

## Tourism Tuesday

By Arizona Office of Tourism • Jan 20, 2026

Smart Brevity® count: 3 mins...855 words



A colorful mix of balloons prepare to take to the sky during the Havasu Balloon Festival and Fair in Lake Havasu City. Photo credit Go Lake Havasu.

### Good afternoon,

As we get closer to the end of January, many residents and visitors alike are enjoying our enviable weather and outdoor spaces. This also means, of course, we're closer to Arizona outdoor events season!

In just two days from now, the [Havasu Balloon Festival and Fair](#) kicks off at Lake Havasu State Park. From the vibrant morning flights to the dazzling balloon night glow, it's a great celebration of flight, fun and community.

Additionally, we're in the middle of the [Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction](#) at Westworld this week and anticipating another fantastic [Parada del Sol Parade](#) and Trail's End Festival on Jan. 31, both in Scottsdale.

February also brings Flagstaff's famously decadent [Chocolate Walk](#) throughout downtown just ahead of Valentine's Day on Feb. 7

We're also looking ahead to the [36th Annual World Championship Hoop Dance Contest](#) at the Heard Museum on Feb. 14-15—featuring incredible competitors, local vendors, and delicious frybread!

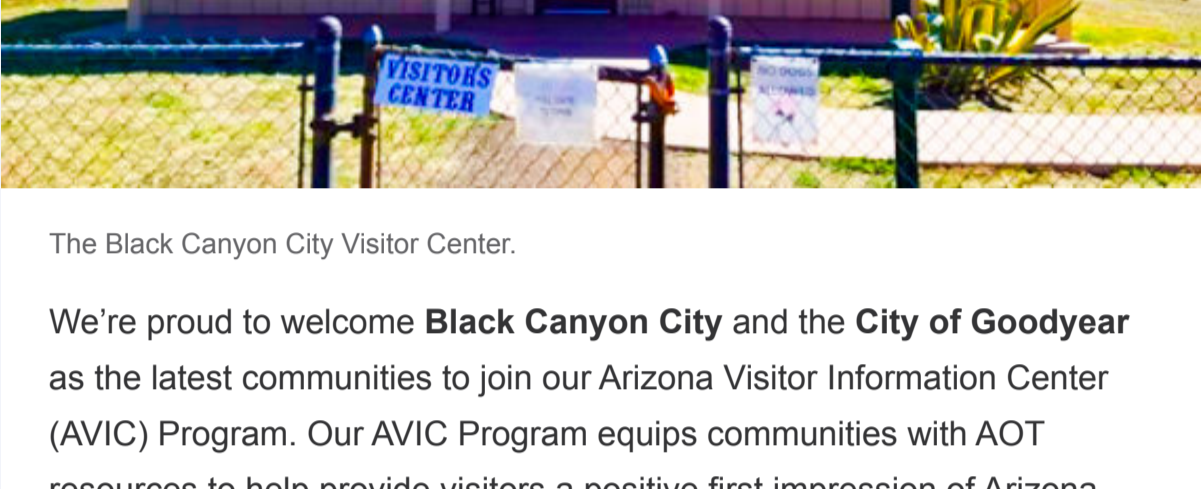
And the renowned [Tucson Gem and Mineral Show](#), now in its 71st year, with the theme "Red, White & Blue - Celebrate the Spirit of Minerals!" runs Feb. 12-15.

And just around the corner, [Cactus League Spring Training](#) begins Feb. 20, which this year includes games against the New York Yankees visiting from Grapefruit League and a series of games in early March against World Baseball Classic teams. We always love welcoming visitors eager to enjoy baseball, sunshine, and [Arizona's many attractions](#).

Hosting events in Arizona is truly a team effort. From airport arrivals to hotel staff, restaurant servers and event planners, everyone plays a role in creating unforgettable experiences. Hosting events enables all of us to build and reinforce long-term relationships with our visitors that last a lifetime.

