

DESERT GOLD DIGGERS GAZETTE

The official publication of Desert Gold Diggers Inc., Tucson, AZ

Desert Gold Diggers is a non-profit prospecting club based in Tucson, Arizona, devoted to all aspects of small scale mining including panning, sluicing, dry washing, and metal detecting. In addition to promoting small scale prospecting, the club exchanges ideas and information on the various aspects of prospecting & mining. Visit our webpage at <https://desertgolddiggers.com> for more club information.



Desert Gold Diggers has 20 claims in southeastern Arizona. The claims are located in several gold producing areas including the Greaterville, Arivaca, Oro Blanco (Ruby), Las Guijas, Old Hat (Oracle) and Banner (Pinal County) mining districts. The club is constantly evaluating and pursuing additional claims.

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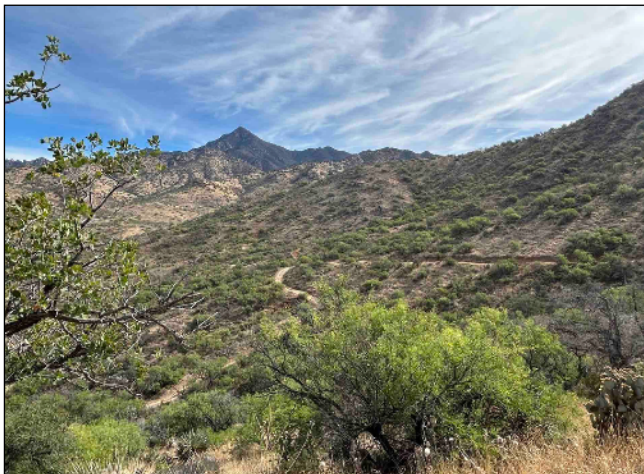
From the Desk of Ralph Montaña

President, Desert Gold Diggers Inc.

Hello to all you prospectors out there. I hope everyone is having luck finding that yellow stuff—it's out there, you just have to get out and look for it.

I'd like to share a little adventure that some members and I had west of the Santa Rita Mountains at the end of April. The intent was to get out and explore and we did find some areas that we will research as candidates for new claims.

We started our journey on the I-19 N frontage road and Elephant Head Road, heading east to Mount Hoskins Road and continuing east to FSR 143 heading east south east, ending up at Patagonia, AZ. It was over 20 miles, and took several hours with stops along the way. We stopped at the Glove Mine site (silver, zinc, and lead are the primary commodities) and picked up interesting rocks. We continued on and stopped at the ruins at the Alto ghost town and then drove to Patagonia for lunch. Thanks to Bob Burgette for the following pictures:



Road to Mount Hopkins



A Unique Rock Formation

It was quite the adventure! We saw nice country, but it was a little on the rough side. If you take this trip, I advise a 4x4 vehicle and high clearance.

If you have a trip or adventure you would like to share, please let me know and we'll put it in a future Gazette.

Get out there and find some gold!

—Ralph



Becky and Joe at the Alto Ruins

Desert Gold Diggers 2026 Election Results

DESERT GOLD DIGGERS OFFICERS: 2026

PRESIDENT: Ralph Montañó (dgdpresident8@gmail.com)
VICE PRESIDENT: **VACANT**
SECRETARY: William Vasko (vasko27@cox.net)
TREASURER: Joe Marihugh (dgdmembership@gmail.com)
OUTINGS DIRECTOR: Darrell Marihugh (darrellmarihugh@yahoo.com)
HISTORIAN: Mary Garcia (marycgarcia54@gmail.com)
CLAIMS DIRECTOR: Hank Bassaraba (mortgage759785@gmail.com)
PR DIRECTOR: Amber Clark (amclark4691@gmail.com)
GOLD MASTER: Joe Marihugh (j.marihugh@yahoo.com)
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR: Becky Marihugh (dgdmembership@gmail.com)
GAZETTE EDITOR: Ray Darragh (DGDGazette51@gmail.com)
DGD CLUB STORE: Hank Bassaraba (mortgage759785@gmail.com)
WEBSITE COORDINATOR: Anibal Morales (anibalmorales2@gmail.com)

DESERT GOLD DIGGERS BOARD MEMBERS

ONE-YEAR BOARD MEMBERS (2026-2027)

Grady Dees, Ed Madson, Katherine Manning, Nick Martel

TWO-YEAR BOARD MEMBERS (2026-2028)

David Fuller (Board Chairman), Ray Darragh, Becky Marihugh, Joe Marihugh, "Bedrock" Bob Masog, Bob Melzer, Louis Pill

THREE YEAR BOARD MEMBERS (2026-2029)

Hank Bassaraba, Howard Cooper, Darrell Marihugh

Gold Price: Year-To-Date (YTD) Trend

Gold closed at **\$4,426** an ounce on May 22, 2026, and has recently trended down from a high of \$5,344 an ounce on January 29, 2026.



