



P.O. Box 117 Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190 * 406-848-2400 * www.YellowstoneAssociation.org

Welcome to *Yellowstone for Families*. This document contains important information that will help you prepare for your upcoming program. Please read it carefully and do not hesitate to contact the Institute at 406-848-2400 or registrar@yellowstoneassociation.org with any questions.

The Program

Designed for parents and children to enjoy together, this four-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 program 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 where you will stay at the Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel. The last two 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 naturalist guide 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, however, it is fine if part of your family chooses not to participate for a day—just let your instructor know your decision in advance.

How Fit Do You Need to Be?

This program is rated for 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 hiking at an elevation of 6000 to 7000 feet, it would be wise to commence a program of moderate aerobic exercise prior to the trip, if you have not already done so. Participants residing at lower elevations may want to arrive a day early to adjust to the altitude. If you have any questions or concerns regarding physical or medical conditions, please contact the Institute staff to clear up potential problems before they occur at 406-848-2400.

What to Bring

Summer weather in Yellowstone can be unpredictable; exploring the park safely and comfortably requires planning and preparation. Please study the clothing and equipment list, carefully. All children under the age of 9 or weighing less than 60 pounds are required to be in a car seat. These are not provided by the program so please bring yours from home, if your children require them.

What's Included

The *Yellowstone for Families* program includes instruction by an Institute naturalist guide, in-park transportation, two nights lodging at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel, two nights lodging at Old Faithful, daily breakfasts and lunches, one dinner, as well as a gratuity for all prepaid meals. Any other gratuities, including gratuities for your naturalist guide, are discretionary. The Old Faithful Inn Dining Room and Obsidian Dining Room at the Snow Lodge (also located near Old Faithful) seat guests by reservation only. If you did not make dinner reservations during registration and would like to, please contact Xanterra at 307-344-5566. Please allow more than one hour for your dinners. Quick and casual fare is available at the Terrace Grill and the Dining Room at Mammoth Hot Springs and the Geyser Grill at Old Faithful, which is "first come, first served."

**2013 FAMILIES ITINERARY
MHS TO OLD FAITHFUL**

The itinerary is designed to take advantage of the best opportunities in the park, but may be adjusted to adapt to weather conditions and animal movements.

Day 1 Welcome and Orientation

Dinner on own at Terrace Grill or Mammoth Dining Room

7 p.m. Meet in the Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel lobby by the fireplace. We'll board the bus and drive a short distance to the classroom for orientation. Introduction to Yellowstone, program preview, clothing and equipment review, introduction to the Junior Ranger program, and question and answer session

Overnight Mammoth Hot Springs (MHS)

Day 2 Wildlife

7 a.m. Meet instructor at bus with day's gear (pack, water, and appropriate clothing)

Wildlife watching along drive into northern range

Picnic breakfast in the field

Interpretive hike in Yellowstone's northern range (easy, up to 3 miles, rolling terrain)

Picnic lunch in the field or classroom (possible time for afternoon classroom activities)

3 p.m. Return to MHS for free time, National Park Service Ranger Program, and dinner on own, overnight at MHS

Day 3 Geysers, Mudpots, and Hot Springs

Check out of MHS Hotel *before* you meet instructor

Breakfast on your own (coupon provided)

8:15 a.m. Meet instructor at bus with luggage and day's gear (pack, water, and appropriate clothing)

8:30 a.m. Depart MHS

Drive to Old Faithful with geology stops along the way (up to 3 miles, 400-foot elevation gain)

Geology activities

Picnic lunch in the field

3:30 p.m. Check in at Old Faithful (Instructor should check the group in and pick up keys for the participants)

Dinner on own (reservations recommended), overnight at Old Faithful

Day 4 Canyons and Waterfalls

Breakfast on your own (coupon provided)

7:30 a.m. Meet instructor at bus with day's gear (pack, water, and appropriate clothing)

Drive to the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone for hike (easy, up to 3 miles, rolling terrain) (We will drive to Canyon via Lake)

Picnic lunch in the field

Thomas Moran painting activity

3:30 p.m. Depart Canyon for Old Faithful (We will return to Old Faithful via Norris)

5:00 p.m. Arrive at Old Faithful for free time

Dinner on own (reservations recommended, coupon provided), overnight at Old Faithful

Day 5 The National Park Idea

Check out of hotel *before* meeting group for the day

Breakfast on your own (coupon provided)

8:30 a.m. Meet at bus with luggage and day's gear

Junior Ranger Ceremony (Old Faithful Visitor Center)

Art and photography presentations in the field

11:30 a.m. Depart Old Faithful for MHS, picnic lunch in the field

2:30 p.m. Arrive in MHS

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 (NPS) 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. We will adhere to NPS regulations by keeping a minimum distance of 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes, 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 the park. Institute instructors have permission from the NPS 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, and 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.

