



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

AUTUMN WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY #191001

Start: 10/1/2019 at 9:00 a.m.

End: 10/4/2019 at 4:00 p.m.

Location: Yellowstone Forever's Gardiner Classrooms
308 Park Street, Gardiner, MT 59030

Welcome to Yellowstone National Park. If you are a newcomer to the Yellowstone Forever Institute, you will be amazed at what awaits you during each day of exploration. We are glad that you are able to join us in Gardiner, Montana, a wonderful Yellowstone gateway community that many of us at Yellowstone Forever call home. Our goal is to provide you with an enjoyable, high-quality educational experience and a safe and memorable visit to Yellowstone.

The following information is provided to help you prepare for your program. Please read it thoroughly and call us at 406.848.2400 or email contact@yellowstone.org if you have any questions. We recommend all first-time visitors seek general park information through the National Park Service at 307.344.2107 or www.nps.gov/yell.

Important Information Included in this Document:

- Letter from Your Instructor
- What's Included
- How to Prepare for this Program
- Suggested Reading
- Yellowstone Forever Park Store Information
- Yellowstone Forever Supporter Information
- Code of Ethics
- Cancellation Policy
- Travel Information
- Supplemental Lodging Information

From the Instructor

Welcome to the joy of photographing wildlife in Yellowstone. It has been my passion for over 20 years and I am looking forward to sharing those joys with you! Our four days together will be spent primarily in the field photographing wildlife of all sizes and types. In our road-based travels, we will be looking for everything from large animals such as bears, wolves, elk, and bison, to small critters like pikas and birds. My hope is that you will gain insight into how and where to find wildlife as well as how best to photograph them without interfering in their quest for survival.

My goal for this program is to help you become a better photographer with wildlife as your subject. I try to teach with a "one-room school method" and to meet all of you at whatever skill level you are currently working with, encouraging you to take it to the next level. What you will learn will also help you to better



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photograph many other subjects. While wildlife is the focus of this program, if there are other opportunities for great scenic shots or abstracts we will take these in as well.

We will be based in the town of Gardiner, Montana, and travel the park road system in a comfortable bus. There may be some off-road hiking, but that will be limited up to 1-3 miles on any occasion. On the first evening, we will meet at the classroom for some orientation and introductions. The next morning, we will spend time discussing the fundamentals of photography, composition, exposure compensation, equipment selection, how to use depth of field to your advantage, how to look for the story, and many other important topics. To find wildlife to photograph, you will also need an understanding of their habits and habitats. While some lecture is necessary, I prefer the class time to be as interactive as possible. I welcome your questions and will direct the discussion to the things that you as a class most want to learn. You should be familiar with your camera, but no matter how familiar you think you are with it, *please* bring the manual.

In the late afternoon and evening of the first full day, we will travel the park looking for wildlife and opportunities to hone your new skills. Wildlife, particularly large carnivores, are most active in the early morning and late evening hours. By happy coincidence, that is when the light for photography is best as well. The next two days, we will be meeting early (before light) and staying out late, with mid-days spent either discussing animal behavior or photographic techniques, or just taking some well-deserved down time. On the fourth day, we will be out early but spend the afternoon in the classroom reviewing your images and working with them with digital darkroom techniques. While there are many digital editing programs available, I will be using the full version of Photoshop CC and Google Nik to demonstrate editing techniques. If you are using a different program and you would like help understanding what that program can potentially do for you, please be sure to bring the manual or user guide.

Yellowstone in September/October is a place in the midst of transition between the warmth of summer and the unpredictability of fall. Storms that come and go will enhance your photographs but can also make it more challenging. You should come prepared for both extremes and remember that layering your clothing is most important and rain gear is a necessity—for both yourself and your camera equipment.

The camera equipment that you bring should be easily portable in a camera bag or day pack. The bus has overhead racks but the class is normally full so space will be limited. Please bring a selection of lenses, including your longest lens, and a *sturdy* tripod. Tripods travel in the back of the bus so don't worry about personal space for those. If your camera is a “point and shoot” type without interchangeable lenses, that is fine too, but please be sure to bring your manual and a sturdy tripod. If you have a laptop computer, bring that as well so that you can work with your images and prepare them for projection. Our secure classroom will have plenty of room to spread out with laptops and outlets for your use throughout the class for charging batteries, etc.

If you are planning on making a purchase before coming to Yellowstone and you would like my advice on your options, please feel free to contact me before you buy. After you register, I will be sending you more



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information and a questionnaire so that I can have some idea what your skill level is at the beginning of the program and what you would most like to learn while you are here.

