

The Restless Giant

At the heart of Yellowstone’s past, present, and future lies a **SUPERVOLCANO**. Huge volcanic eruptions occurred here, the latest about 631,000 years ago. The center of what is now the park collapsed, forming a 30- by 45-mile caldera, or basin. The heat powering those eruptions still fuels the park’s geysers, hot springs, fumaroles, and mudpots.

The park’s **ECOSYSTEMS** range from near-desert vegetation at the North Entrance to subalpine meadow and forest on Mount Washburn. They support a variety of habitats that sustain diverse wildlife like bison (buffalo), elk, grizzly and black bears, wolves, trumpeter swans, and Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

PEOPLE also have been part of Yellowstone for more than 13,000 years. Many Native American tribes still have deep connections here. Discover your own connections to the park as you explore its wonders.



Wild iris
NPS

The supervolcano feeds the world’s largest group of HYDROTHERMAL FEATURES.



Abyss Pool in West Thumb Geyser Basin
© ROMA DONALD

HOT SPRINGS are the most common hydrothermal features in the park. They vary from frothing mocha-like boiling water to clear and calm pools of tremendous depth. Surface water seeps underground, is heated by a deep source of magma, and rises to the surface as superheated water. Hot springs have no constrictions, so water rises, cools, and sinks freely.



Riverside Geyser in Old Faithful Area
NPS / NEAL HERBERT

GEYSERS erupt with steaming hot water. They are hot springs with narrow spaces in their plumbing, usually near the surface. The constrictions prevent water from circulating easily to the surface where heat would escape. The deepest circulating water can exceed the surface boiling point (199°F/93°C). The Old Faithful area has the most famous geysers; some eruptions can be predicted.



Canary Spring at Mammoth Hot Springs
© CRAIG VOTH

TRAVERTINE TERRACES are found at Mammoth Hot Springs, where the interactions of water and limestone create chalk-white travertine. These terraces are among the fastest changing features in the park, emerging quickly and drying up just as fast. Compare Canary Spring in 2012 (*above*) with what it looks like today.



Roaring Mountain, between Mammoth and Norris
© PATTY PICKETT

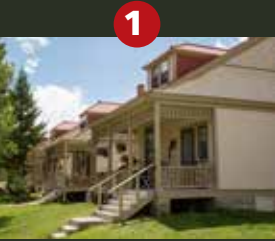
FUMARoles (steam vents) are the hottest hydrothermal features in the park. The small amount of water in fumaroles flashes into steam before it reaches the surface. Fumaroles hiss, whistle, or thump if the steam pathway is restricted at the surface. They are easiest to see in cool weather. Look for fumaroles in the major hydrothermal areas.



Mudpots at Artists Paintpots
© MARK WILTRAKS

MUDPOTS are acidic hot springs with a limited water supply. Acid from volcanic gases and micro-organisms decompose the surrounding rock into clay and mud. Mudpot consistency and activity vary with the seasons and precipitation. You can see mudpots at Artists Paintpots, Norris Geyser Basin, Fountain Paint Pots, West Thumb Geyser Basin, and Mud Volcano.

EVERY CORNER of Yellowstone reveals the park’s rich array of nature and history.



MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS features ever-changing travertine terraces and historic FORT YELLOWSTONE. A self-guiding tour explores the US Army’s role in protecting the park in its first decades.

NPS / NEAL HERBERT



NORRIS GEYSER BASIN is the park’s hottest, most dynamic geyser basin. It includes Steamboat, the world’s tallest geyser. The nearby Museum of the National Park Ranger showcases the history of these iconic public servants.

NPS / JIM PEACO



MIDWAY GEYSER BASIN hosts the world’s largest geyser, Excelsior, and the world’s largest hot spring, Grand Prismatic (*above*). Boardwalks take you past these features, and a nearby trail leads you to an elevated view.

NPS / JIM PEACO



OLD FAITHFUL is more than its namesake world-famous geyser (*top photo*). You can view hundreds of other geysers (Grotto, *above*) and hot springs. Take a self-guiding tour of the historic district, which includes Old Faithful Inn.

