



## Arizona High Country Campground: A Quiet Retreat from the Crowds

by Amie Rodgers

There is no denying that summers in the White Mountains can be a bit crowded at times. With the beautiful scenery and great weather, it comes to no surprise that locals and visitors alike are out and about enjoying themselves this time of year. Recently, I visited a charming little campground near Clay Springs that boasts a friendly atmosphere that is both blissfully quiet and a little less crowded than many of the well known spots. "It is a nice quiet place off the beaten path. We are about a mile off the main road so we don't have the sound of the highway. We are about fifteen miles to either Heber or Show Low for shopping. We have our own small store and there is a small store about a mile down the road from here. There is also a really great hamburger stand just together with his wife Susan own and operate Arizona High Country Campground, "We have noticed that when people come out here they are here to get away from everything. This is the perfect quiet getaway. You don't hear much until the middle of the night when the coyotes start howling or the occasional elk visitor walks right down the middle of the campground."

To which Susan adds with a smile, "It is more of a rural setting, but you can really enjoy nature and wildlife. When you go out on the trails, you see all sorts of great gems and rock specimens. We are rock



hounds ourselves. The birdwatching and nature photography opportunities are great here. We have lots of wild birds and tons of hummingbirds. The stars are also beautiful out here. All the street lights are small and point down so the stars just shine."

Bordering National Forest, the Arizona High Country Campground sits at the beginning (or the end depending on how you look at it) of the Maverick Motorized Trail, which has become a popular ATV and 4WD trail that is also enjoyed by hikers and horseback riders. The campground features 31 RV sites, tent sites and even a Park Model and RV rental available. Amenities include full hookups, free WiFi, propane, dump station and clean restrooms, showers and laundry. There is also a clubhouse with

a TV and movie collection. Traveling with your pet? No problem. The campground is pet friendly and even has a grassy dog park to play in.

When asked how they came to be campground owners, Susan chuckles and admits, "It was me. We moved out West when I got a job in Sedona as a real estate appraiser. Once the kids were in college, we decided we needed a change. We bought a motor home and thought we were just going to travel around, but then I got offered the job in Sedona, which is one of my favorite towns. So we moved there and in 2007, the market crashed. We started traveling in the motor home and ended up in Malibu, California. We worked at an RV Park there for nine months. It was right on the ocean. My daughter was near by so we got to see her a lot. Once our time was up there, we applied for a job in Apache Junction as general managers at a top resort. We got that job and managed the 500 site 55+ resort for three years. We decided that we would like our own business and started looking around. We ended up finding this property."

One of the last places they looked at, the Radfords were happy to see that there had been a lot of blood, sweat and tears put into the property on which to expand. "I think the campground has been around fifteen or twenty years beginning with a very small site. In the last three years, everything has been expanded. We have all different sized sites because we have utilized the terrain up here in the trees. We left all the trees we could so everyone can park in between the trees for good shade on a hot day. We also kept wildlife needs in mind," says Mike.

In addition to keeping clean, well maintained facilities, the Radfords are also very committed to keeping things green. "We have left all the trees we can and have a lot of cedar and pine trees. We increased the size of the pond too. It was overgrown so we dug it all out and are in the process of creating a waterfall for the birds and wildlife to enjoy. The property is attached to National Forest on our entire East side so we keep a waterer just outside the fence for wildlife and people riding horses by," says Mike, "We put out a lot of waterers and have created areas where wildlife can access water. You would be surprised what comes up for a drink. We have elk who drink at the pond. We also see deer and just about any other animal that gets thirsty enough. We have piled up some of the trees that have been bulldozed on the forest side for wildlife habitat and viewing. When we close the campground in the winter, the wildlife camps here. We see lots of signs of life."

The campground is open April 1st through November 1st. The Radfords welcome guests to stay anywhere from overnight to all season. As a fairly well kept secret, they can also accommodate groups of all sizes and even have space for extra cars and camper storage. They offer discounts to firefighters, EMS and police officers. There is usually a spot available, but to get the best spots, they recommend reserving early. For more information, to see maps or reserve your RV or tent site, please visit [www.arizonahighcountrycampground.com](http://www.arizonahighcountrycampground.com). You can also call 928-739-4383. Be sure to let them know you read about them in the *Maverick*.

**Arizona High Country Campground**  
 5064 Sawmill Road PO Box 806  
 Clay Springs, AZ 85923  
 928-739-4383  
[www.arizonahighcountrycampground.com](http://www.arizonahighcountrycampground.com)

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