run went on a five-loop course through the **McDowell Mountain Regional Park**. The race was again a Western States 100 Golden Ticket contest with the top two women and men each earning automatic entry to the June 2025 Western States 100.

Women

Barely an hour separated the first five women, and it was a day of historically fast finishes. Riley Brady won the race in 14:19, and it was the race's second-fastest finish ever. Brady ran 14:45 in 2022 and

15:29 in 2023 too, when finishing second and third. Brady identifies as non-binary, but competes in the women's race.

Hannah Allgood ran 14:38 for second and, like Brady, also accepted the Western States 100 Golden Ticket. Allgood's time ranks fifth-best ever at Javelina.

Third-place Lauren Puretz finished in 15:00, just two minutes in front of Erin Clark. Puretz and Clark's times are the race's ninth-and 10th-best ever.

The top five was:

- 1 – Riley Brady – 14:19
- 2 – Hannah Allgood – 14:38
- 3 – Lauren Puretz – 15:00
- 4 – Erin Clark – 15:02
- 5 – Corinne Shalvoy – 15:24

Men

David Roche moved to 2-0 for the 100-mile distance. Barely two months after resetting the longstanding Leadville 100 Mile course record, Roche won again and just missed the Javelina course record. His 12:45 winning time was only two minutes off Jon Rea's 2023 record.

Second-place Jeff Mogavero ran 12:54, the race's third-fastest finish ever. Mogavero, as with Roche, accepted his Golden Ticket entry to the Western States 100. The 2023 fourth-placer Dan Green moved up one spot. He was third in 12:58, and that was the race's sixth-best run ever.

The men's top five was:

- 1 – David Roche – 12:45
- 2 – Jeff Mogavero – 12:54

- 3 – Dan Green – 12:58
- 4 – Rajpaul Pannu – 13:16
- 5 – Blake Slattengren – 14:03

2 Peaks SkyRace – Ulju County, South Korea

It was the year's 17th Skyrunner World Series race and Anastasia Rubtsova (Russia) has now won five of those races. At the same venue as the Asia Pacific Trail Running Championships, Rubtsova mastered the 26k trail and its 2,080 meters of gain in 3:24. Irina Rachinskaia (Russia) and Veronika Leng (Slovakia) in 3:42 and 3:46, respectively.

Gianluca Ghiano (Italy) scored the men's win in 2:53, just over a minute better than second-place Ruy Ueda (Japan). Lorenzo Beltrami (Italy) was third in 3:05.

Sobrescobio Skyrace – Rioseco, Spain

A day after the 2 Peaks SkyRace in South Korea, there was another Skyrunner World Series race in Spain. This one went 32k with 2,100 meters of climbing along Redes National Park. Already technical, rain and strong winds added to the course challenge.

Lucille Germain (France) ruled the women's race in 3:25. Spanish runners Oihana Kortazar and Júlia Font were second and third in 3:37 and 3:38, respectively.

Men's winner Luca Del Pero (Italy) set a new course record and outdueled Manuel Merillas (Spain) late. Del Pero ran 2:49 and Merillas was second in 2:50, 37 seconds later than Del Pero. Antonio Martínez (Spain) was third in 2:56.

Additional Races and Runs Snowman Race – Bumthang, Bhutan

The 115-mile (186k), five-day stage race concluded today local time, after starting on Thursday, October 24. Sixteen participants traveled on the famous Snowman Trek in the Bhutanese Himalayas, reaching as high as over 17,900 feet (5,400 meters) to bring awareness to climate change there and worldwide. Germany's Rosanna Buchauer won the women's race in 31:58:02 and Bhutan's Sangay Wangchuk won the men's race in 28:31:14.

Javelina 100k – Fountain Hills, Arizona

The little sister to the Javelina 100 Mile saw women take three of the top four overall finish spots. Anne Flower won in 8:23 ahead of Jane Maus's 8:32, and Jordan Brett was the first man in 8:39.

Canyonlands Ultra – Moab, Utah

The Mad Moose Events race marked its second year with a string of new distances. Thirty-eight runners finished the 100k, led by Charlotte Cadow and Jonathan Kuplack in 11:49 and 8:58. Kristen Little and Grant Roper won the 50 miler in 9:44 and 7:36.

Door County Fall 50 Mile – Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

Elizabeth Cinquegrani and Jordan Janusiak rolled the point-to-point course in 7:04 and 6:04.

Chippewa Creek Half Marathon – Brecksville, Ohio

Sarah Jane Kerwin won the women's race in 1:31 and 2016

Olympic 800-meter bronze medalist Clayton Murphy led the men in 1:28.

Mammoth Cave 50k – Mammoth Cave, Kentucky

The fourth annual race is out and back on the Bike & Hike Trail inside the national park. Belle Thomas and Anthony Groft were victorious in 4:51 and 3:44.

No Business 100 Mile – Jamestown, Tennessee

The loop course crosses into and out of Kentucky while traversing the Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area. Amy Holpuch conquered the course and the women’s crown in 23:53 and David Sullivan led the men in 22:09.

Marine Corps Marathon 50k – Arlington, Virginia

Anna Staats and Calum Neff won the road ultra in 3:44 and 2:56. Triple Lakes Trail Race – Greensboro, North Carolina

Avery Mathias and Devon Softic won the 40 miler inside Bur-Mil Park in 6:43 and 6:37. Only six minute separated the first four overall 40-mile finishers.

Call for Comments

Here for the boos! What else is brewing?

Gate Fire stopped at 75 acres near north Scottsdale homes

Story by Ben Bradley, David Baker
October 27, 2024

MSN.com

SCOTTSDALE, AZ (AZFamily)— Firefighters stopped a fast-moving brush fire that threatened a neighborhood in far north Scottsdale on Thursday.

The flames from the Gate Fire, previously named the Sand Hills Fire, came within feet of homes in the area of 128th Street and Ranch Gate Road, near the Tom’s Thumb Trailhead.

One firefighter was treated for heat exhaustion, but no other injuries have been reported so far.