NPS / JIM PEACO



WEST THUMB includes mudpots, boiling springs, and geysers that discharge into the chilly waters of Yellowstone Lake. At the GRANT VILLAGE Visitor Center, enjoy the scenery while you learn about the role of fire in Yellowstone.

© PETER DUTTON



LAKE VILLAGE offers vistas of Yellowstone Lake from the comfort of historic Lake Hotel. The lake is the largest high-elevation lake (above 7,000 feet) in North America. It is more than 400 feet deep with 141 miles of shoreline.

NPS / NEAL HERBERT



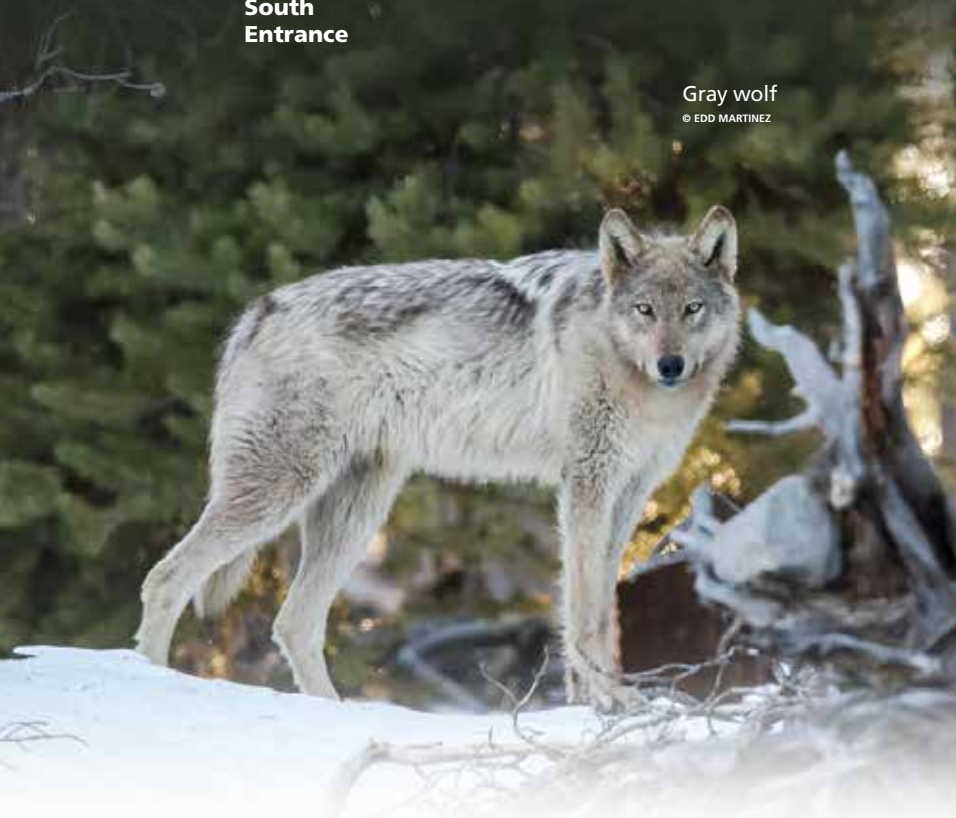
CANYON AREA features the colorful Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River and the Upper and Lower falls from overlooks and walkways. Away from the rim, trails take you through meadows and grasslands.

© JOHN STROTHER



The LAMAR VALLEY has been a wolf-watching destination since wolves were reintroduced to Yellowstone in 1995. It is also home to herds of bison and elk, and many black and grizzly bears.

NPS / JACOB W. FRANK



Gray wolf
© EDD MARTINEZ



Bison
NPS / NEAL HERBERT



Yellowstone cutthroat trout
NPS / JAY FLEMING

THE WONDER OF YELLOWSTONE’S WILDLIFE

You have the rare opportunity to view animals who are wild and behave like their ancient ancestors. They eat the same foods, they migrate along the same routes, and they breed on the same cycles. When you watch animals in Yellowstone, you witness the complex interplay of life.

Animals are seldom seen in the dense, dark forest that covers most of the park. They are more easily seen in open areas, like meadows, where vegetation is shorter and more light is available. These areas are shown in beige on the park map (*see the other side of this brochure*).

