



Sandhill Cranes Winging Their Way To Whitewater

Arizona's original 'snowbirds' now arriving daily.

Sandhill cranes by the thousands are once again returning to their wintering grounds at the Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area in southeastern Arizona.

For the next several months, more than 20,000 of these fascinating birds, along with waterfowl and other wetland-associated

species, will provide an unparalleled wildlife-viewing experience.

"In my opinion, there just isn't a better wildlife-viewing opportunity in Arizona" said Jeff Meyers, wildlife viewing program manager for the Arizona Game and Fish Department. "Nothing beats seeing these large,

noisy birds in person. The cacophony of sound that they make is thrilling."

The best time to view the cranes is 30 minutes before and after sunrise, just before they leave to feed for the morning. The leggy birds generally return to the wildlife area before noon, where they will remain for the rest of the day.

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A FAMILY TRADITION

Cut Your Own Christmas Tree

Christmas Tree Permits

The selection and cutting of a special tree from the forest for the holidays has been a treasured tradition for generations of residents. The Tonto National Forest offers personal-use Christmas Tree Permits for the cutting of a tree on National Forest land. Christmas Tree Permits cost \$15 per tree, are for personal use only (not for resale).

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Let's do November.

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Cut your own Christmas tree.

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WESTERN WILDLIFE

Young condors fly.

Important Dates

Christmas Tree Permit sales start in late November for permits bought through Recreation.gov and at district ranger stations; call the ranger stations for applicable dates.

Limit five per person. No refunds will be made, even if weather conditions prevent you from reaching your cutting area and cutting your tree.

How to Obtain a Permit

Permits are available at all locations, Supervisor's Office, Cave Creek, Globe, Payson, Mesa, and Tonto Basin Ranger Stations listed below or at Recreation.gov:

Supervisor's Office

(602) 225-5200
2324 E. McDowell Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85006

Cave Creek Ranger District

(480) 595-3300
40202 N. Cave Creek Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85262

Globe Ranger District

(928) 402-6200
7680 S. Six Shooter, Canyon Rd.
Globe, AZ 85501

TREES, continued on page 12



ON THE COVER

A Sign Of The Seasons

BY CAROL L. ALLEN

First, the sandhill cranes begin their journey, reminding us by their annual migration that summer is waning. Next, Mother Nature is ready to step in with wonderful weather in the Southwest, weather that welcomes great hunting and fishing opportunities.

Then, soon after the autumn ac-

COVER, continued on page 12



Ben Avery Offers New Shooting Opportunity



5-Stand fans can break clay targets twice-monthly under lights .

The Ben Avery Shooting Facility (BASF) is shining the spotlight on a new way to have some fun breaking clay targets.

When the sun goes down on the first and third Thursday each month, recreational shooters can gather behind the Clay Target Center Pavilion and give their shotguns an "after-hours" workout under the lights on the 5-Stand course. "5-Stand@Night" puts an exciting and challenging spin on a popular clay-target shooting game. From 7 to 9 p.m., shooters aim at colored targets that appear to be glowing against the dark, desert sky.

For New Shooters

For those new to the traditional game, 5-Stand in-

SHOOTING, continued on page 12



NOV. 4

More than 2,200 permit-tags remain for 2025 spring hunts, raptor capture

Applications accepted — by U.S. mail only — beginning Monday, Nov. 4. The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) will make available 2,820 over-the-counter nonpermit-tags for nonresident archery deer hunters for the 2025 calendar year beginning at 8 a.m. (Arizona time) Monday, Nov. 4, 2024. Information: www.azgfd.gov/hunting.

NOV. 5

Election Day: Vote!

NOV. 9

Condors & Cocktails

4:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Liberty Wildlife welcomes guests to our campus for a festival atmosphere, as we celebrate efforts to save the endangered California condors. Festivities begin at 4pm until 7pm, for this 21+ year of age event.



Liberty Wildlife
2600 E. Elwood Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85040
(480) 620-6785

NOV 10

Everyone Runs

Veterans Day 5.3-Mile & 10.6-Mile Trail Races and 5K Road Run & Walk
\$42.00-\$65.00
7:15 to 10:00 am

This Veterans Day weekend, on Sunday, November 10, Everyone Runs is hosting 5.3-mile and 10.6-mile trail races and a 5K road run at Catalina State Park to benefit veteran agencies in need, including our Project Action for Veterans program!

Come join the fun at what Everyone Runs describes as Southern Arizona's Favorite Trail Race! The race starts and finishes at the park trail head and travels the trails of this magnificent park, while the 5K road run takes place on the fast and flat roads of the park.

In addition to your spot in the race, your registration will include their homemade Mexican breakfast, free professional race photos available for download in any size, free coffee from A Gusto Coffee, quality finisher shirts in cotton and tech (moisture-wicking polyester), and overall and five-year age group medals for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. Overall winners in the 5.3-mile and 10.6-mile trail races will take home free running shoes from Fleet Feet!

Part of the proceeds of the event will go to veteran agencies in need, including our Project Action for Veterans program. www.everyoneruns.net



NOV. 11

VETERANS DAY: Wear a Poppy!



NOV. 23

History in the Park: Salute the Troops – The Military History of Arizona

10:00 am to 1:00 pm MST
\$5.00
2900 N. Craycroft Rd
Tucson, Arizona 85712
520-622-0594

Before registering, please visit the Everyone Runs website, the Veterans Day event page and view their course instructions.

If you can't make it to the event, but are still interested in donating, you can do so using the Project Action for Veterans page on the Everyone Runs website.

Entry fees are not refundable and bibs cannot be transferred without prior approval by Everyone Runs. If you have any questions or are interested in veterans discount codes, please contact Owner and Race Director, Steve Landau, s.landau@comcast.net.



NOV. 23-24

The Hummingbird Effect

FREE, but reservations required
2:00 to 5:00 pm
2 pm and 3:30 pm
Jim and Linda Lee Planetarium
3700 Willow Creek Road
Prescott, Arizona 86301
928-777-3422



NOV. 30-DEC. 28

Scottsdale Announces Return of Scottsdazzle

8:00 am to 10:00 pm
The City of Scottsdale is pleased to announce the return of its popular annual holiday celebration, Scottsdazzle. This season, the city is introducing new decor and entertainment to level up the spirit of this beloved event.

DEC. 15

Enter the Great 8 fall raffle for just \$10

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) would like to remind hunters that Conservation First USA is running its bonus Great 8 fall raffle. With fall seasons opening and hunting on the brain, what better time to purchase tickets?

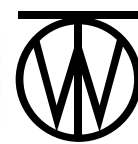
You must purchase your tickets online through Conservation First USA's website. But don't wait, the deadline for ticket purchases is Dec. 15. Make sure to check out all the rules.



DEC. 31

Hunter Education

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is making it easier to complete the requirements necessary to become certified by the department's Hunter Education program. If a resident student has taken the online course from Oct. 1, 2019 to Aug. 28, 2024, they will have until Dec. 31, 2024, to complete an in-person or virtual field day before their certificate expires. ■



THE CREW

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Our waterways are ready, but are you?

To learn more about boating safely in Arizona visit 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



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See The Season Sparkle

Lighted boat parades welcome Christmas.

Lake Havasu City, Ariz.

The 2024 Lake Havasu City Holiday Boat Parade of Lights will take place on Saturday, December 14, from 6–9 PM. The parade will feature over 100 decorated boats that will pass under the London Bridge in the Bridgewater Channel. The event is free to view.

The parade is a popular holiday event in Lake Havasu City. The boats are a dazzling display of creativity and holiday spirit. The parade launches from the Riviera Marina, and there will also be a dock event on Friday night at the Riviera.

If you want to enter your boat in the parade, you can contact JJ Gibbs at (928) 486-7073 or JJ_Gibbs@hotmail.com



December (December 14 at 5:30 p.m., 2024). Kick off this holiday tradition with SeaWorld's spectacular fireworks and enjoy the festive holiday boats parade on the bay from designated spectator viewing areas along the parade route. It's a night of magic, merriment, and cherished memories for the whole family. Looking to keep the holiday fun going all weekend long? Book a stay at one of our incredible resorts on the bay and make it a truly memorable family holiday weekend.