Meeting & Event Summary (June-August 2026)

Membership Meetings

1st Tuesday of every month at 6:00 PM.

Ellie Towne Community Center
1660 West Ruthrauff Road
Tucson, AZ 85705-1253

The monthly meetings are an opportunity for club members to socialize, listen to guest speakers, and participate in nugget raffles at the end of the meeting.

Guests are welcome to attend!

Business Meetings

3rd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 PM.

IHOP
4187 N. Oracle Road
Tucson, AZ. 85705-2721
(Southwest corner of Oracle and
Limberlost Road)

Club members are welcome to attend
the monthly business meetings.

Events Schedule

June:

02: Membership Meeting; 6:00 PM

07: (Sunday) Outing: HOPE Claims; 7:00 AM; Gardner Canyon Road & Highway 83

16: Business Meeting; 6:30 PM

July:

07: Membership Meeting; 6:00 PM

11: (Saturday) Outing: BRUISER Claims; 7:00 AM; Circle K in Oracle (2000 W. American Ave)

21: Business Meeting; 6:30 PM

August:

04: Membership Meeting; 6:00 PM

09: (Sunday) Outing: WISHFUL Claims; 7:00 AM: Buenos Aires Wildlife Refuge (Arivaca Rd.)

18: Business Meeting; 6:30 PM

Welcome NEW Club Members!

- Justin Benefield (Tucson)
- Michael & Corali Burdick (Green Valley)
- Greg & Shanna Burhans (Vail)
- Glenn & Sofia Cunningham (Poteau, OK)
- Brent & Barbara Goodrich (Yuma)
- Steve & Beth Hopkins (Patagonia)
- Ken Karrels (Patagonia)
- Paul & Yvette Kroeze (Vail)
- John Llamas (Tucson)
- Jeff & Julie Means (Tucson)
- Gary & Sandra Russell (Sahuarita)



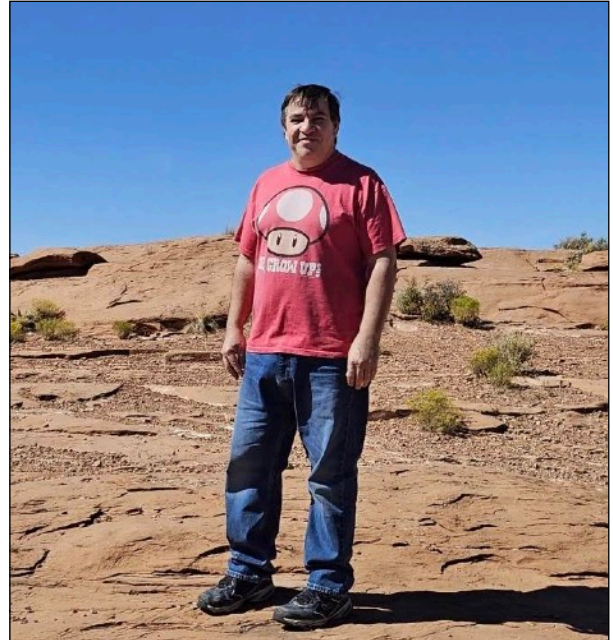
- Peter Sayers (Fairfield, CT)
- Jesse & Kimberly Smith (Amado)
- Adrien Torres (Tucson)
- John & Rose Uhl (Tucson)
- William & Jessica Whiteside III (Vail)

Meet Anibal Morales – DGD Webmaster

Anibal is an Engineer by trade, with a Master of Science degree in Computer Engineering. He has been in Tucson and working for a local Aerospace and Defense company for more than 25 years.

After spending 10 years combing the beaches of the Caribbean with his White's Spectrum metal detector, he was very excited to join a place with such a rich history of mining. This led to the decision to join DGD and try his luck at gold prospecting.

In 2025 Anibal answered the request to help manage the club's website and happily joined the board as a volunteer to search, select, and port to a new hosting provider. Anibal is still not enjoying retirement, but will be very happy to join the club outings as often as he can. As a Jeep Gladiator owner capable of hauling water, his preferred prospecting method is wet recirculation sluicing. He also owns many PI and VLF metal detectors, and is always willing to learn more and share his knowledge.



—Anibal Morales

Message from the Membership Director

I recently received feedback from club members that experienced a problem renewing their DGD membership online while using their cell phones. For some reason, this has not been a issue with all cell phones and we are trying to identify the cause of the issue.

If you experience a problem using your cell phone, please try using a computer to make your membership payment. There have been no issues reported from members that make their payment using a computer.

Please be advised that the Desert Gold Diggers board of directors approved an increase in the membership fees for new members to reflect the price increases from badges, postage, and other mailing materials. The membership fee will increase to \$75 on June 1, 2026. **This increase is for new members only.** The annual membership renewal fee for existing members will remain at \$45.

—Becky Marihugh

Outing Director's Report: April 12 (Bruiser Claims)

We met at 8 AM at the dirt parking lot across from the Circle K in Oracle on American Avenue. We had 28 members sign in and head over to the metal detect hunt for prizes of three (3) gold nuggets and 24 gold dollar coins. It was a successful hunt and all targets were found.



