

Gerlach Nature Photography

Yellowstone National Park Winter Photography Workshop

www.gerlachnaturephoto.com

2023

with John Gerlach and Dixie Calderone

January 15 – 21, 2023

January 22 – 28, 2023

Jan. 29 – Feb. 4, 2023

Gerlach Nature Photography is an Authorized Permittee of the National Park Service



Figure 1 The dark clouds, late afternoon sunshine and shadows on the foreground snow make this a dramatic Old Faithful image.

We enjoy the comfort and safety of a snowcoach to photograph the winter wonders of Yellowstone National Park during this magical time of the year. John has lived next to Yellowstone since 1993. During that time, he has led over 120 winter photo tours in Yellowstone. Nobody has more experience and enthusiasm for leading photo tours while teaching innovative photography techniques during winter in Yellowstone. Please join us for four full days of intensive photography in the interior of Yellowstone and another busy day photographing at the wolf and bear center in West Yellowstone. Come join like-minded nature photographers and be inspired by the incredible scenes found throughout the park

Our days in the park are long. We begin early at 8am and we do not quit until the light fades away around 5:30 pm.

A Winter Fairyland of Beauty

Winter is spectacular in Yellowstone. Heavy snow in the lofty mountains send wildlife down to the geyser basins, rivers, and valleys where they seek food and warmth. At no other time of the year are the wildlife of Yellowstone easier to see and photograph. Bison and trumpeter swans are frequently photographed in the dancing mist of rivers warmed by the runoff from hot geysers. Wintering bald eagles and river otters patrol the rivers for fish. We will photograph coyotes and with luck may get to photograph red fox and wolves.

Although winter wildlife photo opportunities are outstanding in Yellowstone, the highlights are the unbelievable landscapes. You have not seen Old Faithful erupt until you photograph it exploding into a cloud of steam on frosty winter mornings. The billowing steam created when superheated water clashes with frigid winter air is impressive!

In the geyser basins, snow and hoar frost cling to every tree that photographs beautifully against cobalt blue skies. Scenes we will photograph include:

Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone
Hayden Valley and its famous tree
Mud Volcano
Fountain Paint Pots
Upper Geyser basin around Old Faithful
Lower Geyser basin
Black Sand basin
Biscuit Basin
Grand Prismatic Spring
Norris Geyser Basin
Yellowstone, Gibbon, and Firehole River scenes

Chocolate Pot
Firehole Falls
Gibbons falls
Upper and Lower falls on the Yellowstone
Kepler and Firehole cascades

We spend all our time leading you to outstanding places to photograph while teaching you how to use your equipment most effectively.



Figure 2 A polarizer reduces the glare on the wet foreground and that truly lets the color of Grand Prismatic Spring shine!

To ensure that instruction is complete, informative, and helpful, the group size is limited to only (16) participants or eight per snowcoach. That provides extra room for camera gear.

Our Flexible Itinerary

A day-to-day itinerary is not possible because weather determines our schedule. We lead our photo groups to the best locations prevailing weather conditions allow. There is no reason to visit Old Faithful if it is snowing as this famous geyser is invisible in a snowstorm. But a snowy day is ideal for wildlife. Cloudy days without snow are superb

for many landscapes such as the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone and all waterfalls. On sunny days, we visit thermal basins to photograph frosted trees, geysers, and steam against cobalt blue skies. We always stop to photograph any wildlife we find in appealing situations.

You will have a wonderful time exploring Yellowstone, shoot terrific images, learn about the park, and increase your photo skills considerably. We work hard to ensure this all happens—and it always does!

Wolf and Bear Discovery Center

We do not go into the park on Friday. Instead, we visit the Grizzly Bear and Wolf Discovery Center in West Yellowstone on Friday. Both grizzly bears and wolves are active during winter at the center. The wolves offer especially good photo opportunities. Admission to the center is included in your tour package

What you will learn!

Expose snow quickly and accurately

Compose memorable images

Precisely focus every time

Why live view works well for exposure, focus, and sharp images

Maximize depth of field with focus stacking

How to photograph wildlife

Master the polarizer – how and when to use it

How to process images and focus stack them together with Helicon Focus

Greatly improve your shooting techniques for sharp images

How to focus in heavy snowfall

How to use mirrorless cameras most effectively

What about the cold?

It can be cold on some mornings in West Yellowstone. Temperatures of 25 degrees below zero are possible, especially on mornings following clear nights. However, modern clothes are terrific for keeping you warm. We have had many below zero mornings during our tours over the decades and nobody has had a problem with cold temperatures yet. Besides, the snowcoaches we travel in are warm and quite comfortable no matter the weather.

What is the typical day like?

Breakfast is served at 6:30 a.m. at the hotel. We board the snowcoaches by 8:00 am and drive the short distance to the park where we stay out all day and return to West

Yellowstone late in the day around 5:30pm. We return to the hotel in West Yellowstone when the light fades away.



Figure 3 Sometimes you get lucky. This is a wild wolf in Yellowstone that approached our snowcoach to within 35 yards! You cannot expect that, but it is always possible!