Mission Bay is getting festive with family fun spectator viewing areas along the parade route. Enjoy the best views of the decorated boats while you enjoy holiday-themed Mission Bay hospitality, including food and beverage service, holiday music, bonfire seating, entertainment for kids, and even a visit from Santa! There are boatloads of family fun on Mission Bay.

Tempe Town Lake, Ariz.

Light up the night and be dazzled this holiday season at Tempe Town Lake on Dec. 14, 2024. The Fantasy of Lights Boat Parade at Tempe Town Lake is the Valley's most unique holiday event and celebrated tradition. Enjoy holiday shopping, festive eats and treats, a dazzling boat parade featuring boats of all shapes and sizes and a spectacular fireworks show. This is a FREE and family-friendly event.

Visit the Fantasy of Lights Boat Parade website for updates. For more information on events in Tempe, visit our Tempe Events page or call 480-355-6060. <https://www.tempetourism.com/events/fantasy-of-lights-boat-parade/>

Tempe Town Lake 80 W. Rio Salado Parkway, Tempe, 85281

Mission Bay, Calif.

This festive boat parade on beautiful Mission Bay takes place annually each

Newport Beach, Calif.

In addition to the beautiful boats sailing through the harbor, all waterfront homes, businesses and yacht clubs are encouraged to participate in the "Ring of Lights." In past years, many homes, businesses and yacht clubs have gone to great

BOAT PARADES, continued on page 5

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The BoatUS Foundation "Turning the Tide Online" virtual summit Feb. 25-27 hopes to seek out more sustainable boating-related waste stream solutions, such as finding better solutions for end-of-life or derelict fiberglass boats.

BoatUS Foundation Seeks Experts To Speak About Boating-Related Waste Streams

Apply now to present at the "Turning the Tide Online" virtual summit, Feb. 25-27, 2025

The non-profit BoatUS Foundation will host the first-ever "Turning the Tide Online" summit Feb. 25-27, 2025 to discuss sustainable boating-related waste management solutions and is [calling for speakers](#) to present. The goal of the summit is to join boaters, recyclers, marine professionals and waste management experts to find solutions and revolutionize best practices for responsible, sustainable boating-related waste removal and disposal.

Topics include disposal of fiberglass, shrinkwrap, pyrotechnic flares, fishing gear, and debris caught in "trash interceptors" – culvert gates and floating trash receptacles that trap both recyclable and degraded plastics and marine debris. Speakers are also encouraged to share insights into how boating-related debris disposal challenges impact waters in underserved communities.

Event participation is open to individuals, academics, organizations, and industry or business leaders who are encouraged to complete an online form for initial evaluation. Applications to serve as



The BoatUS Foundation "Turning the Tide Online" virtual summit Feb. 25-27 hopes to seek out solutions for boating industry-generated waste, such as boat shrinkwrap.

a speaker are due Nov. 22, 2024. Applicants may include an individual presentation or note their interest in participating on a panel discussion. Applicants may also use this opportunity to share a poster/display that explores responsible and sustainable boating-related waste disposal.

"Our conference aims to highlight successful, sustainable solutions as well as new and innovative ideas both within and beyond the boating industry," said Alanna

WASTE, continued on page 7

BOAT PARADES

Continued from page 4

extents to decorate their properties and add to the festive feel of the boat parade.

Hosted by the Commodores Club of the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce, all homes, businesses, and yacht clubs lining the harbor are invited to enter. With its own judged categories and prizes awarded, the Ring of Lights has become as celebrated as the boat parade itself. In addition for the chance to win an award, registrants have a chance to appear in the live broadcast of the parade.

For specific entry questions, please call the Chamber at (949) 729-4400. Entry fee is \$35.

San Diego, Calif.

The 54th Annual San Diego Bay Parade of Lights announces its theme: PEACE ON EARTH. The San Diego Bay Parade of Lights is a time-honored holiday tradition brought to San Diego by the boating community. Continuing its long-standing

San Diego tradition, the 54th annual San Diego Bay Parade of Lights promises to dazzle and entertain bay-front crowds during two evenings on December 8 and December 15, 2024. Participants in this year's highly anticipated holiday boat parade will decorate their boats to fit this year's theme.

The San Diego Bay Parade of Lights brings more than 100,000 San Diego residents and visitors to the shores of San Diego Bay each year. The procession of approximately 80 lavishly decorated boats has become one of the most iconic events in the region. There is no cost to view the parade.

This year, for the sixth time, the parade will proceed to the pier at Cesar Chavez Park before making the turn to Coronado, giving spectators another area to view the parade. The procession will start at 5:30 p.m. and will follow the predetermined parade route.

The parade takes approximately one hour to one and a half hours to pass any given point along the parade route. Please send questions or comments to sdparadeoflights@gmail.com. ■

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Pilot Program Strives To Make Borrowing A Life Jacket Easier

DECKEE mobile app aims to help increase life jacket wear rates.

The nonprofit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water and the National Safe Boating Council, which provides national boating safety outreach, have teamed up with boating app provider DECKEE to make it easier to find and borrow child- or adult-sized life jackets for temporary use, such as for a day or weekend, with the goal of increasing life jacket wear and boating safety.

This pilot program has integrated the BoatUS Foundation's more than 600 life jacket loaner sites across the nation into the simple-to-use DECKEE app, allowing boaters to find their closest BoatUS Foundation loaner site on a map – highlighted by the BoatUS logo – or be notified when

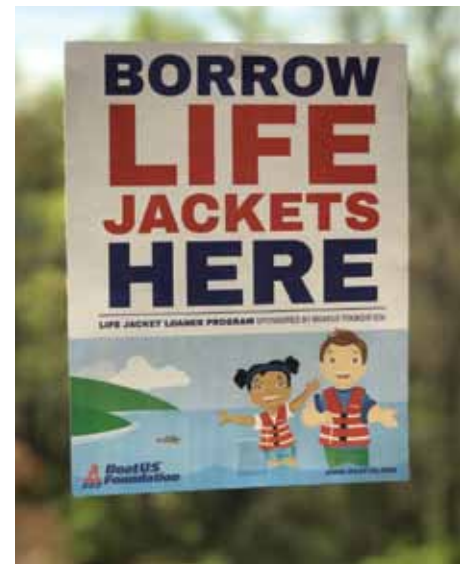
they are near a BoatUS Foundation Life Jacket Loaner location.

"It's a great way to find a life jacket loaner if you have unexpected guests aboard," said BoatUS Foundation program manager Alan Dennison. The Foundation's loaner database includes more than 600 free kids' Life Jacket Loaner Program sites at marinas, boat clubs, campgrounds, marinas, firehouses and TowBoatUS companies. "We really want to make it easier for families to get the right size life jackets, whether infant, child, teen or adult," he added. The program loans out more than 140,000 life jackets annually.

Said Peg Phillips, executive director of the National Safe Boating Council: "The pilot app project with DECKEE and the BoatUS Foundation will help give us an accurate and scalable way to measure the influence of ongoing outreach programs. For example, a notification that comes as a gentle reminder of a nearby life jacket loaner site may reinforce or prompt increased life jacket wear by kids and adults."

In 2023, statistics show 75% of fatal boating accident victims drowned (where the cause of death was known). Of those, 87% were not wearing a life jacket.

The DECKEE app is available for free for iOS and Android devices. For



SAFETY FIRST — A new pilot program aims to make it easier for boaters to borrow life jackets for the day or weekend to encourage wear.

more information on the BoatUS Foundation Kids Life Jacket Loaner program, go BoatUS.org/LJLP. ■

Dog Life Jacket Shopping Tips

Your canine crew can come in all shapes and sizes, so learn how to pick the right personal flotation device (PFD) for your cherished companion

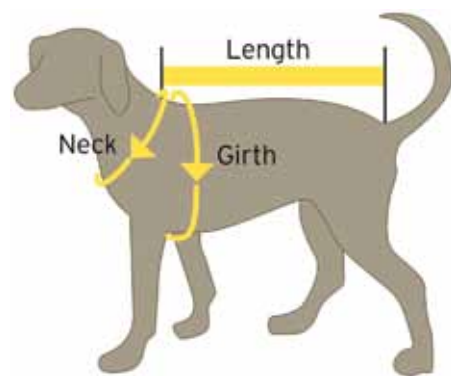
BY RICH ARMSTRONG,
BOATU.S. MAGAZINE SENIOR EDITOR

Dog owners love to brag about how good their pooch can swim, but even true "water dogs" can only doggie paddle for so long before exhaustion sets in and drowning becomes imminent. Although it's not a legal requirement, BoatU.S. encourages all boaters to outfit their dogs with a life jacket — and put it on them every time — whether on the docks or out on the water.

