



Maricopa County, Phoenix fire bans begin May 1



Photo by: ABC15

By: [Ashley Loose](#)

Posted at 7:25 AM, Apr 30, 2022 and last updated 5:09 AM, May 01, 2022

PHOENIX — Multiple Valley fire bans are going into effect around the Valley as both temperatures and fire danger increase.

Starting Sunday, May 1, the [Phoenix](#) and [Maricopa County parks and recreation departments](#) are putting their annual open fire bans into effect. They are put in place "due to the extreme fire danger that the combination of low humidity, increased temperatures, excessive dry vegetation, and frequent high winds creates each spring," the Phoenix parks department says.

What the ban includes:

No open fires in the Phoenix's desert parks and mountain preserves (including Camelback Mountain, Deem Hills Recreation Area, Lookout Mountain, Papago Park, Phoenix Mountains Park and Recreation Area, Phoenix Mountains Preserve, Phoenix Sonoran Preserve, North Mountain Park, Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area, and South Mountain Park/Preserve). The ban does not apply to Phoenix's flatland parks.

- No open wood, charcoal fires or fire pits

- No smoking outside enclosed vehicles (prohibited year-round). Please use extra care with smoking materials and only dispose of them in your vehicle's ashtray.
- No fireworks (prohibited year-round)
- No campfires along Lake Pleasant shoreline

What is allowed:

- Propane and gas grills may be used, **ONLY** in established picnic areas

The ban is in effect through September 30, Maricopa County's department says, though it may be extended. Additional temporary fire bans may be put in place during Red Flag Warnings and other conditions leading to extreme fire danger.

Fire ban in Phoenix's desert parks, preserves begins May 1

By FOX 10 Staff

Published April 30, 2022

Fire ban in Phoenix parks begins May 1

PHOENIX - A [fire ban](#) will go into effect at Phoenix's desert parks and mountains starting on May 1 as temperatures continue to rise across the Valley.

Smoking and charcoal fires are included in the ban, and [Maricopa County's](#) fire ban for their regional parks also go into effect on Saturday.

The annual ban includes the following parks and preserves:

- Camelback Mountain
- Deem Hills Recreation Area
- Lookout Mountain
- Papago Park

- Phoenix Mountains Park and Recreation Area
- Phoenix Mountains Preserve
- Phoenix Sonoran Preserve
- North Mountain Park
- Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area
- South Mountain Park/Preserve.

Propane and gas grills can only be used in established picnic areas, and the ban does not apply to Phoenix's flatland parks.

Residents living near the preserves are advised to remove dead shrubs and grasses within a 10-foot radius around the border of their property in order to help protect their homes from potential brush fires.

Currently, 86% of the state is experiencing severe drought, according to Maricopa County Parks and Recreation.

Hiking safety tips

- Stay on the trail.
- Hike with a friend.
- If you're hiking alone, tell someone where you're going.
- Don't forget your cell phone.
- Hydrate before, after and during a hike
- If hiking with a pet, make sure their paws are protected and that there's enough water for you and them.

Where to hike, soak, and experience Phoenix's great outdoors

Uncover petroglyphs and hot springs as you release your inner adventurer



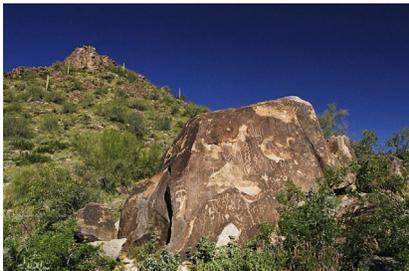
By Visit Phoenix
Apr 28th 2022

The Sonoran Desert can be both mysterious and magical. Stories of lost treasure, unique plants and animals, ancient ruins, and some of the most beautiful scenery in the U.S. creates an aura of enchantment that can bring out anyone’s inner adventurer. Whether you’re soaking in the hot springs or pondering the meaning of ancient petroglyphs, there are many ways to immerse yourself in Phoenix’s fascinating past.

From seriously large cacti and geological wonders to hiking trails, here are eight places to hike, soak, and experience the Arizona desert in and around Greater Phoenix.

Bring plenty of water, wear a hat and sunscreen, and hit the trail in the early morning or near dusk during hot-weather months.

1. Waterfall Trail



White Tank Mountain Regional Park. | Photo courtesy of Visit Phoenix

This easy-going trail leads you right to the cliff of a waterfall. Great for families, dogs, and the average curious hiker, [Waterfall Trail](#) (at [White Tank Mountain Regional Park](#) on Greater Phoenix’s western border) is just 2 miles round trip. The waterfall is most photogenic after a good rainfall—but petroglyphs and sweeping views are abundant enough to make the hike worthwhile, whether the water is flowing or not.



A trail at Spruce Cross Ranch.

2. Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

[Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area](#) consists of eight different trails (rated easy, moderate, and extremely difficult), and is home to some seriously large saguaro cacti. Choose the right hike length for you on easy-to-follow trails that range from a quick, 30-minute hike to several hours long. Metate Trail offers views of mysterious petroglyphs; for a \$3 fee, you’ll receive access to the park as well as a map and trail guide.

3. Deer Valley Petroglyph Preserve
Native Americans created more than 1,600 petroglyph carvings throughout the 50-acre archeological site known as [Deer Valley Petroglyph Preserve](#). As a reminder, you can look and observe, but do not touch the petroglyphs so they can stay preserved—oil from hands can be extremely damaging.

You’ll find interpretive signs and a free audio tour to follow for context along the trail. An onsite museum offers historical exhibitions, educational programs, children’s activities, live-music events, a gift shop, and more.



Mormon Trail at South Mountain Park. | Photo courtesy of Visit Phoenix

4. Mormon Trailhead

For a challenging hike located right in town, [Mormon Trailhead](#), located at the bottom of [South Mountain Park and Preserve](#), connects to a few different trails and offers the chance to see petroglyphs as well as panoramic views of Phoenix. The Hidden Valley loop is less than 4 miles, and filled with dry waterfalls, tunnels, and great photo ops.



Telegraph Pass in South Mountain Park and Preserve.

5. Telegraph Pass

Named after the telegraph line that once ran from San Diego to Maricopa Wells, [Telegraph Pass Trailhead](#) spans a few miles and is located right inside South Mountain Park and Preserve. It’s one of the more popular trails in the park, and although it’s shorter than most of the others, it can get steep. The start of the trail is paved and features informative signs about the various petroglyphs you will encounter. It’s common for hikers to continue on to the National Trail from here to explore more rock formations and take in the sweeping views.



