



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

YELLOWSTONE MASTER NATURALIST | SUMMER

Itinerary & Details

FIELD SEMINAR – SUMMER 2024

INSTRUCTOR: Amanda Evans

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY: Amanda Evans is a Yellowstone Forever lead field educator. Her passion for wildlife and wild places has taken her to working in California, Texas, Wyoming, Alaska, and Montana. She feels that it is through firsthand experience with the natural world that people build the strongest connections to it. Her goal is to use education to foster the same appreciation she feels and to inspire others to preserve and protect nature in all spaces.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: This course is 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 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 p.m. on Saturday, August 24, 2024, and goes through Thursday, August 29, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

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. 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: 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, preparation for classes, what to expect, cancellation policies, and more, please see the [Gardiner Field Seminars - Summer General Information](#) document.

PROGRAM ITINERARY

Welcome to an intense and rewarding course with Yellowstone Forever. The *Yellowstone Naturalist* course teaches skills for those interested in increasing natural history knowledge and promoting awareness, understanding, and stewardship of Yellowstone's natural environment. The *Yellowstone Naturalist* program is designed for adults who want to stoke their curiosity, deepen their knowledge of the natural world, and give back to their communities in new ways. Participants gain skills to interpret Yellowstone's flora, fauna, and landscape. This course focuses on the depth of Yellowstone content knowledge with some methodology of instruction.

To learn these skills, students in this course will earn credentials as a certified Montana Master Naturalist through the Montana Natural History Center and receive a *Yellowstone Naturalist* certificate through Yellowstone Forever.

The focus of this week-long course will be developing skills to read the Yellowstone landscape. We'll highlight and discuss themes related to natural history, cultural history, trophic cascades, ecology, controversial topics, pedagogy, and habitat to frame our course. Through this multi-day, intensive course, participants will develop the ability to understand and interpret the Yellowstone landscape. There will be classroom instruction, field-based learning, and demonstrations. You can expect to be in the field and/or classroom eight to twelve hours a day and have evening assignments or activities. Your objective is to learn as much as you can in a week and demonstrate your skills as a Yellowstone naturalist. Expect to challenge yourself and think on your feet.

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 **Welcome**

- Evening orientation and introductions beginning 5:00 p.m.
- Evening presentation regarding what it means to be a naturalist and a breakdown of the class expectations for the week.

Day 2 Early morning to early afternoon wildlife watching

- Meet up in the field with a biological science technician from the Yellowstone Wolf, Cougar, and Elk Project to discuss current wildlife research
- Afternoon to early evening will cover nature journaling.
- After a dinner break, there will be an evening presentation on environmental interpretation practices.

Day 3 All day field trip focusing on geology and the connection to cultural history

Day 4 Morning will be spent learning about and looking for birds Afternoon will be spent learning about plant taxonomy and Yellowstone wildflowers

Day 5 Morning to late afternoon will be spent in the classroom with a tracking expert Afternoon will be spent practicing tracking in the field.

Day 6 Morning discussion on ecology and putting it all together followed by time to work on presentations

- Presentations will start in the afternoon followed by award ceremony

PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

For a full list of what is included in this course, in addition to recommended equipment check out the [Gardiner Field Seminars - Summer General Information](#) document.

There are no specific items required for this class.

- You will be provided a journal and coloring set.

RECOMMENDED READING

No prior reading is required, but participants might enjoy the following publications, that complement the program.

- National Park Service. *2023 Resource and Issues Handbook*. NPS, 2023.

WHOM TO CONTACT

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

- Program itinerary, health forms, payment, and general program 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.