If you are still just considering taking the class, please see my LinkedIn references from former students.

I look forward to meeting you and helping you advance your skills while experiencing the fabulous wildlife photography opportunities that Yellowstone has to offer!

Meg Sommers

megsommers@gmail.com

www.megsommers.com

www.linkedin/in/megsommers

www.facebook.com/sommers.photo

What's Included:

Your tuition includes daily outings and transportation during your program. It does not include transportation to the park, park entrance fees, meals, or lodging. Gratuities are not included in the price of programming. If you would like to recognize exceptional service by an Institute staff member, tips are appreciated. Donations to support Yellowstone Forever educational programs are also appropriate and will be used to improve and expand opportunities for people to make deep connections to Yellowstone.

Continuing Education Credit

Many of our Field Seminars are recognized by universities across the country. We are happy to provide a letter of completion and supporting documentation that you can submit to the institution of your choice to request approval for university credit or CEUs.

Lodging Option

Yellowstone Forever Institute students in Field Seminars based out of Gardiner, Montana, may have the opportunity to stay in our comfortable lodging at the Yellowstone Overlook Field Campus for an additional charge. The Yellowstone Overlook features comfortable cabins on 80 acres, awe-inspiring views, and easy access to the northern section of the park. Cabins include self-serve kitchens for preparing meals and open-floor plans for group dining and evening activities. For more information please see the last page of this document. Feel free to call our contact center at 406.848.2400 to make your reservations today.

How to Prepare for this Program:

How fit do you need to be?

This program is an activity level 2 and students enrolled in this program are expected to be active participants. Be prepared to hike up to 3 miles per day, comfortably, with elevation gains up to 600 feet. Some off-trail hiking possible. We recommend you begin an exercise program right away if you have not already done so.



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Participants residing at lower elevations may want to arrive a day early to adjust to the altitude. To learn more about how specific medical conditions can be affected by Yellowstone's environment and our activities, please visit www.Yellowstone.org/experience/health-information/

General Clothing and Equipment List

Much of your time will be spent outdoors and all programs are held rain, snow, or shine. You should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are very important. Spring, summer, and fall temperatures can range from below freezing in the mornings to 85 degrees Fahrenheit in the afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide your clothing choices. Loose-fitting layers allow you to maintain a comfortable and dry body as outside temperatures change, and as your own body temperature and moisture output changes with different levels of exertion. Some colder-weather items may not be needed in July or August, but please keep in mind that Yellowstone's weather is unpredictable.

Equipment:

Yellowstone Forever field staff assigned to your program will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.

- Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, field guides, etc.
- Water bottle**, one-quart is the minimum recommended. Camelback or similar hydration systems work well in summer but can freeze in winter.
- Sunglasses**
- Sunscreen/lip protector**, sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly.
- Camera, binoculars**
- Notebook/pencil**
- Pocket hand and foot warmers**, recommended November through May.
- Flashlight/Headlamp**, a small light for walking to and from your cabin in the evenings and mornings.
- Alarm**, so you're on time for the day's activities.

Summer Clothing:

- Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, or similar wicking fabric.
- Midweight insulating layer**, light, 200-weight synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover.
- Heavyweight insulating layer**, wool, down, or heavy-weight fleece jacket, for less-active times.
- Waterproof and windproof outer layer**, lightweight and breathable. Jackets and pants are recommended.
- Short sleeved shirt**, cotton okay in summer, but synthetic wicking shirts are ideal.
- Pants**, synthetic hiking pants, lightweight pile/fleece pants or tights or similar. Jeans are not recommended.
- Hats**, both a brimmed sun hat and an insulating hat for cool weather.
- Gloves**, lightweight glove liners and a pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens.



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- Socks**, light wool or synthetic liner sock with heavier wool or synthetic outer sock. The inner-outer sock combination helps prevent blistering, wicks moisture and reduces friction. Cotton socks do not wick moisture and are not recommended.
- Hiking boots**, that provide stability, traction, and comfort. Unless you've consistently hiked in athletic shoes, bring boots that provide ankle support.
- Off-duty shoes**, sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear.

Equipment Specific to this Class:

I believe strongly in being prepared for the worst while hoping for the best. Given that, here is a list of clothing and gear that I think you should consider bringing with you:

Clothing:

Note - September/October is a transitional time in Yellowstone as the weather is moving from a pleasant Indian summer where it is warm and lovely to winter where the storms blow in and it can be quite cold. Temperatures in September can range from the 20s to upper 70s Fahrenheit. The weather here can change very quickly also, sometimes going from one extreme to the other in less than an hour. This means you will need to come prepared for it all.