Holbert Trail in South Mountain Park and Preserve.

6. Holbert Trail



Holbert Trail is a more difficult climb up the mountain, ideal for hikers (and their dogs) who want more of a challenge. Charles M. Holbert was South Mountain’s first park custodian back in 1929, and was known as the “Old Man of the Mountain.” Named after the man who explored every inch of the park, the trail leads to Dobbins Lookout, featuring panoramic views of downtown Phoenix and the surrounding area. You’ll encounter photogenic rock features and ancient art along the way; this is probably the best trail in the park for spotting petroglyphs.



Hieroglyphic Trail in the Superstition Mountains.

7. Hieroglyphic Trail
[Hieroglyphic Trail](#) is located right in the Superstition Mountains and is easily accessible through Gold Canyon. At just 1.5 miles long, it’s one of the shortest trails in the area, making it great for families and hikers of all experience levels (dogs aren’t allowed). Don’t let the short trail fool you into thinking that it’s lean on history—in addition to subtle ancient markings left on the stones and cliffs, the Hieroglyphic Trail is filled with cacti and gorgeous views of Gold Canyon and the Gila River plain.

8. Salt River Tubing
If you happen to be visiting during the summer, Mesa’s [Salt River Tubing](#) is the best way to feel as if you’re truly immersing yourself in the surrounding geography. At Salt River Tubing, you can rent inner

tubes and catch a bus upstream. From there, you’ll drop the tubes into the water and take a float down the salt river back to your starting point. As you drift, take a moment to enjoy the sights and appreciate the region’s incredible geologic history.

9. El Dorado Hot Springs
After exploring Phoenix, escape the city for a day trip to [El Dorado Hot Springs](#). Kick back and relax in the mineral water, said to feel like you’re bathing in “liquid silk.” Choose from a wide variety of relaxing experiences, including five different pools in quiet, private areas ranging from shady (Duck Pond) to sunny (Desert Vista). Be aware that this low-key spot is almost unnoticeable from nearby I-10—and reservations are required to enjoy the overgrown and rustic oasis.

You'll probably see wild burros on this part of the Black Canyon Trail. Here's where to go

Mare Czinar
Special for The Republic
[View Comments](#)



Registering somewhere between a honk and a howl, the vocalizations of the feral burros that roam around **Lake Pleasant** are as gritty and unbridled as the beasts themselves.

Sturdily built and resilient, the desert-adapted, North African imports first arrived in Arizona in the 1600s carrying supplies with Jesuit priests.

Valued for their strong backs and hardy work ethic, the burros soon found additional employment with prospectors. They hauled ore during boom times and when the mines went bust, they either wandered off or were released into the wild where they thrived in the arid territory.

Make no mistake, these docile-looking vegetarians are not to be messed with. Unlike their cousin the horse, these rough-around-the-edges members of genus Equus are hardly the type to stride elegantly before spectators wearing feathered fascinators at a racetrack. They can be scrappy, so it’s smart to observe them from a distance.



Hikers can almost bet on seeing the free-roaming wild donkeys that average about 350 pounds when full grown in the Bureau of Land Management’s Lake Pleasant Herd Management Area. It’s 25 miles north of Phoenix, west of Interstate 17, north of Carefree Highway (State Route 74) and northeast of the lake.

Much of the Black Canyon National Recreation Trail passes through this swath of upper Sonoran Desert in the hilly backcountry of the Agua Fria River watershed.

The 3.5-mile Windmill Valley segment of the trail, which is just a few miles east of Lake Pleasant, is a scenic trek that winds through prime burro habitat.



The hike begins across the road from the Table Mesa trailhead with an easy walk among huge saguaros with majestic views of the Bradshaw Mountains to the north and a flank of flat-topped mesas near the north coves of Lake Pleasant.

The trail quickly descends into a wash area and fire scar. Torched trees and ashen cactus stumps belie an understory of resurgent shrubs and wildflowers. It's in this short section of trail where the most species are found.

Look for desert marigold, chia, owl clover, desert snow, scorpion weed, globemallow, woolly daisy, white ratany and frilly American carrot.

Beyond the fire damage, the trail traces a network of washes, bouncing between ridges and drainages as it gradually climbs 500 feet. High points showcase vistas of the New River Mountains, Table Mesa and acres of scrubland where springtime color breaks in colorful cactus blooms, golden brittlebush, buckwheat and rare specimens of bladder sage.



The remainder of the route twists around stone pinnacles, rolling hills and rangeland. It ends at the Doe

Springs Segment 7.7 trail miles north of the Emery Henderson trailhead on New River Road.

While the Doe Springs junction makes for a good turnaround point, hikers can opt to customize the hike length by way of a car shuttle or tying in with the popular Boy Scout Loop for a more rigorous out-and-back trek through burro land.

Black Canyon Trail hike: Windmill Valley
Length: 3.5 miles one way.
Rating: Moderate.
Elevation: 1,921-2,450 feet.

Getting there: Use the Table Mesa trailhead. From Interstate 17, take Table Mesa Road (Exit 236). It's 36 miles north of central Phoenix. At the end of the off ramp, turn left, go a few yards, and then veer right onto Frontage Road (the unsigned west end of Table Mesa Road). Continue to the large Table Mesa West sign, turn left and go to the Table Mesa trailhead at kiosk No. 5 on the right, 3.1 miles from I-17. To reach the start of the hike, walk a few yards farther down Table Mesa Road to the BCT sign on the left. Roads are maintained dirt/gravel, suitable for all vehicles.

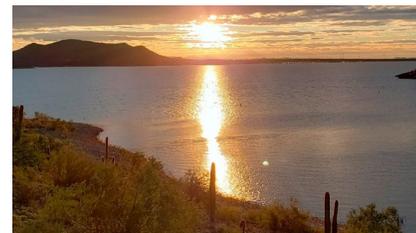
Note: The Black Canyon National Recreation Trail is closed to motorized travel and shooting, but the surrounding area is popular with OHV riders and recreational shooters. Dust and noise may be noticeable.

Details: Black Canyon Trail Coalition, <https://bctaz.org>. Read more of Mare Czinar's hikes at <http://arizonahiking.blogspot.com>.

