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ALERT

TOP STORY

Get up close with creepy crawlies at 2 events in Tucson this weekend

Arizona Daily Star

Sep 25, 2023



The Tucson Reptile and Amphibian Show had more than 11,000 attendees last year.

Courtesy Tucson Reptile and Amphibian Show

Creepy crawlies are taking over Tucson this weekend when the Tucson Reptile and Amphibian Show opens its doors, along with the Arizona Insect Festival.

The popular Reptile and Amphibian Show will be held at a new venue — Old Pueblo Hall at the Pima County Fairgrounds, 11300 S. Houghton Road — on Saturday, Sept. 30, and Sunday, Oct. 1



For those looking for a hands-on experience, there will be a reptile petting zoo for kids and adults at the Tucson Reptile and Amphibian Show.

Courtesy Tucson Reptile and Amphibian Show

After seeing its largest turnout ever last year, with more than 11,000 attendees, the organizer is ready to welcome visitors with alligators, crocodiles, cobras, mambas, gabon vipers, poison dart frogs, monitor lizards, giant tortoises, pythons and tree vipers, amongst other exotic creatures.

For those looking for a hands-on experience, there will be a reptile petting zoo for kids and adults.

Food trucks will be on site, along with more than 100 vendors from across the country who will be displaying and selling hundreds of species, along with supplies and other merch.

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“All the reptiles and amphibians for sale will be captive bred or vetted imports, non-native to Arizona, and non-venomous,” said Mark Wolfson, the show’s director. “Non-captive bred animals are for advanced keepers only. Captive bred reptiles make better pets.”





More than 100 vendors from across the country will be displaying and selling hundreds of species at the Tucson Reptile and Amphibian Show.

Courtesy Tucson Reptile and Amphibian Show

The show will be open 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Tickets are \$15 for those 12 years old and up; \$5 for ages 6 to 12; and free for children 5 and under. Admission is cash only, but it grants you access for the entire weekend.

Learn more at **[tucson reptileshow.com](http://tucsonreptileshow.com)**



The Arizona Insect Festival at the University of Arizona will feature insect scientists, interactive

exhibits and food trucks.

Courtesy Arizona Insect Festival

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Also on Sunday, the University of Arizona's Department of Entomology is hosting its free, day-long Insect Festival, which draws thousands of visitors each year.

This year's theme insect is the tarantula hawk — which is technically a large wasp — known for its sting. It paralyzes and lays its eggs on tarantulas, providing a large meal for its developing offspring.

According to the Insect Fest, the tarantula hawk is easily recognized by its jet-black body, bright orange wings, and often curled antennae. They're often seen sipping nectar from flowers all over Tucson.

Chat with an insect scientist at the festival, take in the interactive exhibits and grab a bite at a food truck.

It's happening from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the ENR2 building on the UA campus, 1064 E. Lowell St. Parking is free.





The free, day-long Arizona Insect Festival draws thousands of visitors each year.

Courtesy Arizona Insect Festival

Learn more at **arizona.insectfestival.com**.