We then headed up to the Bruiser 2 and 3 claims to look for the elusive yellow stuff with drywashers and recirculation setups. It was rough getting up there, but members were finding nice color up on Bruiser 3. It was a nice day that got breezy at times, but the temperature was perfect. Most members cleaned up by 1 PM, but a few diehard members stayed later finding that shiny stuff.

The outing was a success. Next month's outing will be on Saturday, May 9, at 7 AM at the Snoozin' claims in Arivaca. We will meet at mile post 7 on Arivaca Road.

Be safe and keep finding the shiny!

—Darrel Marihugh

Outing Director's Report: May 9 (Snoozin' Claims)

We met at 7 AM at the mile post 7 meeting area off Arivaca Road. Twenty (20) members signed in and caravanned to the metal detect hunt spot.

The metal detector hunt consisted of 24 buffalo nickel targets for the usual prizes of gold nuggets, Goldbacks, \$2 bills, and \$1 coins. The hunt was a success because all targets were found.



Members then began heading to the claims. Some members went to the Snoozin' claims while I headed out with other members to the Pilgrim's Pride claims. A few others drove further south to the Wishful claims for easier access.

I set up and started dry-washing about 100 feet up the wash, while the Mannings were sluicing with a mini-highbanker at the beginning of the wash. We were both finding some color. I devoted some time showing new members how to find good areas in this spot and they took some samples. Clean-up started around 1 PM and I met up with Joe, Becky, and David at Snoozin' 3 where they were finding color.

It got a little warm but wasn't bad in the shade and the outing was a success. The next outing is Sunday, June 7, at the Hope claims in Gardner Canyon. Members should meet at 7 AM at Highway 83 and the Gardner Canyon turnoff.

Keep finding the yellow stuff.

—Darrell Marihugh

Members Meeting Minutes: April 7, 2026

- Ralph Montañó convened the meeting at 6:00 PM; opened with the Pledge of Allegiance; introduced new members/guests; asked about April birthdays/anniversaries; shared MASH information.
- Ralph announced and introduced the candidates for the 2026-2027 Gold Diggers Club Officers. He noted that the Vice-President position was vacant and asked if anyone wished to run for that position. Since no one wished to run for that position and that none of the other positions were contested, he called for a collective vote for all of the club positions. All members in attendance voted aye by a show of hands. There were no dissenting votes noted.
- Darrell announced that the April 12 outing will be held at the Brusier Claims. Members were asked to meet next to the Oracle Circle K prior to 8:00 AM. The nugget hunt will be held before entering the last section of road to the claim. The final section requires high clearance or four wheel drive vehicles. Arrangements will be made for members to carpool from this point to the extent possible.
- Ralph spoke about a future raise in the cost of new memberships—from \$65 to \$75 dollars to reflect the price increase of badges, postage, and other mailing materials. The Board has approved this increase for new memberships only. A club member suggested that a month be provided before the increase takes effect. The start date will be determined at the next Board meeting.
- A video was presented regarding the basics of how a metal detector locates gold and other minerals. Topics covered the depth gold can be detected, the smallest amount that can be detected and what signals can disrupt a detectors signals. The size and shape of detector coils and the difference between 71K and 6.4K were discussed. The presenter strongly recommended not to use a detectors discrimination settings because you might miss gold hidden next to iron bearing hot rocks or objects. The importance of ground balancing your detector and properly setting the detectors threshold “voice” was discussed at length.

Raffle winners:

- Hat: Bill Vasko
- Shirt: Melanie Martel
- Badge: Rick Harrison
- Yellow ticket: Eileen Vasko; Alex Waddell; John Uhl (2); Dick Sulda; Ed Madson; Shaun Moseley; Rich Bulter; Ralph Montano; and Robert Burgette.
- Red ticket: Bob Hamilton and Dick Smith.
- Find of the Month: Nick Martel
- Ralph concluded the meeting by reporting the Club will have access to a new claim in the Arivaca area. Details regarding the claim, including location, maps, environmental rules, etc., will be provided once all regulatory requirements have been met.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Members Meeting Minutes: May 5, 2026

- Ralph Montañó convened the meeting at 6:00 PM; opened with the Pledge of Allegiance; introduced new members/guests; asked about April birthdays/anniversaries; shared MASH information and noted that the club sends out appropriate cards to members.
- Darrell announced that the May 9 outing will be held at the Snoozin' Claims northwest of Arivaca. Members were asked to meet at Mile post 7-prior to the 7 am departure time. The group will then drive to the nugget hunt area. Following the hunt, members will proceed to the claims to prospect.
- Ralph discussed two issues. The first was a reminder to fill your prospect holes when you leave. The DGD board has developed a good relationship with the Forest Service and BLM and it is important to follow the required regulations. A club member suggested that DGD consider a reward program for members who fill unsafe prospect holes and report them to the board. Ralph noted he would bring the suggestion to the Board. The second item was a reminder to stay alert to fire warnings and restrictions when announced. He repeated that DGD members should be fire safe when driving to claims (no dragging chains or unsafe smoking), and camping at the claims. Make sure fires are out when you leave.
- Ralph then introduced Goldback representatives Brian Mildebrandt (local dealer) and Brannon Flasck (GB Regional Sales Representative).

