



# YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

## WINTER WILDLIFE WATCHING

### Itinerary & Details

Winter 2023/2024

The **Winter Wildlife Watching** tour is designed for those who want to focus on viewing and learning about wildlife along Yellowstone's famous northern range and Lamar Valley. Winters in Yellowstone offer a unique experience - fewer crowds and epic scenery across snow-covered landscapes. This tour stays close to the road as winter is the best time to view wolves in Yellowstone, and this tour is designed to take advantage of this rare opportunity. Join one of our winter Field Educators to get the most out of your Yellowstone winter experience!

Yellowstone Forever Field Educators will provide transportation, meals, and equipment for the day, take you to the best northern range wildlife viewing areas, and enhance your experience with stories and science behind Yellowstone. The day will be spent wildlife watching with a Field Educator who will incorporate wildlife, history, ecology, and geology along the northern range, in addition to discussing issues that affect the Yellowstone ecosystem.

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Delicious field breakfast and lunch catered by Bears Brew in Gardiner, MT
- Hot beverage service
- In-park and local pick-up, transportation via a 14-passenger minibus
  - Pick-ups only available in Gardiner, MT (up to 10 miles out of town), and Mammoth Hot Springs
- Eight hours of educational programming with a Yellowstone Forever Field Educator
  - 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- High powered scopes and binoculars
- Field equipment, to include snowshoes and poles

*Gratuities for the Yellowstone Forever field educators are not included in the program costs but are recommended and greatly appreciated.*

## 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 day begins early to catch morning wildlife activity. You'll begin with a short orientation, where the Field Educator will cover the plans for the day and answer any questions the participants may have.

**7:00 AM**      **Depart Gardiner or Mammoth Hot Springs for Lamar Valley and Northern Range**  
*Hot beverage service and box breakfast will be provided*

### **Morning wildlife viewing**

*In-field tutorial on how to use the high-powered scopes and binoculars*

**11:00 AM**      **Lunch**  
Hot beverage service and lunch, in the field, will be provided - location TBD

**12:00 PM**      **Afternoon Wildlife Watching**

**3:00 PM**      **Return to Gardiner and/or Mammoth Hot Springs**

## ACTIVITY LEVEL

### **How fit do you need to be?**

- This program can be accommodated to the group's desired activity level.
- To learn more about how specific medical conditions can be affected by Yellowstone's environment and our activities, please visit our site page on health information.

**To participate in this program, each participant must fill out and sign a health questionnaire and assumption of risk waiver.**

## WHOM TO CONTACT

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

- Program questions, refunds, and bookings contact Yellowstone Forever at [institute@yellowstone.org](mailto:institute@yellowstone.org) or 406-848-2400 extension 3
- Road updates, park conditions, and general park information contact Yellowstone National Park Service at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/contacts.htm>

## **CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY**

The following policies apply to this program if you cancel:

- 60 days or more prior to the start of your package, 100% of your payment will be refunded.
- 30 days or more prior to the start of your package, 50% of your payment will be refunded.
- If you cancel with fewer than 30 days before the start of your program, your full payment will be forfeited.

Please email us at [institute@yellowstone.org](mailto:institute@yellowstone.org) or call Yellowstone Forever at 406-848-2400 extension 3 to cancel.

**We recommend the purchase of travel insurance to help protect you against financial loss if you must cancel or interrupt your trip due to unforeseen circumstances.**

## **COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY**

Yellowstone Forever's goal is to provide clear and concise information about what we are doing to protect our participants, guests, volunteers, and staff. We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic with information from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/) and in consultation with local authorities and partners such as county health departments and the National Park Service. The information provided on this website is not intended to be all-encompassing and should not be considered medical or legal advice.

To view our current protocols, visit <https://www.yellowstone.org/covid-19-health-safety/> for more information.

