

Yellowstone National Park

September 15-21, 2024

Join Sarett Nature Center naturalists for a trip to our county's most famous national park. It is not an exaggeration to proclaim this area a world class natural history destination due to its huge size, incredible scenery, unusual geology, and the numbers of large mammals that are present. On this trip we will visit many areas scattered along the roadway loops. You will see erupting geysers, bubbling mud pots, impressive canyons, stunning waterfalls, and herds of bison, elk, and pronghorn. There are very good odds of spotting grizzly bears, bighorn sheep, and moose. Wolf sightings are always possible. Interesting birds such as black-billed magpies, bald eagles, and mountain bluebirds are commonly seen. You will also experience the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem when we take in views of the Teton Mountain Range while rafting down the Snake River, and while we complete a portion of the incredibly scenic Beartooth Highway.

Daily Itinerary

Sunday, September 15..... Our group will depart Sarett Nature Center at 7:00 a.m. for the drive to Chicago's O'Hare airport. Arrival in Jackson Hole Wyoming will be at noon mountain time. Our first stop of the trip will be at the nearby **National Museum of Wildlife Art** in the town of Jackson. This one-of-a-kind museum is dedicated solely to wildlife art. There are walking trails here with views of the 24,000-acre National Elk Refuge. There should be time to do a drive on the refuge access road. Surprisingly we are not likely to see elk at this time of year, but we will try to find bighorn sheep moving around the slopes of Millers Butte. It is a short drive from here to our Colter Bay cabins in Grand Teton National Park.

Monday, September 16.....Our destination for today is the **Upper, Midway, and Lower Geyser Basins** of Yellowstone National Park. The park contains 60 percent of all the world's geysers! We will visit several of them today including Old Faithful. Boardwalks will guide us safely around to see other geothermal features including mud pots and multi-colored boiling hot springs. Included in the activities today will be eating lunch at the historic Old Faithful Lodge and visiting the Old Faithful information center. Accommodation for the next four nights will be in cabins at Lake Lodge which is located on the north shore of Yellowstone Lake.



Tuesday, September 17..... We will start early today to have the best wildlife viewing in a region of the park known as the **Lamar Valley**. Dawn and dusk are peak times for animal activity. The road through this region has many pull-offs where we can exit the vehicle and scan the wide-open country for mammals such as bison, elk, pronghorn, and grizzly bears. This is the best area of the park for a chance to see wolf packs in action. We will have



spotting scopes to help us enhance views of the animals. The Lamar valley region is located near the northeast entrance to the park. We will take this opportunity to exit the park here and tour a portion of the incredible **Beartooth Highway**. Many jagged 12,000-foot peaks are visible along with alpine lakes, deep valleys, and alpine tundra. This drive is considered one of the most scenic in the entire United States. There will be a short, easy walk to Beauty Lake. A picnic lunch will be provided today. We plan to arrive back at Lake Lodge at dinnertime.

Wednesday, September 18..... There will be many more geothermal features of Yellowstone to see today when we visit **Norris Geyser Basin** and **Mammoth Hot Springs**. Underground magma has heated water in the Norris Geyser Basin to incredible temperatures. We will take boardwalks through this area to experience geysers and steaming pools of water. Steamboat Geyser shoots water up to 400 feet in the air! Other interesting locations in the area include Artists Paintpots and Gibbon Falls. After lunch at the Terrace Grill restaurant, we will cross the street to the Albright Visitor Center to learn about the history and wildlife of the park. There will be a walk amongst the steamy hot spring terraces. We will look for bighorn sheep near the Gardiner River and do the Blacktail Plateau Drive. This scenic 6-mile one way road will take us through high alpine forests and meadows. This will allow us to look for wildlife at a slow pace. Our overnight accommodation will be back at our Lake Lodge cabins.



Thursday, September 19..... The **Hayden Valley**, which is located a short drive north of our cabins is another hotspot for seeing wildlife. We will depart early to witness the dawn activity of animals. Wide open country will give us opportunity to view hundreds of bison and many other large mammals from the comfort of our vans. After breakfast back at the lodge we will visit the **Grand Canyon of Yellowstone**. The Yellowstone River over time has eroded out rock to create a canyon that is 20 miles long, 1,200 feet deep, and almost a mile across in places. Other features include raging whitewater and impressive waterfalls. We will explore this area by doing short walks. A picnic lunch will be provided for you today. Our last stay at the Lake Lodge cabins will be tonight.