There are well over a dozen brands of canine life jackets, each with its own design details. Unlike human life jackets, where Coast Guard certification is the gold standard, there are no standards for dog life jackets. Here are some features you should look for:

Handle(s): Regardless of size, chances are you'll have to lift your dog out of the water and back onto the boat. Most brands have a handle on the top center of the jacket aligned with your dog's spine, so you can pick him up (like a briefcase). Some designs for larger dogs incorporate two handles. Keep in mind the added weight of a wet dog. Check the handle stitching (preferably double stitching), since it's going to be put under a lot of strain.

Buoyancy: Superior dog life jackets have flotation under the belly as well as on the back and sides. Some jackets have



To zero in on the perfect size for your pooch, use a ribbon-like tailor's tape to take the following measurements: 1. GIRTH (most important) – dog's chest at the widest point just behind the front legs, 2. NECK – around the base of at the widest point, 3. LENGTH – base of neck (at the bottom of the collar) to base of tail Write down these three measurements, along with your dog's weight, since they'll help you determine which size to order. Just like for human wardrobes, "medium" in one manufacturer may be different from another.

flotation sections under the neck to help keep your dog's head above water.

Color: Earth tones may look cooler on your boat, but should your four-legged buddy go overboard, high visibility is essential. Bright colors, preferably with a reflective strip, make a dog easier to spot in the water.

D-ring: This is a nice feature to look for, so you can attach a leash.

Straps: In general, the more adjustments, buckles, and closures, the better the final fit. Touch tape closures work well, and they're easier to put on and take off, but consider that they tend to attract hair/fur and need cleaning so they maintain their cling. For straps, the wider the



STACEY NEDROW-WIGMORE | BOATU.S.

Whether on the dock, or on deck while under way, keeping Rover safe from drowning gives any skipper great peace of mind.

better, since they're less likely to chafe your dog. Straps under the belly should be padded. And you don't want an excessively long dangling straps after fitting, since they're just asking to be chewed or could get tangled on something.

Size and fit: Make sure you're purchasing a dog life jacket that is the proper size for your dog, so a prepurchase fitting is ideal. Stores like West Marine, Petco,

and PetSmart allow customers to bring in their dogs to try on life jackets.

This article was reprinted with permission from BoatU.S. Magazine, flagship publication of the membership organization Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatU.S.). For more expert articles and videos to make your boating, sailing, or fishing better, visit BoatUS.com. ■

WASTE

Continued from page 5

Keating, BoatUS Foundation's director of outreach. "We hope to uncover best practices in industries such as agriculture, construction, packaging, waste management and recycling, fishing, wind power or any industry that may have an impact on these waste streams. We're really looking to advance actionable solutions."

The online summit is part of a four-year, \$10 million grant to the nonprofit BoatUS Foundation from the National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration Marine Debris Program. Grant funding is provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and will help clean up the nation's coasts and Great Lakes and improve navigation safety by removing abandoned/derelict vessels, while also seeking disposal solutions for all types of marine debris.

A mix of live and prerecorded sessions will be offered at the online summit from speakers and panels, each from 15 to 45 minutes, along with posters, infographics or other displays.

For more information and to apply go to BoatUS.org/advgrant. ■

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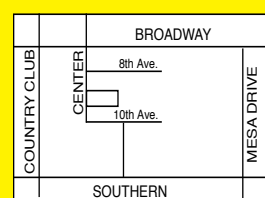
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It's A Great Place To Visit And To Fish

BY M.L.ANDERSON

Lake Havasu on the Colorado River is a fantastic place to visit – it has great fishing, beautiful views, plenty of places to stay and play -- and the London Bridge.

The London Bridge

In the 1930s, the construction of Parker Cam created Lake Havasu. During World War II an R and R camp for the armed forces was built on a peninsula. A developer named McCulloch bought 26 square miles of desert (the current site of Lake Havasu City), and in 1968 he bought the London Bridge and had it dismantled and shipped to the desert.

By 1971 the bridge had been re-assembled at Lake Havasu, and the land under it was dredged out to form a channel, turning the peninsula into an island connected to the mainland by the London Bridge.



Havasu has rocks, coves, bulrushes, river areas, and just about any other kind of cover and structure to fish that you can think of!

Keep Your Eyes On The Graph

The main lake basin is good place to start this time of year – Dean likes the Pilot Rock or Steamboat area, then south toward the Bill Williams. The river areas actually warm up first because the water isn't as clear. Fish the primary points with a Carolina rig, drop shot, or Tokyo rig. The bass stage on those points in fifteen to twenty-five feet until they move up to spawn.

A good old-fashioned split shot rig is another great way to catch bass in early spring – try the humps and reefs around Site Six and long main-lake points in about twenty-five feet of water. When you're fishing these long points you can be fifty yards or more from shore. Keep your eyes on the graph to make sure you stay on the structure, and be patient.

If The Weather Is Clear —

If the weather is clear and calm, go

HAVASU, continued on page 10



Lake Havasu is a gorgeous place to fish. Wayne Crowder and John are fishing shallow here — in winter!

Today you can drive your boat under the London Bridge, and the shores of the channel are a popular place for boats to beach.

Fishing Is Excellent Here

Havasu has excellent largemouth and smallmouth bass fishing year-round, with daily high temperatures averaging from 64F in January to 109F in July. Fair skies are almost a guarantee – Havasu generally receives less than four inches of rain per year. At maximum pool, Havasu is over twenty-six miles long and covers over 19,000 acres. Both of the river ends of Havasu – Bill Williams in the south and the Colorado in the north – have an abundance of thick tules that stretch for what looks like miles and miles.

Spring

When western anglers talk about Havasu, the name Roy Hawk usually comes up sooner rather than later – he's made a name for himself fishing tournaments out West, and especially on Lake Havasu. "Havasu is best in the spring," he says, "when the fish are up on beds". In the spring, Roy fishes the shallows and bays, and the pockets up in the river. When the fish move off the beds, he says, they often move out to the planted structure or grass beds and rocky points.

Planted Structure

There is a lot of planted structure in Havasu, and that structure has vastly improved the fishing. Much of that structure is clearly visible from a boat. Hawk's favorite man-made habitat is brush bundles, the lower-lying ones. They deteriorate, so you have to hunt for the deeper ones with your graph. The artificial habitat started



Wayne Crowder caught this bass from offshore structure at Havasu in January.

going in during the mid '90s, and one of the ways they help is by giving the fry a place to hide.

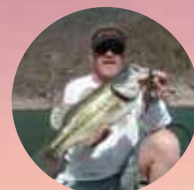
The backs of coves and pockets in the river provide some of the best fishing in the spring. Sight fishing with tube baits and also throwing buzzbaits and topwater lures over weeds are two of the best producers. Jerkbait on secondary points also produce plenty of bass, and so do rattling lipless cranks, spinnerbaits, and shad-colored Senkos.

Dean Farrell Likes The North End

Dean Farrell, an Arizona tournament fisherman, likes to fish the north end of Havasu in the Colorado River, especially in the spring, because if the river bite is on, that's where the tournaments will be

won. Dean says that swimming in current all the time makes the river fish bigger and stronger. Farrell asserts that the fishing in the river end is good off and on all year long, but particularly good when the water is up. When the water is low, it can be difficult to get into the backwaters.

