

**Gerlach Nature Photography**

**Winter Photography  
Workshop at  
Yellowstone National Park**

[www.gerlachnaturephoto.com](http://www.gerlachnaturephoto.com)

**2023**

with John Gerlach and Dixie Calderone

January 15 – 21

January 22 – 28

Jan. 29 – Feb. 4

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



*Figure 1 Snow adds mood to a dark furry bison.*

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



*Figure 2 Crested pool generates more steam when temperatures are cool. A 16-35mm lens nicely composes the scene.*

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. No other photo tour gives you more time in the park than we do!



*Figure 3 Trumpeter swans are common wintering waterfowl on the Yellowstone rivers during our tours.*

## **A Winter Fairyland of Beauty**

Winter is spectacular in Yellowstone. Heavy snow in the lofty mountains push wildlife down to the geyser basins, rivers, and valleys where they seek food and warm ground. At no other time of the year are the wildlife of Yellowstone easier to see and photograph. Often, bison and trumpeter swans are 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.

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 days. The billowing steam created when superheated water clashes with frigid winter air is impressive!



*Figure 4 Old Faithful blew a little over to the right and that revealed the sun.  
Stop down to f/22 to turn the sun into a STAR!*

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
- 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
- Mammoth Hot Springs
- Chocolate Pot
- Firehole Falls
- Gibbons falls
- Upper and Lower falls on the Yellowstone
- Kepler and Firehole cascades

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



*Figure 5 A beaver is busy gathering food along the Yellowstone River in Hayden Valley.*

To ensure that instruction is complete, informative, and helpful, the group size is limited to only (13) participants in the two snowcoaches we use. That provides extra room for your camera gear.



*Figure 6 Palette Spring in the fog*

## **Our Flexible Itinerary**

We cannot give you a day-to-day itinerary 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 geysers and steam against cobalt blue skies. Naturally, no matter the weather, we always stop to photograph wildlife in appealing situations.

Our goal for you is to 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!



*Figure 7 Clepsydra Geyser erupts all the time in the Fountain Paint Pots area. Photo conditions were perfect for this photo. A southwest breeze blew the steam to the right revealing the colorful cone. The golden late afternoon light enriched the colors and created texture in the geyser and the dark clouds in the background created the contrast necessary to separate the white steam and water from the background.*

## **Wolf and Bear Discovery Center**

When the weather is most favorable one morning, we visit the Grizzly Bear and Wolf Discovery Center in West Yellowstone. 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.



*Figure 8 A gray wolf at the center.*

### **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 very 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 photograph sunset whenever possible. We have paid for extended snowcoach hours, so we do not have to return as early as other tours. We return to

the hotel in West Yellowstone only when the light fades away.

## **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 we feel like it. At the end of the day, we enjoy an ample and delicious dinner at the Three Bear Restaurant.

## **Tips**

Please tip the restaurant staff for your meals. We will collect tips for the snowcoach drivers who work extra-long days on our behalf. Budget 20 dollars per day for the coach driver.



*Figure 9 Chocolate pot is a colorful hot spring that few visitors to Yellowstone ever see, but you will photograph it.*

## **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 (406) 388-6404. 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 100 miles. Usually the drive is easy, but it could be a challenge should a blizzard hit when you must travel. That is not likely 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.



*Figure 10 Heavy frost on the lodgepole pines makes this a mysterious landscape in Elk Meadows.*

### Snowcoach Tour Fee per person

\$3300 Single (1 person/1 bed – includes single room supplement)

\$2870 Double (2 people/1 or 2 beds)

\$2735 Triple (3 people/2 beds)

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

### Tour Package Includes:

- Six nights lodging at the deluxe Three Bear Lodge with private room
- Five days use of required National Park guides (snowcoach driver and

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 presented by John that include, wildlife, landscape, and closeup 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.



*Figure 11 We spend one morning at the Grizzly Bear exhibit in West Yellowstone. Both bears and wolves are active during your trip.*

## **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.



*Figure 12 We sometimes find large bull elk in winter, especially at Mammoth Hot Springs!*

## **Enroll Now!!!**

Only 13 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.

## **Pre-departure Information**

Once we receive your deposit, we will send you pre-departure information that covers 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

## **Cancellation Policy**

A deposit of \$1000 per person is required to hold your space.

Cancellation Fee:

90 days or prior: 100% refunded less fees we cannot recover

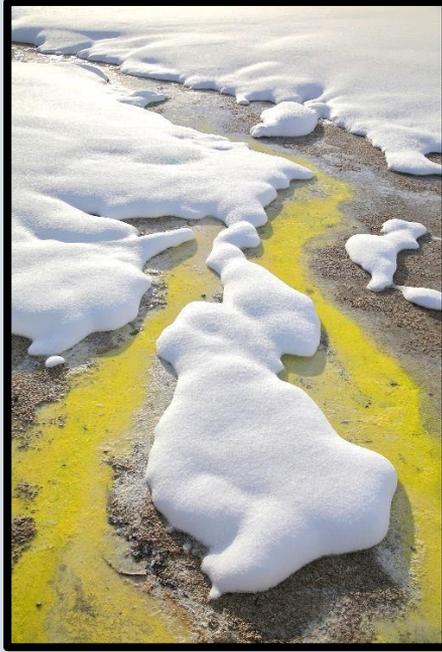
89 to 61 days prior: 50% of trip fee

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](mailto:johngerlachphotography@gmail.com)



*Figure 13 Several shots were made at different distances to stack the colors in the runoff to make a super sharp image. We teach you how to do that.*

## Yellowstone Winter Photo Tour by Snowcoach

Jan. 15—21, 2023

Jan. 22—28, 2023

Jan. 29—Feb. 4,  
2023

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.

Type of Accommodations

Single, One Person, one bed (includes single supplement) \_\_\_\_\$3300

Double, two people

\_\_\_\_\$2870 per person (both participants)

Triple, three people \_\_\_\_\$2735  
per person

(There may be a slight increase in our hotel and snowcoach costs for 2023 as I am writing this on Jan 10, 2022, and final prices could be changed by suppliers.

Full Amount is Due two months before your trip begins.



*Figure 14 The valleys in Yellowstone are pristine in winter.*



*Figure 15 A coyote leaps to pin down a vole in the soft snow.*



*Figure 16 A dusky grouse became a "pet" at the Madison Junction warming hut in 2020!*



*Figure 17 Cupid spring at Mammoth Hot Springs is always colorful!*



*Figure 18 The famous tree in Hayden Valley. The dark cloud above the sunlit snowy hills really makes for a splendid scene to photograph.*



*Figure 19 We do find bald eagles each week, and sometimes they are in a good spot for photos. I like the backlight on this one. See how the light rims the white head.*



*Figure 20 Steamboat geysers is attractive on clear days.*