Search crews find body of swimmer who apparently

drowned at Lake Pleasant

Apr 25, 2022, 10:00 AM
BY KTAR.COM



(Facebook Photo/Lake Pleasant Regional Park)

PHOENIX – Search crews recovered the body of a man who apparently drowned while swimming in Lake Pleasant on Sunday, authorities said.

Neria Aranbayev, 20, was found dead about 20 feet below the surface of the northwest Valley lake, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office said Monday morning.

There were no signs of foul play, MCSO said.

Aranbayev had been swimming in the Agua Fria arm of Lake Pleasant on Sunday afternoon when he went under the water and didn't resurface.



He'd made his way from a boat to shore and was heading back to the boat when he went under.

No other details were made available.



Rescuers find body of missing swimmer at Lake Pleasant

The Agua Fria arm area of Lake Pleasant.(Arizona's Family)

By [Dani Birzer](#) and [Jessica Goodman](#) | KOLD

Published: Apr. 24, 2022 at 3:26 PM MST | Updated: Apr. 25, 2022 at 8:32 AM MST



PEORIA, AZ (3TV/CBS 5) -

Officials confirm they have located the body of a swimmer who drowned at **Lake Pleasant** Sunday afternoon.

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office says divers found 20-year-old Neria Aranbayev on Sunday night. He was about 21 feet below the surface.

According to the Peoria Fire and Medical Department, several people were aboard an anchored boat in the Agua Fria area of the lake while Aranbayev and others were swimming. Aranbayev reportedly swam to the shore and was heading back to the boat when he went under and never resurfaced.

MCSO says there is no sign of foul play.

Rescuers find body of missing swimmer at Lake Pleasant

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By [Dani Birzer](#) and [Jessica Goodman](#) | AZFamily.com
Published: Apr. 24, 2022 at 3:26 PM MST | Updated: Apr. 25, 2022 at 8:32 AM MST

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MCSO says there is no sign of foul play.

Man who died following Lake Pleasant boat incident identified by MCSO

By FOX 10 Staff
Published April 24, 2022
Updated April 25, 2022

Rescue crews searching for missing person after **Lake Pleasant** boat incident

Rescue crews are searching an area of Lake Pleasant for a person who never came up from the water after a reported boating incident on April 24. "The friends couldn't get to the person in time."

MARICOPA COUNTY, Ariz. - Officials with the Maricopa County

Sheriff's Office have identified the person who drowned following a boat incident at Lake Pleasant.

In a brief statement released in April 25, officials say 20-year-old Neria Aranbayev was found on the night of April 24, about 21 feet below the surface of Lake Pleasant.

"There [are] no signs of foul play," read a portion of the brief statement.

In an earlier statement, Sgt. Calbert Gillett with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office further detailed the incident, writing that, "We had an adult male who swam from a boat to shore and attempted the swim back when he went under and didn't resurface. This incident happened at the Agua Fria arm area at Lake Pleasant. Deputies are currently searching."

The search was initially conducted by rescue crews with the [Peoria Fire](#) and Medical Department. After 30 minutes of not being able to find the man, the search was handed over to crews with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

"Several people were on one boat that was anchored. Several people were in the water swimming and one person was in distress. That person is unaccounted for and MCSO will handle the incident from here," Cpt. Mark Barbee with the Peoria Fire and Medical Department said. "The friends couldn't get to the person in time."

Initially, Peoria Fire said the report was a crash between two boats, but that has since been ruled out.

"Some time went by, and before they called 911 and by time our fireboat got to them, this person had already been under for some time," Cpt. Barbee said.



He offers some warnings for those who plan to head to the lake as Arizona heats up.

"We always want you to know when you're out on the water, you have a cell phone handy, and everyone should have a floatation device," he advised.

Deputies find body of swimmer after Lake Pleasant search

Author: 12 News

Published: 6:36 PM MST April 24, 2022

Updated: 9:36 AM MST April 25, 2022



PEORIA, Ariz. — Deputies have recovered the body of a 20-year-old who went missing while swimming at Lake Pleasant on Sunday, the [Maricopa County Sheriff's Office](#) said.

The man, identified as Neria Aranbayev, was found 21 feet below the surface of the water, the office said Monday.

A group of people was swimming near an anchored boat at the Agua Fria area of the lake when Aranbayev went under around 2 p.m., according to the Peoria Fire Department. People called 911 after the man swam to the shore and disappeared while trying to swim back to the boat

There were no signs of foul play, deputies said.

"For those that had the privilege to have known Neria, understand the impact that he has had on so many lives," [a fundraiser for Aranbayev's family said](#). "His smiles, warm embraces and incredible sense of humor will not only be missed, but treasured in all of our hearts."

Drowning Prevention Tips:

- Drowning is the leading cause of death for children between ages 1-4 aside from birth defects, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Three children die every day as a result of drowning. Here are some tips from the CDC on how to protect children around water:
- Learn life-saving skills.
- Everyone should know the basics of swimming (floating, moving through the water) and CPR.
- Fence it off.
- Install a four-sided isolation fence, with self-closing and self-latching gates, around backyard swimming pools. This can help keep children away from the area when they aren't supposed to be swimming. Pool fences should be completely separate the house and play area from the pool.
- Life jackets are a must.
- Make sure kids wear life jackets in and around natural bodies of water, such as lakes or the ocean, even if they know how to swim. Life jackets can be used in and around pools for weaker swimmers too.
- Keep a close watch
- When kids are in or near water (including bathtubs), closely supervise them at all times. Because drowning happens quickly and quietly, adults watching kids in or near water should avoid distracting activities like reading books,

talking on the phone, or using alcohol and drugs.

Fire Ban in Phoenix Area Parks and Preserves Begins May 1

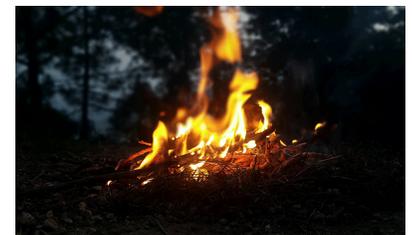
[Open Audio Article Player](#)

By Staff | on April 21, 2022

By City of Phoenix

The Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department will put into effect its annual fire ban of open fires in the City's desert parks and mountain preserves starting Sunday, May 1. **The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department's** annual fire ban goes into effect the same day.