Practice Sustainable Methods: We will reduce waste by minimizing paper and other disposable products used during programs. Recycling will be practiced in vehicles and at YA facilities. Effects of climate change, especially those evident in Yellowstone, will be highlighted by instructors, as well as the efforts of Yellowstone National Park and its partners to mitigate these effects.

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

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST

Weather in Yellowstone is unpredictable in the spring and fall; you will need to prepare for greater temperature and weather extremes. The elevation in the park interior is 6000 to 7000 feet. Conditions could range from a warm, summer-like experience to snow. Nights will likely be cold. When dressed properly, even the most challenging conditions can be encountered successfully. If you are adequately equipped with the right gear and clothing, you will have a more comfortable and enjoyable experience. If you have any questions about appropriate clothing or gear, please do not hesitate to contact the Institute at 406-848-2400.

Clothing

The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide your clothing choices. Loose fitting layers of synthetic or non-cotton material allow you to maintain a comfortable and dry body as outside temperatures change and as your own body's temperature and moisture output changes with different levels of exertion.

Must Have:

- ❑ **Footwear.** We recommend hiking boots if they are already broken in, however sturdy lace-up footwear (preferably with ankle support) is also sufficient. Footwear should provide stability, traction, and comfort.
- ❑ **Midweight Insulating Layer.** A light-weight synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover.
- ❑ **Waterproof and Windproof Outer Layer.** Should be light-weight, and breathable if possible. Must have a jacket. Nice to have a pair of pants.
- ❑ **Short Sleeved Shirts.** Cotton T-shirts are okay to wear in the summer. Synthetic shirts are ideal, because they wick moisture away from the body.
- ❑ **Socks.** A light wool or synthetic liner sock with a 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.
- ❑ **Pants.** Synthetic hiking pants, lightweight pile/fleece pants or tights (spring and fall), or similar pants. Jeans are not recommended, however if this is your only option you will want to bring loose fitting jeans and an extra layer of warmth to wear underneath (ie. sweatpants)
- ❑ **Hat.** Bring two: A brimmed hat to protect you from the sun, and an insulating hat for cool weather (May, June, September).
- ❑ **Gloves.** Lightweight pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens

Nice to Have:

- ❑ **Insulating Underwear.** Capilene, Silk, Polypropylene, or similar. Should have ability to wick away moisture.
- ❑ **Heavyweight Insulating Layer.** Can be Wool, Down or Heavy-weight fleece jacket or sweatshirt—for less active times. (Must have for programs in May, June, and September)
- ❑ **Off-duty Shoes.** Sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear.

Equipment

Your instructor will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device. High powered spotting scopes and binoculars will be provided for the group to share.

- ❑ **Day Pack:** In addition to extra clothes, you'll be carrying water, lunch, and maybe a camera, binoculars, field guides, and other items during excursions away from the vehicle. Make sure your daypack is large enough to accommodate these items.
- ❑ **Water Bottle (reusable):** Staying hydrated is very important. One quart/liter is the minimum recommended. Camelback or similar hydration systems work, as well. We will provide one complementary YAI bottle at orientation, but we encourage you to bring one reusable bottle of your own, as well. To reduce our impact, we do NOT provide disposable water bottles.
- ❑ **Sunglasses**
- ❑ **Sunscreen/Lip Protector**
- ❑ **Camera, Binoculars:** If you have them, bring them. If you have a digital camera, you may be able to take close photos of surprising quality through the Institute spotting scopes.
- ❑ **Personal First Aid Kit:** Please bring any personal medications you require.
- ❑ **Alarm Clock:** Make sure you're ready for early mornings! Not all hotel rooms/cabins have alarm clocks.

OPTIONAL READING LIST

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 store at www.YellowstoneAssociation.org or by calling 406-848-2400. Yellowstone Association members receive a 15 percent discount and all 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.
- Scofield, S. 1990. *Fascinating Facts about Old Faithful and other Hot Spring Wonders*. Wayfarer Publications. 40 pp.
- Skurzynski, G. and Ferguson, A. 1997. *Wolf Stalker*. National Geographic Society, New York, NY. 149 pp.

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, call the NPS at 307-344-2107, or check in at a visitor center for up-to-date travel information.

USE OF IMAGES/AUDIO

During your course a staff member may document the course through photos, video, or audio. The Institute uses audio and visual media in a variety of ways to further our educational mission and encourage others to participate in our courses. For example, videos might be used to train new instructors, or posted online to give folks at home a chance to learn about Yellowstone and experience what our courses are like from a distance. Similarly, we might use photographs of the class in our publications, such as the Institute catalog. If you would prefer not to be photographed or recorded, please let your instructor know.