

## Cool creeks and falls

Even in the midst of drought, there are several places in Arizona to enjoy the cool waters of the great outdoors.

**Fossil Springs** - <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino> Thousands of gallons of water a minute pour out of these natural springs, about 5 miles west of Strawberry on the Mogollon Rim. The water, at a near-constant temperature of 72 degrees, forms several idyllic swimming holes, one even has a rope swing.

Along the creek are several shaded, spacious camping spots. No permit is needed, but you'll have to hike about 2.5 miles down a steep, rocky trail to reach the springs. (Did you know that Mogollon is pronounced muggy-own?)

**Wet Beaver Creek** - <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino> A popular site, not just for its scenic beauty, but for its ease of access and its proximity to Sedona. From the trailhead, a little more than 2 miles east of I-17, it's about a 3.5 mile hike to Bell Crossing, a lush oasis on Wet Beaver Creek. The crossing makes a fine, if often crowded, turn-around destination for picnickers and casual hikers, but the trail continues up onto the Mogollon Rim, where the crowds thin dramatically.

**Slide Rock State Park** - <http://www.pr.state.az.us/parkhtml/sliderock.html> Nestled along the exquisite Oak Creek Canyon north of Sedona, Slide Rock is one of the wettest, wildest state parks in Arizona. Bring your kids, cut-offs and coolers, and enjoy the natural swimming holes and water slides in the creek.

Crowded? Sure, but that's part of the fun.

**Aravaipa Canyon** - <http://www.az.blm.gov> This lush riparian canyon about 50 miles south of Globe is a favorite of hikers who enjoy splashing through a shallow creek. You can hike from either end, but the western trailhead, which is far more accessible for most visitors, gets much greater usage. More ambitious hikers travel the entire 11 miles to the other end and back again.

**Havasu Falls** - <http://www.havasupaitribe.com> This western Grand Canyon paradise is famous for its dramatic waterfalls and turquoise pools. Whether you're staying at the lodge in Supai Village or the campground beyond, you can explore Havasu, Mooney and Navajo falls. If that's not enough water for you, hike down to the Colorado River.