On Friday morning, Arizona Forestry and Fire Management took command of the blaze and stopped it at 75 acres. On Friday evening, firefighters achieved 100% containment.

Four large air tankers were ordered to help slow the fire’s spread and assist crews on the ground.

Just after 6 p.m. Thursday, Scottsdale police opened the roads and allowed drivers into the same neighborhood where the fire started and to streets just to the southeast.

Fire crews then confirmed everyone who was evacuated were back in their homes. Most houses in the area are still under construction, and none have been damaged.

Gates at Fraesfield Trailhead are now open, but Tom’s Thumb Trailhead and neighborhood access gates to the Gooseneck area trails remain closed.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park is also temporarily closed.

The Gate Fire broke out shortly before 2 p.m. after someone called 911 to report debris was on fire behind a home.

Winds helped push the fire to the northeast, which threatened some homes in the neighborhood. All buildings east of Ranch Gate Road and 132nd Street were evacuated for most of the afternoon. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

With a Record November, Mesa Establishes Itself as a Premier Destination for National and Internatio

26 October 2024
BreakingTravelNews.com



Home to some of the nation’s most in-demand sports facilities, Mesa, Arizona will host a record number of events in November, generating substantial economic benefits for the city and its residents.

Throughout the month, a myriad of sports events will bring 20,000 athletes and spectators to Mesa who are projected to

consume over 7,200 hotel room nights and directly spend approximately \$13.8 million. The events are diverse and will bring visitors from across the U.S. and around the world.

Key Events and Economic Contributions:

Oct. 31 - Nov 2: USA Touch Rugby National Championships
The USA Touch Rugby National Championships will take place at Eagles Park in Mesa, drawing over 30 teams and 500 players from across the U.S. and Canada. This event is not ticketed nor open to the public.

Nov 1-3: Triple Crown Fall Showcase

With 500 contracted hotel room nights and 700 estimated attendees, this youth softball tournament held at Red Mountain Softball fields will showcase top young talent from across the country. This event is not ticketed nor open to the public.

Nov. 1-4 & Nov. 7-10: U.S. Youth Soccer National League Quarterfinals

Quarterfinal matches for U.S Youth Soccer National League for U16-19 and U13-15, respectively, will bring a combined 1,900 hotel room nights. The two tournaments are expected to attract approximately 2,900 attendees to the Arizona Athletic Grounds. Tickets will be sold at the gate.

Nov. 6-9: Mesa Community College Thunderbird Basketball Classic

Bringing in teams from across the country, this tournament held at Mesa Community College has contracted 128 hotel room nights. The

basketball classic is estimated to attract 200 attendees and showcases top junior college talent in both men's and women's basketball. Tickets will be sold at the gate.

Nov. 8-10: U.S. Open Netball Championships

Featuring a large international travel base, the U.S. Open Netball Championships held at Arizona Athletic Grounds will consume approximately 685 hotel room nights and can expect over 600 attendees. Tickets will be sold at the gate.

Nov. 9-10: IWLCA (International Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association) Southwest Cup

One of the nation's largest college recruiting events for women's lacrosse, the Southwest Cup has booked 760 hotel room nights in Mesa. Tickets will be sold at the Red Mountain Soccer Complex Expansion and is expected to bring in around 700 athletes/coaches/scouts.

Nov. 9-17: Biofreeze USA Pickleball Nationals

With an impressive 2,400 contracted hotel room nights, Mesa will host up to 3,000 qualified players at Arizona Athletic Grounds, along with an estimated 10,000 spectators in attendance. Tickets will be sold online and at the gate.

Nov. 13-17: World Field Target Shooting Championships

Mesa will be hosting athletes from over 42 countries when this international competition returns to the U.S. for the first time since 2007. Of the 36 U.S. locations considered to host this prestigious event, Mesa secured the bid and will welcome over 300 athletes. This

event is not ticketed nor open to the public.

Nov. 15-17: Turf Wars: Last War

This professional kickball event is expected to feature 50 teams, representing approximately 1,000 attendees. In addition to the main competition, the event will partner with Mikey's League, an adaptive sports organization, for the Limitless Division, which will offer a Friday clinic and spotlight game featuring local adaptive athletes. Turf Wars is also collaborating with Outloud Sports, an LGBTQ+ organization. Tickets will be sold at the gate.

Mesa's facilities such as Red Mountain Soccer Complex, Lehi Sports Park, Sloan Park (Spring Training home of the Chicago Cubs), and Hohokam Stadium (Spring Training home of the Oakland A's) are sought-after venues for organizations hosting local, regional and national events. Additionally, Mesa's world-class family sports complex, Arizona Athletic Grounds, provides athletes with 16 basketball courts, 24 soccer fields, 41 pickleball courts, 50 indoor volleyball courts and more. Beyond the fields, Mesa's proximity to the Tonto National Forest, Salt River and **Usery Mountain Regional Park** opens opportunities for all kinds of outdoor recreation and leisure pursuits.

"Mesa's top-tier facilities and attractions make us one of the nation's leading destinations for hosting elite sporting events," said Lance Fite, Visit Mesa's Vice President, Sports. "As we continue to attract high-caliber national and international

events, our community benefits from the influx of imported visitor dollars and global exposure, which may eventually lead to other, more traditional economic developments. After all, outside investments first start with a visit. The estimated impact of these November events alone is a testament to the growing appeal of Mesa as a world-class sports hub.”

Looking ahead, Mesa will also host the world-famous baseball circus, Savannah Bananas, at Sloan Park to kick-off their 2025 Banana Ball World Tour in early February 2025. Also, Mesa will welcome the return of the Western Athletic Conference Baseball Championships, as well as the Desert Challenge Games, among dozens of other events, between December and Spring 2025.

ADVERTISEMENT

The estimated direct visitor spend figures are based on a combination of contracted hotel room nights, contracted hotel room rates and calculations provided by Destinations International Event Impact Calculator, which utilizes economic impact modeling from Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company. The Event Impact Calculator is utilized by over 300 destinations worldwide.

