



P.O. Box 117 Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190 \* 406.848.2400 \* [YellowstoneAssociation.org](http://YellowstoneAssociation.org)

Welcome to Yellowstone National Park. If you are a newcomer to the Institute you will be amazed at what awaits you during each day of exploration. If you are a veteran of Institute programs, you will know the many perspectives from which learning can take place in this diverse place. Since its inception in 1976, the Institute has evolved into a respected field school that offers diverse and in-depth study of the Yellowstone area, bringing back participants year after year. We are glad that you are able to join us. As Yellowstone National Park's primary partner in education, 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 [registrar@yellowstoneassociation.org](mailto:registrar@yellowstoneassociation.org) if you have any questions. Please return your completed health questionnaire at least 30 days prior to your program. We recommend that first-time visitors seek general park information through the National Park Service at 307.344.2107 or [www.nps.gov/yell](http://www.nps.gov/yell).

**Important information included in this document:**

- Program Overview
- What's Included
- How to Prepare for this Program
- Program Itinerary
- Suggested Reading
- YA Park Store Information
- YA Membership Information
- Code of Ethics
- Cancellation Policy
- Travel Information

**Program Overview: Yellowstone for Families**

Designed for parents and children (ages 8-12) to enjoy together, this five-day family learning adventure features participatory games, exercises, and activities including animal tracking, wildlife watching, painting, and hiking. During the program, parents will help their children complete the requirements of the National Park Service's Junior Ranger Patch, and the week will end with the ceremonial presentation of Junior Ranger patches by a National Park Service Ranger. We'll also see and discuss effects of climate change, as well as the park's efforts towards sustainability.

Your first two days will be based out of Mammoth Hot Springs. The last three days of your program will be based out of Old Faithful, where you will be spending two additional nights. Your group will travel by 14-passenger minibus to many different areas of the park including the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone and Lamar Valley.

There will be an experienced instructor leading all activities, but parents are expected to participate with their children. This is a great opportunity for parents and children to bond closely in sharing the joy and wonder that is Yellowstone. All field trips will be conducted as a group. If you are not able to participate in the day's activities, please let your instructor know in advance.

## **What's Included?**

The *Yellowstone for Families* program includes instruction by an Institute instructor, in-park transportation, two nights lodging at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel, two nights lodging at Old Faithful, all breakfasts and lunches during full program days, as well as gratuity for all prepaid meals. Any other gratuities, including gratuities for your instructor, are discretionary. The Old Faithful Inn Dining Room seats guests by reservation only. If you did not make dinner reservations during registration and would like to do so, please contact Yellowstone National Park Lodges at 866.439.7375. Dinner is also available at the Obsidian Dining Room at the Snow Lodge (also located near Old Faithful) and is first come, first served. Please allow more than one hour for your dinners. Quick and casual fare is available at the Terrace Grill, the dining room at Mammoth Hot Springs, and the Geyser Grill at Old Faithful, and all are first come, first served.

## **How to prepare for this program**

### **How fit do you need to be?**

This program is rated for walks and hikes up to 3 miles per day with elevation gains of up to 600 feet. Some off-trail hiking is possible. This is the maximum distance; hikes are often shorter due to changing conditions and group ability. Due to walking at an elevation of 6000 to 7000 feet, we recommend you begin an exercise program right away if you have not already done so. 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 <http://bit.ly/1xx5H8K>.

### **General equipment and clothing 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:**

Your instructor 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. 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.
- Alarm Clock**, so you're on time for the day's activities.
- Flashlight/Headlamp**, a small light for walking to and from your cabin in the evenings and mornings.

### **Summer clothing:**

- Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, or similar wicking fabric.
- Mid-weight 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-sleeve shirt**, cotton is 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.
- 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.

### **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 movements, holidays, and road construction.

#### **Day 1**

##### **Welcome and Orientation**

Dinner on own at Terrace Grill or Mammoth Dining Room

7 p.m.

Orientation in Mammoth Hot Springs (ask hotel front desk staff for location and directions to the orientation room)

Introduction to Yellowstone, program preview, clothing and equipment review, introduction to the Junior Ranger program, and question and answer session

Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs

#### **Day 2**

##### **Wildlife**

7 a.m.

Meet instructor with your gear for the day (day pack, water, and appropriate clothing)

Box breakfast in the field

Wildlife watching along the Northern Range

Interpretive hike in Yellowstone's Northern Range

Deli lunch in the field

3 p.m.