In consultation with the Phoenix Fire Department, smoking and charcoal fires are included in the ban due to the extreme fire danger that the combination of low humidity, increased temperatures, excessive dry vegetation, and frequent high winds creates each spring.



The ban applies to Camelback Mountain, Deem Hills Recreation Area, Lookout Mountain, Papago Park, Phoenix Mountains Park and Recreation Area, Phoenix Mountains Preserve, Phoenix Sonoran Preserve, North Mountain Park, Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area, and South Mountain Park/Preserve.

- The ban does not apply to the City's flatland parks.



- For those using the City’s desert parks and preserve land, the fire ban stipulates the following:
- Open wood and charcoal fires are prohibited
- Propane or gas grills may be used, but only in established picnic areas
- The following activities continue to be prohibited year-round:
- Smoking outside enclosed vehicles
- Fireworks

Motorists traveling through or near Phoenix’s desert parks and mountain preserves should use extreme care with smoking materials and dispose of those only in their vehicle’s ashtray.

To protect their homes, residents whose property borders the City’s preserve land may remove dry shrubs, brush and grasses, and trim dead branches from trees within the 10-foot strip of land that borders their property. By creating this 10-foot “buffer zone” residents can help to protect their homes from potential brush fires in the adjacent preserve land. Preserve neighbors also should check irrigation lines and pool back-flush hoses to ensure that water is not seeping into the preserve. Outside water sources encourage unnaturally dense vegetation growth, which increases fire risk.

History

Apr 20, 2022 11:00 AM
Wickenburg Sun

80 years ago – April 24, 1942
Sugar rationing starts April 27
All retailers, wholesalers, industrial users, including food service establishments, located within the territory of the rationing board will register a Wickenburg High School office Monday and Tuesday, April 27 - 28 for sugar purchase

certificates. Applications must be signed at the high school in the presence of the registrar. Owners are urge to register Monday if possible.

70 years ago – April 18, 1952
Safety deposit vault at the bank to open

In another week and a half, Valley National Bank hopes to open its new vault of safety deposit boxes. Manager Nick Gaunt said there will be 200 boxes in three sizes. Construction of the vault has been completed, but flood conditions in the Midwest held up the shipment of the big steel door.

60 years ago – April 20, 1962
Councilman visualizing a Civic Center

Wickenburg’s public library board has proposed a new library and needs a place to build it. Desert Caballeros Western Museum needs space for its proposed building. Volunteer firemen are anxious to build an extension on the present fire house to handle their extra equipment. The park board has plans for adding facilities to Stone Park. Councilman said months ago some months ago visualized a Civic Center that would extend from the present Town Hall to Valentine Street. First step in a Civic Center plan was the purchase of two lots on the east side of stone park for the Masonic Lodge. Now, the town has its eye on the remaining property at the east end of that same block. At Monday's council meeting, a letter was read from Mr. and Mrs. Harry Herskowitz in which they offered to sell their property consisting of three houses on two lots at the corner of Valentine and Apache Streets to the town for \$23,500.

50 years ago – April 20, 1972 flood control work six months away
A representative of the Department of Agriculture told the Town Council Monday night that the first construction on flood control

structures in the Wickenburg area was at least six months away. The department had found that water retention dams on Sunny Cove and Sunset washes were economically feasible and has submitted a plan call for \$235,000 in construction.

40 years ago – April 22, 1982
Westside post office branch planned
The Town Council was caught a bit off-balance Monday evening when A.J. Gerard of Electric City, Wash., addressed the council and requested permission to put up a temporary post office branch at the corner of Highway 60 and Vulture Mine Road, across from the Safeway shopping center. This is the first the council has heard of it, Councilwoman Helen Dudley said. "The need must have sprung up overnight." Gerard, who also is planning to build a Coast-to-Coast Hardware store at the same location explained that he is building a permanent post office branch at the site but would like to place a temporary structure there so mail service could begin out West by May 15. The permanent post office branch would be completed by December 1. At that time the temporary structure would be removed.

30 years ago – April 22, 1992
Changes at Lake Pleasant being felt
Recreational users at **Lake Pleasant Regional Park**, located 35 miles south east of Wickenburg, are starting to feel the effects of construction of the Waddell Dam. But according to Maricopa county officials they can take comfort in knowing that when complete, the project will nearly triple the lake size from 3,500 surface acres to more than 10,000. Supervisors Chairwoman Betsy Bayless said recently that to make room for the lake expansion, its park staff will soon begin taking out public facilities, concrete picnic tables, grills and comfort stations in a park areas.
20 years ago – April 24, 2002



Habitat here nearly 10 years Wickenburg's Habitat for Humanity, conceived more than two decades ago by Linda and Millard Fuller and highly promoted by President Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosiland, has been a presence in the greater Wickenburg area for almost 10 years. Today in Wickenburg, Habitat for Humanity has built seven homes for qualified low income families and Wickenburg, Congress and Aguila areas. With the recent acquisition of a large lot off of Aricleta Drive in West Wickenburg, there is the potential for at least four or five more habitat homes.

10 years ago – April 18, 2012
More layoffs, cutbacks at local schools

A number of positions throughout Wickenburg schools have been reduced or eliminated altogether due to a continued need to cut expenses. When the Wickenburg Unified School District governing board last met, Tuesday, April 10, it reluctantly agreed the cuts needed to be made as part of a reduction in force. As part of the consent agenda, the position of high school dean of students was eliminated, as was the school secretary for the Wickenburg Digital Learning Program. A number of positions had hours reduced as well. Additional certified and classified employees were selected for non-renewal or termination of employment as a reduce reduction in funding and the need to implement savings in the district, according to the meeting minutes.

Fire Ban In Phoenix's Desert And Mountain Parks Begins May 1

The ban includes wood fires, charcoal fires and smoking, because of low humidity, high temperatures and excessively dry vegetation.

Caitlin Sievers, Patch Staff
Posted Mon, Apr 18, 2022 at 4:25 pm MT
Reply



A ban on fires in Phoenix's desert and mountain parks begins May 1. The ban does not apply to the city's flatland parks. (Shutterstock)

PHOENIX, AZ — A fire ban in Phoenix's desert parks and mountain preserves will begin May 1, the same day that the **Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department's** annual fire ban takes effect.