What’s Up in Ultra This Weekend — October 26

Drew Dinan 10/23/2024
Ultra Running Magazine

The final weekend of October features 59 races on the

UltraRunning Magazine race calendar, including a few great Halloween-themed events and the largest ultramarathon in the United States. In this week’s What’s Up in Ultra, we travel to Arizona, West Virginia, Kentucky and Virginia. Let’s see what’s brewing in those aid station cauldrons.

Javelina Jundred

We kick things off in the Arizona desert for a costumed-themed ultrarunning bash, the Javelina Jundred (100-mile and 100k races). The festive events kick off on Wednesday with a group run and then feature a series of fun runs and parties over the days leading up to the main events. The 100-mile and 100k races take place on a single-track looped course in **McDowell Mountain Regional Park**, featuring rolling hills, a combination of sandy and rocky trails and 1,580 feet of elevation gain per 20-mile loop. The 100-mile runners have 30 hours to complete five loops, while 100k runners have 30 hours to finish three loops. In addition to being one of the most fun and social ultrarunning events you’ll find anywhere, with runners, crews, and volunteers decked out in elaborate costumes, Javelina annually draws some of the sport’s best athletes, with the top two male and female 100-mile finishers earning Golden Tickets to the 2025 Western States 100 Endurance Run.

Rim to River 100

Our next stop takes us to West Virginia’s New River Gorge for the Rim to River 100, the state’s first and only 100-mile trail race. Now in its fifth year, the “wild and wonderful” out-and-back course takes in some of West

Virginia’s best scenery, including scenic vistas, plenty of bridge and creek crossings, flowing rivers and fall colors. Approximately 74 miles of the course takes place within the boundaries of the New River Gorge National River Area, with the full route consisting of 84 miles on trail, 6 miles on dirt and 10 miles on pavement, and a total of 12,000 feet of climbing. Runners have 32 hours to earn their buckles and Western States qualifiers. Race proceeds benefit Adventure Appalachia, a non-profit organization “facilitating empowering, educational outdoor adventure experiences for adolescents and adults.”

No Business 100

Heading over to Jamestown, Tennessee, and Pickett CCC Memorial State Park, we drop in on the No Business 100. This year marks the eighth running of the challenging race that takes runners on a 102-mile looped course through the Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area, starting in Tennessee and crossing the border into Kentucky before heading back to the Volunteer State. Along the way, runners will have to navigate 14,500 feet of climbing over remote and technical trails that showcase the natural and rugged beauty of the area as well as historic settlements like the No Business community. Participants have 33 hours to finish the loop and claim their buckles and Western States qualifier.

Wildcard: Marine Corps Marathon 50k

In this week’s Wildcard race (where we feature an event you may not be familiar with), we

head to Arlington, Virginia, for the Marine Corps Marathon 50k (MCM). Despite being the largest ultramarathon in the United States, the MCM (established in 2019), is still a rather new addition to the iconic Marine Corps Marathon which is now in its 49th season. The urban race begins on Sunday and will take runners on a tour of our nation's capital, passing by the Pentagon, Arlington National Cemetery and the National Mall before finishing at the Marine Corps War Memorial. The mission of the Marine Corps Marathon is "to promote physical fitness, generate community goodwill, and showcase the organizational skills of the United States Marine Corps." Last year, an amazing 1,293 runners completed the 50k course while maintaining the required sub-14-minute pace.

Other Events this weekend include Ozark Trail 100 Mile Endurance Run (Steelville, MO), Canyonlands Ultra (Moab, UT), Hixon 50 (La Crosse, WI), Tussey Mountainback 50 Miler (Boalsburg, PA), Gate2Gate 50k (Alachua, FL), Door County Fall 50 (Sturgeon Bay, WI), ECT 50 Ultra Marathon (St. Johns, NL), Georgia Sky to Summit (Dillard, GA), Kansas Rails-to-Trails Extravaganza (Ottawa, KS), Lake Murray Endurance Run (Ardmore, OK), The Bad Thing (Goderich, ON), and Greensprings 24 (Williamsburg, VA). Check out the full list of events [here](#) and good luck to everyone racing this weekend!

Verdes rely on Firewise for protection

Proactive approach to fire prevention
Fountain Hills Times
Adhering to Firewise guidelines helps prevent tragedy.
Posted Saturday, October 19, 2024 9:00 am



As National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) certified Firewise Communities, Rio Verde and Tonto Verde work year-round to mitigate the threat of wildfires.

To maintain certification as Firewise Communities there is a requirement to annually maintain community boundaries that interface with open desert to reduce fuels that could feed the spread of fires. Annual Firewise Day for the Verdes is Saturday, Nov. 9.

Through the Firewise effort, the communities work with the Rio Verde Fire District, McDowell Mountain Regional Park, Tonto National Forest and Cave Creek Ranger District to coordinate border maintenance efforts on their property. Additionally, there is cooperation with the HOAs and individual homeowners to maintain properties and further reduce the risk of fire.

The Firewise western border clearing activities are undertaken by volunteers from

Rio Verde and Tonto Verde during winter months (January through March when snakes are primarily dormant). The effort covers approximately four miles across the western and southern borders.

For the last four to five years the same team of about 12 to 15 community residents have undertaken this task for the benefit of the whole community. Many of these volunteers are involved in multiple activities and have served their community well.

New volunteers are invited to join the effort. Work is done a few hours early in the morning, several days each week. Diane Newcomb (dnewcomb1957@gmail.com) is the coordinator who sends emails each day to direct the team to the location of the next workday and captures the volunteers' names and hours worked for credit towards Firewise certification.

Anyone interested in helping or taking on the role of volunteer coordinator, send an email to Newcomb. The year 2024 will be a training year to hand off the coordinator job.

Verdes residents are urged to attend the annual Firewise Day which is a certification requirement to hold a Firewise Education Event each year for the community. Residents' attendance is needed to demonstrate community participation in support of local Firewise efforts. The Rio Verde Fire District, **McDowell Mountain Regional Park**, Maricopa Emergency Management, Tonto National

Forest and others have been on the agenda in past years, keeping residents up to date with processes and procedures. The 2024 Firewise Day will be held on Saturday, Nov. 9, in the Rio Verde Community Center Multi-Purpose Room from 9 to 11 a.m.