Return to Mammoth Hot Springs for free time and National Park Service Ranger Program

Dinner on your own at Terrace Grill or Mammoth Dining Room

Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs

#### **Day 3**

##### **Canyons and Waterfalls**

Breakfast on your own (with coupon)

Check out of Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel

8 a.m.

Meet instructor with your gear for the day (day pack, water, and appropriate clothing) and luggage

Drive to Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone with interpretive stops along the way

Deli lunch in the field

Interpretive hike near the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone

4 p.m.

Check in at Old Faithful Snowlodge

Dinner on your own (reservations recommended)

Overnight at Old Faithful

**Day 4 Geysers, Mudpots, and Hot Springs**

Breakfast on your own (with coupon)

7:30 a.m. Meet instructor with your gear for the day (day pack, water, and appropriate clothing)  
Depart for explorations of Old Faithful area geyser basins with geology activities  
Deli lunch in the field

Thomas Moran painting activity

4 p.m. Return to Old Faithful for free time  
Dinner on your own (reservations recommended)  
Overnight at Old Faithful

**Day 5 The National Park Idea**

Breakfast on your own (with coupon)

Check out of Old Faithful Snowlodge

9 a.m. Meet instructor with your gear for the day (day pack, water, and appropriate clothing) and luggage  
Junior Ranger ceremony (Old Faithful Visitor Center)

Art and photography presentations in the field

11 a.m. Depart Old Faithful for Mammoth Hot Springs

Deli lunch in the field

2:30 p.m. Arrive in Mammoth Hot Springs

**Suggested Reading**

No prior reading is required, but you might want something to occupy the long plane or car ride to Yellowstone. Whether your passion is history, geology, wildlife, or ecology, there's something for everyone. Most publications are available from the Yellowstone Association's online Park Store at [www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop](http://www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop) or by calling 406.848.2400. Yellowstone Association members receive a 15 percent discount and proceeds go back to the park for education and research.

**For Adults**

- Craighead, F.C.Jr. 1994. *For Everything There is a Season: The Sequence of Natural Events in the Grant Teton-Yellowstone Area*. Falcon Publishing, Inc. Helena, MT. 206 pp.
- Eversman, S., and Carr, M. 1992. *Yellowstone Ecology: A Road Guide*. Mountain Press Publishing Co., Missoula, MT. 242 pp.
- Haines, A.L. 1977. *The Yellowstone Story: A History of Our First National Park*. Colorado Associated University Press, Vol. 1 - 385 pp. Vol 2 - 543 pp.
- Schullery, P. 1999. *Searching for Yellowstone: Ecology and Wonder in the Last Wilderness*. First Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, NY. 338 pp.
- Whittlesey, L.H. 1995. *Lost in the Yellowstone: Truman Everts' "Thirty-Seven Days of Peril."* University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, UT. 62 pp.

**For Kids**

- Field, N. and Karasov, C. *Discovering Wolves*. Dog-Eared Publications, Middleton, WI. 40 pp.
- Hubbard, F. 1971. *Animal Friends of Yellowstone*. Awani Press, Fredericksburg, TX. 32 pp.
- Knapp, P. 1997. *Getting to Know Yellowstone National Park*. 48 pp.
- Nail, J. 1994. *Whose Tracks Are These? A Clue Book of Familiar Forest Animals*. 30 pp.
- Robinson, S. and Meloy, E. 1986. *Expedition Yellowstone: A Mountain Adventure*. Roberts Rinehart, Boulder, CO. 172 pp.

## **Park Stores**

Our Park Stores feature 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 Association members receive a 15 percent discount on merchandise online or at any of 12 locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support education and research in Yellowstone. Visit: [www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop](http://www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop)

## **Membership**

Yellowstone Association members directly fund education and research, provide financial aid for teachers and help expand programming for underserved youth. Member benefits include a subscription to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly*, early registration, discounts for Institute courses, and discounts on retail purchases throughout Yellowstone (exclusions apply). If you are not a member of the Yellowstone Association, an introductory subscription (one year) to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly* is included with your tuition. For more information about membership, visit: [www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/join](http://www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/join)

## **Code of Ethics**

The Yellowstone Association Institute is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant in an 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 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. 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:** 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 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.