## GENERAL EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING LIST

Much of the program time will be spent outdoors, and participants should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are important. Winter temperatures can range from below freezing in the mornings to 40° Fahrenheit in the afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide clothing choices. **\*The Field Educator will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.**

### Equipment:

- **Hand Sanitizer**
- **Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, etc.
- **Water bottle**
- **Sunglasses & Sunscreen**
- **Lip protector**, chapstick
- **Optics**, camera and binoculars

### Clothing:

- **Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, wool, or similar wicking fabric
- **Midweight insulating layer**, a light synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover
- **Heavyweight insulating layer**, wool, down, or heavy-weight fleece jacket
- **Waterproof and windproof outer layer**, lightweight and breathable, jackets and pants
- **Pants**, wool, fleece pants are preferred, no cotton
- **Hat**, an insulating hat that covers ears
- **Gloves**, lightweight glove liners and a pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens – waterproof/windproof outer layer is recommended – heated gloves are recommended for those who have poor circulation
- **Socks**, lightweight liner with heavyweight synthetic or wool socks
- **Gaiters**, *knee-high to keep snow out of your boots*
- **Insulated boots** should have water repellent layers outside, thick insulation inside, and be large enough to fit over thick socks. Soles with proper traction or traction devices (i.e. Yaktrax) are essential for icy conditions.

## ABOUT YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

### Park Stores

Yellowstone Forever park stores feature more than 900 books, maps, and videos to help participants plan their visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items. Yellowstone Forever members receive a 15% discount on merchandise online or at any of the locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support Yellowstone.

Visit: [shop.yellowstone.org](http://shop.yellowstone.org)

### Membership Program

Yellowstone Forever members directly fund visitor education and park preservation. Benefits include:

- 15% discount on merchandise at all Park Stores locations, including the online store, Yellowstone National Park Lodges gift shop and Yellowstone General Stores. Exclusions apply.
- Discounts at over 400 participating public land stores across the country.
- A library card for the Yellowstone Heritage and Research Center.

## CODE OF ETHICS

Yellowstone Forever is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant on a Yellowstone Forever program, participants will adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Yellowstone Forever abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations, in addition to practicing Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

**Observing wildlife:** Groups will do their 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 the group presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. Yellowstone Forever adheres to National Park Service regulations by keeping a minimum distance of 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes, and nesting birds and 100 yards from bears and wolves. Wildlife will not be enticed 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 Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever educators have permission from the National Park Service to manipulate plants, rocks, bones, etc. for educational purposes and will return them to their natural positions and locations.

