



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

BIRDING IN WINTER WONDERLAND

Itinerary & Details

FIELD SEMINAR – WINTER 2023/24

INSTRUCTOR: Elena Ulev

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY: Elena Ulev is a naturalist guide and environmental educator based out of Missoula, Montana. She has a B.S. degree in Wildlife Biology and has spent the last 23 years working in western Montana as a field biologist and writer for the U.S. Forest Service and as an educator for the Montana Natural History Center and the Lifelong Learning Center. She has seen over 200 species of birds in Montana so far, and her favorite is the short-eared owl. Elena loves sharing her curiosity and enthusiasm about nature with all ages and backgrounds.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: This course is activity **level 2** and students enrolled in this course are expected to be active participants. Be prepared for hikes on snow-packed trails, or snowshoe or ski trips, up to 3 miles per day with climbs up to 250 feet.

**All field activities will be conducted as a group. If participants cannot meet the activity level expectations during the program, they may be restricted from participation in daily outings. Program itineraries or activities will not be altered 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 7:00 PM on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, and ends on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 5:00 PM

LODGING CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT: No lodging is provided for this course, however, there may be limited lodging available through Yellowstone Forever at the Yellowstone Field Overlook Campus. For more information, please contact the Institute at institute@yellowstone.org. More information on Gardiner-based lodging here: [Gardiner, MT - Lodging](#).

MEALS: This course is not catered. Participants will need to bring their own food; lunch should be able to travel in the field.

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

PROGRAM ITINERARY

Many birds fly south for the winter, but many interesting species stay in the Yellowstone ecosystem making it an enjoyable time of year for bird watching. Some of the species that one can expect to see include flocks of red crossbills, Clark's nutcrackers, northern shrikes, and rough-legged hawks. This course will be a combination of an interactive classroom presentation to learn the basics of birding by sight and sound followed by time in the field. Participants will leave this field seminar with a greater understanding of how to watch and listen to birds and how they utilize the amazing winter landscape to survive.

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.

Days 2 – 3 Classroom and field time

First two hours of the day will be spent with a slideshow on the most common winter birds in Yellowstone and how to identify them, followed by a Bird Bingo game. The rest of day will be spent in the field birding.

PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

This course does not require any specific equipment unless participants wish to bring their own snowshoes. For a full list of what is included in this course, in addition to recommended equipment check out the [Gardiner Field Seminars - Winter General Information](#) document.

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.

- Heinrich, Bernd. *Winter World: The Ingenuity of Animal Survival*. Harper Perennial, 2009.

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