



CONSERVE AND PROTECT



Welcome to Page Springs Hatchery

You are about to meet 500,000 new fishy friends.

Page Springs Hatchery
1600 N. Page Springs Rd.
Cornville, AZ 86325
928.634.4805

Hours:
7:00 AM – 3:30 PM daily
(except Thanksgiving
and Christmas)

Please respect the hatchery rules and responsibly discard any litter to protect the fish, wildlife and visitors alike!

- You are welcome in areas where gates are open. Please do not open gates.
- Please keep dogs on leash.
- Some areas can be dangerous.
- Please supervise small children.
- Do not put hands or throw rocks into the raceways.
- Try not to frighten the fish because stress increases disease and death.
- There is no creek access from Page Springs Hatchery. Creek access can be found at the bridge over Oak Creek on Page Springs Road to the north of the hatchery.

www.azgfd.gov

Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 W. Carefree Highway • Phoenix, AZ 85086
(602) 942-3000

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5/2018 ERD



INTRO

Page Springs Hatchery is the largest of six fish production hatcheries owned and operated by the Arizona Game & Fish Department and provides over 60% of all rainbow trout stocked. There are four other coldwater facilities that raise trout (Sterling Springs, Tonto Creek, Canyon Creek, and Silver Creek Hatcheries) and one warm and cool water hatchery (Bubbling Ponds Hatchery) that raises native fish species for conservation as well as some warmwater sportfish. (Bubbling Ponds is located across the creek and is open to the public.) There is no creek access from Page Springs Hatchery but the creek can be accessed at the bridge north of the hatchery on Page Springs Road. It's important to produce trout at the state hatcheries because many streams and lakes in Arizona lack the habitat necessary to support natural populations of trout. In addition, supplementing these populations provides for better recreational fishing opportunities.



for safety reasons. B-Bank and C-Bank). B-Bank is not open to the public has 12 raceways in each of our three banks (A-Bank, swim back and forth under the baffles. Page Springs feed and waste to the end of the raceway. Fish can raceway, which creates a current that carries unused The baffles are several inches off of the bottom of the raise the fish. Each raceway is divided into several sections by baffles, which help keep the raceways clean.

A: Raceways are the long concrete tanks where we raise the fish. Each raceway is divided into several sections by baffles, which help keep the raceways clean. A: The fish in the Show Pond are for the visitors' enjoyment where they can be viewed and fed. Occasionally, these fish are stocked in a lake or stream. When this happens, the Show Pond is restocked.

Q: What is a raceway?

A: Unlike other state hatcheries, Page Springs Hatchery stocks lakes, ponds and streams year round throughout the state of Arizona. Fish are stocked as far south as ponds in Yuma, to the northwest in the Colorado River, northeast in the White Mountains and southeast in lakes near Safford—and everywhere in between.

Q: What happens to the fish that are in the Show Pond?

A: The fish in the Show Pond are for the visitors' enjoyment where they can be viewed and fed. Occasionally, these fish are stocked in a lake or stream. When this happens, the Show Pond is restocked.

Q: Where do you stock or release the fish?

A: Our fish are fed a special dry pellet diet that we get from a feed company. These feeds are made to meet the nutritional requirements of different fish species as well as different life stages of the fish. Please do not feed the fish in the raceways! You can feed the fish in the Show Pond. Feed machines are located on the Show Pond deck.

Q: What do you feed the fish?

A: A rainbow trout can live up to nine years and a brown trout can live up to 18 years!

Q: How long can a trout live?

A: While some fish could survive for years, most are caught by anglers or taken by natural predators in a relatively short period of time. However, it varies from location to location how long a fish might live.

Q: How long to the fish live once they are released?

to hatch trout eggs is between 45° and 55° Fahrenheit.

This warmer water temperature is the reason that trout eggs are not incubated here. The optimal temperature A: The spring water is 68° Fahrenheit all year round.

raised in?

Q: What temperature is the water the fish are

Gila trout (20,000 – 30,000 per year).



A: Rainbow trout are what we mainly raise here (650,000 rainbow trout per year). We also raise some brown trout (40,000 – 60,000 per year) and occasionally

Q: What kind of fish and how many are raised here?

A: The simple answer is "no!" The funds to support the hatchery come from the sale of fishing licenses, taxes on fishing/boating equipment and fuel for the boats. So, the fishermen pay to grow the trout Page Springs releases for them to catch!