Residents will be asked to submit their sweat equity sheets and/or landscaping receipts to the Rio Verde Community Association Office so the data can be incorporated in the recertification application. This year, there have been several fires around the area burning more than 40,000 acres. Some named fires were worked by crews of firefighters, hotshots, Emergency Management teams, helicopters, air tankers, and there were some small fires along the roads that have been managed by local fire crews. It is important to remain diligent to prevent wildfires from threatening the community and disrupting lives. For more information on volunteering or participating with personal efforts, contact Eb Scheuing (480-471-7393) in Rio Verde and Diane Newcomb (856-498-4160) in Tonto Verde.

RAINFALL TOTALS: How much rain has fallen around the Valley? 10-18-24

A front brought rain through parts of the Valley Friday morning

By: abc15.com staff
Posted 8:44 AM, Oct 18, 2024
and last updated 10:39 AM, Oct 18, 2024

PHOENIX – A cold front brought rain through much of the Valley in time for the Friday morning commute.

How much has fallen in your area in the last 24 hours?

Here is a look at how much measurable rain has fallen during this storm, according to the Maricopa County Flood Control District. Last updated: 10:40 a.m.

- Apache Junction: 0.31"
- Bartlett Lake: 0.04"
- Cave Creek: 0.04"
- Chandler (near Loop 202 and I-10): 0.04"
- Gilbert (Gilbert Regional Park): 0.16"
- Gold Canyon: 0.24"
- **Lake Pleasant: 0.16"**
- **McDowell Mountain Park: 0.12"**
- New River: 0.16"
- Phoenix (Deer Valley Airport): 0.08"
- Phoenix (Sunburst Paradise Park): 0.24"
- Peoria: 0.12"
- Queen Creek: 0.12"
- **White Tank Mountains: 0.08"**

2024's 9 Most Scenic Arizona Towns

October 17, 2024
World Atlas

Arizona has much of the United States' most incredible and iconic scenery. From the Grand Canyon in the north to the Santa Catalina Mountains in the south, Arizona abounds in beautiful landscapes awaiting exploration. Though the vast

majority of the state's population resides in or near the major cities of [Phoenix](#) and [Tucson](#), there is far more natural scenery to experience throughout the rest of the state.

While the larger metropolises do have plenty of their own wondrous natural landscapes, Arizona also has numerous small towns sporting incredible views all around. You can expect amazingly beautiful desert views, but don't sleep on Arizona's gorgeous mountains and verdant forests. From Cave Creek to Williams, take a journey through nine of the most scenic Arizona towns in 2024.

Cave Creek



Spur Cross Ranch, Cave Creek, Arizona.

Cave Creek may only be 32 miles north of Downtown Phoenix, yet this seemingly sleepy suburb comes alive with dazzling displays of natural beauty. Start at **Cave Creek Regional Park**, which has multiple easy and moderate trails providing access to wide expanses of Sonoran Desert wilderness and just over 1,000 feet of elevation gain. In addition, Cave Creek Regional Park has designated horseback riding stables and trails, along with 55 campsites for tent and RV camping.

For a more rugged and pristine slice of the upper desert, go to

the **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area** and explore its 2,154 beautiful acres. Not only does Spur Cross Ranch include a lovely stretch of Cave Creek (the natural stream), but it also has plenty of gorgeous riparian habitat, and it has nearly 90 archaeological sites featuring petroglyphs and other artifacts dating back to when the Hohokam Indigenous people lived here over 800 years ago.

Globe

It appears quite fitting that this former mining town about 87 miles east of Phoenix has some of Arizona's finest hidden gems. Located around 3,500 feet above sea level and at the foot of the mighty Pinal Mountains, Globe makes the perfect base camp for plenty of exhilarating outdoor adventures. Just about a 20-minute drive from Globe, the Pinal and Upper Pinal Campgrounds of Tonto National Forest are ideal for a great escape high into the mountains, where Ponderosa pines abound, animals like elk, deer, and even bears run wild and free, and the lack of city lights makes for gorgeous stargazing at night.

For more cool adventures closer to town, try the Besh Ba Gowah Archaeological Park and Museum. This park includes the remains of a pueblo originally constructed by the Salado Indigenous people between 1225 and 1450 CE. Admire the pueblo structures themselves, then head inside the museum to learn more about ancient Southwestern Indigenous history and culture. While at the park, keep exploring the trails and discover the lovely botanical gardens on site.

Greer

High up the White Mountains (more specifically, about 8,400 feet above sea level) in Eastern Arizona, the town of Greer may be the ultimate paradise for nature lovers. About 222 miles northeast of Phoenix and 183 miles southeast of Flagstaff, Greer offers a slice of tranquil serenity in the mountains, along with 16 trails to explore and enjoy. If you are not sure where to begin, try the Butler Canyon Trail (at Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests) to catch a glimpse into native riparian life in the White Mountains and soothing views of the Butler Canyon Spring.

For a more invigorating challenge, try the East Fork Trail that guides you along the path of the Little Colorado River through dense forests of spruce, fir, aspen, and Ponderosa pine trees to expansive meadows, curious rock formations, and another trail that goes all the way up to the peak of the extinct volcano Mount Baldy (at 11,409 feet above sea level). Meanwhile, the Pole Knoll Recreation Area has 18 miles of inter-looping trails that are great for hiking during the warmer months, yet they become prime territory for cross-country skiing in winter.

Prescott

With mostly mild (for Arizona) weather throughout the year, a comfortable elevation of around 5,300 feet above sea level, and a prime location sandwiched between the Bradshaw Mountains, the Sierra Prieta range, and the Granite Dells (and about 99 miles north of Phoenix and 94 miles south of Flagstaff), Prescott is picture-

perfect for explorers who crave the ultimate excursions into the great outdoors.

