

Yellowstone Glacier Adventures, Inc.

イエローストーン・グレイシャアドベンチャー株式会社
P.O. Box 746 Bozeman, Montana 59771-0746 USA
Tel/Fax: (406) 585-9041 E-mail: SeeMontana@aol.com
Homepage: <http://www.national-park-tours.com>

Wildlife Safari Family Combination with Hiking March to November Gardiner/ Northern Yellowstone departure

The northern part of Yellowstone is home to the largest herds of Big Game in all of North America—elk, bison, wolves, bears, and more! March through November is prime time for watching bears and wolves together with all of the other species that have lived in northern Yellowstone for the past 8,000 years. Hiking is also fantastic—searching for bear or wolf tracks, following a pack, enjoying a “*Sound of Music*” slope full of wildflowers, playful river otters, and much more reward those who venture off the roads in Yellowstone! We encourage you to be one of the only 7% who get out of their cars! Our firm is one of the few entrusted by the National Park Service to guide you in the backcountry.

However, for children it is sometimes hard to focus exclusively on wildlife. Therefore our Combination Safari will follow a faster pace with early wildlife searching followed by one or two shorter hikes selected in consultation with your family. Children will have more opportunity to explore, learn, and discover off-road. Who knows- you might be able to track a grizzly bear or follow a wolf pack!

Spring Wildlife Tours provide the opportunity for you to see bears as they emerge from their winter sleep. The large male grizzlies usually come out first and they are hungry. It is not unusual to see a grizzly challenge a pack of wolves and take away their hard-earned meal of an elk or bison. Eagles and owls nest in the spring and the wolves are preparing to den before the birth of their pups. The big bull elk have lost their majestic antlers. Black and grizzly bears usually start appearing with their cubs in April. May brings the birth of bison calves, the first wolf puppy viewing, and secretive elk calves.

Early **Summer Wildlife Touring** gives you the opportunity to watch all of the different species of wildlife found in Yellowstone since the Great Ice Ages; *black and grizzly bears, coyotes, gray wolves, elk, bison, pronghorn antelope, bighorn sheep, deer* and maybe even *moose* or *mountain goats*. The weather is still generally cool and the roads are not crowded. The wetlands along the river are home to many species of birds and waterfowl; we will look for bald and golden eagles, hawks and search for the nests of *osprey, owls* and *sandhill cranes*. Wildlife tours during the hot summer months of July and August mean rising at daybreak and hoping to catch a glimpse of the animals before they move into the cool shade of the timber. Most of the wildlife has moved into the high country to escape the heat, we can usually find *bears* on the high mountain

slopes and *elk*, *bison* and *bighorn* along the timberline while *ospreys* are teaching their young to fly and birds and wildflowers are plentiful.

During **Fall Wildlife Tours** you will find bison and elk in rut. The big bulls challenge each other for the right to be king of their harem of cows. Listening to the elk bugle and watching these massive animals charge and fight each other is exciting. The bears will be preparing to den; they eat constantly putting on enough weight to survive their long winter nap. The blooms of the wildflowers have faded and are replaced by the aspen and underlying shrubs turning bright colors. Birds will be flocking for migration to warmer climates, late fall will bring snow and the return of the trumpeter swans to the interior river valleys.

The Hiking trail for the day will be decided in consultation with you. The hikes available range from easy ½ to 2 mile treks through sagebrush flats to more strenuous hikes- a 10 miles roundtrip to a 10,100 feet peak is one of our favorites and our 4 year old son first climbed the mountain at age 10 months! Current wildlife movements and trail conditions will also dictate what trail to choose. Your guide will be carrying bear spray and you will have a brief safety orientation at the trailhead. We encourage children to participate in the logistics of a field trip so helping carry the spotting scope, training in bear spray use, and more is usually included.

We provide a spotting scope and binoculars for your use. Wildlife is best observed from a distance so we don't disturb them; all of their energy is needed to help them survive in Yellowstone. We also supply interpretation materials, first aid gear, and all of the other group items you will need. Field snacks and drinks are also provided. Please remember to bring your camera and dress in layers, you can shed clothes as the day warms. A hearty field breakfast, photography stops, and breaks for restrooms, sorry not heated, provide you with the chance to get out of the vehicle. Short walks away from the vehicle may be necessary for the best wildlife viewing

It is best to start early in the morning. Daybreak is the most active time of the day for wildlife. We like to leave around daybreak and so we include a field breakfast and drinks. However, we ask you to be realistic about what is suitable for your family- for example, will the children be fine with a 5 AM departure? Or is 6 or 7 AM more realistic for your family? We think it is better to possibly miss a bear but instead have a fun day rather than be "family-impossible" trying a 5 AM start and the result is cranky children who will not enjoy their time in the field. So we will decide the start time in consultation with you.

Field snacks and drinks are included throughout your time with the guide. After an early morning start focused on wildlife we will switch to hiking, completing the safari around 2-3 PM. We encourage you to bring a light field lunch.

You are responsible for your own personal clothing and gear. We recommend that you dress in layers. Park entrance fees, guide gratuity, and lunch are not included. Please advise if you have any food allergies and health conditions. Some meals may be served inside and itineraries may need to be adjusted if conditions require.

Reservations are required. Please be sure to inform us of any special needs for the children!

To Make a Reservation

The base rate for a safari is \$475 per day for your family with 1-4 adults. This includes the services of a private National Park Service Licensed guide, transportation from your hotel in the northern Yellowstone area or Gardiner, Montana, field snacks and drinks, use of high quality spotting scopes and binoculars, and much more. An additional adult is \$70 per person. For more than 6 people two vehicles might need to be used for driving safety and to serve you best. Group and educational rates are also available- we teach courses and seminars to a variety of school, university, and museum groups every year. Please contact us with your details so we can respond with a quotation. When snow conditions permit complimentary snowshoe use is also included. Pick ups are available throughout Yellowstone country including the Jackson, Wyoming, Idaho Falls, Idaho and Cody, Wyoming areas with an additional charge.

To confirm your safari guide reservation

Please remit a check for the first day's safari fee to YGA, PO Box 746, Bozeman, MT 59771 USA. We also accept wires and international bank drafts. For your protection and to keep safari fees as reasonable as possible we do not accept credit cards. The final remaining balance will be due three weeks before your arrival. Since all of our trips are tailored to meet your individual needs detailed price quotations will be provided once we have all of the details of your trip. After receiving your payment we will contact you to confirm arrangements for the day of your trip. Please send us your hotel itinerary and cell phone contact number so we can contact you if necessary after you depart on your trip. Also, please be sure to check with us for any last minute news from the field.

Our cancellation policies are flexible up to three weeks before arrival. We understand that family emergencies can happen. If the weather should be very bad on the day of your trip we will also reschedule or refund your payment- we prefer to treat you with respect and the reality is that we do not want you out in a major snowstorm without being able to see anything. However, sudden cancellations "just because" are not acceptable and no refunds will be made. Safaris will operate with normal snows and other inclement weather.

We can assist you with wheelchair and other special needs arrangements as well. Please be sure to call us in advance to be sure all the arrangements for your family are just as you would like them to be.

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