They presented an informative discussion about the creation of this privately owned Company, how the Goldbacks are made (with gold), denominations of Goldbacks, States that are represented on Goldbacks, and the cost/value of each Goldback. A lively question and answer session followed.

May Raffle Winners:

- Hat: Howard Cooper
- Shirt: Lewis A.
- Badge: Kathy Smith
- Yellow ticket: Keith Oliver; David Doyle (2); Darrell Marihugh (2); Anibal Morales (2); Ken Herholz (2); Robert Burgette; Steve Barthalmy; Hank Bassaraba; Ed Madson; JR Smith; Joe Marihugh; and Daniel Manning.
- Red ticket: Bill Horky, JR Smith
- Find of the Month: Daniel Manning
- The Goldback representatives graciously provided Goldbacks and winners included: Keith Oliver (2); Robert Burgette (3); Marion Vittetoe (2); David Fuller (2); Beth Sausen (3); Jeff Merns (2); Jim Kells, Bob Hamilton, Grady Dees (3); Shawn Moseley (2), Dave Riley, Max Offermann; Dan Scheper (3), Darrell Marihugh; Rich Butler; JR Smith; Anibal Morales; Susan Rickman; Ed Madson; and Ken Herholz.
- Ralph thanked Brian and Brannon for their generous donation to the DGD raffle.
- Ralph adjourned the meeting was adjourned at 7:51 PM.

Business Meeting Minutes: April 21, 2026

- Chairman: David Fuller convened the meeting at 6:36 pm. Secretary Darrell Marihugh read previous meeting minutes; Grady motioned to approve and Howard seconded.
- Secretary's Report: Bill read the March 17 business meeting minutes. Howard moved the minutes be approved, Grady 2nd and the motion was passed by unanimous consent.
- Gazette Editor's Report: - Ray reported that he was working to complete the next issue of the gazette. He indicated that he is on schedule and there was nothing else to report at this time.
- Webmaster: We are having trouble with online subscriptions and PayPal sending over the registration information.
- Membership Director's Report: Becky was unable to attend the meeting. David continued this item along with the discussion of implementing the new member's fees increase.
- Treasurer Report & Gold Master's Report: Joe was unable to attend the meeting. David continued both of these items to next month's meeting.
- Outing Director's Report: Darrell reported that the April 12 outing to the Bruiser claims was a success. A full report on the outing will be forwarded to the Secretary. The next outing will be held at the Snoozin' claims northwest of Arivaca. Members should arrive prior to 7 am, at mile post 7 on the Arivaca Rd. Members will then proceed to the Nugget Hunt area. After the hunt, members will continue to the claims.
- Claims Director's Report: Hank reported the Club's new AU1 claim has been approved. He is working on

preparing maps and claim information for the club members. He reported on the status of the Club store. He also reported that all necessary forms for the IRS and State had been filed.

- Historian's Report: Mary reported that a speaker from the Duval mines is projected for the July meeting. Joe reported that the May speaker will discuss Goldback certificates.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ralph provided Club business cards for distribution to people interested in the Club.

New BUSINESS

- Ralph brought several items to the attention of the Board: (1) Be aware that rattlesnakes are out already and to be cautious while in the field, (2) The fire season has started with an incident in the Dragoon Mountains. Be aware of Red Flag alerts and potential fire restrictions, (3) During outings, club members with dogs should keep them on lease or leave them at home if they present a hazard to members or pets to avoid problems, (4) Ralph informed the Board of the Club's 501c7 non-profit status, (5) Ralph provided a general discussion on the location of the Club's new AU1 claim, (6) Ralph reported that the Club has developed a positive relationship with the US Forest Service & BLM. He asked the Board to inform members that these Jurisdiction's 14-day camping limitation also applies to the Club's Placer claims, and (7) the topic of new Club merchandise (embroidered hats/ t-shirts) will be discussed at the next meeting.

