Phoenix temperatures were reaching 120 F (close to 50 C) so it was time to head for cooler places, a kayak trip on the Verde River. The scenery is wonderful and varied while you have to keep an eye on where you are going! One starts at Clear Creek (I think) and then floats, with ‘ripples’, to Beasley Flat.

The Verde River is a perennial river that flows freely for 125 miles (I need to check this) before meeting dams at Horseshoe and Bartlett Lakes. It then goes into the Salt River which goes into the Gila River and, after that, into the Colorado (how much water is left is a mystery).

This map doesn’t show the actual river

Arizona’s mid-point, visible from the river

June is when the water level is the lowest but, as you can see from the chart on the left, April has a very high flow. We know this from a monitor, installed in 1934, that measures the flow. The arrow in the picture on the right shows debris from when the river was higher and running much faster.
The advantage of low flow is that you don’t run into low-hanging tree branches; the disadvantage is getting stranded on rocks.

This area is close to ‘Montezuma’s Castle’ which is a National Monument dedicated to some cliffdwellings from the 1200s. There are cliffdwellings along our portion of the river too but I didn’t get pictures. We did see a beautiful rock with petroglyphs. The three of us kayaking had hiked to cliffdwellings along the Mesa River years ago and these remains were a good reminder of how much earlier cultures have contributed.

A few more pictures of the trip but these are of the quieter parts because it is hard to take pictures in less quieter water.
And at the end of the river trip, the car was waiting, with the Peak in the background.

After Camp Verde, we took the 260 East and went to Strawberry and Pine and stopped at a quaint icecream place in Pine, the Ginger-Bread House. The young man selling the icecream is the grandson of the woman who started the store and the antique store. Icecream and antiques all blended in delightfully.

Then we went back via the Salt River (lower) Canyon (not my picture – I was driving).

An amazing day!