Note - This not a complete list of everything you will want to bring. As an adult, I am betting you can figure that part out all on your own :)

Boots - should be warm, well broken in

Clothing you can layer - light weight wind jackets, fleece vests, that sort of thing

Gloves - warm

Hat - warm

Coat - warm and waterproof

Rain pants and/or wind pants and/or snow pants (any will help standing around while out in a cold breeze)

Sunscreen

Rain gear for yourself

Hand and foot warmers are really nice sometimes. Any sporting goods store will carry them.

Alarm clock that works (your cell phone may not)

Gear:

Please keep in mind as you pack your gear that we will be traveling through the park together on a small, but comfortable, bus. Your camera equipment, except your tripod, will be with you in your seat. There is also an overhead rack which helps immensely. Most people bring a single camera bag packed with what they consider to be the essentials and another for food, gloves, etc.



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Camera body

Sturdy Tripod with camera mount

Interchangeable Lenses

You can bring the longest lens you have, but don't neglect the smaller ones such as a wide angle. I use everything from around a 16 mm to a 600mm. If you bring a large lens that can't be kept at your side in the seat, be sure to bring a very protective case so that it can ride protected in the back of the bus.

Camera and Lens manuals If you don't have your lens manuals, that's okay, but sometimes they can be very helpful. If you don't have your camera manual, *please* look up your camera manufacture online and download the manual so you will have it to refer to.

Teleconverter if you have one, any size.

Batteries for your camera and any other gadget you might bring. The number of camera batteries you will need will depend generally upon two factors: how quickly your individual camera consumes them and how cold it is outside. (Cold really draws down even the best batteries.) At a minimum, you should have at least one extra.

Battery Charger if yours are rechargeable.

Card Storage Please anticipate that you will be out in the field all day and not able to purchase more card storage or download until later in the evening. At a minimum, you will need to bring enough storage with you to get you through the day.

Laptop if you have one and want to use it. Be sure you have loaded the software you need to be able to view your raw images as well as the program you want to use to develop them.

Thumb Drive is very helpful in sharing images from your computer to mine.

Card Reader and attachment cord to download your images to your computer.

Rain/Snow covering for your camera and lens as it sits waiting on a tripod. This does not need to be fancy, but it does need to be effective even when the wind is blowing (lightly).



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A Ziploc bag large enough to put both your camera and attached longest lens into it and zip it up. I have found them large enough to put the 600 into, so I am sure you can find one that will work for you. I will explain the need for this in detail during the class, but for now, please understand it is very important in cold. If there is a large difference between your lens sizes, you may want to bring a couple of sizes in Ziplocs.

Microfiber cloth is just the ticket for wiping moisture off your equipment.

Manual or books for your development software. If you don't have a manual or book, and you use an Adobe product, I would highly recommend you look into the library of books produced by Scott Kelby. He has written them for every version of Photoshop, Lightroom, and Elements. His books are easy to follow and entertaining to read. Purchase the one for the version you are using, regardless of how old or outdated. If you are using product other than Adobe, try to find a manual of some sort. Many can be downloaded online.

Your own images If you would like to bring your own images either to share with the group and/or to have them critiqued, please do. They can be either digital or print, but no slides please because I don't know if a slide projector will be available. Please limit the number of your images to no more than five.

Suggested reading

Please read and bring your camera manual.

Park Stores

Our Park Stores features more than 900 books, maps, and videos to help you plan your visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items to remind you of your visit to Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15 percent discount on merchandise online or at any of our 11 locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support Yellowstone. Visit: Shop.Yellowstone.org

Supporter Program

Yellowstone Forever Supporters directly fund priority park programs and projects. Supporters also provide scholarships for teachers and help expand programming for underserved youth. Benefits include a subscription to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly*, early registration and discounts for Yellowstone Forever Institute programs, and discounts on retail purchases throughout Yellowstone (exclusions apply). If you are not yet a supporter of Yellowstone Forever, an introductory subscription (one year) to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly* is included with your tuition. For more information, visit: Yellowstone.org/donate



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Code of Ethics

The Yellowstone Forever Institute is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant in a Yellowstone Forever Institute program, we ask you to adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Institute abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations. We also practice Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

Observing wildlife: We will do our best to have as little impact on wildlife as possible. Animals will be observed from a distance, using high-powered spotting scopes to help keep our presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. The Yellowstone Forever Institute will adhere to National Park Service regulations by keeping a minimum distance of 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes and nesting birds and 100 yards from bears and wolves. We will not entice wildlife with food, animal calls or any actions that change their behavior.

