



*Wolves and Wildlife*  
*Yellowstone in Winter*  
*Six-Day All-Inclusive*  
*Package Tour*



## Overview

Spend full days immersed in Yellowstone's wildlife-rich Lamar Valley and Northern Range, highly revered as the very best place on Earth to see wild wolves. Lodging and dinners will be in the comfort of our new boutique eco-lodge and evenings will be filled with presentations from local wildlife biologists and filmmakers. This tour is a visually stunning adventure through the pristine beauty of Yellowstone landscapes - towering peaks and sweeping valleys, blanketed by soft winter snow. Each day provides new possibilities to see multiple wolf packs, frosty bison, long-legged moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, elk, otters, foxes, coyotes, eagles, owls and more. Your tour will also be highly educational, as we highlight the monumental reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone, the complexities of wolf social behaviors, wolves' specialized hunting strategies and their ecological impacts on the Yellowstone ecosystem. We will explore how these factors, and others, have captured the human imagination for centuries, and over time have characterized the wolf as the ultimate icon of Wilderness.

The deep snows of winter have pushed Yellowstone's iconic wildlife down out of the mountains and onto their wintering grounds in the Lamar Valley and the Northern Range. Thousands of elk and bison, along with moose, big horn sheep, white-tailed and mule deer and pronghorn have filtered out of the higher mountains of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and have concentrated in the lower valleys and grasslands where there is less snow and less extreme temperatures. Winter can be tough on these grazing animals, and partially because of that, this is where Yellowstone's wolves and other carnivores thrive. Come and explore the unparalleled beauty and wildlife watching opportunities of Yellowstone National Park with experienced local naturalist guides during the most beautiful and dramatic time of the year: winter. Winter is the season of the wolves, and wolves are our specialty.

This all-inclusive tour package is the ultimate way to experience the wild magic of Yellowstone National Park, while treating yourself to the luxuries of the brand-new Wonderland Cafe and Lodge. Wonderland is the area's first and only boutique eco-lodge where you can find rustic elements with all of the modern amenities to make your vacation the best it can be. Breakfasts and lunches will be catered by the Wonderland Cafe and enjoyed picnic-style out in the park, overlooking one of our favorite vistas in Yellowstone. Dinners will be shared in the lodge with local artists, researchers and/or storytellers by the warmth of the Wonderland fireplace. Each evening, following dinner, we will be treated to a private presentation from a local Yellowstone wildlife expert.



# Tour Schedule Summary

Day	Location	Accommodation	General Comments
1	Bozeman, MT	Bozeman, MT	Arrive in Bozeman Check in to Hotel
2	Gardiner, MT	Gardiner, MT	Transportation to Yellowstone Check in to Wonderland Lodge Wildlife and Geology Day 1
		Wonderland Lodge	
3	Gardiner, MT	Gardiner, MT	Northern Range Wildlife Day 2 Evening Guest Speaker
		Wonderland Lodge	
4	Gardiner, MT	Gardiner, MT	Northern Range Wildlife Day 3 Evening Guest Speaker
		Wonderland Lodge	
5	Gardiner, MT	Gardiner, MT	Northern Range Wildlife Day 4 Evening Guest Speaker
		Wonderland Lodge	
6	Bozeman, MT		Travel back to Bozeman, and say our farewells. Until next time!





## General Logistics

- One-night's stay in Bozeman, MT
- Four-night's stay in historic Gardiner, MT in the new boutique eco-lodge at North Entrance of Yellowstone National Park
- Round-trip transportation - Bozeman to Gardiner/Yellowstone
- Transportation in our fully-equipped touring vehicle(s) (we drive, you enjoy the scenery)
- Half-day tour of Mammoth Hot Springs and Gardiner Basin
- Three full-day (8 hours) guided wildlife tours in Yellowstone's Northern Range
- Local naturalist guide(s)
- Dinners together at Wonderland Dining Room
- Private evening presentations with local wildlife experts



# Tour details

- Optics for everyone: top-of-the-line binoculars and high-powered spotting scopes for each guest
- Fresh-baked breakfast pastries
- Hot drinks (coffee, tea, hot cocoa)
- Healthy and hearty snacks (various bars and trail mix, etc.)
- Healthy fruit juice soft drinks and water
- Full picnic lunch (GF and vegetarian/vegan and kosher options available upon request)
- Dynamic and engaging discussions interpret the wildlife activity and behaviors we observe
- Informed and accurate information on the biology and conservation issues surrounding the wildlife you will observe on our tours
- Plenty of space in our vehicle(s) for your extra clothing \*we provide detailed recommendations on appropriate winter clothing



## *Day 1*

- Arrival at Bozeman International Airport -
- One night in Bozeman, Montana -



This package includes a one night stay in Bozeman, Montana, walking distance to the historic downtown. Guests arriving to the Bozeman/Big Sky International Airport will be shuttled to hotel. You will be on your own this evening, so feel free to explore the exceptional dining and shopping options that Bozeman has to offer. The group will assemble the following morning in the hotel lobby.



