

# Gillespie Creek Journal

## Wild Horses

Tomorrow, Easter Sunday, we celebrate hope and our future. Dressing in a flowered Easter bonnet no longer is in style. Instead why not get out and about to see some unexpected wild life?

Here in the Phoenix, Arizona area and to my followers on the East Coast, check out the nearby herds of wild horses!

## The Salt River Wild

**Horse Management Group** is given credit for saving and managing the wild horses of Arizona's Salt River. These beautiful animals have been documented residents of the Tonto National Forest since 1890. (Their existence officially verified by six generations of human records.) The Salt River horses also have Spanish origin. Often referred to as "Mustangs" they stand at 13 to 15 hands high, slightly taller than the Assateague and Chincoteague Ponies. There are several viewpoints in the Coon Bluff Recreation Area located near Meaa, Arizona for watching these stunning creatures. Due to the draught the horses have to be fed hay. A volunteer Management Group food truck arrives around 5 PM daily for the horse feeding. A 4 PM arrival is recommended. Google [horsemanagementgroup.org](http://horsemanagementgroup.org) for detailed information.



**Salt River Wild Horses, Near Mesa, Arizona**



**Assateague Channel, Virginia, Wild Pony Round-up**

Wild horses are found in California, Oregon, Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, Colorado, Montana, South Dakota, Arizona and Texas.

**The wild ponies of Assateague and Chincoteague Islands** are believed to have first arrived following a ship wreck in the dangerous waters off the Virginia coast before 1700. These horses of Spanish origin now live feely protected by the National Park Service on Assateague Island. Annually, the last Thursday in July, the herd is culled and wranglers swim an allocated number of healthy ponies across the channel between Chincoteague and Assateague Islands to be sold at auction. Hundreds of visitors join in the celebration and sale later in the week. The festival originated as a fundraiser for the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company. The permitted roundup and sale limits the herd to 150 ponies. Google Assateague Island "Pony Swim Guide" for more information. My husband and I brought our young granddaughters to play beside the ponies in the Assateague surf on a warm June day. It was an awesome joy!