**Alix Skelpsa Ridgway**, *Director*, Arizona Office of Tourism

## Welcome New AVICs



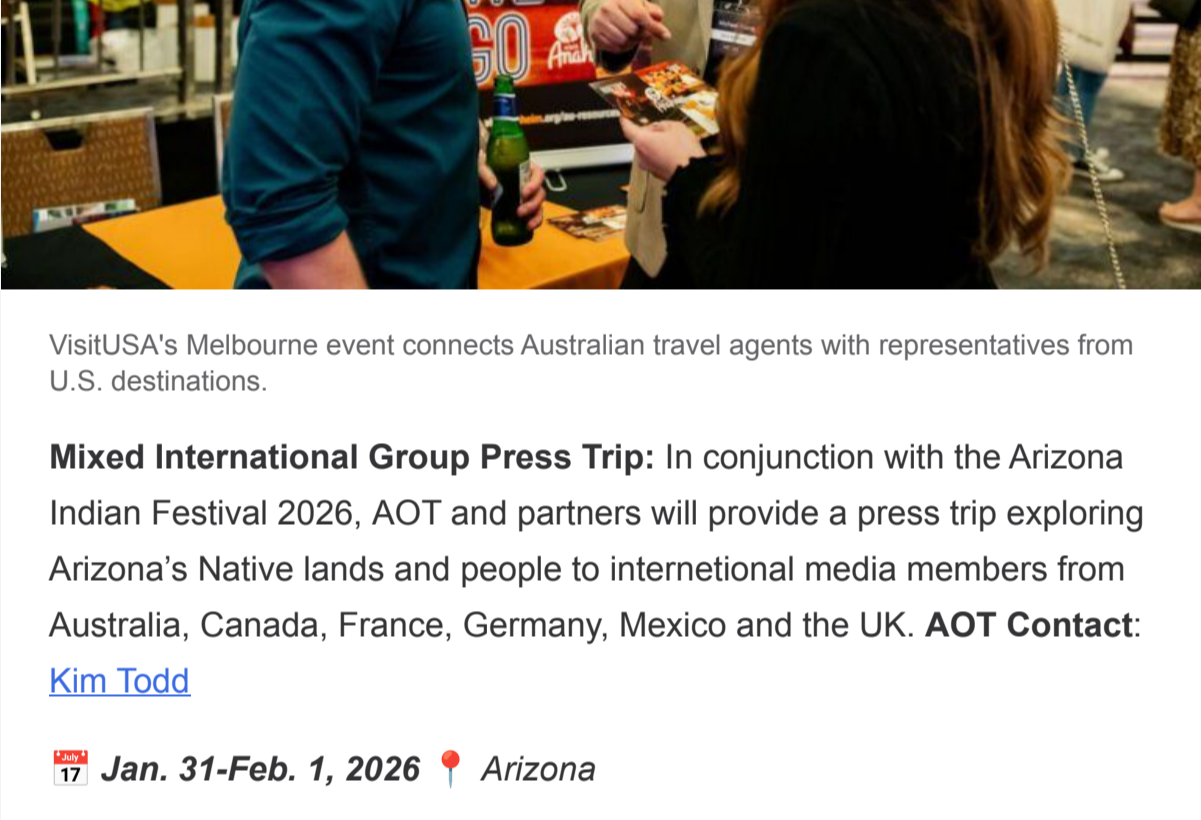
The Black Canyon City Visitor Center.

We're proud to welcome **Black Canyon City** and the **City of Goodyear** as the latest communities to join the Arizona Visitor Information Center (AVIC) Program. Our AVIC Program equips communities with AOT resources to help provide visitors a positive first impression of Arizona.

Our statewide network of AVIC partners are essential to how we promote local, regional and statewide attractions, destinations, dining options and hospitality amenities.

[AVIC Membership Info](#)

## Coming Soon: Industry Events



VisitUSA's Melbourne event connects Australian travel agents with representatives from U.S. destinations.

**Mixed International Group Press Trip:** In conjunction with the Arizona Indian Festival 2026, AOT and partners will provide a press trip exploring Arizona's Native lands and people to international media members from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Mexico and the UK. **AOT Contact:** [Kim Todd](#)

**Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 2026** • [Arizona](#)

**Canada Media Mission:** AOT and partners will host media appointments in Toronto and Vancouver to educate media representatives about the latest and greatest of Arizona's world-class tourism amenities. Registration for this event is now closed. **AOT Contact:** [Marjorie Magnusson](#)

**Feb. 2-6, 2026** • [Toronto and Vancouver](#)

**France & Belgium Trade & Media Mission:** AOT will host trade & media functions in Paris and Brussels to educate media representatives about the latest and greatest of Arizona's world-class tourism amenities. One-on-one appointments will also be scheduled. This event is open to all statewide tourism suppliers, with preference given to Arizona designated DMO partners. **AOT Contacts:** *Trade:* [Joanna Tejada](#) *Media:* [Kim Todd](#)

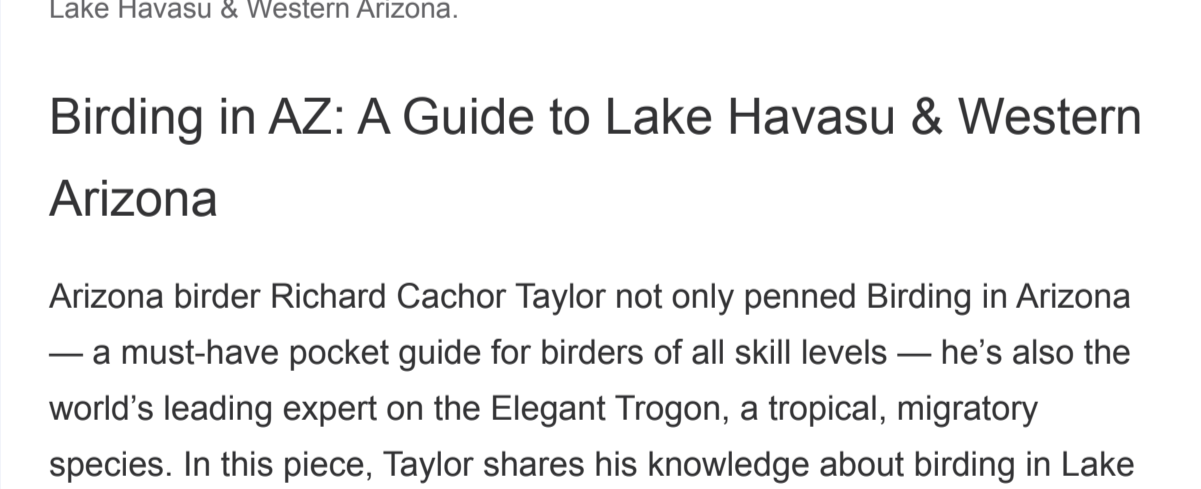
**Feb. 16-19, 2026** • [Paris and Brussels](#)