## *Day 2*

- Pick-up in Bozeman and Transport to Gardiner, Montana -
- North Entrance to Yellowstone National Park -



Breakfast is available starting at 6 AM in the hotel's dining area. You will need to check out by 10 AM and have all of your belongings in the hotel lobby.

We will meet in the hotel lobby at 10 AM, load up and begin our 1.5 - 2 hour drive through the Paradise Valley to Gardiner, Montana, at the north entrance of Yellowstone National Park.

Stopping along the way will give us the opportunity to experience and photograph the spectacular scenery of the Yellowstone River, Absaroka and Gallatin Mountains and the plentiful wildlife in the valley.

We will stay in Gardiner at the Wonderland Café and Lodge where we will be staying for the next four nights. Your lodge is a new boutique eco-lodge designed to be an elegant steppingstone into Yellowstone National Park, where you can find rustic elements with all of the modern amenities to make your vacation the best it can be. After settling in to your rooms, we set out into the park to see the wildlife in the lower-elevation Gardiner Basin. Visiting the unique geologic structures of the Mammoth Hot Springs complex during the dramatic evening light, we can walk through the stunning Travertine Terraces and travel back to Gardiner for dinner and an orientation regarding the days ahead and what to expect.



## *Days 3, 4 & 5*

- Wildlife on the Northern Range -



An early morning start (6:00 AM) allows us the privilege of positioning ourselves inside Yellowstone National Park in the best places to find wolves and other wildlife before the first light. We will be able to access the territories of up to five different wolf packs, and we will spend our time in the areas with the best chances to locate and photograph wolves at that time. Your guides know these wolves well and can often predict their movements, enabling us to position ourselves for the best viewing opportunities possible. We also have the privilege of first-hand information on wildlife locations through direct contact with the Yellowstone National Park wolf biologists, local wolf enthusiasts, professional photographers and film makers. The exact areas we are visiting each day will be determined by the most current information on wildlife activity.

While focusing on these five wolf packs, we will also have many opportunities to spend time with other iconic Yellowstone wildlife species that concentrate in the lower elevation valley bottoms due to the heavy snow in the higher mountains. During these days, we can expect to be able to watch and photograph wolf, bison, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, moose, pronghorn, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, coyote, fox, otter, beaver, bald eagle, golden eagle, raven, magpie, and possibly other rarer species.





It is important to remember, that the expanses in Yellowstone are huge and the animals are wild. As such, we cannot expect everything to be up close and personal. In fact, many of our sightings will be at considerable distances. Therefore, we provide you with the very best in viewing optics for the greatest viewing enjoyment possible with each sighting. The binoculars and spotting scopes that we provide are the highest quality available and allow us to enjoy great views while maintaining a respectful distance from the wildlife that keeps both them and us safe.

On these days, we are serving hot drinks and fresh-baked pastries, as well as an assortment of breakfast snacks, picnic-style as we watch a Yellowstone sunrise. It is common to be sipping your coffee and savoring a huckleberry scone when you hear your first wolf howl off in the distance. Your guides will work hard to locate wolves in that early morning light and then to train everyone's spotting scope onto the animals to observe them during the hours of their peak activity. We use our tour vehicles to quickly move from one viewing point to another to locate and observe the wildlife activity. We may be in and out of the vehicle several times at our favorite vantage points where we can comfortably set up our tripods, spotting scopes and cameras. At mid-day, we will serve a healthy and hearty picnic lunch overlooking one of our favorite views in the park and catered by the Wonderland Café. Vegetarian, vegan, gluten free and kosher dietary restrictions can be accommodated upon prior request. A moderate hike towards midday is an option if you would like to stretch the legs. We will have the opportunity to visit various different features of the park, depending on where the wildlife sightings take us throughout the morning, and we can discuss those options with you during the morning.