The smallmouth in Havasu spawn earlier than the largemouth do, and they also spawn in deeper water. When the water temperature reaches about 58 degrees, locals start to look for smallmouth beds in at least ten feet of water. These beds are easy to spot because they are as much as three times bigger than a typical largemouth bed, and they are go clear to the rock, making them very easy to spot in the clear water of Havasu's main lake basin.



FISHING



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f i y t d

HAVASU

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with finesse baits and fish very slowly. Once the fish go into the active pre-spawn mode, you can start using crankbaits, jerkbaits, and other reaction baits. The largemouth bass are more likely to spawn in the backwaters on shallow sandy banks. You can easily miss the entrances to these backwaters, and if the water is low you may have to pole your way in. Your best bet is to cruise the banks slowly and watch for the small channels that will allow you access to the backwaters.

Mohave Valley resident Mike Baldwin likes the coves near the north end of the lake when the largemouth are spawning, and he'll fish a Pointer 78 (a shallow jerk-bait), but fairly slowly. There are man-made brush piles in this area that hold fish, he says. From the Arizona Channel to Blankenship is the first area where the largemouth will spawn, he says, and there is a series of coves going up this area. He also fishes the rocky points along the way.

Summer

In the summer, Roy Hawk throws crankbaits and topwater and just covers water until he finds the fish. Once he's had some interest, he'll slow down and throw a Texas rig or a weightless Senko. Green pumpkin and smoke colors are his favorites. He fishes a lot of evening and night tournaments this time of year, and catches most of his fish on crankbaits and topwater baits in those tournaments.

Mike Baldwin Fishes Here Year Long

My buddy Mike Baldwin fishes Havasu all year long and he loves to throw spinnerbaits along the tulle line in summer and on through the fall. He also does a lot of flipping this time of year, to root out those bass that are tucked deep into the shade of the tules. The problem

with fishing tules at Havasu is that there are literally miles and miles of them. Mike fine tunes his tulle fishing by searching for the spots along the tules that have darker water. Dark means deep, and the bass love to use those little deep holes near the tules – this water is four feet deep or so.

Dean Farrell says that another good summer technique is to fish the rocky banks in the Colorado, throwing crankbaits and spinnerbaits along the shore, and following up with jigs and worms. Good colors include anything with red on it, along with white and pink for crankbaits and spinnerbaits, with darker colors for worms and jigs.

All Is Sight Fishing

Dean says that his experience is that all the fishing at Havasu is sight fishing, no matter the time of year. He can usually see the bass down in the water, and the trick is to get them to bite without scaring them away. He keeps a 6-inch purple and red worm tied on at all times, on light line. When a bass comes out of the tules and hits his jig or his spinnerbait without taking it, he tosses that little worm in.

Lake Havasu has good weed beds until cold weather causes them to die off. They start growing early in the year, but sometimes they get so thick that they block off access to the backwaters by late summer. Try throwing topwater lures over those weeds in summer. Walk the Dog baits are particularly popular over the weeds and often produce explosive results. Havasu in the summer can be incredibly crowded with pleasure boaters, but nighttime is usually a lot more mellow and the fishing will be better.

Fall

Fall is a fantastic time for fishing on Havasu, and it starts around October. The number one choice for bass at Havasu in the autumn is a buzzbait – you can throw it all day long this time of year, along with



Deb Blanchard with a bass caught in one of the many coves at Lake Havasu.

rip baits and topwater plugs. Flipping in the Colorado is another go-to technique this time of year. Water level has a lot to do with it – if the water is high, you can fish the river, but if it's low most anglers stick to the main lake area.

The backwater areas in the Colorado are fantastic areas to fish, but in the fall they can be tough to get to because of water levels and the weeds that haven't died off yet. Narrow trails through the tules lead to beautiful pools that are impossible to see from the channel, and these quiet pools often hold the biggest fish in the lake.

I've poled through to some pools that were unbelievably gorgeous, with vivid turquoise water that is so clear and bright it looks fake. In places, the steep red rock walls and the thick tules make it seem like you're in another world. Even the boats racing down the channel sound like they are miles away. It can be a risk, but it can pay off if you have the nerve.

Crankbaits: A Fall Favorite

A Havasu guide told me that the fish go into these backwaters in the fall and hang out there until the water temperature reaches the '50s. He loves rattling lipless crankbaits this time of year in the backwaters – a blue and chrome one is his favorite, and he says the fish "just inhale it to death!" Rip it as fast as you can, then stop it. The bass try to rip the rod out of your hand when you stop it, he says.

Roy Hawk also favors crankbaits in the fall, and he says the crankbait bite can be amazing, sometimes with cast after cast producing a nice fish, with a mix of largemouth and smallmouth bass. You can often find active fish like this, and when they do slow down, he switches to a light Carolina rig with a 5-inch Yamamoto grub or a Yamamoto Stretch 40, which is like a Senko with a curly tail.

Winter

Hawk says that in the winter things slow down tremendously on Havasu, and small baits like a Yamamoto Grub or Ika, or a Spro Phat Fly work very well, especially for smallmouth. He loves to swim that little Phat Fly bucktail jig and his favorite colors for all baits this time of year is shad or green pumpkin. Fortunately, winter is short on the lower Colorado river, and by February things are picking up again, so when it is winter in most of the country, it's early spring on Havasu.

In the early part of the year the lower water level forces the fish to come out of the tules, so fishing improves in the Bill Williams River. In fact, the cold-weather fishing is so good around the Bill Williams that it can get crowded. Flipping black and blue or pumpkin jigs along the edges of the tules in this area is a good way to catch bass.

Fish Backwaters Now

This is the time of year to fish those backwaters because they warm up first, especially in the Colorado end. A Havasu guide once told me that you can fish shallow all year long on Havasu because it is basically a river and the fish don't go deep as a rule. Jigs are fantastic baits in January and February – throw them right to shore and work them slowly down to about ten feet, concentrating on rocky areas, tules, and points. If you can get into the backwater areas, you can pitch jigs around in there, too. Once the water starts to warm up, tube lures will start to out-produce the jigs.

Havasu Is An Ideal Destination Lake

There really isn't a bad time to fish Havasu. With so many different types of structure and cover, Havasu can be richly rewarding if you're willing to put in a little work. Fabulous weather and great fishing make Havasu an ideal destination lake. ■

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Tourism To Grand Canyon National Park Contributed \$768 Million To Local Economy

Report shows visitor spending supports 10,100 local jobs.

A new National Park Service report shows that 4.7 million visitors to Grand Canyon National Park in 2023 spent \$768 million in communities near the park. That spending supported 10,100 jobs in the local area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$1.0 billion.

"I'm so proud that our parks and the stories we tell make a lasting impact on more than 300 million visitors a year," said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. "And I'm just as proud to see those visitors making positive impacts of their own, by supporting local economies and jobs in every state in the country."

"We're excited to see how the Grand Canyon continues to drive economic growth in our local communities," said Grand Canyon Superintendent Ed Keable. "The spending by our visitors not only underscores the park's allure but also highlights its vital role in supporting jobs

and boosting the regional economy."

The National Park Service report, 2023 National Park Visitor Spending Effects, finds that 325.5 million visitors spent \$26.4 billion in communities near national parks. This spending supported 415,400 jobs, provided \$19.4 billion in labor income and \$55.6 billion in economic output to the U.S. economy. The lodging sector had the highest direct contributions with \$9.9 billion in economic output and 89,200 jobs. The restaurants received the next greatest direct contributions with \$5.2 billion in economic output and 68,600 jobs.

An interactive tool is available to explore visitor spending, jobs, labor income, and total economic contribution by sector for national, state and local economies. Users can also view year-by-year trend

TOURISM, continued on page 13



COVER

Continued from page 1

tivities, thoughts turn to anticipation of holiday events such as the lighted boat parades in Arizona and California and, locally, to families and friends making plans to cut their own Christmas trees.

Time flies by quickly during this season and soon we will be welcoming a new year. And, on an editorial thought, my wish is that our country will heal and regain its strength after November 5. ■

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SHOOTING

Continued from page 1

volves shooting clay targets in rounds of 25 from five stands, with each shooter rotating from station to station. Clay targets are thrown in a predetermined pattern that is indicated on a menu. 5-Stand uses six to eight machines and simulates game-bird hunting.