Business Meeting Minutes: April 21, 2026 *(continued)*

- Ralph stated that in accordance with the Club Bylaws, said Bylaws will be read and reviewed by the Board at this time. Board members read the Club Bylaws and general discussion followed.
 - A motion was then made by Howard that David Fuller be appointed Board Chairman for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, 2nd by Ray, and others. The motion was approved by unanimous consent.
 - Darrell moved and Ed 2nd that the meeting be adjourned, which was approved by unanimous consent at 7:36. PM.
-

Business Meeting Minutes: May 19, 2026

- Chairman: David Fuller convened the meeting at 6:30 pm.
- Secretary's Report: Bill read the April 2, 2026, business meeting minutes. Howard moved the minutes be approved, Kat 2nd motion - approved by unanimous consent.
- Gazette Editor's Report: Ray distributed a working draft of the Gazette for members to review. There was general discussion regarding items in the draft.
- Webmaster Report: Anibal was unable to attend the meeting. Items related to the web site, including the implementation date for the new member's fees increase, were referred to the meeting's Old Business agenda item.
- Membership Director's Report: Becky provided a combined presentation for the March and April (4-1 to 4-30) reporting periods. There were 10 new members and 31 non-renewals for a total Club membership of 357.
- Treasurer Report: Becky read the Treasurers report for the combined March and April reporting periods. A copy of these two reports is available upon request.
- Gold Master's Report: Joe reported on the Clubs gold inventory, costs, and income for the combined March and April period. A copy of this report is available on request.
- Outing Director's Report: Darrell reported on the May 9 outing at the Snoozin' claims. Twenty members signed in and proceeded to the metal detecting area and searched for 24 buffalo nickel targets. These were redeemed for the usual prizes of gold, Goldbacks, \$2.00 bills, and \$1 dollar coins. Members then began heading to the Snoozing and Pilgrim Pride claims. A few members headed further south to the wishful claims for easier access. The Sunday, June 7 outing will be held at the Hope claims in the Kentucky camp area. Members are to meet prior to 7 am at the Highway 83 and Gardner Canyon Road turnoff.
- Claims Director's Report: - Hank provided copies of the IRS and State Corporation approvals for Board member review. The Club's new AU1 claim has been approved. He is finalizing claim location information and maps for distribution to club members. He reported on the Forest Service approval letters status and the Club store. General discussion followed.

Business Meeting Minutes: May 19, 2026 *(continued)*

- Historian's Report: Speakers for the next two meetings have not been confirmed.

OLD BUSINESS

- The implementation date for the New Members membership fee increase to \$75 was discussed. Howard moved that June 1, 2026 be set as the start date, Louis 2nd motion - approved by unanimous consent.

New BUSINESS

- The topic of new Club embroidered hats/t-shirts was discussed. Dave moved that embroidered merchandise be purchased for the store, Grady 2nd motion - approved by unanimous consent.

- Ralph proposed that Club ice chests be replaced. Dave moved that two ice chests be purchased, Darrell 2nd motion - approved by unanimous consent.
- Ray requested a clarification of the Web Liaison-Webmaster position title. Dave moved that Webmaster be the position title, Hank 2nd motion - approved by unanimous consent.
- General discussion about use of Goldbacks as prizes, creating a DGD power-point presentation, and asking new members/guests how they learned about the club followed.
- Bob moved the meeting be adjourned, Louis 2nd motion - approved by unanimous consent at 7:50 PM.

An Interesting Fact about Gold: The Boot of Cortez

In 1989, an amateur prospector armed with a modest Fisher Gold Bug metal detector unearthed one of the most extraordinary gold nuggets ever discovered. This remarkable find occurred near Caborca, Mexico, about 70 miles south of the Arizona border. The prospector, a local rancher named Gierhart, had no formal mining experience, but taught himself to use the metal detector by practicing on buried coins and scrap metal. Guided by reports of gold-bearing canyons, he meticulously scanned the desert using a grid pattern, a methodical approach that demanded patience and precision.

After countless hours and numerous false signals, Gierhart's detector emitted an unusual tone. Digging carefully, he unearthed a massive gold nugget and thought the nugget might be a piece of junk metal or scrap due to its size.

Shaped like the boot of a conquistador, the nugget was named "The Boot of Cortez." It measured over 10 inches tall, weighed 389.4 troy ounces (26.77 pounds), has a purity of 98%, and is the largest gold nugget ever found in North America.

Its sheer size and distinctive form are breathtaking, making the nugget one of the most significant gold finds in history.



The Boot of Cortez

Gold Nugget Raffle



Raffle tickets are now available for a **4.6 gram** gold nugget.

The raffle tickets are \$2.00 each and may be purchased at the membership meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. The lucky winner will be selected at a future members meeting.



4.6 gram nugget

Club Store

Be sure to stop by the Desert Gold Diggers Club Store at the monthly membership meetings. You can purchase clothing and prospecting items such as:

- Columbia long-sleeve shirts
- DGD polo shirts, T-shirts, hats, and patches
- DGD club license plates
- DGD window transfer decals
- Bucket handle grip replacements, scoops, and numerous other prospecting items.

The Club Store also carries laminated color topo maps with the GPS coordinates and directions to the claims. The store is in the process of re-stocking and it may take some time to purchase new items and we appreciate everyone's patience.

Please help support Desert Gold Diggers with purchases from our club

MASH Report

1. Bud Little is recovering from a stroke.
2. Gil Mireles's brother passed away.
3. Judith Vittetoe fell and broke her hip.

If you have an illness, injury or death in the family please contact Amber Clark at amclark4691@gmail.com

Market Place.....