Friday, September 20..... We will have a leisurely morning, then drive down to **Grand Teton National Park**, and check in at noon for a scheduled two-hour float trip down the **Snake River**. This 10-mile gentle float through the park will allow continuous views of the Teton Mountain Range and chances to see wildlife along the riverbanks. We have chances of seeing elk, mule deer and moose. There is a large concentration of bald eagles in the area and river otters are sometimes spotted. The raft guide will educate us about the natural and human history of the area. We will enjoy an early lunch at Dornan's Chuckwagon café before our float trip. Our overnight stay will be back at the Colter Bay cabins located along the shores of Jackson Lake.



Saturday, September 21..... This is our travel day back to Michigan. We will arrive at Jackson Hole airport at 11:30 a.m. Arrival back at Sarett Nature Center should be 7:30 p.m.

Important Information

Accommodations:

- **Colter Bay Village Cabins on Jackson Lake:** These unique historic log cabins feature double beds, private bathrooms with a shower, and a coffee maker. Linens and towels are provided. Hair dryers and irons are available on request. There are no refrigerators, microwave ovens or televisions. The resort has full views of the Teton Mountain Range. There is a restaurant that serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner at Colter Bay Village.
- **Lake Lodge Cabins on Yellowstone Lake:** Located at Lake Yellowstone Lodge these cabins feature queen-sized beds, coffee maker, hairdryer, and full bathroom. There are no refrigerators, televisions, or microwave ovens. The lodge building features a lounge with two fireplaces, a gift shop and a large front porch which overlooks Yellowstone Lake. There is an on-site cafe that serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Food: Other than the picnic lunches on Tuesday and Thursday, you will be responsible for purchasing all food on this trip.

Transportation: Sarett Nature Center vans will transport the group to and from O'Hare airport. A large transit van and a minivan from the Jackson Hole airport will be used for transportation in our time out west.

Activities: Sarett Nature Center's commercial permit to operate in Yellowstone National Park allows for a driving tour with only short walks planned. Though certain locations are prime for wildlife viewing, we can see wildlife along roadways at any time. Our group will follow strict park regulations concerning wildlife viewing to avoid harassing the animals and creating an unsafe situation for ourselves. There will be at least one evening activity offered to look for more wildlife close to our accommodation. There will be opportunity to visit some of the information centers not mentioned to learn more about the natural and human history about the area.

Membership: You must be a current member of Sarett Nature Center to participate. A family membership is \$50.00. An individual membership is \$40.00.

Cost: \$3,790.00 (based on double occupancy)

Single Supplement: \$1,100.00

This includes:

- Roundtrip airfare
- Ground vehicle transportation
- National Park fees
- Six nights' accommodation
- Two lunches
- Services of Sarett Nature Center Naturalists
- Rafting on the Snake River
- Admission to the National Museum of Wildlife Art

Deposit: \$ 200.00 You must pay this non-refundable amount to sign up for the trip.

Final Payment Due Date: August 1, 2024

Cancellation Policy: Every effort will be made to refund recoverable costs in case you need to cancel. If the entire trip is cancelled, you will receive a full refund including the deposit. It is recommended that travelers always purchase their own trip cancellation/ interruption insurance to guard against unforeseeable events.

Responsibility: Sarett Nature Center reserves the right at their sole discretion to make changes to the itinerary should they become necessary, and is not responsible to any person for expenses, loss of time, money, or happenings resulting from a change of tour scheduling. Sarett Nature Center reserves the right to accept, decline, or retain any person as a member of the tour, and is not responsible for any losses or damages of personal property, injuries, expenses, or damages incurred or claimed by any tour member.

Flight Schedule on American Airlines (local time)

Sunday, September 15

Depart Chicago O'Hare @ 9:55 a.m.

Arrive Jackson Hole @ 12:00 noon

Saturday, September 21

Depart Jackson Hole @ 1:39 p.m.

Arrive Chicago O'Hare @ 5:45 p.m.