The cost for this shooting opportunity

CRANES

Continued from page 1

Across the globe, there are 15 species of cranes. Two species of cranes are found in North America — sandhill, the most abundant species, and the endangered whooping crane.

Sandhills are wary birds that shy away from areas of dense vegetation that may conceal predators. Cranes prefer to feed and roost in open areas where potential danger can be seen from a distance.

The cranes will begin to leave the wildlife area between late February and the middle of March. By April, all of the birds will be on their way to their northern nesting grounds, some as far away as Siberia.

For more information about wildlife viewing, visit www.azgfd.com/wildlife-conservation/wildlife-viewing/. ■

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is the price of the clay targets. Customers are encouraged to purchase a Gold Card before 7 p.m., when the facility closes Thursday nights. A Gold Card is a preloaded target card that has a one-time cost of \$15. That target card then is used to load a minimum of \$100 in clay targets (about 350). As an added bonus, the target card can be kept indefinitely and used anywhere at the Clay Target Center.

A Reminder

As a reminder, all firearms must be cased before entering the course. Customers are responsible for picking up their

spent casings. Eyewear and hearing protection are required.

The Clay Target Center is a professionally managed public shotgun-shooting facility, located at 5060 W. Skeet St. (about 1.5 miles west of Interstate 17 on West Carefree Highway) in north Phoenix. Hours: 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Closed Monday. For more information, call 623-582-8313, or visit <https://www.azgfd.com/shooting-sports/ben-avery-shooting-facility>. ■

TREES

Continued from page 1

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1009 East Highway 260
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Areas Closed To Christmas Tree Cutting

- Trees may not be cut on private property, trailheads, and campgrounds
- Christmas Tree Permit Regulations
- When taking a Christmas tree from the National Forest, please observe the following permit requirements. Failure to do so is a violation.
 - Each permit is for one tree.
 - Sales are final and non-refundable.
 - Attach the permit to a bottom branch of the tree as soon as it is cut down and before leaving the cutting area. If you purchased an online permit, make sure it is visible on your dashboard.
 - Transport the tree so the permit is clearly visible from outside your vehicle.
 - Don't top trees by leaving the lower part of the tree standing. Leave a stump less than six inches and cut below the lowest live limb.
 - Use boughs from the lower section of the tree you cut, NOT from other live trees.

- Do NOT cut trees greater than 10 feet in height.
- Do NOT cut trees that are more than six inches in diameter at the stump.
- Scatter any unwanted branches to lie 24" or less from the ground.
- This permit allows you to also collect boughs and pinecones for decorations if you wish.

Safety Suggestions

- Check with the local Forest Service office for recent site and road information.
- Park safely on a highway pullout or off a Forest Road. Do not park where your vehicle can be hit by a falling tree.
- Check maps to be sure of your location. Cutting on private land is trespassing!
- Have a full tank of gas and use snow tires. Bring chains and a shovel.
- Stay out of the forest when there are strong winds.
- Use caution when felling your tree!
- There is no cell phone coverage in many areas of the forest, so plan accordingly.
- Dress warmly and bring food, extra water, a blanket, and a first aid
- If you get stranded, stay with your group and your vehicle. Keep a window open while using your car heater.

Harvesting Your Tree

- Choose a tree that is growing with other trees in a cluster. Leave the "perfect" trees to grow and provide for a healthy genetic source for the future forest.
 - Leave the site looking as undisturbed as possible and take your trash home with you.
- Enjoy yourself and have a Happy Holiday Season! ■

PORT LAND CRUISING

Enjoy These Two Seasonal Favorites

Zoo Lights

ZooLights at the Phoenix Zoo is back! This beloved holiday tradition features millions of twinkling lights, new animal lanterns and light displays. There's also an enhanced Santa experience and the return of the tallest floating tree in North America, showcasing original music and a synchronized light show.

You can also enjoy the enhanced s'mores station, explore the interactive Glow Garden and stroll through the immersive 200-foot-long light tunnel. And, of course, Santa will be there for photo ops!

View the Phoenix Zoo event website for additional details.

For more information on events in Tempe, visit our Tempe Events Page.



Las Noches de Las Luminarias

Experience the simplicity and beauty of Las Noches de las Luminarias this holiday season with 8,000 flickering luminarias and twinkling lights throughout the Desert Botanical Garden. Enjoy an evening filled with sparkling luminarias,



TEMPE TOURISM

musical performances, entertainment and holiday delights line the Garden's iconic trails for a picture-perfect night. This is one event you don't want to miss!

This year, the Garden is excited to present an even more dazzling experience with LIGHT BLOOM by HYBY-COZO, where nature and light merge into stunning geometric displays. Bring

your loved ones and create unforgettable holiday memories at the Garden.

DATES: Nov. 29-30 | Dec. 1, Dec. 6-7, 13-15, 18-23, 26-30

Visit the Desert Botanical Garden website to purchase tickets.

For more information on events in Tempe, visit our Tempe Events Page. ■

Havasu Events Celebrate Holidays



13th Annual Sand, Water & RV Expo

- One Event on November 15th, 2024 at 11:00 am
- One Event on November 16th, 2024 at 9:00 am
- Lake Havasu State Park, Windsor 4 171 London Bridge Rd., Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403
- The annual Sand, Water and RV Expo will return for another epic display of all toys sand and water!
- Admission is \$10 (cash only at the door, children 10 years old and younger are free)

River Riders M/C 41st Annual Toy Run

- December 8th, 2024 @ 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm



- Flying X Saloon, 2030 McCulloch Blvd. N, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403
- flyingxsaloon.com | Admission Price: One toy per rider, one toy per passenger
- Meet the River Riders Motorcycle Club and about 1,500+ of your friends and neighbors at Pirate's Den in Parker (Arizona side) before noon for the Annual Toy Run! The event features more than 1,800 bikes and about 5,000 people on the boulevard, and participants donated well over 3,000 toys.
- At 12 pm sharp, depart from the Pirate's Den in Parker (Arizona side) for a leisurely putt to the Flying X Saloon in Lake Havasu City (2030 N. McCulloch Blvd.) where toys will be collected for distribution to children whose families are experiencing difficult times.
- All street-legal motorcycles and trikes

are welcome to participate and please arrive early so everyone can ride together.

• All new, unwrapped toys will be collected at the end of the run.

• There will be plenty of food and a live band at the finish. Don't miss out on the 50/50 drawing

Spectators who wish to line Main Street to watch the River Riders pull in are invited to come down to McCulloch Blvd N at 12:30 pm

• While you are out and about, make sure to stop by the New Horizons beer

garden by Flying X Saloon from noon to 4pm; all proceeds will go to New Horizons.

McCulloch Blvd will be closed from Smoketree Ave to Acoma Blvd. There will be plenty of spectator parking behind the businesses off of Mesquite Ave or Swanson Ave. Please plan accordingly. Event dates, times and/or details are subject to change. Please contact event coordinator to verify information.

EVENTS, continued on page 19

Algae Bloom At Lake Powell Reported

PAGE, Arizona – Algal blooms have been reported scattered around Glen Canyon National Recreation Area this fall. Certain species of algae and phytoplankton can produce toxins that may cause illness in humans, pets and wildlife.

Algal blooms can occur for a variety of reasons. Warm, still water is the perfect breeding ground for cyanobacteria and the addition of nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus that enter the lake from outside sources, encourage the growth of algae and bacteria.

Some may be harmless, but please follow the following guidelines on how to stay safe during Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs).

- Don't swim in water that has an algal bloom.
- Don't boat, water ski, or jet-ski on scummy water. These activities can cause toxins to become airborne, increasing the likelihood you will inhale them.
- Keep children away from scum in the water or along the shore.
- Keep pets or livestock from swimming or drinking from scummy waters.
- Always take a shower after coming into contact with any surface water whether or not an algal bloom appears to be present. Rinse/wash animals immediately if they swim in scummy water and don't let them lick their fur.

For additional information, please see our website at: <https://www.nps.gov/glca/learn/news/lpp.htm> ■

TOURISM

Continued from page 12

data. The interactive tool and report are available on the NPS website.