Meals

We eat all meals as a group. The Three Bear Restaurant prepares your breakfast each morning. We have a hearty packed lunch for everyone on the snowcoach. The packed lunch allows flexible travel as it lets us eat whenever and wherever we feel like it. At the end of the day, we enjoy a delicious dinner at the Three Bear Restaurant.

Tips

Please tip the restaurant staff for your morning meals. We will collect tips for the snowcoach drivers who work extra-long days on our behalf. Budget 25 dollars per day (total \$100) for the coach driver.

How to get to West Yellowstone

West Yellowstone is near the intersection of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. Yellowstone National Park roads are closed during winter to regular traffic, so you cannot drive in the park. The best route from the south is Highway 20 north from Idaho Falls. From the north, take highway 287 or 191 south from Bozeman, Montana.

If you wish to fly in, Gallatin Field in Bozeman, MT is an excellent choice. Karst Stage lines is the shuttle bus at the airport that can transport you to West Yellowstone. The round-trip from Bozeman to West Yellowstone is about \$200 per person. Their local phone number is (800) 845-2778. You can rent a car. Many clients do that as the rental car can be less expensive than Karst Stage lines, especially if two are sharing the car rental price. The drive to West Yellowstone is 91 miles. Usually the drive is easy, but it could be a challenge should a blizzard hit when you must travel. That is unlikely to happen, but it could. Roads are plowed frequently though! If we were attending this workshop as participants, we would rent a car and drive.

You can also fly into the Idaho Falls, ID regional airport. The drive is 109 miles, but the straighter roads are easier to navigate with much less snow and ice most of the time.

Tour Package Includes:

- Six nights lodging at the deluxe Three Bear Lodge with private room
- Four days use of required National Park guides (snowcoach driver, John, and Dixie)
- Park user fees
- Breakfast (6) Monday thru Saturday
- Lunch (5) Monday thru Friday
- Dinner (5) Monday thru Friday
- Intensive photo instruction from John Gerlach and Dixie Calderone
- Instructional slide programs on wildlife and landscape photography
- Admission to the Grizzly Bear and Wolf Discovery Center

We made the tour price as complete as possible. However, items of a personal nature, alcoholic drinks, transportation to and from West Yellowstone, and your personal Yellowstone National Park pass are not included in the tour price.

Yellowstone National Park Pass

Your pass to enter Yellowstone National Park is not included because most of you already have a pass. If you visit a few to many national parks each year, purchase a National Parks pass that is good at all National Parks for one year. If you are 62 years of age or older, buy an Interagency Senior Pass for \$80 and it is good for life. That is a fantastic deal! Or you can purchase a \$30 pass that is good in Yellowstone for the week. Have the pass and your driver's license with you each day, as sometimes the gate attendant may ask to see it.

Only 16 participants per tour and we use two snowcoaches. John guides one and Dixie the other. Nearly always both snowcoaches stop at the same place while touring, so both John and Dixie are present to provide ample photo instruction.



Figure 4 Silex spring is always fun to photograph. The breeze blowing the steam away reveals the colorful foreground.

Pre-departure Information

Once we receive your deposit, we will send you pre-departure information that explains everything you need to know in detail, such as clothing and camera gear to bring.

How to Enroll

Call Dixie now at 812-350-0799 to find out if space is available and to pay your \$1000 deposit on this trip. You can send a check or pay with a credit card. Make a check payable to Gerlach Nature Photography.

John Gerlach/Dixie Calderone
PO Box 318
Island Park, ID 83429

Snowcoach Tour Fee per person

\$3450 Single (1 person/1 bed)

\$3100 Each Person Double (2 people/1 or 2 beds)

\$3000 Triple Each Person (3 people/2 beds)

\$1000 Deposit is required to hold your spot in the tour. Full payment is due 60 days before the start of your tour.

Yellowstone Winter Photo Tour by Snowcoach

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Each tour begins on a Sunday at 7pm when we have an orientation meeting in the conference room at the Three Bear Lodge and ends after breakfast on the following Saturday.

The Full Amount is Due **two months** before your trip begins.

Cancellation Fee:

90 days or prior: 100% refunded less fees we cannot recover and a \$100 cancellation fee

89 to 61 days prior: 50% of trip fee

60 day or less: no refund unless we can refill your spot

For Additional Information

Contact:

John Gerlach/Dixie Calderone

(812) 350-0799 (Dixie's cell)

johngerlachphotography@gmail.com



Figure 5 Cold clear nights produce frosty bison by the following morning.



Figure 6 Even on a cloudy day, the springs in the thermal areas like Norris geyser basin make colorful photos. All of the wildlife photos below were shot handheld in 2022 over a three-week period with a Canon R5 and the 100-500mm lens. Speed is important for wildlife!



Figure 9 Bison



Figure 7 Coyote



Figure 12 American Marten



Figure 8 Wolf



Figure 11 Red Fox



Figure 10 Red Squirrel