Prescott has an abundance of parks and public lands full of hiking and biking trails. Highlights include the Granite Basin Recreation Area at Prescott National Forest for stunning views of Granite Mountain and the Granite Basin Lake, Watson Lake for prime hiking, boating, and bird watching amidst the incredible Granite Dell boulders, and Lynx Lake for the ideal escape into the mountains. For even more adrenaline-pumping adventures, Watson Lake and the Peavine Trail also have great spots for rock climbing.

Winslow

Winslow may be best known for its location on the historic Route 66 (about 178 miles northeast of Phoenix and 56 miles east of Flagstaff), but there is much more to this town beyond the open road. Just beyond town limits lies Homolovi State Park, which preserves a traditional pueblo built by the ancestors of the Hopi Indigenous people over 700 years ago. Homolovi has multiple hiking trails, including the wheelchair-accessible Homolovi II Trail, which provides access to the park's largest archaeological sites, and the Homolovi I Trail, which follows the path of the Little Colorado River.

A little farther out, you can find even more illustriously beautiful public lands within an easy drive of Winslow. About 30 miles south, Jack's Canyon at Coconino National Forest offers 300 routes of prime year-round sport climbing, along with

wonderful hiking and biking trails with views of the Moenkopi red rock sandstone canyon. About 58 miles east of Winslow, Petrified Forest National Park has everything from Triassic-era fossils to the eye-catching colorful “moonscape mounds” at Painted Desert. And 18 miles west of Winslow, the Meteor Crater gets you up close and personal with the land where a meteor with a force 150 times greater than an atomic bomb crashed into the earth.

Sedona

About 30 miles south of Flagstaff and 117 miles north of Phoenix, Sedona has some of Arizona’s most famously beautiful natural scenery. Travelers come from all around the world to view the city’s iconic red rock formations, and Sedona makes it possible to hike trails leading to natural landmarks like Cathedral Rock, Bell Rock, Courthouse Butte, and Boynton Canyon.

If you feel like hopping on a mountain bike and hitting more challenging terrain, ride the Mescal Trail to reach the massive sandstone Mescal Mountain, or hit the Ridge Trail for an exhilarating ride into Red Rock Crossing with phenomenal views of Thunder Mountain. If you fancy a different kind of ride, try horseback riding on one of Coconino National Forest’s approved equestrian trails, including Anaconda, Arizona Cyprus, Cockscomb, and Girdner. For even more scenic adventures, head to Slide Rock State Park for a host of trails with incredible red rock and mountain views, as well as

swimming and fishing at Oak Creek.

Tubac

Located around 44 miles south of Tucson and 156 miles southeast of Phoenix, Tubac may be best known for its historic 18th-century presidio and its contemporary artists’ colony, but there is much more to catch the eye beyond the galleries. The Tubac Presidio State Historic Park serves as a trailhead for a four-mile-long stretch of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail that leads to Tumacácori National Historical Park. Along this trail, enjoy an easy stroll by the soothing waters of the Santa Cruz River and amidst the lovely riparian habitat that welcomes the region’s birds.

This area serves as a critical refuge for over 200 species of birds, including golden eagles, cooper’s hawks, turkey vultures, mallard ducks, calliope hummingbirds, Inca doves, and roadrunners. The trails within Tumacácori National Historical Park and connecting back to Tubac Presidio State Historic Park are great for walking, running, hiking, and biking.

Williams

Situated right along the historic Route 66 and near the I-40 freeway (35 miles west of Flagstaff), travelers generally come to Williams because it’s the most developed town within 60 miles of Grand Canyon National Park. Williams serves as a convenient base camp for an epic Grand Canyon excursion, and the Williams-Forest Service Visitor Center in town can help you plan special experiences like whitewater

rafting the Colorado River at the canyon floor.

Yet beyond the Grand Canyon, there is even more to see and do in the forests and mountains around Williams. For incredible mountain scenery, try the Bill Williams Mountain Trail at Kaibab National Forest to hike a roughly eight-mile long trail that traverses through Ponderosa pine and oak groves up to aspen and fir forests and eventually reaches an elevation of 9,256 feet above sea level. For great fishing, head to Cataract Lake and Kaibab Lake and try catching trout. And for one of the region’s most stunning waterfalls, hike or bike the Sycamore Rim Trail to discover truly majestic views of Sycamore Falls.

Flagstaff

Sitting around 7,000 feet above sea level near the base of the San Francisco Peaks, the stately college town of Flagstaff is a larger community but has some of Arizona’s finest “outdoor classrooms.” For an easier journey into nature, try the Griffith’s Spring Trail at Coconino National Forest to step into a gorgeous riparian habitat that birds like wild irises, western bluebirds, robins, and hummingbirds call home. You will also spot Griffith’s Spring itself, a seemingly small stream that eventually becomes Oak Creek as it makes the dramatic journey down to Sedona.

For a more challenging hike, bike, and/or equestrian journey, try the Little Elden Trail (also in Coconino National Forest) for spectacular views of aspen groves and the San Francisco Peaks that are especially

striking during the fall season, when the aspens' leaves turn golden. For more explosive adventures, head to Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument to explore an extinct volcano that still has dry lava left over from its last eruption around 1085 CE. During winter, the Arizona Nordic Village opens its trails to cross-country skiers, while the Arizona Snowbowl has 777 skiable acres and a variety of runs serving skiers and snowboarders at all levels.

Arizona's Scenery Isn't Limited to the Low Desert

Arizona may be best known for its wide expanses of arid Sonoran Desert, and this desert really does have plenty of its own beautiful scenery. Yet beyond the desert, Arizona has many more hidden gems awaiting your discovery. From the grand alpine wilderness near Greer and the lovely pine forests of Williams to the tranquil riparian habitat of Tubac and the serenely rocky landscapes of Prescott, Arizona has an incredible diversity of scenic landscapes and ecosystems. These nine most scenic Arizona towns are certainly towns you will want to spend quality time exploring in 2024.