To learn more about national parks in Arizona and how the National Park Service works with state name communities to help preserve local history, conserve the environment, and provide outdoor recreation, go to www.nps.gov/arizona. ■


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A new raffle and pot will commence at 12:00 am on the first of the month. Buyers through 11:59 pm on the last day of the month will have a chance to win before the pot is closed and reset.

There are no limits on the number of tickets sold or the number any one person can purchase. Winner will be drawn Sat random and announced on or before hte 5th of the month. All purchasers must be at least 21 years old.



The Poppy Symbolizes Veterans Honored And Remembered

Veterans Of Foreign Wars Buddy Poppy

Before Memorial Day in 1922, VFW conducted their first poppy distribution, becoming the first veterans' organization to organize a nationwide distribution. The poppy soon was adopted as the official memorial flower of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, as it remains today.

During our 1923 encampment, we decided that VFW "Buddy"® Poppies would be assembled by disabled and needy veterans who would be paid for their work to provide them with financial assistance. The next year, disabled veterans at the Buddy Poppy factory in Pittsburgh assembled VFW Buddy Poppies. The designation "Buddy Poppy" was adopted at that time.

In February 1924, we registered the name "Buddy Poppy" with the U.S. Patent Office. A certificate was issued on May 20, 1924, granting our organization all trademark rights in the name of Buddy under the classification of artificial flowers. We've made that trademark a guarantee that all poppies bearing that name and the VFW label are genuine products of the work of disabled and needy veterans. No other organization, firm or individual can legally use the name Buddy Poppy.

Today, our Buddy Poppies are still assembled by disabled and needy veterans



in VA Hospitals. The VFW Buddy Poppy program provides compensation to the veterans who assemble the poppies, provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs and partially supports the VFW National Home For Children. Show your support today. Host a Buddy Poppy drive in your town, or have your local government issue a special proclamation.

The American Legion's Poppy Story

After World War I, the poppy flourished in Europe. Scientists attributed the growth to soils in France and Belgium becoming enriched with lime from the rubble left by the war. From the dirt and mud grew a beautiful red poppy. The red poppy came to symbolize the blood shed during battle following the publication of the wartime poem "In Flanders Fields." The poem was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D. while serving on the front lines.

On September 27, 1920, the poppy became the official flower of The American Legion family to memorialize the soldiers who fought and died during the war. In 1924, the distribution of poppies became a national program of The American Legion.

Led by the American Legion Auxiliary, each year members of The American Legion Family distribute poppies with a request that the person receiving the flower make a donation to support the future of veterans, active-duty military personnel and their families with medical and financial needs.

Poppy Day is celebrated in countries around the world. The American Legion brought National Poppy Day® to the United States by asking Congress to des-



ignate the Friday before Memorial Day, as National Poppy Day. On May 28, Legion members urge the public to wear a red poppy to honor the fallen and support the living who have worn our nation's uniform.

Editor's Note: Canadians feature the poppy on November 11, which they designate as Remembrance Day. In the United States, many wear the poppy on both Veterans Day, November 11, and on National Poppy Day on the Friday before Memorial Day.

In Flanders Fields

BY JOHN MCCRAE

In Flanders fields the poppies blow,
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky,
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago,
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw,
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow,
In Flanders fields.



Editor's Note: In doing some research about this famous poem, I found the answers to several questions asked by today's public. Some of those follow here:

What does the poem In Flanders Fields mean?

"In Flanders Fields" is a poem written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian doctor and teacher, during the first World War. The poem describes poppies blooming between gravestones. The poppies represent the fallen soldiers, who died in the days before. They felt the sun, but now they lie beneath the ground.

Where are Flanders Fields located?

Flanders Fields, the name of World War I battlefields in the medieval County of Flanders, which spans southern Belgium and north-west France.

Why is the poem In Flanders Fields so important?

Its powerful use of the symbol of the poppies blooming from the churned earth led to the tradition, to this day, of the poppy as a symbol of remembrance for those killed in service. By 1917, "In Flanders Fields" was known throughout the English-speaking world. ■

'Red Dawn'

... Are We Doing This Already?

BY TOM COLE, MARINE RETIRED
SPECIAL FEATURES WRITER

In this time of political upheaval, global unrest and uncertainty many people today speculate that we may be heading towards WW III or a civil war. In many ways it seems as if we're headed that way, but could we already be readying this conflict or prep'ing for it? Could be! Let's take a look.

Weapons Of Today

The weapons of today are very technical; however, many are overlooked. Everything is weaponized.

- Communications companies are being bought up by billionaires on both sides of the political fence and many politicians are trying to squash those companies that lean a certain way politically in direct conflict with the First Amendment.
- We have driverless (some say kamikaze) cars ready to take out large portions of the population or even specific targets if so chosen. Flying cars are being developed and could be easily made to carry weapons.

- Money-without-money (bitcoin for one) could become a means to control people's finances and actually bankrupt people's accounts without their knowing or having control of their finances.

- Outside influences, Russia, China and Iran to mention a few, are all trying to destroy this country, control our politics and the way we think. Our major "news" stations contribute to the propaganda of these sworn enemies and add to all of the political lies that are fed us by the vast majority of our politicians.



- And let's not forget the newly coined phrase LAWFARE in the weaponization and politicization of the Justice department and other government agencies in order to harm and punish people of certain political beliefs. The current government wasted millions on the prosecution (persecution?) of citizens involved in the January 6 debacle, but seemingly turned a blind eye to the murderers, rapists and arsonists in Ferguson. Disgusting.

Are We At War Already?

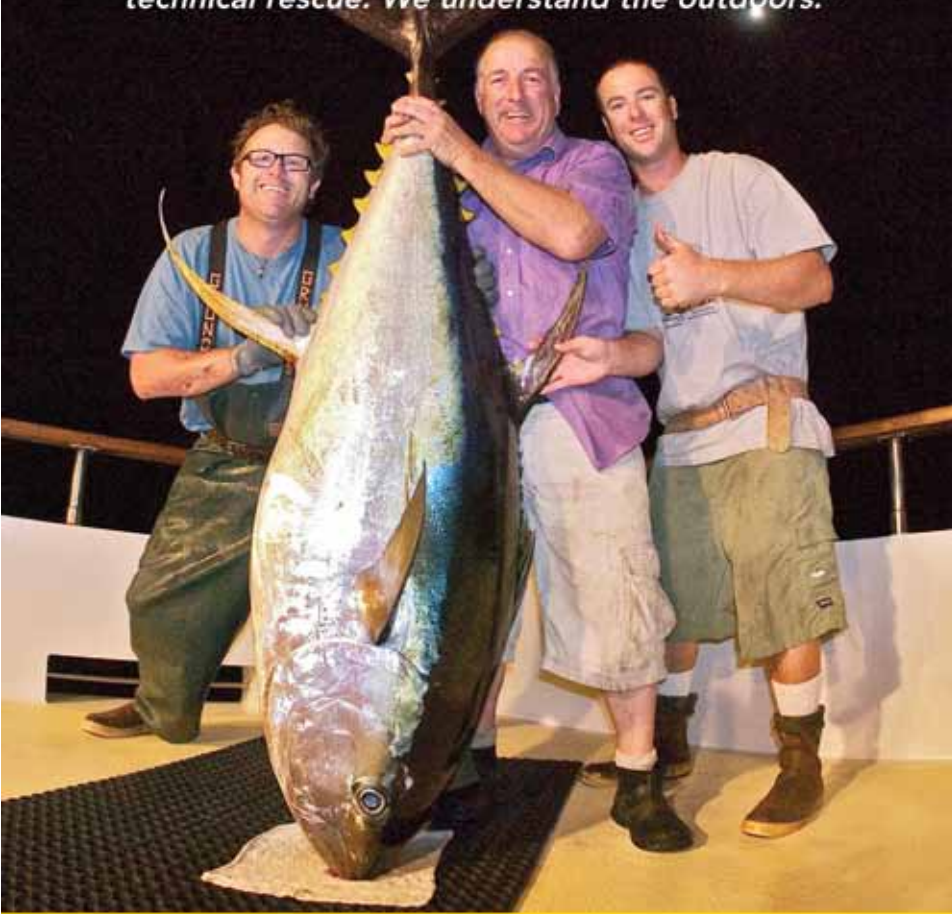
So given all this you might ask yourself in wonder ... are we at war already?

