



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

ROCKY MOUNTAIN THUNDER: BISON RUT PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

Itinerary & Details

FIELD SEMINAR – SUMMER 2023

INSTRUCTOR: Kate Ochsman

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY: **Kate Ochsman** is a naturalist and wildlife photographer based outside of Yellowstone. Kate believes in art for a cause – hers being conservation. Her artistic “why” is to help people connect with the wild, both within and outside of themselves, for we protect what we know and love. Building her fine art photography portfolio, Kate travels globally to photograph wildlife and wild places. Before her move to Yellowstone, Kate, a certified South African Safari Guide, ran an innovative program in the South African bush for college-aged participants that taught them photography, filmmaking, marketing and how to use these along with social media to spread awareness for wildlife conservation issues. She has also worked in human-wildlife conflict in Namibia. These days, Kate is focusing on American wildlife and conservation issues through wildlife guiding and photography.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: This course is an activity **level 1** and students enrolled in this course are expected to be active participants. Be prepared to hike up to 1 mile per day, comfortably, through relatively flat terrain on maintained trails.*

**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: Lamar Buffalo Ranch – Yellowstone National Park, WY

PROGRAM DATES & TIMES: The program begins at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 12, 2023, and ends on Tuesday, August 15, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

LODGING CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT: Lodging check-in begins at 4:00 p.m. on August 12, 2023, and lodging check-out is at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 16, 2023.

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 [Lamar Buffalo Ranch - Summer General Information](#) document.

FROM THE INSTRUCTOR

The earth quakes as their bellows fill the valleys with an ancient call.

The bison rut is one of my very favorite wildlife events in the entire world. Power, family, lust – so many dynamics at once.

A rut is when males compete for breeding rights with the females. Testosterone, musth, and adrenaline hang thick in the dusty summer air. Sunsets are late and are absolutely mesmerizing in their haze and vibrant colors. The grunting males have such loud roars that the valley itself seems to tremble with thunder. Males fight, sending clouds of dust swirling. Females and males have quiet, loving moments of connection and tenderness – the only time in the year to get “couple” shots of the males and females. The rut is a power-charged event and shows the true power of the American bison. We will spend most of our time in Lamar Valley and will spend at least one full day down in Hayden.

Shots we hope to get:

- Bull portraits
- Bulls and cows nuzzling
- Bulls fighting/standoffs
- Bulls with dust all around
- Sunset bison
- Sunset Bulls in silhouette

This course is for intermediate+ photographers, who know the fundamentals of their camera and how to use it, in addition to basic knowledge of post processing.

Please reach out with any questions you may have, and hopefully you will join me to photograph one of my favorite species of all time!

- *Love and Roars, Kate*

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PROGRAM ITINERARY

The itinerary is designed to spend as much time in the field and with bison as possible, 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
7:00 p.m.

Welcome

Introduction to the Lamar Buffalo Ranch, and course schedule and specifics. Instructor will give a brief presentation on the natural history of bison, behavior and show some inspirational images.

Day 2

Lamar Valley

Traditional Safari Schedule during these long summer days. Morning and Afternoon in the field, with midday at the ranch for lunch, down time and photo critique/assistance with post-processing.

Day 3

Hayden Valley Morning & Lamar Afternoon

Traditional Safari Schedule during these long summer days. Morning and Afternoon in the field, with midday at the ranch for lunch, down time and photo critique/assistance with post-processing.

Day 4

Lamar Valley Morning and Hayden Afternoon

Traditional Safari Schedule during these long summer days. Morning and Afternoon in the field, with midday at the ranch for lunch, down time and photo critique/assistance with post-processing.

Day 5
9:00 a.m.

Check Out Day

Check out of the Lamar Buffalo ranch. Thank you for joining and for caring about wildlife conservation!

PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

For a full list of recommended equipment for all courses see the [Lamar Buffalo Ranch - Summer General Information](#) document.

- Camera Body (one or more – whatever you like!)
- Lenses – Go as big as you want! The longest lens I have is a 400, and I don't believe in teleconverters. Although portraits are wonderful, wider shots showing the majestic Yellowstone Landscape are truly masterful. I will have at least:
 - 24-70mm
 - 100-400mm
 - 400mm
 - Other recommended lenses:
 - 24-105
 - 70-200mm
 - 200-600mm
 - 150-500mm
 - 600mm
 - Feel free to go super wide with a 16-35mm! Let's try it all!
- Extra batteries and charger
- Extra SD cards to make sure you can get all the images you want in the field!
- Laptop with charging cord and editing software of your choice
- Software for editing images

As you pack your gear keep in mind that the class will be traveling through the park together on a small, but comfortable, bus. Camera equipment, except tripods, will be with participants in their seats. Many participants bring a camera bag packed with camera essentials and a separate small bag for other day essentials and personal items.

- Tripod and camera mount
- Hard drives and cords for uploading images
- Teleconverter – If you have one and like them!
- Card reader and attachment cord
- Rain cover – This does not need to be fancy, but it does need to be effective, even when the wind is blowing (lightly), for your camera and lens as they sit waiting on a tripod.
- Microfiber cloth to dry and clean your equipment with.
- Gloves that you can photograph in

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
- Equipment questions or other questions specific to the class, please contact the Instructor, Kate Ochsman at kateochsman@gmail.com