Q: Are my tax dollars paying for all of this?

A: This varies depending upon water temperature. Page Springs is a grow-out facility rather than a hatchery. It receives fish that are approximately 3" long from one of our four coldwater hatcheries and it takes us between 12-15 months for them to reach catchable size.

Q: How long does it take to grow a trout to "catchable" size?

the years and is currently between 9.3" and 10"

A: The majority of the trout are released when they are a "catchable" size. This size has increased throughout

Q: What size are the fish when they are released?

A: No, it became more cost effective for our hatcheries to get all its fish in the egg stage from other state and federal hatcheries.

Q: Does Page Springs Hatchery have its own brood-

stock to get fish eggs?

A: All of our water is spring water. There are several springs on the property which have been captured and piped to the junction box to be used for the fish. Together the springs produce approximately 20 cfs (cubic feet per second) or 9,000 gpm (gallons per minute).

Q: Where does the water come from?

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Located less than two hours north of Phoenix in Cornville, Page Springs Hatchery is situated on about 116 beautiful acres along the banks of Oak Creek. It produces approximately 750,000 fish per year to stock Arizona's lakes, ponds and streams. Page Springs Hatchery has been in operation since 1932 when it was owned by the Arizona Trout Company. In 1938, the Arizona Game & Fish Department secured the land lease and eventually purchased the property in 1949 for about \$50,000. This hatchery is called Page Springs after the original landowner, James Page, and for the many springs that make up the hatchery's water source. These springs produce approximately 68° Fahrenheit. Typically, trout hatchery water temperatures are 45-55° Fahrenheit. This hatchery's warmer water allows for slightly faster growth but eggs cannot be hatched successfully. Page Springs Hatchery is a misnomer as it is actually a "grow-out station".

HISTORY

Q & A

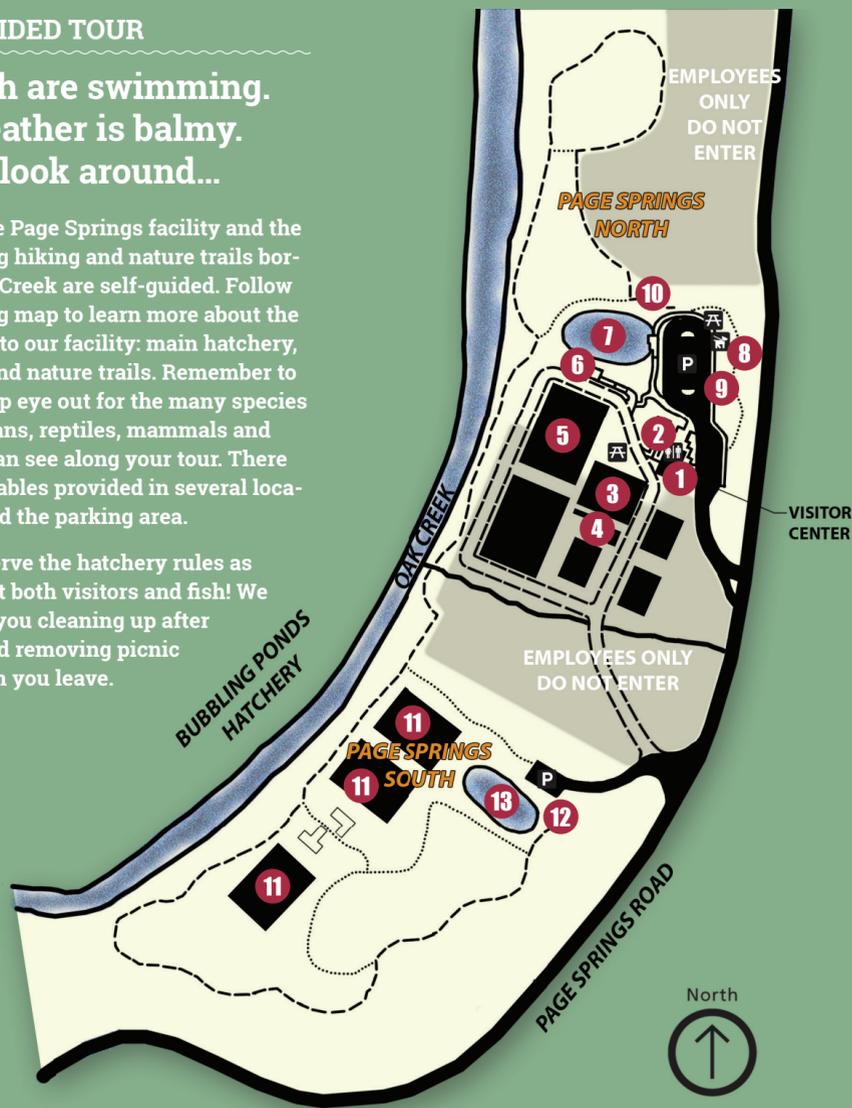


SELF-GUIDED TOUR

The fish are swimming.
The weather is balmy.
Take a look around...

