

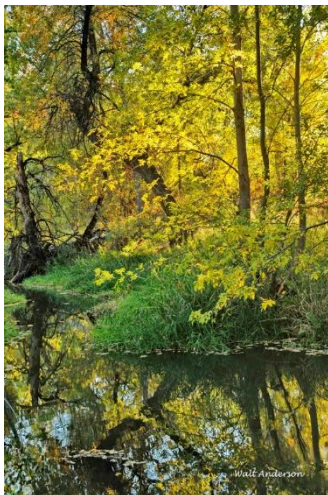
Wild Wednesday 8 July 2020

Welcome to Wild Wednesday on 8 July 2020! When Arizona Eco Development made its initial proposal to the City for annexation, most of the required open space acreage was steep rocks that were unbuildable anyway. When citizens protested that the beautiful landscape around the Peavine and Iron King Trails would be destroyed, some on City Council said not to worry; we'll save the rocks anyway. They totally missed the point; the Granite Dells is an ecosystem, and the rocks, while gorgeous, are not the productive habitat and scenery that the creekside riparian areas provide.

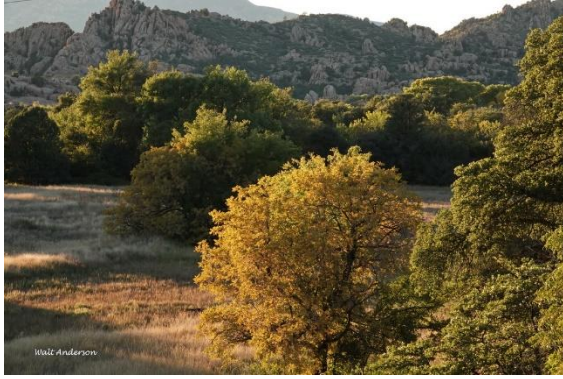
The good news is that we citizens prevailed. The current proposal, yet to be finalized, saves a vital stretch of Granite Creek and one of its main tributaries, currently misnamed as No-name Creek (we must change that; some of us would like it to be Elisabeth Creek to honor Elisabeth Ruffner, Prescott heroine). That watershed is also one of the prettiest views in the Dells, and it will be a lovely and essential component of the regional park and preserve we are working toward.

What we gain is critical habitat for some of the rarest and most spectacular wildlife species in the area. For example, this is where we can find the reclusive Common Black Hawk, the stunning Wood Duck, and the brilliant Summer Tanager.

Follow and support Save the Dells and Granite Dells Preservation Foundation as we await the hearings and final decisions regarding annexation and land preservation. Only when the deal is sealed can we fully celebrate our victory and shift our emphasis to acquiring more land for the regional park and preserve.



The lush ribbon of life that is Granite Creek flows through Granite Dells and provides some of the prettiest and most wildlife-friendly habitat in the area.



This scene, captured with telephoto lens from the Peavine Trail, shows the beautiful valley of No-name Creek approaching the dense gallery forest of Granite Creek. We are thrilled that our dream of protecting this superb landscape will be realized if final decisions match the expectations of the current Letter of Agreement. Wow!



The Common Black Hawk is a Neotropical species that returns from the tropics to nest in small numbers on Arizona's creeks and rivers. Granite Creek is essential habitat for this remarkable bird.



In Arizona, breeding Wood Ducks are found only on Prescott's Granite Creek and in the Verde Valley. Protected lands in our regional park and preserve will assure that these amazing birds remain our welcome neighbors.



Summer Tanagers join many other colorful (and plain) birds to breed along Granite Creek and its tributaries. This diversity of bird life is one of the amenities we all get when we save vital open space like this near our urban area.