7 Best Activities To Explore In Arizona

TavelNoire.com
Faith Katunga • Oct 10, 2024

There are a lot of states in the US to choose from when you want an adventure, but Arizona stands out thanks to its striking contrasts. Arizona has it all. You can find enormous deserts,

luscious forests, historic landmarks, and contemporary cultural sites. The Grand Canyon, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, is just the beginning of what this southwestern state has to offer. To help you plan a lifetime trip to Arizona, we have compiled a list of the well-known and lesser-known attractions you simply must experience.

Rent A Private Charter At Scorpion Bay

For that perfect Arizona experience, head to Scorpion Bay at **Lake Pleasant Regional Park**. This premier floating playground has various water activities. However, the crown jewel is the opportunity to rent a private charter. You can cruise on the crystal-clear waters of Lake Pleasant aboard your own luxurious double-decker boat, complete with a captain and crew. With amenities like a full bar, deluxe stereo system, and seating for up to 40 passengers, you can create the best memories while taking in the lake's desert landscape.

Explore The Grand Canyon

No visit to Arizona is complete without experiencing the breathtaking beauty of the Grand Canyon. This natural wonder, carved by the Colorado River over millions of years, stretches for 277 miles and is up to 18 miles wide and a mile deep. Whether you choose to hike along the rim, take a mule ride down into the canyon, or stand in awe at one of the many viewpoints, the Grand Canyon offers a humbling and otherworldly experience that will stay with you for a lifetime.

Discover The Magic Of Antelope Canyon

Located near Page, Antelope Canyon is a slot canyon famous for its wave-like structure. The light beams that shine down into the openings of the canyon create a magical display of color and shadow. The canyon divides into two separate sections. There's the Upper Antelope Canyon and Lower Antelope Canyon. Both offer stunning photo opportunities and a chance to learn about Navajo history and culture from local guides.

Don't Miss Out Arizona's Horseshoe Bend

Just a short drive from Antelope Canyon, Horseshoe Bend is another natural marvel you shouldn't miss. This horseshoe-shaped meander of the Colorado River is best viewed from the cliff above, where you can witness the emerald waters contrasting beautifully with the red-rock canyon walls. The short hike to the viewpoint is well worth the effort, especially during sunset when the colors are most vivid.

Immerse Yourself In Sedona's Red Rock Country

Sedona is renowned for its stunning red rock formations and spiritual vortexes. Hike through the red rocks on trails like Cathedral Rock or Bell Rock. Additionally, take a jeep tour to explore the backcountry or relax and soak in the serene beauty of the landscape. Stop by the Chapel of the Holy Cross, an architectural beauty built into the red rocks. It offers panoramic views of the surrounding area.

Step Back In Time In Tombstone

For a taste of the Old West, visit the historic town of Tombstone. Known as “The Town Too Tough to Die,” Tombstone was once a booming silver mining town and the site of the famous gunfight at the O.K. Corral. Today, you can watch reenactments of the gunfight, visit the Boothill Graveyard, and enjoy saloon shows that bring the Wild West back to life.

Experience The Sonoran Desert At Saguaro National Park

Saguaro National Park, located near Tucson, is home to the nation’s largest cacti – the giant saguaro. These majestic plants, which can grow up to 60 feet tall, are found only in a small portion of the United States. The park allows visitors to enjoy scenic drives, hiking trails, and opportunities to see diverse desert wildlife.

Lunch and Learn: Bugs!

Signalsaz.com
October 10, 2024

Join Ranger Shaun for another Lunchtime presentation!
Today’s Menu: Arthropods!

Bugs a la carte! Ranger Shaun is serving up a presentation about insects, arachnids, and other members of the arthropod group! Learn about their anatomy, taxonomy, and maybe even see a few! Learn all sorts of things you never knew you didn’t know! Ask questions! Get answers! There will even be a few invertebrate animal

ambassadors along for additional Halloween-era spookiness. Restrooms and water will be located nearby. This program will take place in a climate-controlled space. No pets, please.

MEETING LOCATION: Nature Center

Limit 15 participants. To register, please call the Nature Center at (602) 506-2930 ext. 6 with your name, phone number and number of people attending. If you cannot attend a program after registering, please call the Nature Center ASAP so we may contact those on the waiting list. Registration for this program will close on October 9.

October 11, 2024, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Venue: **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**

Address: Estrella Mountain Regional Park
Goodyear Arizona 85338
United States

Quiet Hour at San Tan Mountain

Feel inner peace outside in this guided 4-step process led by Ranger Jacque.
Signalsaz.com
October 9, 2024

Would you like a break from noise and stress and a new way to enjoy nature? The Quiet Hour process can help. It blends nine techniques or influences that research indicates have a calming or uplifting effect. This seated program is for all abilities, ages 12 and up. Restrooms and water fountains are available at the Nature

Center, where we will meet. For maximum comfort, wear comfortable clothing and shoes, bring water, and a yoga mat or towel to sit on. No pets.

MEETING LOCATION: Nature Center

No registration required

October 20, 2024, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Venue: Nature Center at **San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

Address: 6533 W Phillips Rd
Queen Creek Arizona 85142

Maricopa County Regional Parks

Extend Fire Ban

Through October 31

By Staff
on October 07, 2024
Signalsaz.com

Due to extremely dry conditions within the parks and the lack of moisture received during the monsoon season, the **Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department** will extend fire restrictions through October 31, 2024.



“Although it’s almost October, we must continue to adhere to fire restrictions for a little while longer,” said Maricopa County Board of Supervisors Chairman

Jack Sellers, District 1. “The triple-digit temperatures and dry monsoon season have created the perfect circumstances for wildfires to spread quickly, posing a threat to communities across Maricopa County. Let’s each do our part to stay safe and prevent fires.”

This summer, work on a railroad sparked a wildfire that quickly spread to the Hassayampa River Preserve, causing a temporary park closure and evacuation in June. The Rose Fire scarred approximately 100 acres of parkland. Unfortunately, this would not be the only park to experience damage from wildfire activity throughout the arid summer. Recently, McDowell Mountain Regional Park was impacted by the McDowell and Gate wildfires, which scorched more than 1,000 acres of pristine Sonoran Desert parkland.

