



# PRIVATE TOUR | WILDLIFE WATCHING

The Wildlife Watching private tour is perfect for those looking to get out for a day in the park. The wildlife watching tour is designed for those who want to focus on viewing and learning about wildlife along Yellowstone's famous northern range and Lamar Valley. Explore Yellowstone's diverse array of wildlife including bears, elk, bison, wolves, bighorn sheep, moose, and pronghorn. Our high-powered optics will allow you to experience these animals as we observe them in their natural habitats. This tour offers the opportunity to learn about and appreciate the beauty of Yellowstone's wildlife and landscapes.

Yellowstone Forever Field Educators will provide transportation and equipment for the day, take you to northern range wildlife viewing areas, and enhance your experience with stories and science behind Yellowstone. The day will be spent wildlife watching and exploring thermal areas with a Field Educator who will incorporate wildlife, history, ecology, and geology along the northern range, in addition to discussing issues that affect the Yellowstone ecosystem.

*Most sightings of wildlife occur at a distance; the field educator will provide high-powered spotting scopes and binoculars for group use.*

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Delicious field breakfast and lunch catered by Bear's Brew in Gardiner, MT
- Hot beverage service
- In-park and local pick-up, transportation via a 14-passenger minibus and/or transit van
  - Pick-ups only available in Gardiner, MT (up to 10 miles out of town) and Mammoth Hot Springs
- Eight hours of educational programming with a Yellowstone Forever Field Educator
  - 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- High powered scopes and binoculars
- Field equipment, as needed

*Gratuities for the Yellowstone Forever Field Educators are not included in the program costs but are recommended and greatly appreciated.*



PHOTO JACOB FRANK

# PROGRAM ITINERARY

*The itinerary is designed to take advantage of the best opportunities in the park but may be adjusted to adapt to weather conditions, wildlife activity, holidays, and road construction.*



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## DAY 1 **PROGRAM ITINERARY**

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The day begins early to catch morning wildlife activity. You'll begin with a short orientation, where the Field Educator will cover the plans for the day and answer any questions the participants may have.

6:00 a.m. **Depart Gardiner for Northern Range & Lamar Valley**

*Hot beverage service and breakfast provided*

### **Wildlife Watching**

*In-field tutorial on how to use the high-powered scopes and binoculars*

11:00 a.m. **Lunch in the field**

*Lunch provided - location TBD*

2:00 p.m. **RETURN TO PICK UP LOCATION**

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PHOTO NEAL HERBERT

# ACTIVITY LEVEL

## HOW FIT DO YOU NEED TO BE?

• Activity levels for private tour programs vary. Private tour groups can request their desired activity level for the program. Most hikes take place at elevations between 6,000 to 7,500 feet. 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 our site page on health information.

• All field activities will be conducted as a group. If members of the group cannot participate in the day's activities, they need to let the educator know in advance.

To participate in this program, each participant must fill out and sign a health questionnaire and assumption of risk waiver. These forms must be completed and returned at least 30 days prior to the program start date.

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## WHOM TO CONTACT

For any questions, concerns, or additional information, please contact the following:

• Program questions and bookings, contact Yellowstone Forever at [institute@yellowstone.org](mailto:institute@yellowstone.org) or 406-848-2400 extension 3

• Road updates, park conditions, and general park information, contact Yellowstone National Park Service at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/contacts.htm>



PHOTO DIANE RENKIN



PHOTO NEAL HERBERT

# GENERAL EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING LIST

Much of the program time will be spent outdoors, and participants should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are important. Summer temperatures can range from below freezing in the mornings to 85° Fahrenheit in the afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide clothing choices.

*\*The Field Educator will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.*



PHOTO DIANE RENKIN



PHOTO NEAL HERBERT

## EQUIPMENT

- **Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, etc.
- **Water bottle**, guests should always keep a minimum of one quart of water on hand to facilitate proper hydration.
- **Sunglasses**
- **Sunscreen/Lip protector**, sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly
- **Optics**, camera and binoculars

## CLOTHING

- **Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, wool, or similar wicking fabric
- **Midweight insulating layer**, a light synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover
- **Heavyweight insulating layer**, wool, down, or heavy-weight fleece jacket
- **Waterproof and windproof outer layer**, lightweight and breathable, jackets and pants
- **Short-sleeve shirt**, cotton is okay in summer, but synthetic, wicking shirts are ideal
- **Pants**, synthetic hiking pants – jeans are not recommended
- **Hat**, 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
- **Socks**, specifically designed for hiking, that wick moisture
- **Hiking boots that provide stability and traction**, make sure they are broken in, comfortable, and do not cause hot spots or blisters
- **Off-duty shoes**, sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear

# CODE OF ETHICS

Yellowstone Forever is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant on a Yellowstone Forever program, participants will adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Yellowstone Forever abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations, in addition to practicing Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

## OBSERVING WILDLIFE

Groups will do their 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 the group presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. Yellowstone Forever adheres 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. Wildlife will not be enticed 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 educators 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 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, Yellowstone Forever field educators will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, educators will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. Yellowstone Forever will not stop in the middle of the road and should a traffic jam develop because of the group's activities, the activity will cease.



PHOTO JACOB FRANK

## PROPERLY DISPOSE OF WASTE

Participants will pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Field Educators will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

## TRAVELING LIGHTLY

When hiking or walking Yellowstone, groups will use existing trails and boardwalks. Hikers 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 the program and should expect to walk through mud, snow, or puddles in the trail.

# MAP

Plan on extra driving time in the park, the speed limit is 45 mph or lower and road conditions can vary. There may also be construction delays.

Visit [www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm), call the recorded NPS Road Report at 307-344-2117, or contact a visitor center for up-to-date travel information.

