



# YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

## DECODING THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE

### Itinerary & Details

FIELD SEMINAR - SUMMER 2023

**INSTRUCTOR:** Jon Young & George Bumann, M.S.

#### **INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY:**

**Jon Young** is a leader in the field of nature-based education, and effective nature connection, he is a deep nature connection mentor, wildlife tracker, author, educator, consultant, inspiring public speaker, and storyteller. Jon's work has appeared in documentaries concerning nature and ecology and he has authored and co-authored several seminal works on deep nature connection and connection mentoring, including *What the Robin Knows: How Birds Reveal the Secrets of the Natural World* (2013), and *Coyote's Guide to Connecting to Nature* (2007).

**George Bumann, M.S.**, can draw, sculpt, and teach about all aspects of Yellowstone. He has a degree in wildlife ecology and works as a professional artist and educator. His art and writing have appeared in popular in scientific publications, and his sculpture can be found in collections throughout the United States and abroad.

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

**PROGRAM DATES & TIMES:** The program begins at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 2, and ends on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

**LODGING CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT:** Lodging check-in begins at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 2, 2023, and lodging check-out is at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 7, 2022.

**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

Mother nature rarely shouts, and when she does speak, it's most often in a whisper. Are you listening? Want to know that a coyote has just passed by or that a hawk is about to arrive? If so, you will want to explore the ways in which to read the nuances in the natural world in a new and unprecedented way—through the art and science of bird and animal language, and tracking. Join renowned tracker and author of *What the Robin Knows*, Jon Young and Yellowstone naturalist and artist George Bumann on this enlightening program that will change the way you see the world around you—forever.

All living human being's ancestors were in direct communication with the natural world at some point in their history. Attentiveness to their surroundings was rooted in the will to survive and was fueled by the innate curiosity built into their, and our own, neural circuitry. During the class, you will reenter that ancient conversation, awaken the same sensory systems and take away lessons that are now more relevant for the modern age than ever. Various ways of 'knowing'—from cutting edge science, to indigenous wisdom, to your own first-hand experiences—will ignite your ability to dig deeper into the beauty of life and allow you to bring that understanding home with you.

The program will make use of ample field outings, involve 'bird sits', field lectures, and open conversations towards getting the most out of our time together. A inspiring tapestry of stories and ideas will be woven out of Jon's extensive background teaching bird language and nature connection, and his lifetime experience working as a tracker for conservation science and storytelling. George's Yellowstone-specific knowledge of the Park, research background, over 30 years as a guide using animal language and tracking, as well as his unique perspective as an artist, will help boost your knowledge towards a truly transformative experience. Bonus material on the program will include the elements of storytelling, nature journaling, and field sketching to help you to better record and share your encounters with others both during and after the program.

Our greater goal is to help you tune into the pulse of the landscape around you, not only in a place like Yellowstone, but in your very own backyard. We will present and practice tools that will build awareness of the 'goings on' anywhere you find yourself— from urban, to suburban or rural settings. Nature has so much to offer us and you may find that some of the best teachers are the pigeons outside your door, the squirrels at the feeder or the deer in your neighborhood. The lessons learned will also directly translate to anywhere you may travel. Observations made during the class, or of backyard robins and rabbits, will leave you better equipped to find the next wolf in Yellowstone, or the mamba or lions in Africa, with greater proficiency than you ever thought possible. Prepare to imbed yourself in one of the greatest wild lands on earth! Come armed with your curiosity, awaken your senses, and let the magic of Yellowstone do the rest...

Warm regards and we look forward to spending time with you in the Park!

*Jon Young and George Bumann, M.S.*

## 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.*

After the introductory night about what the program will entail, what to expect and things to be learned, etc., each day will follow the same start general progression (with obvious contingencies for weather, etc.) of the following:

<b>Sunrise</b>	Wildlife watching
<b>8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.</b>	Breakfast
<b>9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.</b>	Classroom or outdoor lessons/lecture
<b>12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.</b>	Mid-day outing in the field with the option of a packed lunch, or if poor weather lunch at ranch
<b>2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.</b>	Afternoon break
<b>3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.</b>	Wildlife watching
<b>6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b>	Dinner
<b>7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.</b>	Evening program, evening wildlife watching Fireside chats at the fire ring or classroom instruction

## PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

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

### Required:

- Notebook and pencil for observations

### Optional:

- Magnifying glass or hand lens
- Camera
- Binoculars

## 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](http://shop.yellowstone.org) Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15% discount and proceeds directly support the park.

### Books:

- Ackerman, Jennifer. *The Genius of Birds*. Penguin Books. 2017.
- de Waal, Frans. *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* W. W. Norton & Company. 2017.
- Gooley, Tristan. *The Lost Art of Reading Nature's Signs: Use Outdoor Clues to Find Your Way, Predict the Weather, Locate Water, Track Animals—and Other Forgotten Skills*. Published by The Experiment. 2015.
- Halfpenny, J.C. *Field Guide to Mammal Tracking in North America*. A Second Edition. Johnson Books. 1987.
- Heinrich, Bernd. *Ravens in Winter*. Heinrich, B. 1991. Vintage Books.
- Heinrich, Bernd. *Mind of the Raven*. 2007. Harper Perennial.
- Hutto, Joe. *Illumination in the Flatwoods: A Season with the Wild Turkey*. Lyons Press.
- Hutto, Joe. *Touching the Wild: Living with the Mule Deer of Deadman Gulch*. Skyhorse Press. 2014.
- Liebenberg, Louis. *The Art of Tracking: The Origin of Science*. New Africa Books. 1995.
- Marchand, Peter. *Autumn: A Season of Change*. Published by UPNE. 2000. ISBN-10: 0874518695.
- Marzluff, John. *Gifts of the Crow: How Perception, Emotion, and Thought Allow Smart Birds to Behave Like Humans*. Atria Books. 2013.
- Meijer, Eva. *Animal Languages*. The MIT Press. 2020.
- Morgan, Tiffany and J. Young. *Animal Tracking Basics*. Stackpole Books. 2007.
- Rezendes, Paul. *Tracking and the Art of Seeing: How to Read Animal Tracks and Sign*. Published by Collins Reference. 1999.
- Savage, Candice. *Bird Brains: The Intelligence of Crows, Ravens, Magpies, and Jays*. Greystone Books. 2018.
- Safina, Carl. *Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel*. Picador Press.
- Slobodchikoff, Con. *Chasing Doctor Dolittle: Learning the Language of Animals*. St. Martin's Press, 2012.
- Smith, Douglas & Gary Ferguson. *Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild To Yellowstone*. Lyons Press. 2005.
- Young, Jon. *Advanced Bird Language: Reading the Concentric Rings of Nature*. Owl Link Media. 1999.
- Young, Jon. *What the Robin Knows: How birds unravel the secrets of the natural world*. Mariner Books 2012.

### Media:

- Young, Jon. *Activating the Storyteller's Mind: Simple practices to deepen connection and integrate the nervous system*. Audio Series program.
- Young, Jon. *Bird Language Basics*. DVD. Village Video.
- *Nature: My Life as a Turkey* (2011)
- NOVA: *Animal Minds*

## 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](mailto: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