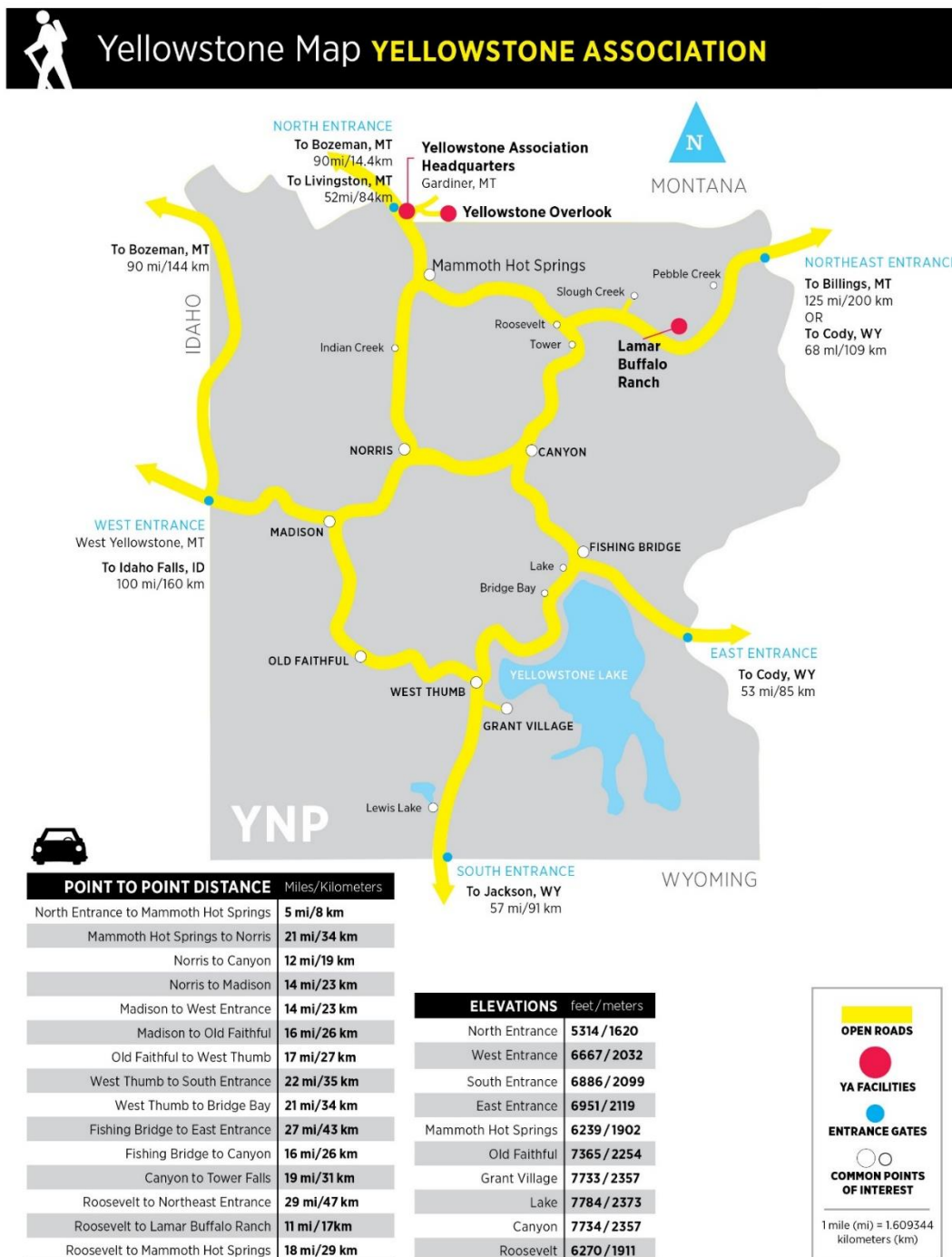
**Traveling lightly:** When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, we will use existing trails and boardwalks. We will follow appropriate techniques when walking off-trail. Walking around muddy or wet places in the trail increases erosion and negatively affects the resource; proper equipment is essential 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!*

## Cancellation and Refund Policy

For packages, 60-day notice is required to receive a full refund of your deposit amount. Cancellations made between 30-60 days will result in 50% forfeiture of package cost. Cancellations made within 30 days of arrival result in 100% forfeiture of package cost. We recommend the purchase of travel insurance to help protect you against financial loss if you must cancel or interrupt your trip due to unforeseen circumstances. For more information about travel insurance, please ask our representative when booking your reservation.

## Travel Information



Plan on extra driving time in the park. The speed limit is 45 mph or lower. 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.