In the afternoons, wildlife sightings can be amazing as we work our way back towards Gardiner. Guests can plan on arriving back in Gardiner between 4-5 PM depending on the animals we find along the way.

Our dinners will be enjoyed in the comfort of the brand-new Wonderland Cafe in Gardiner, complete with a gourmet chef and full menus of exquisite food, beer and wine. A special guest presentation will follow dinner each evening with local biologists, authors and filmmakers in the Wonderland Lounge.

Each day we will visit many of the same areas in the northern portion of Yellowstone, and each day will offer new opportunities for finding and observing wildlife activity and behaviors. We often start our second and third days of wildlife watching by trying to pick up where we left off the afternoon before to discover what happens in the next chapter of the story of Yellowstone's iconic wildlife.



# *Day 6*

- Gardiner to Bozeman -



The final day of the trip will be a day of transition as we prepare for our departure from this magical place. On this transition day, we will have breakfast before we drive back to Bozeman. We can provide a drop-off at the Bozeman Airport no earlier than 11:30 and we can arrange a drop-off at any other location in Bozeman for anyone wanting to stay longer in Big Sky Country.



## *Prices*

Prices will vary depending on whether you would like this package as a private tour or if you would like to be a part of a larger group (up to 12 guests). Prices also vary per person depending on shared occupancy (two people) or private, single rooms. Please contact us directly with your preferences so we can calculate the best price option for you.

### *Prices starting at*

*Double occupancy*

\$2,250.00

*Single occupancy*

\$2,750.00



## *Deposits*

In order to hold your spot on this special trip, we require a 30% deposit upon booking. Full payment will be due 45 days prior to the beginning of your tour.



## *Cancellation Policy*

In case you need to cancel your trip with us, we will fully refund you up to 60 days prior to the starting day of this trip minus a \$75 processing fee. In case you need to cancel your trip with us between 32 and 59 days prior to the starting day of your trip, we will refund half of the costs of your trip. Any cancellation made 31 days or less before the starting day of your trip, will not be refunded.



## *Trip Cancellation*

We reserve the right to cancel the trip due to extreme weather conditions, events that would jeopardize the success of the expedition or other factors that are outside of our control. Full refunds, minus a \$65 processing fee will be given at that time.



## *Winter Wildlife Watching in Yellowstone*

As soon as we enter the northern gate of Yellowstone National Park, wildlife-viewing opportunities abound! The Gardiner Canyon immediately greets us as we start our ascent towards Mammoth Village. This canyon is home to the McMinn herd of Rocky Mountain big horn sheep, which overwinter in this lower elevation canyon. Come spring they will spread back out and fill in their high-mountain territories throughout the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. During November and December, the rams can be found amongst the herds competing for breeding rights. The cracking sound of their impressive skulls and horns crashing together can sometimes be heard for miles. Keep your eyes up on these steep canyon walls, as nowhere is out of reach for these climbing specialists.



Climbing our way to 6200' elevation, we arrive at the historic park headquarters at Mammoth Hot Springs. Originally established as Fort Yellowstone by the U.S. Army in the late 1800s, Mammoth is most known for the exquisite beauty of the Mammoth Terraces, travertine formations deposited by a dynamic complex of hot springs. Large herds of elk spend their winter in and around Mammoth, often providing the up-close views that have given Mammoth the nickname of "Elk Town".



Here we turn to the east and find ourselves climbing ever more up and eventually over the Blacktail Plateau. Our route parallels one that has been used for tens of thousands of years, not by humans, but Yellowstone's prehistoric survivors, the American Plains Bison. Buffalo, as named by early explorers and settlers, have traveled in the footsteps of their ancestors for millennia, heading towards the lower elevations of the Gardiner basin to escape winter's relentless assault. Along this path, we often see family groups of bison heading west, and downhill, appearing as natural and adept on the landscape as the very snow itself. It is humbling and inspiring to witness these timeless creatures carry out, and pass on to the next generation, the route of this ancient migration.





Further towards the east, we have a couple massive vistas overlooking the confluence of Hellroaring Creek and the Yellowstone River, an area known simply as “Hellroaring”. From our pullout views here, it is easy to become overwhelmed by the scale with the landscape first dropping away from your feet, then dramatically rising again, leaving a beautifully soft and welcoming slope below. Surely, an Ansel Adams-worthy landscape, but also a winter wildlife viewer’s delight! The lower elevations along the bottom of the slope, and the flanks of the Yellowstone River are a welcome winter refuge for the large ungulates of Yellowstone. Elk and bison alike gather here, sometimes resting along their march or spending their entire winter season in the bottom of Hellroaring. This concentration of prey, will undoubtedly draw the attention of several wolf packs who annually travel into Hellroaring for this season, also looking for a meal. Your guides will use their high-powered optics to find them!