If you're searching for something specific that you'd like to buy or sell, or have lost/ found something while on our claims, please contact DG DGazette51@gmail.com.

Provide a description of what you would like to buy or sell, include pictures (if applicable) and your information will be posted in this section of the Gazette.

SAFETY ALERT: Heat Exposure and Heat Stress

We've had a very warm spring in Arizona, but just around the corner, the temperatures are about to rise considerably. When you are outside prospecting, what precautions are you taking to ensure that you are preventing two very dangerous heat-related risks: Heat Exposure and Heat Stress?



In Arizona, without taking the proper precautions, your risk of heat exposure and heat stress can stack up very quickly and could have devastating results.

Big differences exist between the two and can mean precious minutes of reacting to both properly. Experts suggest paying attention to what your body is telling you when you are working outside in the heat. The following are some of the telling signs of what is going on.

Heat Exposure: Understanding the Basics

Heat exposure, also known as heat exposure syndrome, refers to the direct contact of your body with high temperatures. This can happen during outdoor activities when working in hot environments or even during a heatwave. When your body is exposed to excessive heat, it can lead to various health issues

The Effects of Heat Exposure

1. Dehydration: Prolonged exposure to high temperatures can cause excessive sweating, leading to dehydration. It's crucial to stay well-hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids.
2. Heat Rash: Heat exposure can result in skin irritations like heat rash, causing redness, itching, and discomfort. Wearing lightweight, breathable clothing can help prevent this.
3. Sunburn: Unprotected skin can quickly suffer from sunburn, which hurts and increases your risk of skin cancer. Always apply sunscreen with adequate SPF when outdoors.
4. Heat Exhaustion: If you experience heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, and nausea, you may suffer from heat exhaustion. Seek shade and rehydrate immediately.

Heat Stress: A More Serious Condition

Heat stress goes beyond mere "heat exposure." It's a condition that develops when your body's mechanisms for regulating temperature become overwhelmed. Heat stress can lead to severe health complications if not addressed promptly.

SAFETY ALERT (*continued*)

The Dangers of Heat Stress

1. Heat Cramps: Heat stress can cause painful muscle cramps due to the loss of electrolytes through excessive sweating. These cramps can be debilitating and require rest and rehydration.
2. Heat Stroke: Heat stress can progress to heat stroke, a life-threatening condition.

Preventing Heat Stress and Heat Exposure

1. Hydration: Staying hydrated is key whether exposed to heat or under stress. Drink water regularly, and avoid excessive caffeine or alcohol, which can contribute to dehydration.
2. Appropriate Clothing: Dress in loose-fitting, light-colored clothing to minimize heat absorption. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses for added protection.
3. Breaks and Shade: Take frequent breaks in the shade or air-conditioned areas if working or exercising in high temperatures. Listen to your body's signals.
4. Know the Signs: Familiarize yourself with heat stress and exposure symptoms (as cited earlier). If you or someone you know experiences them, act promptly.

Understanding the differences between heat exposure and heat stress is essential for staying safe in hot weather. While heat exposure can lead to discomfort and minor issues, heat stress is a severe condition that demands immediate attention. Simple strategies can keep you safe and healthy.

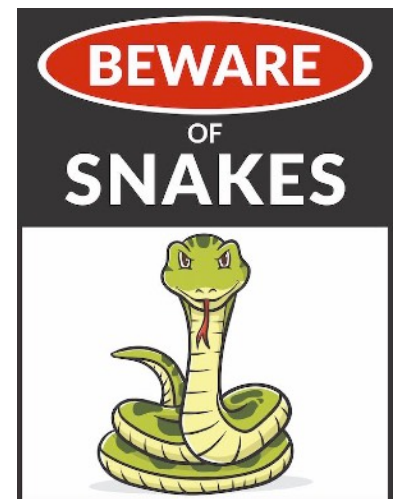
(The preceding information was obtained from internet sources. The entire story may be found at: <https://www.azfb.org/Article/Four-Simple-Strategies-to-Staying-Cool-and-Healthy-Under-Arizonas-Sun>)

SAFETY ALERT: Venomous Snakes

There have been several rattlesnake sightings at several of our DGD claims in the last two months. The following will provide information on how to identify venomous snakes and what to do if you receive a snake bite.

Of all the snakes encountered in the United States, approximately 10 percent are venomous. There are approximately 8,000 venomous snakebites each year in the US -- these typically result in eight to 15 deaths.

