



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

YELLOWSTONE BIRDS: AN INTRODUCTION

Itinerary & Details

FIELD SEMINAR - SUMMER 2023

INSTRUCTOR: Forrest Rowland

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY: Forrest Rowland is a published ornithologist and photographer who has happily resided in the Greater Yellowstone Ecoregion for the past 13 years. Beyond becoming intimately familiar with the resident and migratory birds of our region, he is an expert in the birds of Montana, the United States, and South America, where he has held or currently holds seats on Rare Bird Committees, conservation committees and non-profit boards. During the course of his career in avian conservation biology, expedition planning, ecotourism business development, and photography Forrest has been honored to lead birding and wildlife adventures in more than 50 countries on 6 continents. He is excited to bring his passion for birds and ecology to this course, and share his knowledge and love of Yellowstone's amazing animals with you!

ACTIVITY LEVEL: This course is an activity **level 2** and students enrolled in this course 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.*

**All field activities will be conducted as a group. If you cannot meet the activity level expectations during your program, you may be restricted from participation in daily outings. We will not alter program itineraries or activities to accommodate participants who cannot meet the expectations of the stated activity level.*

LOCATION: Course begins at the Yellowstone Forever classrooms located in Gardiner, MT.

PROGRAM DATES & TIMES: The program begins at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, May 15, 2023, and ends on Tuesday, May 16 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

LODGING CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT: No lodging is provided for this course, however, there may limited lodging available through Yellowstone Forever at the Yellowstone Field Overlook Campus. For more information, please contact the Institute at institute@yellowstone.org. You can also find more information on Gardiner based lodging here: [Gardiner, MT - Lodging](#). (Yellowstone River Motel will grant you 10% off their rooms if you mention that you are taking a Yellowstone Forever Field Seminar.)

MEALS: You will need to bring your own food; lunch should be able to travel in the field with you.

For general information about the facilities, preparing for classes, what to expect, cancellation policies, and more, please see the [Gardiner Field Seminars - Summer General Information](#) document.

FROM THE INSTRUCTOR

Students and fellow nature lovers, I'm excited to introduce you all to my favorite group of animals, which I have studied and enjoyed since age 9 – Birds!!! This course is designed to not only impart beginner-to-intermediate level understanding of the natural lives and natural history of birds, but to get you out in the field to watch them in action. The sheer beauty of Yellowstone's birds, against the most delightful backdrop in the lower 48, is reason enough to be excited about the time we will spend together. For me, much of the joy of watching birds is understanding and delighting in their behaviors and their forms. While migratory bird species escape the harshness of Winter, by exploring the avian world of the park before the height of migration allows us time to become acquainted with the hardiest of birds in North America: Yellowstone's residents. From Swans and other dazzling waterfowl, to displaying Grouse and drumming Woodpeckers, we will have the opportunity to experience and enjoy the lion's share of the fun species that call this remarkable place home. Expect a few short hours of classtime, and be sure to bring a notebook. Most of our time together will be spent in the field, watching the birds and interpreting what they do, why they are shaped the way they are, what structures they've evolved to be able to thrive here, and how they interact with their environment to complete the picture of Yellowstone's fascinating ecology. Artists are welcome to bring sketching supplies, photographer should feel compelled to bring their rigs. Aside from learning the science of the species, we will take the time to enjoy the beauty they bring into our lives.

-Forrest

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. *The details and timing of the agenda are subject to change.*

Day 1 Evening Orientation

Welcome and introductions at Yellowstone Forever HQ classroom
Background information on Instructor and participants/students
Short Presentation and Q&A

Day 2 In the Field

Yellowstone National Park today, visiting known lek of Dusky and Ruffed Grouse, nests of Williamson's Sapsucker, Three-toed Woodpecker and Hairy Woodpecker, and many others in the Mammoth area. Visit Swan Lake for Trumpeter Swan, Common Merganser, & Barrow's Goldeneye, with brief visit to feeders in Jardine & Gardiner for close studies of Finches, Jays & Clark's Nutcrackers. Late-afternoon Wrap up back in Gardiner.

PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

For a full list of recommended equipment for all courses see the [Gardiner Field Seminars - Summer General Information](#) document.

There are no items specific to this course.

RECOMMENDED READING

No prior reading is required, but participants might enjoy the following publications, that complement the program. Most publications are available at Yellowstone Forever's online store at shop.yellowstone.org Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15% discount and proceeds directly support the park.

- D.A. Sibley, 2016. *Field Guide to Western Birds*. Knopf.
- T. Flach & R. Prum. 2021. *Birds*. Harry M Anderson publishing.

WHOM TO CONTACT

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

- Program itinerary, health forms, payment, and activity questions please contact Yellowstone Forever at institute@yellowstone.org or 406-848-2400
- Road updates, park conditions, and general park information please contact Yellowstone National Park Service at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/contacts.htm>
- If running late for a program, please contact 406-848-2400