Phoenix's fire ban for its desert parks and preserves not only bans wood fires, but charcoal fires and smoking as well. These extra measures are being taken at the advisement of the Phoenix Fire Department because of low humidity, high temperatures and an abundance of dry vegetation, according to a news release from the city.

Propane or gas grills will be allowed in the parks and preserves where the ban applies, but only in designated picnic areas.

The fire ban does not apply to the city's flatland parks.

Parks and preserves included in the ban are:

- Camelback Mountain
- Deem Hills Recreation Area
- Lookout Mountain
- Papago Park

- Phoenix Mountains Park and Recreation Area
- Phoenix Mountains Preserve
- Phoenix Sonoran Preserve
- North Mountain Park
- Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area
- South Mountain Park and Preserve

Using fireworks and smoking, except for when inside an enclosed vehicle, are prohibited in Phoenix parks year round.

Motorists driving through Phoenix's desert parks and mountain preserves are advised to use extreme caution when smoking and to dispose of smoking materials only in their vehicle's ashtray.

Locals who have property bordering the city's preserves and parks are encouraged to get rid of dry shrubs, brush and grasses and to trim dead branches from trees within the 10-foot strip of land bordering their property line.

A 10-foot-wide buffer zone can help protect homes from brush fires.

Woman who lost leg to rare cancer on track to complete 102 marathons in 102 days

By Associated Press
April 15, 2022 9:46am



In this image provided by Edwin Broersma, marathoner Jacky Hunt-



Broersma trains on Aug. 28, 2021 at **San Tan Mountain Regional Park**, in San Tan Valley, Az.AP

BOSTON — Jacky Hunt-Broersma runs like a woman possessed. And in a way, she is: The amputee athlete is trying to run at least 102 marathons in 102 days.

Last month, a little more than two-thirds toward her goal of setting a new world record for back-to-back marathons, the South Africa native posted something on Twitter that got people talking.

“The first thing I did after my run today was take off my leg. Felt so good,” she tweeted. “Marathon 69 done. 31 marathons to go.”

That was last month, and she’s still running — covering the classic 26.2-mile (42.2-kilometer) marathon distance day in, day out, rain or shine, occasionally on a treadmill but mostly on roads and trails near her home in Gilbert, Arizona. If her streak remains intact heading into [the Boston Marathon on April 18](#), it’ll be marathon No. 92.

Unlike the 30,000 others running the storied course, Hunt-Broersma, 46, will have done a marathon the day before. Somehow, she’ll have to rally body and soul to run another the day after. And another after that. And then eight more.

All on a carbon-fiber blade that’s been her left leg ever since she lost the real thing below the knee to a rare cancer.

“You make peace with pain,” she said in an interview with The Associated Press. “I think my pain threshold is probably quite high at the moment. It’s one step at a time.”



The Boston Marathon on April 18 is expected to be No. 92 in her streak.AP

Boston is the only certified marathon she’s including in her quest. The others she’s running on one of two loops near her home or indoors on a treadmill — a monotonous machine many runners derisively call the “dreadmill.”

In 2001, while she and her Dutch husband were living in the Netherlands, Hunt-Broersma was diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma, a rare cancer more typically seen in children. Overnight, a golf ball-sized bulge appeared on an old scar that had become tender. A biopsy confirmed the worst, and within weeks, her leg was amputated below the knee.

“The biggest struggle was accepting that part of my body was gone,” she said. (She’s since made peace with that: A favorite T-shirt reads, “A Zombie Chewed It Off.”)

Until five years ago, she wasn’t at all athletic, but getting started was expensive. Carbon-fiber blades designed for running cost around \$10,000 and aren’t covered by health insurance. [Survivors of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing](#), which killed three spectators and wounded 260 others, ran into the same

problem when they sought to [reclaim their lives](#).

“Running really changed my life,” she said. “It helped me accept myself as an amputee. It gave me a sense of freedom. I fell in love with the process of pushing my body further just to see what I could do.”

Subsequent marathons led to ultrarunning over extended distances, including a 100-mile (160-kilometer) race. So when Hunt-Broersma learned that [Alyssa Amos Clark](#), a nondisabled runner from Bennington, Vermont, covered the marathon distance 95 days in a row in 2000, an idea was born: She’d do 100. That plan got foiled this week when [British runner Kate Jayden](#) completed 101 marathons in as many days, so Hunt-Broersma has a new goal: “Now I’m going for at least 102.”

“I hoped it would inspire a lot of people to get out of their comfort zone and push a little bit farther,” she said.



Hunt-Broersma said that running helped her accept herself as an amputee and gave her a sense of freedom.AP

She worried her stump would become raw and painful, and the first two weeks were rough. Since then, though, she’s gotten into a sustainable rhythm, taking care to ice and massage the stump. When it became swollen, she switched to a running prosthesis with a little more room.



But there have been mental challenges as well on the road to 102, which began on Jan. 17. On a recent outing, Hunt-Broersma — who’s been averaging a little over five hours per marathon — felt near collapse at 15 miles (24 kilometers) and burst into tears. Suddenly the entire odyssey was in doubt.

“I had a total emotional breakdown. I was like, ‘I just can’t do this. What was I thinking?’” she said. “The trick for me is just to break it down into little goals. Just get to the next mile. And then the next one.”

Her support team is her husband and their two young children, but she’s also gained a large social media following.

This week, after logging marathon No. 85, well-wishers offered virtual applause. “You just seem to eat marathons for breakfast,” one person tweeted. “In such bleak times, thank you for serving as an inspiration,” commented another. As she nears the end of her epic quest, Hunt-Broersma hopes she inspires a singular thought in others, regardless of their own physical challenges:

“You’re stronger than you think — and you’re capable of so much more.”

Park ranger inspired to write White Tank song

By Carrie Snider, West Valley View
Contributing Writer
Apr 12, 2022
Westvalleyview.com



Southwest singer-songwriter Nancy Elliott pays homage to the White Tank Mountains in a song by the same name. (Neal Summerton/Submitted)

There was just something about the desert.

When Nancy Elliott passed through the Phoenix area in the 1970s, she knew she’d be back. Having grown up in Ohio, the desert was a very different place — a very good place.

“I remember calling my mom at a payphone by this adobe diner gas station, and telling her, ‘I’m coming back.’”