Tours of the Page Springs facility and the surrounding hiking and nature trails bordering Oak Creek are self-guided. Follow this walking map to learn more about the three parts to our facility: main hatchery, raceways and nature trails. Remember to keep a sharp eye out for the many species of amphibians, reptiles, mammals and birds you can see along your tour. There are picnic tables provided in several locations around the parking area.

Please observe the hatchery rules as they protect both visitors and fish! We appreciate you cleaning up after yourself and removing picnic debris when you leave.



Station #1

Visitor's Information Center and Restrooms – Enter by the parking area or east entrance. Exit at the door in the northwest corner and turn right.

Station #2

Spring Junction Box – This is where all the water from springs on the property is collected to supply water to the raceways.

Continue the tour at the northwest corner of the Visitor Center and follow the sidewalk down the ramp to 'A' Bank.

Station #3

A-Bank – The water flowing through here is fresh spring water. These are the smallest fish on station. They come to us from Sterling Springs Hatchery located at the head of Oak Creek in Oak Creek Canyon north of Sedona. They are approximately 3 inches long when they are transported to our facility. There are between 20,000 and 30,000 fingerlings in each raceway. (Raceways are the long concrete tanks where the fish are raised.) We move them to B-Bank when they become crowded at about four or five inches. The section at the end of the raceways is called a tailbox. This is where uneaten feed and fecal material settles out before the water flows to B-Bank. Raceways are cleaned twice a week by opening the valve in the tailbox and flushing solids to the settling basin. The large boxes that the water drops into behind the tailboxes are called Low Head Oxygenators (LHO). They raise the level of oxygen in the water through oxygen injection and pressure. We oxygenate the water going into both B and C-Banks in order to maintain oxygen levels at 5 parts per million (ppm) or higher. Growth and survival of trout is affected when oxygen concentrations are held below 5 ppm for extended periods.

Exit to your right to view the liquid oxygen tank and fill station.

Station #4

Fill Station/Liquid Oxygen Tank – On your left is the fill station where we add water and ice to the tanks on the trucks for stocking fish. On the right is our liquid oxygen tank that we use to oxygenate the water in B and C-Banks. This 1500 gallon oxygen tank is filled 8-10 times per year.

Go back toward the Visitor Center and follow the road to C-Bank.

Station #5

C-Bank – Larger fish are kept on B and C-Banks. B-Bank receives all the water used on A-Bank (reuse water) and the remainder of the spring water. B-Bank is not open to the public due to safety concerns. C-Bank receives only reuse water from B-Bank. Larger fish can handle the poorer quality of the reuse water. The water from C-Bank flows into the Show Pond before discharging into the creek. A computer program is used to calculate feed amounts so that the fish



at fed to reach a target size at a predetermined time. The larger fish are fed once a day while smaller fish may be fed two to five times a day. On average, 16,000 fish are held in each raceway on B-Bank and 10,000 fish are held in each raceway on C-Bank. These raceways are fed between 50 and 100 pounds of feed per day.

When these fish are ready to be released or stocked, they are loaded into hatchery trucks. Tanks on the trucks are filled with water and ice to lower the water temperature. This will slow the fish metabolism down so they are calmer and use less oxygen. Sample counts are performed to calculate the number of fish per pound. There are displacement gauges on each tank to determine the number of pounds loaded. Example: If we need to take 2000 fish to a lake and the fish are 2.5 to the pound, we load 800 pounds. We use the displacement gauge to accomplish this so we don't have to weigh each net or bucket loaded.

The fish in the raceways are on a special diet! Please do not feed them!

Exit to your left.

Station #6:

Settling Basin – Waste material settles out here when raceways are cleaned. When valves in the tailboxes are opened the water that would normally flow through the system and eventually into the Show Pond is diverted to the settling basin. Solids settle out as the water slowly flows through the basin. The "clean" water then flows out and joins the water exiting the Show Pond to be discharged into the creek. We monitor our discharge to ensure we meet standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ).

