



Wild Roses grow along the trails at Wenima Wildlife Area.

A Walk Among Wild Roses and Walnut Trees

On January 28, 1993, the first parcel of the Wenima Wildlife Area, consisting of 205 acres, was purchased by the Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) through its Heritage Fund. This constituted the first “fee title” Heritage acquisition in the state. Waterfowl Conservation Funds were also utilized in the acquisition. On February 22, 1995 purchase of the adjacent Slade property added 152 acres to the Wenima Wildlife Area bringing the total size to 357 acres. The Wenima Wildlife Area is located in east-central Arizona approximately three miles northeast of the towns of Springerville and Eagar. The land and resource values associated with this acquisition provide opportunities to meet objectives of Arizona’s Heritage Fund for Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species and habitats, as well as provide benefits for other wildlife species and the public.

Stretching nearly two miles along the Little Colorado River, Wenima Wildlife Area is a long, narrow band of river and streamside (riparian) habitat, meadows and bluffs. It is home to many forms of wildlife: the Little Colorado Spinedace (a small native fish that is protected as a threatened species); Beaver and their unique dams that naturally irrigate the meadows; Deer, Antelope and Elk; plus many native plants and wildflowers including Wild Roses, Gooseberries and Grapes.

The Wenima Wildlife Area is also home to a very unique grove of indigenous Walnut Trees that have stood along the Little Colorado River for several centuries providing shelter and food for Chipmunks and Squirrels. There are only two such groves in the State of Arizona. The Historical Wenima Walnut Grove was well known to many pioneers of Springerville-Eagar and a few old-timers remember the days when signs posted, “All the walnuts you can eat!” and gathered the fall harvest into big gunny sacks. For many decades, the Walnut Grove has been a favorite summertime picnic location for residents in the area.

The Arizona Game and Fish recently introduced Beaver to build dams and rechannel the Little Colorado River. Their unique and industrious engineering can be viewed along the Wenima Wildlife Trail. Before their reintroduction, Beaver were almost extinct in this area through trapping.



The Walnut Grove at Wenima Wildlife area is very unique and one of only two such groves in Arizona State.