As a writer, she is cognizant of details. She remembers visitors busting in and out of her office, the smell of food and the songs that were playing.

She was good on her word and came back in the 1990s permanently.

Elliott landed a job with the Maricopa County Parks and later the highway department. She spent her career building trails, taking tickets and giving maps at the gate, working at events, and rehabilitating Goat Camp Trail at **White Tank Mountain Regional Park** after a fire in 1998.

But really, her job was not what Elliott would call “work.” As a single mom with two daughters, she didn’t have a lot of free time, which made her day job such a huge blessing.

“This was where I wanted to be anyway,” she said. “It was my

release. Everything just melts away when you’re up there.”

Watching wild burros walk through the park gates at Lake Pleasant and the chipmunk on Goat Camp Trail who visited for treats are a few of her fond memories.

She’d been telling stories through poetry and playing guitar for many years. As she spent time at the White Tanks, the words to “White Tank Mountains” came to her.

“The White Tanks kiss the sunset, out where the eagles fly,” as the chorus goes. “And her peaks blush rose in the morning light against a turquoise sky.” The words are set to music she wrote in the genre of “Southwest American style,” as she called it.

She recorded the song in 2006, but recently rerecorded it and included it on an album full of songs that pay homage to her visits.

Creating a music video
Boulder Creek High School student Stefanie Goldstein is in her fourth year, aka “internship year” of a West-MEC satellite program in media production.

Looking for internships, Goldstein was encouraged by her mom to connect with the White Tank Mountains Conservancy, a group of volunteers focused on keeping the area wild.

The White Tank Mountains held a special place in Goldstein’s and her mom’s hearts. The elder Goldstein is a conservancy volunteer.

“The White Tank Mountains are one of my favorite places to explore and do nature photography. It’s one of the most beautiful places in the Valley,” she said.



The conservancy’s social media manager asked Goldstein if she could take Elliott’s song about the White Tank Mountains and create a video. Using photos from local photographers, she got to work.

“I listened to the song over and over and searched through the photos looking for the right photos to connect with Nancy’s lyrics and her song,” Goldstein said.

“I wanted to create something special that would inspire people to protect the White Tank Mountains.”

Her biggest goal is to help expand the conservancy and White Tank Mountains’ audience to teens and young people through videos and graphics on TikTok and Instagram.

Many of the photos are from Neal Summerton, an Ohio native who moved to Arizona in the 1980s. The Surprise resident is just minutes from White Tank Mountain Regional Park.

“The park is 10 minutes away, and you can walk 100 feet from your car and go back 100 years,” he explained. “I get there as much as I can. If I had more time, it would be a cheap gym membership.”

He’s always been interested in photography. He didn’t go all-in until 2016, when he bought an expensive camera to escape life’s stressors.

“Landscape is much easier. Mountains don’t care about their double chin. Saguaros don’t have wrinkled clothes or are picky on the editing,” Summerton said.

“They (the conservancy) have shared my images on their social media sites and have certainly helped my presence on social media that I am happy to share the beauty that is so

close to so many of us on the west side of Phoenix.”

As for having his images in the music video “White Tank Mountains” by Nancy Elliott? Summerton said that he typically doesn’t listen to that style of music, but he really enjoys it.

“The White Tanks song resonates with me because of the words. When I hear it, I envision a campfire with her singing that song, and again, it could be a 100 years ago.”

Meet the Man Who Wants to Make Sitting an Extreme Sport

A day at your desk will not prepare you for this grueling competition. BY LAURA KINIRY APRIL 12, 2022

Meet the Man Who Wants to Make Sitting an Extreme Sport



Robert "Robby" Silk—the first and, for now, only competitive chair-sitter—tests his stamina on Antarctica’s Cuverville Island. LAURA KINIRY

LIFE ON ANTARCTICA’S CUVERVILLE ISLAND can be harsh. Colonies of orange-billed gentoo penguins scale its often windy, snow-covered slopes, building nests for their young with small stones and pebbles they gather from the island’s rocky outcrops. Patches of moss and lichen grow sparingly, some of the few signs of flora on an otherwise barren land.

But on one day in February, an unusually out-of-place sight appeared: a man sitting in a chair.

“I’d never come across someone wanting to bring a camping chair ashore in Antarctica before,” says Jonathan Fuhrmann, a Scenic Eclipse cruise ship glaciologist whose role that day was to help passengers get to and from the island’s viewpoint. “At first it seemed so bizarre, but he’d brought it with him for the biosecurity check”—a process that assures whatever you’re bringing ashore won’t introduce foreign organisms or diseases—“so I thought, ‘why not?’”

Perched in a lightweight and foldable Helinox chair on a spot that Fuhrmann had assured him wasn’t interfering with the views of other guests, the man stared out over Antarctic waters. “He even proceeded to read a book for a while,” says Fuhrmann, “which looked thoroughly enjoyable.”



Flouting his own prohibition on digital devices while extreme sitting, Silk snaps a selfie as he sits in **McDowell Mountain Regional Park** in North Scottsdale, Arizona. ROBERT SILK

Robert “Robby” Silk, 49, was participating in the sport of



competitive chair-sitting, a still-evolving endurance activity Silk has pioneered that involves sitting in extreme environments, from sun-up to sundown without any sort of time pieces or electronic devices. “The idea,” says Silk, “is to really just be, and not do much of anything.” On June 21, 2020, Silk completed his longest sit to date: a 14-hour, 27-minute stretch in California’s Joshua Tree National Park. Before Antarctica, this budding trend-setter had only sat himself in desert settings, including Sedona, Arizona, and the state’s **McDowell Mountain Regional Park** in North Scottsdale. (The Antarctic continent is the largest desert on earth, but many of its surrounding islands are considered tundra.)

While Silk’s endeavor is unusual, unexpected endurance sports have been around for decades. Take the Dutch sport of paalzitten, or pole sitting, in which participants sit atop wooden poles for hours, each one attempting to outlast the other. It was supposedly invented to help stave off boredom during long winter months. Or danceathons, prolonged dance sessions that can last from hours to weeks, with cash prizes awarded to the last team standing.

But despite the obvious notoriety that competitive chair-sitting brings (“It would be amusing to be in the Guinness Book,” says Silk, “but I hadn’t really thought about it.”), Silk says he does it for many of the same reasons that people run marathons: to take a break from daily trivialities and routines and simply test himself. There’s even training involved, since anyone who’s ever flown thousands of miles in an airplane knows that sitting for long periods can wreak havoc on everything from mental stability to physical dexterity. “I don’t do calisthenics beforehand for nothing,” he says.