Carrying on past the Tower Ranger Station, a beacon of human life dropped into the vast frozen wilderness, we cross the Yellowstone River, and approach Little America. This area of the park is unique for its glacial erratics, evidence of a time when ice and cold truly dominated the land some 20,000 years ago. But Little America isn't just a playground of geologic history; it's a wolf watcher's dream. This area, 7 miles long and 3 miles wide, is home to some of Yellowstone's best wolf habitat. With massive views in all directions, the opportunity to spot a wild wolf is as good here as anywhere. Wolves commonly travel the road during the dark winter nights, and with the only the vehicle's headlights illuminating the road, an experienced guide can often pick up their tracks, determine their direction of travel, and often the number of individuals to search for. This is always an exciting moment, knowing the elusive apex predator is nearby, and it's often in Little America.



Moving further to the east, we pass through the Lamar Canyon, a cascade of the Lamar River, over boulders, ice and toppled pines, and approach the destination most intrepid winter visitors of Yellowstone covet, the Lamar Valley. A valley often likened to “driving into a postcard” never disappoints, regardless of the season, but there is a little extra magic during a Yellowstone winter. First noticed is the Lamar River, snaking its way through the valley bottom, with meanders so beautiful and natural it reminds us what rivers are supposed to look like. Dots in the distance, first appearing as rocks, turn into frosted steam generators and eventually reveal themselves. Bull bison, in bachelor groups, will stay in Lamar Valley all winter, leaving the cows and younger bison to migrate to milder climates at lower elevations. Are these bulls too stubborn to migrate? Or too strong to worry about the extreme cold and snow? Regardless, they appear perfectly adapted to push through and wait out Old Man Winter. The image of their strength is forever remembered by all who witness this scene.





This sacred valley was also the site of the first wolf tracks to be laid upon Yellowstone in 69 years. The first release of wolves back into Yellowstone in 1995 was right here in Lamar Valley. Since, it has been dubbed “the valley of the wolves” because of its unique opportunities to view wild wolves, living truly wild lives. It was called home by the park’s most famous, and maybe the world’s most famous wolf pack: the Druid Peak Pack, who reached its peak in 2001 with 37 members. Currently, the Junction Butte Pack, and the Lamar Canyon pack both use the valley to hunt and raise their young. When it comes to wolves in the wild, perhaps the most impressive wolf sightings, photographs, films and scientific research of all time have occurred right here in Lamar Valley, and everyday something new and memorable happens.





The Lamar Valley is also home to many other creatures, large and small. Golden Eagles can sometimes be seen hunting their favorite winter meal, Golden-eye Ducks along the Lamar River. Otters frequent openings along the ice-shelved river as well, always wary of trout stealing Bald Eagles. Foxes and Coyotes use the mid-day hours to hunt, when the snow is softest, and their diving plunge through it is most rewarding. We never know what may be around the next bend or coming over the ridge, but we do know, there's always something amazing happening in the Lamar; it's just a matter of finding it!



Moving along the northern bank of the Lamar River, past the confluence with Soda Butte Creek, we transition into the Soda Butte Valley. Here the landscape changes, from the vast expanses of the Lamar to a tighter and more dramatic section of the Northern Range. Soda Butte Creek is lined with willows, hiding the valley bottom, and therefore creating textbook habitat for another one of Yellowstone's mega fauna: Moose. Winter is the perfect season to find these gangly, yet somehow majestic browsers. Harsh temperatures and deeps snow have pushed them to the valley floor, and often into view if you know where to look. Fortunately, we do!





We will spend three full days exploring the wonders of the Northern Range: a variety and density of wildlife unmatched by anywhere else in North America, breathtaking vistas, and a natural and human history rivaling a story stranger than fiction. With the restoration of wolves and their subsequent impacts on the ecosystem, known as “trophic cascades”, Yellowstone’s Northern Range now holds all of its original species and ecological components, and scientists declare it to be every bit as wild and healthy right now as it’s ever been! The Northern Range has become a world-class destination for wildlife viewing, and immersing yourself in a truly wild ecosystem and the beauty of winter will only enhance everything you’ve come for!