**VUSA Australia Expo Week:** With events in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, VUSA Australia Expo Week connects Australia-based travel agents with representatives from U.S. destinations. This event is self-registering and open to all statewide tourism suppliers. **AOT Contact:** [Joanna Tejada](#)

**Feb. 23-25, 2026** • [Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney](#)

[Trade & Media Calendar](#)

## Newly Featured on VisitArizona.com



A Belted Kingfisher is one of many species that birdwatchers can expect to see around Lake Havasu & Western Arizona.

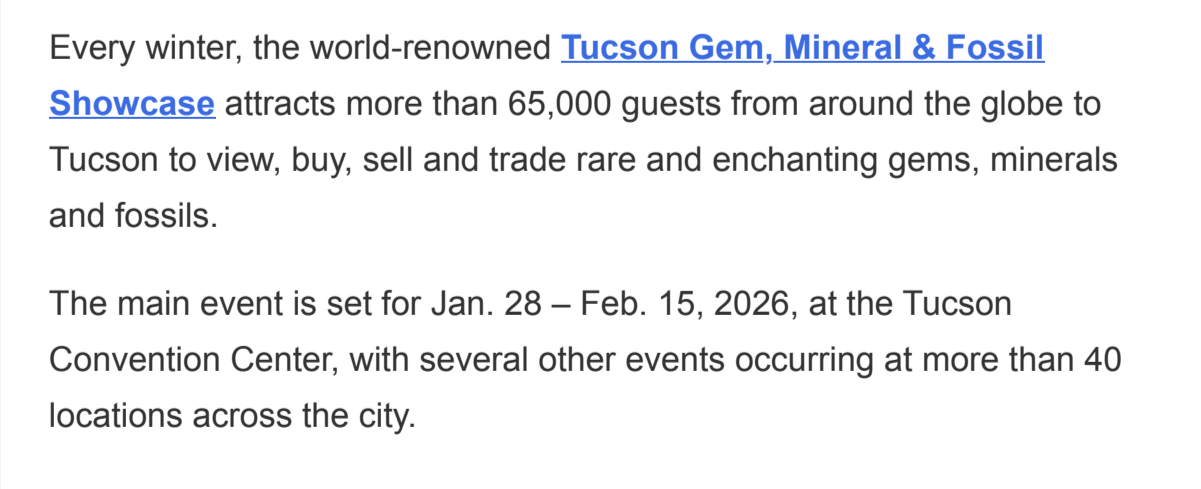
### Birding in AZ: A Guide to Lake Havasu & Western Arizona

Arizona birder Richard Cachor Taylor not only penned *Birding in Arizona* — a must-have pocket guide for birders of all skill levels — he's also the world's leading expert on the Elegant Trogon, a tropical, migratory species. In this piece, Taylor shares his knowledge about birding in Lake Havasu & Western Arizona.

[Read More](#)

We're constantly adding new stories to [VisitArizona.com](#) to help visitors discover the incredible places and experiences you provide across the state. Have a great idea or pitch for a blog that features interesting people or places in your community? Reach out to AOT Senior Marketing Manager [Emily Balli](#) with any pitches for consideration

## Attraction to go: Tucson Winter Gem, Mineral & Fossil Shows



A large T-rex skeleton greets visitors to the Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase.

Every winter, the world-renowned [Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase](#) attracts more than 65,000 guests from around the globe to Tucson to view, buy, sell and trade rare and enchanting gems, minerals and fossils.

The main event is set for Jan. 28 – Feb. 15, 2026, at the Tucson Convention Center, with several other events occurring at more than 40 locations across the city.

The Tucson winter show season also delivers a substantial economic impact to the region. In 2025, Tucson hosted over 50 shows which welcomed 6,700+ vendors, 113,000+ buyers and delivered \$11.6 million in tax revenue.

[Read More](#)

**That's a wrap!** Thank you for reading today's Tourism Tuesday!

- Tourism Tuesday publishes **every other Tuesday**. The next edition is scheduled to be published **Tuesday, Feb. 3**.

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