Turn to your right to follow the road/sidewalk to the Show Pond and continue the tour.

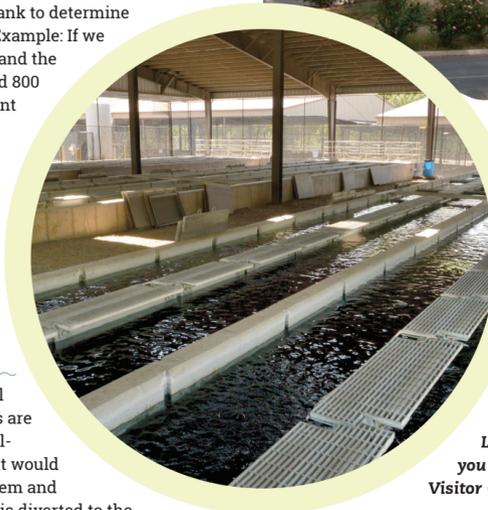
Station #7:

Show Pond – Fish are grown out in the Show Pond to be stocked as "incentive" fish – 12 inches or larger – in waters throughout the state. These fish can be fed by the public. There are vending machines on the Show Pond deck where feed can be purchased. You will notice string running over the top of the pond, this is to deter birds from diving into the pond for a quick and easy meal. The electric fence is used to keep otters away. The aquatic plants in the Show Pond assist in removing ammonia and carbon dioxide prior to the water being released to the creek.

Turn to your right to follow the trail. If you turn to the right it will take you around the parking lot to Cave Springs. Turning to the left and up the stairs will take you to the North Nature Trail.

Station #8:

Cave Springs – This is one of several springs that provide the hatchery with water. It is, however, the only spring on the property that is not contained underground. A portion of this water goes to the downstream water users via the Page Springs ditch. Hatchery staff works with a ditch boss to provide varying amounts of water throughout the



year. The Page springsnail was discovered in this area during renovation and is found in the outflow from Cave Springs as well as in several seeps throughout the property. Springsnails are in decline in Arizona and these populations are closely monitored by the Arizona Game & Fish Department in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Look for signage about the snail as you follow the trail back toward the Visitor Center.

Station #9:

Monarch Butterfly Garden – Milkweed and flowering plants were planted in 2018 in coordination with the Northern Arizona Audubon Society (NAAS) and Monarch Watch. Milkweed is used by the monarch butterfly to lay their eggs on because their caterpillars only eat milkweed leaves. Adult monarch butterflies consume nectar from flowering plants. The monarch butterfly is in decline due to widespread use of herbicides, habitat loss due to development and climate change. There is a huge effort to create monarch waystations to ensure the preservation of this species and its migratory phenomena.

Cross the parking area back to the hatchery.

Station #10:

North Nature Trail – The nature trail winds around the entire property from north to south. Sections of the trail follow the creek where various bird species can be observed. The North Nature Trail leads around the old spring pond area. There were three spring ponds to the north of the hatchery. The springs were captured and piped to the junction box during renovation of the facility in 1991-1992.

Follow the trail west behind B and C-Banks to reach the Evapo-transpiration Beds and the South Nature Trail.

Station #11:

Evapo-transpiration Beds (ET Beds) – This is part of the hatchery septic system for the Visitor Center, office, shop and one residence. ET beds reduce the amount of absorption of waste into the ground compared to traditional systems.

Continue south to walk the South Nature Trail.

Station #12:

South Nature Trail – These trails were built in cooperation with the Northern Arizona Audubon Society. They wind around the old ponds that were used for production prior to renovation. There is an observation deck where visitors can sit and watch for local wildlife in the mornings and afternoons. This trail can also be used to visit Page Springs Cellars & Vineyards to the south of the hatchery. The South Nature Trail has its own parking area. The South Nature Trail is open until dusk but hatchery hours are 7 am to 3:30 pm. Please do not access the hatchery from this trail outside these hours. The gate is on a timer and opens and closes automatically at dawn and dusk. There is no creek access from this trail.

Follow the trail around to the Nature Pond.

Station #13:

Nature Pond – This pond currently holds Gila Topminnow, which are native to the state of Arizona. The Nature Pond is a good place to view birds and other wildlife.

Return to hatchery by following the trail back towards the creek and past the ET beds.