Leave what you find: It is illegal to remove natural or cultural artifacts (plants, animals, bones, rocks, etc.) from Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever Institute instructors have permission from the National Park Service to manipulate plants, rocks, bones, etc. for educational purposes and will return them to their natural positions and locations.

General etiquette: Yellowstone Forever Institute groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (including wolf howls) prevail.

Roads and vehicles: Expect wildlife on the road, and drive at or below the posted park speed limits. When stopping to observe wildlife or other park features, the Yellowstone Forever Institute will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, we will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. We will not stop in the middle of the road, and should a traffic jam develop as a result of our activities, we will cease the activity.

Properly dispose of waste: We will pack out all trash, leftover food and litter. Your instructor will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

Traveling lightly: When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, we will use existing trails and boardwalks. We will follow appropriate techniques when walking off-trail. Walking around muddy or wet places in the trail increases erosion and negatively affects the resource; proper equipment is essential to hiking ethically. Participants should come adequately prepared with the equipment listed for their course and should expect to walk through mud, snow or puddles in the trail.

Thank you for helping us set a good example in Yellowstone!



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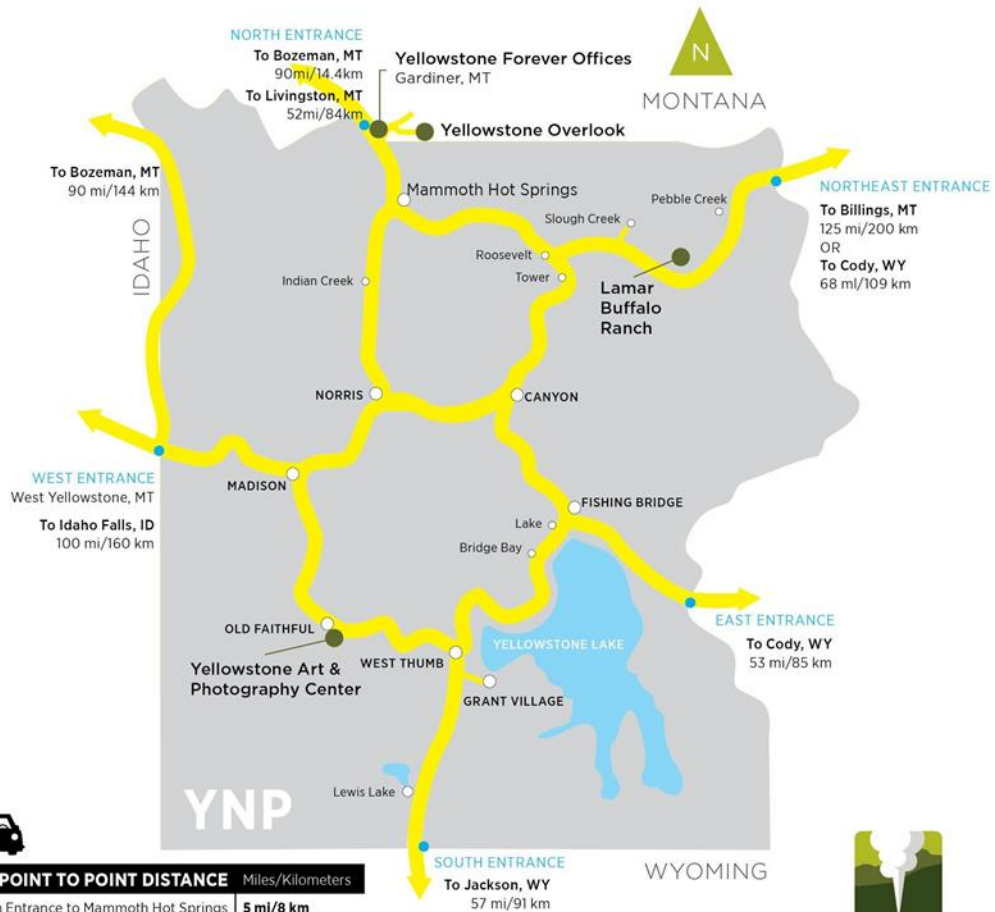
Field Seminar Cancellation and Refund Policy

If you cancel within seven calendar days of your registration date, your payment is refundable less a \$50 per person per course processing fee. On the eighth calendar day from the date of registration, 100% of registration payments will be forfeited. If lodging is cancelled after the eighth calendar day from the date of registration, 100% of lodging payments will be forfeited. Applicable taxes will be refunded in the event of program or lodging cancellations. We reserve the right to cancel a course up to 30 days before the first class day. If we cancel, you will receive a full refund of your payment. We regret that the Institute cannot make exceptions to the refund policy for any reason, including but not limited to illness, travel delays, emergencies, or weather. We urge you to take out accident, baggage, and trip cancellation insurance through a travel agent or website such as [TravelGuard.com](https://www.travelguard.com). Travel insurance can help protect you against financial loss if you must cancel or interrupt your trip.