Fortunately, fatalities from reptile bites are extremely rare when modern medical resources are available. But despite the fact that the recent death rate has dropped to less than 1%, serious symptoms are possible and **bite victims must be seen in a medical facility without delay.**



SAFETY ALERT: Venomous Snakes

There are 15 different types of rattlesnakes in Arizona and all are venomous. Venoms are complex poisons which vary greatly in composition and potency among species and individuals. In addition to rattles, all rattlesnakes share some common physical characteristics:

- a triangular shaped head
- cat-like pupils
- foldable fangs



Prevent Snake Bites

Taking precautions greatly reduces the possibility of snake bites when prospecting:

- **Leave wild animals alone.** These animals want to avoid a human interaction. They will not attack, chase, or intentionally bite.
- **Be aware of peak movement times.** Reptiles in Arizona are most active in the warmer months of April through October. During the hottest months, they will be most active at night. They may be encountered during the day in spring and fall or during a warm day in winter.
- **Watch where you put your hands and feet.** Try to keep your hands and feet out of crevices in rocks, wood piles and deep grass.
- **Dead snakes can bite.** Never handle a venomous reptile, even after it's dead. Reflex strikes with injected venom can occur for several hours after death.

First Aid

In many cases, first aid performed in the field by the patient or companions only causes additional injury. The best first aid kit for snakebite includes your car keys and cell phone. Get help quickly if you are bitten.

If you are bitten by a venomous snake:

- **DO NOT** use ice or electricity.
- **DO NOT** use constricting bands or suction. Using "extractors" does not remove a significant amount of venom and the process can increase tissue damage.
- **DO NOT** give alcohol or medication.
- **DO NOT** wait to see if you get symptoms.
- **DO NOT** try to catch the snake.
 - The snake may bite again.
 - Capture will delay your getting to the hospital.
 - Treatment will be the same no matter which kind of rattlesnake bit you.
- **DO** relax and move as little as possible.
- **DO** remove tight clothing, shoes or jewelry from the bitten limb.
- **DO** go to the nearest medical facility immediately.

(The preceding information was obtained from internet sources. The entire story may be found at: <https://azpoison.com/venom/rattlesnakes>)

Arizona Fire Restrictions

In 2026, there have been 135 fires reported in Arizona, which includes southern Arizona, burning a total of 4,220 acres from January 1 to April 3. As we get into the hot, dry summer months, it's important that all DGD members are aware of Arizona fire restrictions, and where to find current information on the location of current fires.

The Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management implements three stages of fire restrictions on state lands to manage fire risk: Stage 1, Stage 2, and closures.

Stage 1 Fire Restrictions

- Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, charcoal, coal, or wood stove other than in a developed campsite or picnic area is prohibited.
- Smoking is prohibited unless: it is within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site/improved site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.
- The discharging or using of any kind of fireworks and incendiary devices is prohibited.
- Welding or operating acetylene or other torch device with an open flame is prohibited.
- Exemptions: Devices fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG that can be turned on and off are permitted in cleared areas.

Stage 2 Fire Restrictions

- Building maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, charcoal, coal, or wood stove including fires in developed campgrounds or improved sites is prohibited. Persons using a device fueled solely by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels that can be turned on and off is permitted. Such devices can only be used in an area that is barren or cleared of overhead and surrounding flammable materials within 3 feet of the device.
- Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, is prohibited.
- Discharging a firearm except while engaged in a lawful hunt pursuant to state, federal, or tribal laws and regulations is prohibited.
- Operating any internal combustion engine.
- Exemptions: Similar to Stage 1, devices fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG are allowed in cleared areas.

Stage 3 Fire Restrictions

- Public Access: Complete closure of all forest areas.
- Prohibitions: No public entry is allowed due to extreme fire danger.

These restrictions are enforced to protect public safety and natural resources during high-risk fire conditions.

For additional information on fire restrictions, please check the following: <https://dffm.az.gov/newsroom/fire-restrictions>

For additional information on the current locations of fires in Arizona, check the interactive map located at: <https://www.azbackroads.com/interactive-map-of-fire-restrictions-in-arizona/>

Camping Restrictions on Forest Service and BLM Land

With more members spending times on our DGD claims, it is important that club members are aware of the camping rules for both Forest Service and BLM land.

Forest Service

The Forest Service has the following rules and regulations for dispersed camping (i.e., camping outside of developed campgrounds) in the Coronado National Forest

- All dispersed sites are first-come, first-served.
- There is a 14-day stay limit per 60-day period.
- No camping within 1 mile of a developed campground or administrative site unless posted otherwise.
- No camping within 200 feet of a water source, including water tanks.
- No camping anywhere designated as “DAY USE ONLY” or “NO CAMPING”.
- If roadside camping, vehicles must remain within 300 feet from the centerline of the road.
- Large groups, commercial or non-commercial (like weddings and family reunions), often require a special use permit. Call the local district office to inquire if you need a permit for your group size and to discuss any site-specific requirements, such as human waste disposal protocols. See our [Special Use Permit](#) page for additional information.
- No permit is required to camp in any wilderness areas in the Coronado National Forest.