Although the “competition” part is a bit tongue-in-cheek—Silk is, to date, the only competitor—the sport’s overall objective is to complete the most difficult sit possible. For deserts, this generally means a factor of high temperature, total degrees of heat (meaning the day’s average temperature), and length of day. A tricky equation, since the further north you go during the summer solstice the more daylight you’ll get, but overall temperatures tend to decrease. In a place like Antarctica, where the focus is more on “extreme” sitting, Silk jokingly says that icicles forming on the tips of your chair can be good. But frostbite? Not so much. “It’s meant to be uncomfortable,” he says, “but not deadly.”

“I think extreme sitting has the ability to rival other outdoor endurance sports, including climbing and even pole sitting.”

Silk first came up with the idea of extreme chair sitting back in 1995, during a six-month sojourn in Israel. Silk was reading *The Haj*, a novel by American author Leon Uris. In it, he came across a scene that depicted a man somewhere in the desert, awaiting a delivery. A traveler who happens upon the man and asks, “What will you do if it takes a week?”

“Wait,” says the man.

Silk found a world in which “time is of no consequence” appealing. Five years later, he decided to give his own waiting-in-the-desert a go. His goal was to sit in one place and spend the entire day watching the arch of the sun.

Unfortunately, his first foray into chair-sitting was short-lived. Just three-and-a-half hours after planting himself down in Arizona’s Sedona desert, Silk had already endured a bee sting and was experiencing severe bloating from copious amounts of cheese he’d eaten the

night before. By 9 a.m., he was through.



Silk’s longest sit to date came in June 2020, when he clocked 14 hours and 27 minutes in a chair in California’s Joshua Tree National Park. PETER WICK

Still, over the next two decades, the idea of desert chair sitting stuck with him, until in 2019, he decided to try again, this time in Joshua Tree National Park a year later. Little did Silk know that it would be the absolute perfect sport for the era of social distancing.

Silk scouted a spot in Joshua Tree that was fairly accessible, though away from any parking lots or hiking trails, with plenty of direct sunlight and a 360-degree view. Then, dressed in a long-sleeved shirt with light SPF protection, long pants, hiking boots, and a wide-brimmed hat and shawl for his neck, he sat. In addition to his chair, his provisions included beef jerky, chunks of fresh watermelon, and energy bars, and two gallons of water. He’d also packed a couple of books, a journal, and a tube of SPF 50 sunscreen.

Over the next fourteen-plus-hours, Silk did a lot of nothing. He watched several large beetles and a couple of lizards wander past. He dozed off a time or two and stood occasionally to stretch and relieve himself. He also thought about random things, like whether a thoroughbred truly is a better athlete than a greyhound. But more than anything, he just sat. “Your surroundings matter,” says



Silk. "Because that's all that there really is."

Silk hopes to have a competitor when he sits in Chile's Atacama Desert, one of the driest places on earth. [DIEGO DELSO / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

Silk and his friend, Peter Wick (who [filmed](#) Silk's Joshua Tree stint), are currently in the process of securing grants for a chair-sit in Chile's Atacama Desert—one of the driest places on earth—where they're hoping to bring along a competitor. "With the rigors of any physical endurance challenge," says Silk, "I think extreme sitting has the ability to rival other outdoor endurance sports, including climbing and even pole sitting."

For anyone who's thinking of engaging in this competitive pastime, Silk's advice is to start slowly: maybe sitting for a few hours or in weather that's not too hot or cold, before working toward longer, tougher sits. But his biggest tip is to stay mindful. "When you're doing full-day sits," says Silk, "the sun, cold, or wind might start getting to you. Just remember that this is an extreme outdoor sport and dealing with physical discomfort is part of being an endurance athlete."

19-year-old achieves ultramarathon dream of running 100 miles

Good Morning America
April 11, 2022

For many, running 100 miles might sound unfathomable or unrealistic. But Zach Bates was steadfast to run a 100-mile event before his 20th birthday.

"I wanted to do it before I was 20 because there's not much people who do it in their teens," Bates told "Good Morning America."



Zach Bates decided in May 2021 that he wanted to run a 100-mile ultramarathon before he turned 20 years old.

At the time, Bates was 19 and had just graduated from high school. He quickly went to work. After seven serious months of training and preparation, [Bates finished the 100-mile Coldwater Rumble](#) on Jan. 16 in 28 hours, 6 minutes and 36 seconds, about two months before his birthday.



Bates was greeted with a tunnel of supporters at the Coldwater Rumble finish line.

He became the youngest participant to ever finish the Coldwater Rumble event, which was held in [Estrella Mountain Regional Park](#) in Goodyear, Arizona.

"To complete 100 miles, it's really exciting. It's even more exciting to finish the finish line than even like, a marathon, because of how far you have to go and all you have to go through to the end," Bates said.



Zach Bates with his siblings and parents on a hike in Tucson, Arizona.

Rana Bates, Zach's mom, never doubted her son, who has autism.

"We had about eight months left before he turned 20. And so it's like, I don't know. That's a long race. I'm not sure we're gonna have enough time to train for that. But let's just see what shorter races we can do," Rana Bates recalled.

Autism spectrum disorder is a type of developmental disability that impacts roughly one in 44 children in the United States, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Social interaction and social communication can be difficult for some people with autism, [according to the CDC](#), though symptoms vary widely in severity and exist along a "spectrum."

Rana Bates teamed up with her son, bought books on ultramarathoning and recruited a mentor, John Mark



Hendrix, and later, a coach, Nickademus de la Rosa, to help Zach along the way.



Along with his family, Bates has been supported by his running mentor, John Mark Hendrix, and coach Nickademus de la Rosa.

"We just really hit it off and it took a little while but he opened up to me," Hendrix told "GMA," noting that he quickly learned about autism and Zach Bates' own experience. "We covered a lot of miles together and had some great conversations and the further we got into this, the more I was convinced that he really can do this, and I believe he has the wherewithal to pull this off."

The 60-year-old would know. Hendrix has been running since junior high school. He said he's run 40 marathons and crushed 50-milers, 100-milers and even a 200-miler.