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Yellowstone Map **YELLOWSTONE FOREVER**



POINT TO POINT DISTANCE	Miles/Kilometers
North Entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs	5 mi/8 km
Mammoth Hot Springs to Norris	21 mi/34 km
Norris to Canyon	12 mi/19 km
Norris to Madison	14 mi/23 km
Madison to West Entrance	14 mi/23 km
Madison to Old Faithful	16 mi/26 km
Old Faithful to West Thumb	17 mi/27 km
West Thumb to South Entrance	22 mi/35 km
West Thumb to Bridge Bay	21 mi/34 km
Fishing Bridge to East Entrance	27 mi/43 km
Fishing Bridge to Canyon	16 mi/26 km
Canyon to Tower Falls	19 mi/31 km
Roosevelt to Northeast Entrance	29 mi/47 km
Roosevelt to Lamar Buffalo Ranch	11 mi/17 km
Roosevelt to Mammoth Hot Springs	18 mi/29 km

ELEVATIONS	feet/meters
North Entrance	5314 / 1620
West Entrance	6667 / 2032
South Entrance	6886 / 2099
East Entrance	6951 / 2119
Mammoth Hot Springs	6239 / 1902
Old Faithful	7365 / 2254
Grant Village	7733 / 2357
Lake	7784 / 2373
Canyon	7734 / 2357
Roosevelt	6270 / 1911



OPEN ROADS

YF FACILITIES

ENTRANCE GATES

COMMON POINTS OF INTEREST

1 mile (mi) = 1.609344 kilometers (km)



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YELLOWSTONE OVERLOOK FIELD CAMPUS INFORMATION

Directions:

From Livingston, travel south on Highway 89 into Gardiner, Montana. Just before you cross the Yellowstone River, you will see the Conoco gas station on your right and 4th Street on your left. Turn left on 4th Street (you'll see a green sign indicating 5 miles to Jardine) and go up the hill for 1.5 miles. Turn right on Above the Rest Lane at the sign for the Yellowstone Overlook Field Campus (by the mountain man carving) and follow the signs to the cabins.

From Yellowstone, leave the park through the North Entrance and go through the Roosevelt Arch. Turn left on Highway 89 towards Livingston. Cross the bridge over the Yellowstone River. You will see the Conoco gas station on your left and 4th Street on your right. Turn right on 4th Street (you'll see a green sign indicating 5 miles to Jardine) and go up the hill for 1.5 miles. Turn right on Above the Rest Lane at the sign for the Yellowstone Overlook Field Campus (by the mountain man carving) and follow the signs to the cabins.

What to bring:

Each cabin includes a fully equipped kitchen for you to prepare meals. You will need to bring your own food and toiletries. Groceries are available nearby in Gardiner. Linens and towels are provided. Smoking is not allowed in the cabins. Camping and pets (with the exception of service animals) are not permitted.

Arrival and departure:

Our volunteer campus host will be available to greet you between 4 and 8 p.m. on the day of your arrival. Check out is by 9 a.m. the day of your departure to allow our volunteers to begin preparing the cabins for the next group. Parking is available in front of your cabin. Please do not store food in your vehicle as it can attract animals.

If you are visiting during the winter we recommend an all-wheel- or 4-wheel-drive vehicle as roads can be snow-packed and icy. Feel free to call our office at 406.848.2400 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to check the local weather and road conditions.

During your stay:

Our volunteer caretakers live on-campus in the cabin with the "Welcome" sign. They will help orient you to the Overlook campus. An emergency phone is available all hours outside their cabin. We do not have a housekeeping staff at the Overlook. Quiet hours are observed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Verizon is the only cell phone provider currently providing reliable coverage at the campus. In the event of an emergency during your stay, the caretaker's cabin phone number is: 406.848.9128. Wireless Internet is available in the cabins and at several businesses in Gardiner.

The campus has a picnic table and pond. A marked, 1-mile-long trail leads down to the Yellowstone River. Wildlife is abundant. You may see bison, wolves, elk and deer. You may also see rattlesnakes. Please exercise caution, and notify someone of your plans if you will be away from the campus alone. Each cabin has a TV/DVD player and an educational library with books and videos. The Overlook is designed to be a comfortable and peaceful base from which to explore and learn in America's first national park. We look forward to your visit!