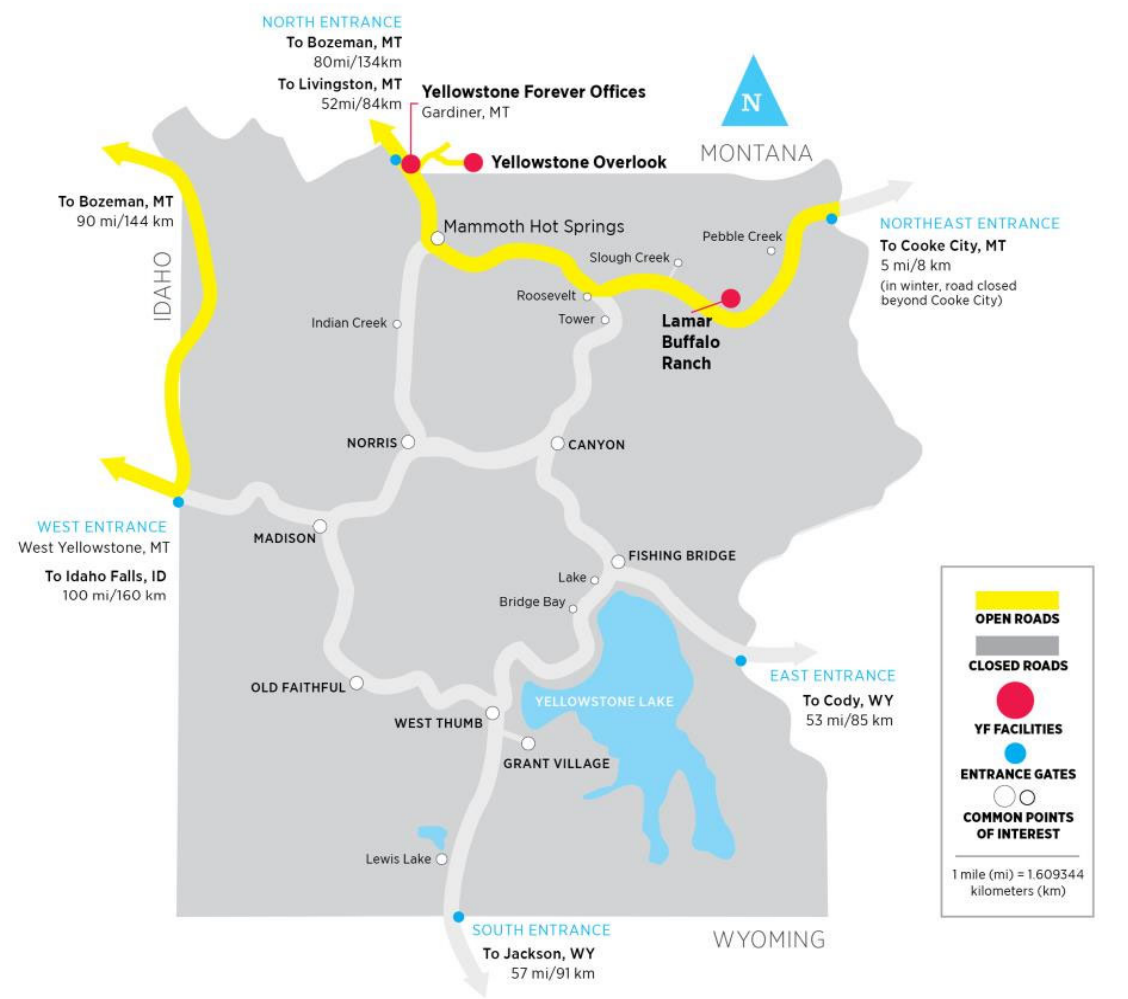
**General etiquette:** Yellowstone Forever groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (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, Yellowstone Forever field educators will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, educators will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. Yellowstone Forever will not stop in the middle of the road and should a traffic jam develop because of the group's activities, the activity will cease.

**Properly dispose of waste:** Participants will pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Field Educators will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

**Traveling lightly:** When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, groups will use existing trails and boardwalks. Hikers will 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 the program and should expect to walk through mud, snow, or puddles in the trail.

# Yellowstone Winter Map **YELLOWSTONE FOREVER**



The only road open to wheeled vehicles in the winter (early November to mid-April) is the road from the North Entrance to the Northeast Entrance. Because Cooke Pass is closed to wheeled vehicles, it is not possible to enter or exit Yellowstone National Park through the Northeast Entrance. You must enter the park through the Northeast Entrance. You must enter the park through Gardiner, Montana. Current road conditions are available through the **NPS Road Report at 307.344.2117**.



POINT TO POINT DISTANCE	Miles/Kilometers
North Entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs	5 mi/8 km
Roosevelt to Northeast Entrance	29 mi/47 km
Roosevelt to Lamar Buffalo Ranch	11 mi/17 km
Roosevelt to Mammoth Hot Springs	18 mi/29 km

ELEVATIONS	feet / meters
North Entrance	5314 / 1620
West Entrance	6667 / 2032
South Entrance	6886 / 2099
East Entrance	6951 / 2119
Mammoth Hot Springs	6239 / 1902
Old Faithful	7365 / 2254
Grant Village	7733 / 2357
Lake	7784 / 2373
Canyon	7734 / 2357
Roosevelt	6270 / 1911

**The Gardiner entrance is the only open entrance to use by car in the winter.**

Plan on extra driving time in the park, the speed limit is 45 mph or lower and road conditions in the winter can vary. There may also be construction delays. Visit [www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm), call the recorded NPS Road Report at 307-344-2117, or contact a visitor center for up-to-date travel information.