The AU1, Bruiser, Hope, Placer Pond, and Wishful Claims are on Forest Service land. For more information please reference <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r03/coronado/recreation/dispersed-camp>.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM has the following requirements:

- 14-Day Limit: This is the standard rule for dispersed (free) camping on BLM land, applying to both consecutive and cumulative days within a 28-day period.
- Long-Term Visitor Areas (LTVAs): For winter visitors (Sept 15 – April 15), several areas in Arizona (e.g., Imperial Dam, La Posa, Midland) allow long-term stays. A fee-based permit is required, either for the full season or for short-visit, 14-day renewals.
- Moving Distances: After your 14 days are up, you must move at least 25 miles away from the previous site.
- Location-Specific Rules: Some high-use areas may have shorter, specific, or seasonal limits, so check local field office signs.
- Permits & Fees: Dispersed camping is free, but LTVAs require permits.

Always practice "Leave No Trace" principles—pack out all trash and waste—and check local fire restrictions, which are common in Arizona.

The Pilgrims' Pride and Snoozin' claims are on BLM land. For more information please reference <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/camping>.

DGD's Newest Claim: AU1

Desert Gold Diggers has a new claim called AU1. This new claim is privately owned by several members of the club, however, the owners are allowing DGD members access to the claim.



All general information and operating instructions of Desert Gold Diggers claims shall apply to the AU1 claim, including liability waiver forms already executed by members. Please keep the claim clean and fill your prospecting holes. Members shall also adhere to all Coronado National Forest rules and regulations (i.e., camping time limits, fire restrictions, etc.).

General Directions and Location

From I-10 in Tucson, take 1-19 south past Green Valley to kilometer marker 49. Take exit 48, which is the Amado/Arivaca exit. Turn right from the off-ramp and proceed west approximately 100 yards to where the road dead-ends at the Frontage Road. Turn right (north) into the Frontage Road and proceed 0.1 miles and turn left (west) onto Arivaca Road which lies between the Cow Palace and Amado Plaza. Proceed west on Arivaca Road for 23 miles until you reach the town of Arivaca. Proceed through the town past Arivaca Mercantile and turn left (south) just past the post office onto Ruby/Arivaca Lake Road. After approximately 0.6 of a mile you will come to a fork. The left is paved, the right is unpaved. Turn right onto the UNPAVED road, which is S. Tres Bellotas Road (FSR 216). Continue on the unpaved road for three (3) miles. Turn left onto Fraguita Road (FSR 4129). Travel approximately 50 feet and keep going straight ahead onto FSR 4123 for 0.4 of a mile to the Au1 claim. You will see the yellow claim marker on the right side of the road. The roads are graded and county maintained and the claim is accessible with a passenger car. The following are the GPS claim boundary coordinates:

Boundary	Latitude	Longitude	Elevation
NW	N 31.52617	W 111.32484	3,886 ft.
NE	N 31.52350	W 111.32108	3,910 ft.
SE	N 31.52382	W 111.32122	3,915 ft.
SW	N 31.52425	W 111.32490	3,943 ft.

A topo map of the AU1 claim will be sent to all members in the next couple weeks.

Members are finding gold on this claim, unfortunately NOBODY has found a nugget on AU1 as large as the one in the “doctored” picture above!

June 2026 Special Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Member's Meeting 6:00 PM	3	4	5	6
7 HOPE Claims 7:00 AM	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Business Meeting 6:30 PM	17	18	19 JUNETEENTH	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2026 Special Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY
5	6	7 Member's Meeting 6:00 PM	8	9	10	11 BRUISER Claims 7:00 AM
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Business Meeting 6:30 PM	22	23	24	
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Editor's Note

Now that summer is here, I encourage members to observe the safety precautions discussed in this newsletter. Being aware of fire restrictions, staying hydrated, and watching for rattlesnakes on our claims will help minimize the possibility of an unpleasant outdoor experience. Rattlesnakes are typically not aggressive, but I know from personal experience that being preoccupied, not paying attention to your surroundings, and almost stepping on a rattlesnake can definitely ruin your day! That distinctive *rattle* that only a diamondback can make will immediately get your attention and get your heart pounding.



Ray Darragh, DGD Gazette Editor

Please take the opportunity to check out the new AU1 claim (p.18). I have been out there and did find some color in my pan. Until next time, be safe and good luck finding that shiny yellow stuff.

“May you always find yellow in the bottom of your pan”



The Desert Gold Diggers Gazette is published as a service to the members of Desert Gold Diggers Inc. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the management and its members and neither the Desert Gold Diggers, its Board, nor the editor of this publication assume any liability for damages resulting from the use of Gazette information and club maps. There are risks associated with prospecting and the Desert Gold Diggers membership application states:

“I acknowledge that prospecting and prospecting locations can be dangerous with numerous natural and artificial hazards. By signing up, as a member of the Desert Gold Diggers Inc., I, my spouse, my family, and/or my guests agree to release the Desert Gold Diggers Inc., their officers or assignees, and/or property owner(s) from any liability incurred during prospecting operations/outings. I further agree to have any guests accompanying me to one of the clubs claims on a private outing, to sign a club waiver prior to the outing.”

The Desert Gold Diggers Board encourages submissions of articles from club members about prospecting or mining, as well as opinion pieces or the sale of items. All submissions will be reviewed and approved by the Board prior to inclusion in the Gazette.