“We’ve also had close calls near the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area and Cave Creek Regional Park this season. For this reason, our team has decided to extend the fire ban through October 31. The continued restrictions include all campfires, fire pits, and charcoal grills. In addition, smoking outside of vehicles and campers is prohibited,” R.J. Cardin, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation director.

The use of gas and propane grills in designated areas is acceptable. Violation of Park Rule R-113 may result in a citation.

Eleven Maricopa County regional parks have been affected by the fire ban: Lake

Pleasant Regional Park, White Tank Mountain Regional Park, Adobe Dam Regional Park, Buckeye Hills Regional Park, Estrella Mountain Regional Park, Hassayampa River Preserve, San Tan Mountain Regional Park, Usery Mountain Regional Park, McDowell Mountain Regional Park, Cave Creek Regional Park, and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

If you have questions regarding the fire ban, contact the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department at (602) 506-2930, or visit www.maricopa.gov/parks.

Fire ban extended until Oct. 31 for all Maricopa County parks

By Alaina Kwan
Published: Oct. 4, 2024 at 6:52 AM MST | Updated: Oct. 4, 2024 at 2:45 PM MST

PHOENIX (AZFamily) – The **Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department** has extended its fire ban for all county parks until the end of the month.

The fire ban extension comes as camping season starts to ramp up. But Michael Weber, park supervisor for the McDowell Mountain Reserve Parks, says triple-digit temperatures continue to create ideal wildfire conditions in October.

“We’ve had increased winter rains, which has created ideal conditions for invasive broad leaf and grass species, which

creates heavy fuel load, so right now the desert is completely full of fuel,” he said. “It’s hotter, and there’s more chance of the fires continue burning into the fall.”

The following are prohibited under the fire ban:

- camp fires
- fire pits
- charcoal grills
- smoking outside of your car or camper
- Propane and gas grills are allowed only in campsites and ramada areas.

Weber said taking these fire ban restrictions seriously is really important to the department, especially after seeing quite a few human-caused fires this summer.

“Construction of new homes is a big one,” Weber said. “The Wildcat Fire, which I believe is still under investigation but is suspected to be human-caused, and the Boulder View Fire, suspected from people grinding fence lines.”

If you plan on visiting or camping at any Maricopa County Parks this month, Weber said even with a propane grill, it’s important to be careful when cooking food in campsites. He also said to make sure you have water nearby at all times in case of an emergency.

Which parks are included in this ban?

- Lake Pleasant Regional Park
- White Tank Mountain Regional Park
- Adobe Dam Regional Park
- Buckeye Hills Regional Park

- Estrella Mountain Regional Park
- Hassayampa River Preserve
- San Tan Mountain Regional Park
- Utery Mountain Regional Park
- McDowell Mountain Regional Park
- Cave Creek Regional Park
- Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

For more information on the fire ban, visit the county's website.

Maricopa County extends fire bans in regional parks until the end of October

KJZZ | By Ignacio Ventura
Published October 2, 2024 at 8:22 AM MST

Fire restrictions at Maricopa County regional parks have been extended until the end of October. The bans come as the weather continues to remain hot into the fall season.

According to Maricopa County Supervisor Jack Sellers, high temperatures and a dry monsoon season have fostered the conditions to cause wildfires to spread quickly.

Earlier in the summer, railroad work caused a wildfire to spread to the **Hassayampa River Preserve**, forcing a park closure and evacuation.

The restrictions apply to campfires, fire pits, charcoal grills and smoking outside of trailers or campers.

Eleven parks are affected, from Lake Pleasant Regional Park to the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

Estrella Mountain Park Bird Program

Signals.com
October 10, 2024

Bird Program talk and PowerPoint Presentation with Joe Ford in the Estrella Park Nature Center Classroom following the Bird Hikes. Topics cover bird images, habits, maps, details, and bird life.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park
Goodyear Arizona 85338
United States
Venue: **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**
Date: October 12, 2024
Time: 9:00 am-10:30 am
Phone: 602-506-2930 ext. 6

Lunch and Learn: Bugs!

Signals.com
October 2, 2024

Join Ranger Shaun for another Lunchtime presentation!
Today's Menu: Arthropods!

Bugs a la carte! Ranger Shaun is serving up a presentation about insects, arachnids, and other members of the arthropod group! Learn about their anatomy, taxonomy, and maybe even see a few! Learn all sorts of things you never knew you didn't know! Ask questions! Get answers! There will even be a few invertebrate animal ambassadors along for additional Halloween-era

spookiness. Restrooms and water will be located nearby. This program will take place in a climate-controlled space. No pets, please.

MEETING LOCATION: Nature Center

Limit 15 participants. To register, please call the Nature Center at (602) 506-2930 ext. 6 with your name, phone number and number of people attending. If you cannot attend a program after registering, please call the Nature Center ASAP so we may contact those on the waiting list. Registration for this program will close on October 9.

October 11, 2024, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm
Address: **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**
Goodyear Arizona 85338
United States

Queen Creek Chamber of Commerce, Explore Queen Creek host "Fall" in Love with Queen Creek

Participating businesses will be offering a variety of special offers, deals and local discounts for family activities until Oct. 11. Queen Creek Sun Times Staff
Oct 1, 2024 2:55 PM

The Queen Creek Chamber of Commerce is hosting "Fall" in Love with Queen Creek, a guide to fall break activities in Queen Creek, from now through Friday, Oct. 11.

Participating businesses will be offering a variety of special offers, deals and local discounts for family activities.

Participating businesses include Apricot Lane Boutique, As You Wish Pottery, Elevate Trampoline Park, Dave & Buster's, Duck Donuts, Fleet Feet QC, FitFX QC, Harkins Theatres Queen Creek 14, Jeremiah's Italian Ice, Mici Italian, Nothing Bundt Cakes, Painting Wonderland Ceramics & Art Studio, Pecan Lake Entertainment, Portillo's, Sage & Barrel Craft Eatery, Seven Brothers Burgers, and Social Birdie.