Tom Cole was born on Chicago's west side, graduated from high school in California, and is a retired USMC Master Sergeant ('69-'92). Cole served over twenty years in corporate America management, two years on the Kabul Embassy Security Forces in Afghanistan, has an Associate Degree in computer science, a Bachelor of Science, and an MBA. He has traveled around the world on ships and planes, and is a Golden Dragon, Shellback and Imperial Turtle. Cole is a Vietnam veteran, and was involved in an Iran rescue attempt and a Philippine coup attempt. Cole retired in 1992 after Desert Storm. We know him as a loyal husband, dad of five and grandpa of seven. In his own words, Cole describes himself as "a great BSer with a crazy sense of humor." ■

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No Wonder This Magnificent Bird Is Our Symbol!

Editor's Note: This article was sent to us by one of our readers. This is amazing! It is no wonder there are scriptural references to the eagle. And, no wonder the bald eagle has such a significant symbolism to our country. What hope!

Focus On Rebirth

The eagle can live up to 70 years. But, to reach this age, an eagle has to make a hard decision.

In its 40s, its long and flexible talons can no longer grab the prey that serves as its food. Its long and sharp beak becomes bent. Its old-age and heavy wings, due to the thick feathers, become stuck to its chest and make it difficult to fly. Then, the eagle is left with only two options: die or go through a painful process of change that lasts 150 days.

The process requires that the eagle fly to a mountain top and sit on its nest. There the eagle knocks its beak against a rock until it plucks it out. After plucking it out, the eagle will wait for a new beak to grow back, and then it will pluck out its talons. When the new talons grow back, the eagle starts plucking its old-age feathers.

And, after five months, the eagle takes its famous flight of rebirth and can now live for 30 more years.

Other Amazing Eagle Details

- When it rains, most birds head for shelter; the eagle is the only bird that, in order to avoid the rain, starts flying above the clouds.

- An amazing tidbit about the eagle's eyesight: The eagle can probably identify a rabbit moving almost a mile away. That means that an eagle flying at an altitude of 1,000 feet over open country could spot prey over an area of almost 3 square miles from a fixed position. ■

'Freedom' Is Her Name And Our Hope

FROM AN ANONYMOUS READER

Editor's Note: This is the kind of story you need, When it seems like the world is spiraling out of control. Not many people get a picture of this proud bird, snuggled up next to them!

Freedom and I have been together nearly a decade and a half this summer. She came in as a baby in 1998 with two broken wings. Her left wing doesn't open all the way even after surgery; It was broken in four places. She's my baby.

Freedom Has A Chance

When Freedom came in she could not stand and both wings were broken. She was emaciated and covered in lice. We made the decision to give her a chance at life. So I took her to the vet's office.

From then on, I was always around her. We had her in a huge dog carrier with the top off, and it was loaded up with shredded newspaper, for her to lie in. I used to sit and talk to her; Urging her to live, to fight; and she would lie there looking at me, with those big brown eyes.

Standing On Her Own

We also had to tube feed her for weeks. This went on for four to six weeks, and by then she still couldn't stand. It got to the point where the decision was made, to euthanize her, if she couldn't stand in a week. You know you don't want to cross that line; Between torture and rehab, and it looked like death was winning. She was going to be put down that Friday, and I was supposed to come in on that Thursday afternoon.

I didn't want to go to the center that Thursday — because I couldn't bear the thought of her being euthanized. But, I went anyway, and when I walked in, everyone was grinning from ear to ear. I went immediately back to her cage; and there she was, standing on her own, a big, beautiful eagle.

A Very Good Day

She was ready to live. I was just about in tears by then. That was a very good day. We knew she could never fly; So the



director asked me to glove train her. I got her used to the glove, and then to jesses, and we started doing education programs, for schools in western Washington. We wound up in the newspapers, radio (believe it or not) and some TV. *Miracle Pets* even did a show about us.

In the spring of 2000, I was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. I had stage 3; Which is not good (one major organ plus everywhere); So I wound up doing eight months of chemo. Lost the hair - the whole bit. I missed a lot of work. When I felt good enough, I would go to Sarvey and take Freedom out for walks. Freedom would also come to me in my dreams, and help me fight the cancer. This happened time and time again.

The Cancer Is Gone!

Fast forward to November 2000. The day after Thanksgiving, I went in for my last checkup. I was told that if the cancer was not all gone, after eight rounds of chemo, then my last option was a stem cell transplant. Anyway, they did the tests; and I had to come back Monday for the results. I went in Monday, and I was told that, ALL THE CANCER WAS GONE.

So the first thing I did was get up to Sarvey, and take the big girl out for a

walk. It was misty and cold. I went to her flight and jessed her up, and we went out front to the top of the hill.

A Magic Moment

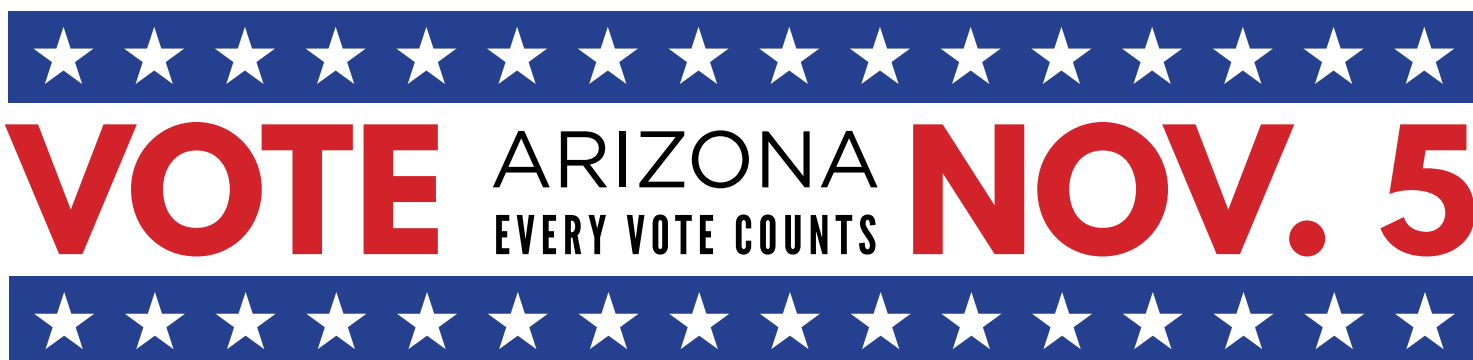
I hadn't said a word to Freedom; But somehow she knew. She looked at me and wrapped both her wings around me, to where I could feel them pressing in on my back, (I was engulfed in eagle wings), and she touched my nose with her beak, and stared into my eyes, and we just stood there like that for I don't know how long. That was a magic moment.

We have been soul mates ever since she came in. This is a very special bird.

On a side note: I have had people who were sick, come up to us when we are out, and Freedom has some kind of hold on them. I once had a guy who was terminal come up to us, and I let him hold her. His knees just about buckled, and he swore he could feel her power course through his body. I have so many stories like that.

I Will Never Forget

I will never forget the honor I have had of being so close to such a magnificent spirit as Freedom. ■



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Emotional Tribute To North Carolina's Rainbow Bridge Goes Viral After Hurricane Helene Washes Away Beloved Pet Memorial

"They all got to take one last swim together."

BY KAIT HANSON

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 1, 2024 IN SOUTHERN LIVING

Any animal lover who has lost a beloved pet is familiar with the Rainbow Bridge, a symbolic reference to the place where pets cross into eternity. When a pet dies, it is said to cross the Rainbow Bridge into a beautiful, peaceful place where it is healthy and happy again, awaiting the day it can be reunited with its owner in a comforting poem that is often shared with people grieving the loss of a pet.