"The thought of a 19-year-old taking this on is just incredibly remarkable," he said. "I tell people all the time, running an ultramarathon is 90% mental and the other 10%, well, that's mental, too. A 19-year-old just doesn't necessarily have the experience to commit and actually run 100 miles. That is just super, super unusual. This is an older person sport, people who have

already accomplished lots of running and in less than a year, he ran a 5K and then a couple of marathons and he did it. He ran 100 miles!"

Rana Bates said she sees how her son's story and feat can be an inspiration and example for parents of children with autism.

"We need to see them as an individual. We need to listen to them. We need to hear what their thoughts and what their dreams are, what they want their future to be," she said.

Hendrix ended up pacing with Bates at the Coldwater Rumble, running with him from mile 60 to mile 80, from about 9 o'clock at night to 3 o'clock in the morning.

"It's a tough, tough thing to do, especially the first time you do it. And he was in a lot of pain but he never ever once in the 20 miles that I ran with him that night, complained or said, 'I don't know if I can do this.' He just kept going," he recalled.



Bates told "GMA" he's been running since middle school.

At the end of the day, Bates said he simply loves running and that his autism doesn't affect his ability to do what he loves.

"Running makes me feel good. I enjoy it. I like the challenge of going really far," he said. Bates' epic Coldwater run will be the focus of an upcoming documentary called "Break the Mold: The Zach

Bates Story," produced by Travis Holt Hamilton. Fans can follow Bates' story on social media through the @running.farther accounts, which Rana Bates helps run.

"I'm just really grateful for the opportunity to be able to share him with people because I think he does shine this light that I think it's obvious to people that he's not doing it for the attention," she said. "He's not doing it for the praise. He's just doing it because he loves running."



After 28 hours, Bates accomplished his 100-mile dream at the Coldwater Rumble. His father and uncles carried him in a chair after he completed the event.

Added Hendrix: "I know for myself, and I know the people that meet him think, 'You know, if Zach can do this really hard, big thing, I can too.' And it might not be running 100 miles, it might just be anything that life throws at you."

Bates plans on running his next 100-miler at the [Javelina Jundred](#), which will take place right before Halloween. Later this month, he'll tackle a 100K with the Canyons Endurance Run in Auburn, California.



No matter the hardships, Rana Bates said she's proud of her son for pursuing his passion.

"I'm really proud of him for working hard and being dedicated and always keeping his dreams in focus," she said. "Oftentimes, I think other people get lost in trying to work around all the mental things that are involved in achieving a goal where he's just like, 'OK, this is the plan.'"

Across the Nation: Youth suicide prevention, an outdoor scavenger hunt and more quick takes

Audrey Jackson, Associate Editor
April 5, 2022
The Christian Chronicle



Across the Nation is our monthly rundown of news briefs, links and quotes from Churches of Christ across the U.S. Got an idea for this column? Email Audrey Jackson at audrey@christianchronicle.org.

Featured image (above): Teenagers gather around a campfire for an evening devotional at [Usery Mountain Regional Park](#) during the "Gram Adventure" sponsored by the [Mesa Church of Christ](#) in Arizona.

The fourth meeting of this annual event featured an outdoor Instagram nature scavenger hunt that ended with a picnic, worship and a lesson led under the stars by Joel Soumar,

the Mesa church youth minister, on God's creation.

Blankets of color harder to find during Arizona's subpar wildflower season

One of the best places to find poppies is at Picacho Peak State Park, north of Tucson
[Tucson Sentinel.com](#)
[More by Samantha Chow](#)
Posted Apr 1, 2022, 6:35 am
Samantha ChowCronkite News

Poppies are beloved wildflowers in Arizona. Their vibrant orange and yellow petals stand out against the drab desert and signify the coming spring.

But Arizonans won't have much luck finding many poppies this year. And some experts fear the future will have fewer Mexican and California poppies – as well as lupine, chicory, fiddlenecks and a host of other wildflowers – as the Southwest continues to heat up and dry out.

This wildflower season is "below average," thanks to "a really dry winter," said Michelle Thompson, chief of communications for Arizona State Parks & Trails.

"Even though we had some rain late in the winter, it was already past the germination period," she said.

Angelica Elliott, assistant director of public horticulture at Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, said rainfall and soil temperatures are crucial for annual wildflowers to begin to bloom.

A "spectacular wildflower season" requires at least 1 inch of rain per month from October to March, she said, and soil temperatures in the fall

need to range from 50 to 60 degrees to enhance germination.

"(These) seasons happen maybe once every 10 to 15 years," Elliott said. "These are mass carpets that just knock your socks off."

Although there weren't any carpets this year, flower lovers can find "little throw rugs of wildflowers" until April, Elliott said.

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Thompson said one of the best places to find poppies is at Picacho Peak State Park, between Phoenix and Tucson.

The superbloom of 2019 was Arizona's last "really good wildflower year," Thompson said, adding, "The mountainsides (of Picacho Peak) were almost completely orange with blankets of poppies."

Rain was a crucial factor that season. From October 2018 through March 2019, Picacho Peak received almost triple the precipitation as the same period in 2021-22, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

But Picacho Peak isn't the only place you might find poppies this year. Thompson recommends also checking out Lost Dutchman State Park east of Apache Junction.

Elliott recommends looking for a variety of wildflowers at South Mountain in Phoenix, the Superstition Mountains near Gold Canyon and [Estrella Mountain Regional Park](#) in the southwest Valley.

"Typically a lot of our wildflowers grow in rocky soils or desert washes where rainfall naturally runs through," Elliott said, noting that's



why wildflowers often are found along roadsides. When rain runs off the pavement, moisture accumulates and enhances germination.

“I was heading east towards the Superstition Mountains, and along the roadsides I saw quite a bit of lupine,” Elliott said. “I was surprised, but pleasantly surprised.”

Although the beloved poppies and other annual wildflowers will be scarce, Thompson and Elliott said perennials, which require less water, may still be found in small pockets. They include globe mallow, chuparosa and brittlebush.

“They’re less dependent on the rainfall,” Elliott said. “They don’t care when they get their rainfall; they’re just going to bloom.”

It’s hard to know for certain, but Elliott predicts Arizona will see more average to below-average wildflower seasons like this year’s.

“With climate change and the amount of rainfall we’re receiving in the desert, it can really impact our wildflower season,” she said.