Queen Creek also has numerous parks and trails perfect for getting outdoors with the family for free. From the new Frontier Family Park to the Queen Creek Wash and **San Tan Mountain Regional Park**, there's plenty of options to keep everyone entertained over the break.

"Supporting local businesses is more important than ever, so take the time this fall break to shop, eat, and play local, and support the businesses that make Queen Creek special," said Chris Clark, president and CEO of the Queen Creek Chamber of Commerce. "We also encourage residents to participate in phone free family day on Tuesday, October 8."

Residents can find more information at "FALL" in Love with Queen Creek - Explore Queen Creek.

PRESS RELEASES:

Maricopa County Celebrates National Take A Hike Day

November 7, 2024



National Take a Hike Day, celebrated on November 17, 2024, is a perfect opportunity to reconnect with Maricopa County's regional parks. Not only does this day serve as a reminder of the benefits of hiking for physical health and mental well-being, but it also helps you rack up miles towards the **100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge**.

"Hiking offers us a chance to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of our natural Sonoran Desert landscapes," said Jack Sellers, Chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, District 1. "From Lake Pleasant Regional Park to San Tan Mountain Regional Park, Maricopa County is lucky to have so many beautiful regional parks to explore and relax in. So, join me in getting outside and taking a hike!"

"National Take A Hike Day is the perfect time to reconnect with nature. Between Maricopa County's regional parks and the Maricopa Trail, we offer more than 615 miles of trails for hiking, trail running, mountain biking, and horseback riding. After months of telling park visitors to hike during the early morning or evening hours to avoid the heat, we can now say, take a hike!" said Jennifer Waller, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Director.

Whether you're a seasoned hiker or a beginner, Maricopa County's regional park system offers trails suited for every skill level, ensuring everyone can participate in this invigorating activity. As you plan your trek, consider gathering friends or family members to make the experience more enjoyable.

On this day, it's important to remember the principles of Leave No Trace, which encourage hikers to respect the environment by minimizing their impact. Simple actions like staying on marked trails, packing out trash, and respecting leaving the parks as you found them go a long way in preserving the beauty of nature for future generations.

Below are a couple of tips to help you prepare for your outing.

Be sure to ALWAYS:

- Stay on designated trails.
- Tell someone where you are hiking and when you expect to return.
- Carry plenty of water for your entire hike. Remember to bring water for your dog.

- Turn around and return to the trailhead when your water is half gone.
- Carry a cell phone.
- Don't hike alone.
- Wear appropriate footwear and clothing for hiking.
- Use maps, and know where you are going and what kind of terrain you are hiking on.

So, lace up your hiking boots, pack some snacks and water, and prepare for a trek that will refresh your body and help clear your mind. Whether you conquer a challenging trail or stroll along a canal bank of the Maricopa Trail, you'll celebrate the solitude and freedom hiking brings.

In recognition of National Take a Hike Day, the \$7 per vehicle day-use entry fee will be waived at all Maricopa County regional parks on Sunday, November 17, 2024. All other fees apply. To find a regional park near you, visit <https://www.maricopa.gov/parks>.

Maricopa County's Regional Parks Recognize Veterans With Military Service Appreciation Day

Posted on: November 5, 2024



This fall, Arizona residents have endured a number of record-high temperatures. Thankfully, cooler temperatures are on the way for those craving time outdoors to recharge and reconnect with nature.

And the cooler weather couldn't have come at a better time. On Monday, November 11, 2024, the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department will recognize those who have served in the armed forces by waiving the \$7 per vehicle day-use park entry for all active and inactive military personnel.

In 2005, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors issued a formal proclamation resolving that each Veterans Day from that point forward would be observed as Military Appreciation Day at all Maricopa County regional parks.

"Our veterans have made countless sacrifices to serve our country, and I could not be more grateful for their selflessness and valor," said Jack Sellers, Chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, District 1. "I'm hopeful that Military Service Appreciation Day is one meaningful way that

we can thank them for their service and offer them the opportunity to enjoy the cooler weather in our beautiful regional parks across the County."

"Being an American offers many privileges. So this Veterans Day, please remember to thank a veteran and honor those who paid the ultimate price to secure and protect our freedom," said Vice Chairman Thomas Galvin, District 2. "I encourage veterans to spend November 11 exploring the 645 miles of wilderness trails our regional park system has to offer and enjoy a day of well-deserved respite and peace in the gorgeous Sonoran Desert."

"From the bottom of my heart, I would like to express deep appreciation and gratitude for the men and women who have fought to keep our country safe and protect the values that shape the fabric of American society," said Supervisor Clint Hickman, District 4. "I'm so proud to represent District 4, which is home to Luke Force Base and the 56th Fighter Wing, the largest fighter wing in the world and the Air Force's primary active-duty fighter pilot training wing. I hope these brave heroes can spend some time unwinding and taking in the County's incredible scenery with loved ones."

"Ever since the Board voted to recognize each Veterans Day as Military Service Appreciation Day in 2005, we have made it an annual priority to continue this tradition and ensure our servicemen and women can access our gorgeous County parks at no cost," said Supervisor Bill Gates, District 3.

"This Veterans Day, I will be thinking of and honoring my grandpa and every other veteran who has put their life on the line to defend our country, democracy, and way of life."

"Spending time in nature with family and friends is good for the soul, and that's the type of serenity and rejuvenation I wish our veterans this upcoming Veterans Day," said Supervisor Steve Gallardo, District 5. "They work so hard every day to make sure our kids know peace and our communities stay out of harm's way. It is the Board's pleasure to waive park entry fees and offer them an opportunity to get out of the city for the day and clear their minds by going for a hike, train run, or horseback ride."

"We are thankful for the opportunity to support our veterans," added Jennifer Waller, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Deputy Director. "In addition to waiving the day-use entry fee on Veterans Day, our parks offer a discount on the [annual pass](#) for veterans with any level of a service-connected disability at any time during the year."

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 from downtown Phoenix. For information about activities at a County park near you, call (602) 506-2930 or visit www.maricopa.gov/parks.