But for some grieving pet parents, the Rainbow Bridge was a real place. Tucked away in the mountains of western North Carolina at Lake Lure Flowering Bridge near Chimney Rock, stood a rainbow-painted bridge created by artist Amy Wald in 2022. From its rails, the collars and tags of beloved pets dangled. Following the devastating flooding in the wake



of Hurricane Helene, the bridge has been washed away.

"The bridge itself was full of so much love," Emily Lauren, a photographer in Virginia, tells *Southern Living*. "You

could tell a lot of thought and love went into the entire place. When I got to the bottom of the stairs, I immediately started tearing up. There were hundreds, if not thousands, of collars. Some had their name tags still on them. Some had fur still on them."

Lauren visited the bridge this summer to leave the collar of her dog, Moa, a Great Pyrenees who passed away earlier this year at the age of 5.

<https://www.southernliving.com/hurricane-helene-washes-away-rainbow-bridge-at-lake-lure-8721300> ■

'Wild About Arizona'

Whether you're an avid outdoors recreationist, or just have a passion for wildlife, then don't miss the latest installment of "Wild About Arizona," the official podcast of the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD).

Join the department's wildlife veterinarian, Dr. Anne Justice-Allen, and host Michael Colaianni, public affairs and media relations director, as they discuss how the outdoors community can help AZGFD to monitor the threat of wildlife diseases, such as rabies and Chronic Wasting Disease.

Listen to the **podcast**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WB-N4oV86qg> ■

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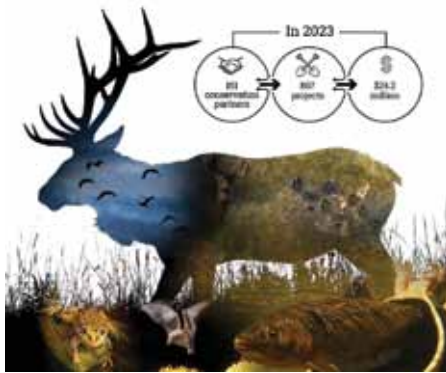
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AZGFD And Its Arizona Partners Put Record \$24 Million Into Wildlife Conservation In 2023

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), partnering with Arizona's wildlife conservation organizations, put a combined total of \$24.2 million into on-the-ground projects for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife conservation in 2023. Equally impressive to the dollar amount was the teamwork it took to make these projects happen: 151 conservation partners helped complete 867 distinct efforts. See the summary list of projects, funding amounts and partners.



A Great Achievement

"It's a great achievement, but we couldn't have done it without all of our partners," said Dan Sturla, AZGFD's Landowner Relations & Habitat Enhancement program manager. "It's all hands on deck to get that amount of money on the ground." Although project selection focused on those involving game species and projects that improved hunting and fishing opportunities throughout the state, many non-game species will benefit from this work as well.

"For example," said Kyle Duro, AZGFD habitat enhancement coordinator, "projects that involve removing encroaching woody vegetation from historic grasslands can benefit everything from pronghorn and elk to prairie dogs, ferrets, and other grassland obligate species."

Arizona-Specific

The summary list is Arizona-specific. While federal partners make significant contributions to the state's wildlife, this list highlights what was done by AZGFD and its in-state, non-governmental partners. "Although some of our efforts may include federal funding," said Sturla, "we wanted to focus this list on efforts led by non-federal partners." A record-breaking year of investment in Arizona's wildlife is exciting on its own and it's also helping build momentum for the future.

Next Year May Be Even Bigger

"As soon as good things are done for
WILDLIFE, continued on page 19

Four Young California Condors Take First Flight Into The Wild

VERMILLION CLIFFS, Ariz. – Partners in Arizona-Utah California Condor conservation, including the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), gathered at Vermilion Cliffs National Monument on Sept. 28 for the successful release of four captive-raised and endangered California condors into the wilds of far north Arizona.



GEORGE ANDREJKO

The Peregrine Fund and the Bureau of Land Management hosted the event in conjunction with National Public Lands Day. Cheers erupted from an enthusiastic crowd at the viewing site as each of the four birds left the holding area and took to the skies. Members of the public were also able to view the release on The Peregrine Fund's YouTube channel.

Raised By Foster Parents

The birds came from captive breeding sites where they were raised by foster condor parents. Three came from the Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Idaho and the fourth came from the Oregon Zoo. All four were more than ready to stretch their wings in the wild.

This year is the 28th annual release of condors at Vermilion Cliffs and marks a return to normalcy after an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) killed a large portion of the Arizona-Utah flock and prevented a release from happening in 2023.

An Important Release

HPAI was unexpected and devastating for the Arizona-Utah flock. But the persistent threat that the birds face year after year is lead poisoning. "Lead poisoning is population-limiting and it's one of the main reasons why we can't get a

self-sustaining condor population," said Brown, "so that's why we're taking this so seriously."

Educating Hunters

AZGFD is helping the condor population by educating hunters about the importance of lead-free ammunition and giving them incentives and discounts to help reduce lead ammunition on the landscape.

This endangered species certainly can use that help. By 1982, the total population of California condors world-wide had dwindled to just 22 birds. The only hope was to begin a captive breeding program and to initiate reintroduction of the species which began in 1992 in California, and 1996 in Arizona. As of this year, there are about 560 birds total, with two California populations, a population in Baja Mexico and the Utah-Arizona flock, which has just under 100 birds.

For now, the four new condors are settling in well with the Utah-Arizona flock and exploring their new home, which ranges from the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, all the way north to Zion National Park. ■

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WILDLIFE

Continued from page 18

wildlife, it grows and we bring in more and more partners,” said Jake Jaeger, AZGFD Landowner Relations program coordinator. “It wouldn’t surprise me if next year it’s even bigger.”

A few highlights of the conservation work benefitting Arizona and its wildlife:

Aquatic Projects

Almost \$2 million dollars for fish stockings, including 51 Community Fishing Program lakes across the state; wall-eye, crappie and largemouth bass stockings in Region 6; five Colorado river rainbow trout stockings; youth events; and more.

Over \$1.5 million for the operation and maintenance of fish hatcheries, enabling over 600 stockings of sport fish at 100 locations across Arizona.

\$124,000 for aquatic habitat enhancement, including 241 structures placed at Alamo Lake; fish habitat structures

installed in Show Low Lake; as well as structures installed in three reservoirs.

Terrestrial Projects

Over \$14 million for habitat enhancement and restoration, including 15,000 acres of grassland, browse, and forest restoration efforts to improve forage and habitat for a variety of wildlife; the removal of 44 acres of invasive tamarisk near I-85; restoration of Tacna Marsh; migratory bird crop planting; and increased public recreational access.

\$2.6 million in wildlife water building and repair, including a rain tank rebuild in Kaibab National Forest; constructing a wildlife water at Whitewater Draw; and redeveloping, constructing and performing major maintenance of wildlife waters statewide.

\$725,000 for big game population surveys.

Over \$200,000 in special projects, including monitoring deer and sheep for Gonzales pass crossing and translocating turkeys from Region 1 to Region 6. ■

EVENTS

Continued from page 13

Swim Race Across Bridgewater Channel

• November 29th, 2024 @ 6:00 - 6:30 pm

• London Bridge Resort, 1477 Queens Bay, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403

• Admission Price: Free

Enjoy an evening of entertainment as The Festival of Lights kicks off when the London Bridge Resort hosts a swim race across the Bridgewater Channel. Free to enter and open to swimmers of all ages — residents and visitors compete for the fastest time and the honor of flipping the switch to turn on the Festival of Lights of the English Village.

The swim course will move a little

south for the first time this year and take place in the Channel on the side of the London Bridge nearest to the London Bridge Resort!

Registration for the race takes place at 5pm on Nov 29 at the docks of the Heat Hotel, located directly across the channel from London Bridge Resort. It is free to register. The swim will then finish at the docks by the Dixie Bell, on the London Bridge Resort-side of the Channel. The swim race scheduled from 6-6:30pm with the Festival of Lights to commence immediately after. The first place swimmer will receive \$250, the second place will receive \$100 and the third place will receive \$50.

Come out and brave the Bridgewater Channel!

Event dates and times are subject to change. Please contact event coordinator to verify information. ■



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'Snowbirds' Return
To Whitewater



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