Other tips

- Look at dawn and dusk when many animals are most active.
- Be quiet and listen for a few minutes; you might hear animals before you see them.
- Use binoculars or spotting scopes to observe animals while staying at a safe distance.

STAY SAFE WHILE WATCHING WILDLIFE

The animals living in Yellowstone are not tame. All of them are wild. Some seem to tolerate humans, but that can change without warning. We jeopardize their survival if we threaten their safety, the safety of their young, or interrupt their ability to get food. Yellowstone has rules to keep both wildlife and humans safe.

Never feed animals, not even small ones like chipmunks. **Store all food properly.** Keep food, cooking tools, coolers, and trash in a bear-resistant container unless in immediate use. Animals who find food at picnic areas and campsites will come back, and can be dangerous.

Do not approach wildlife. You must stay at least 100 yards from bears and wolves, and 25 yards from bison, elk, and other animals (*guide below*). **Pay attention.** Move away if an animal moves closer to you or changes its behavior due to your presence. **Be respectful.** Do not surround, crowd, or disrupt an animal’s path of movement.

STAY SAFE IN THERMAL AREAS

Yellowstone National Park also has rules to keep you safe as you visit its hydrothermal areas.

- Stay on boardwalks and designated trails.
- Do not push or shove other people.
- Keep your children close to you.
- Keep hands and feet out of the water.

Enjoy watching Yellowstone’s animals but STAY SAFE. They are WILD and DANGEROUS.

← 25 yards (23m) → 100 yards (91m) →

KNOW YOUR DISTANCE

Use this guide to visualize the safe and legal distance you need to be from Yellowstone’s animals.



Exploring Yellowstone

Services and Facilities

Find dates and hours of operation in the park newspaper and on www.nps.gov/yell.

Accessibility We strive to make facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. Ask at visitor centers for a free guide to wheelchair-accessible places in the park, or visit the park website.

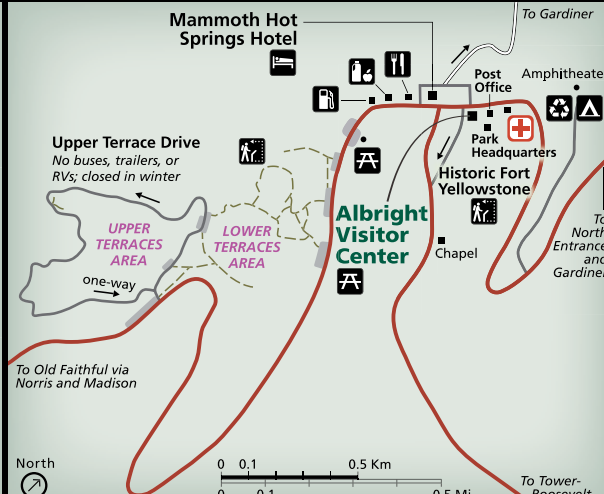
Emergencies Call 911

- Medical clinic
- Parking area (see detail maps at right)

- Ranger station
- Campground
- Lodging
- Food service
- Picnic area
- Store
- Gas station (some have auto repair)
- Recycling
- Self-guiding trail or boardwalk
- Horseback riding
- Boat launch

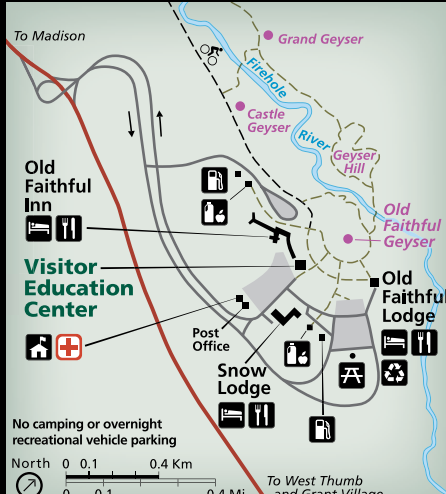
Mammoth Hot Springs

6239ft 1902m



Old Faithful

7365ft 2245m



Canyon Village

7918ft 2413m



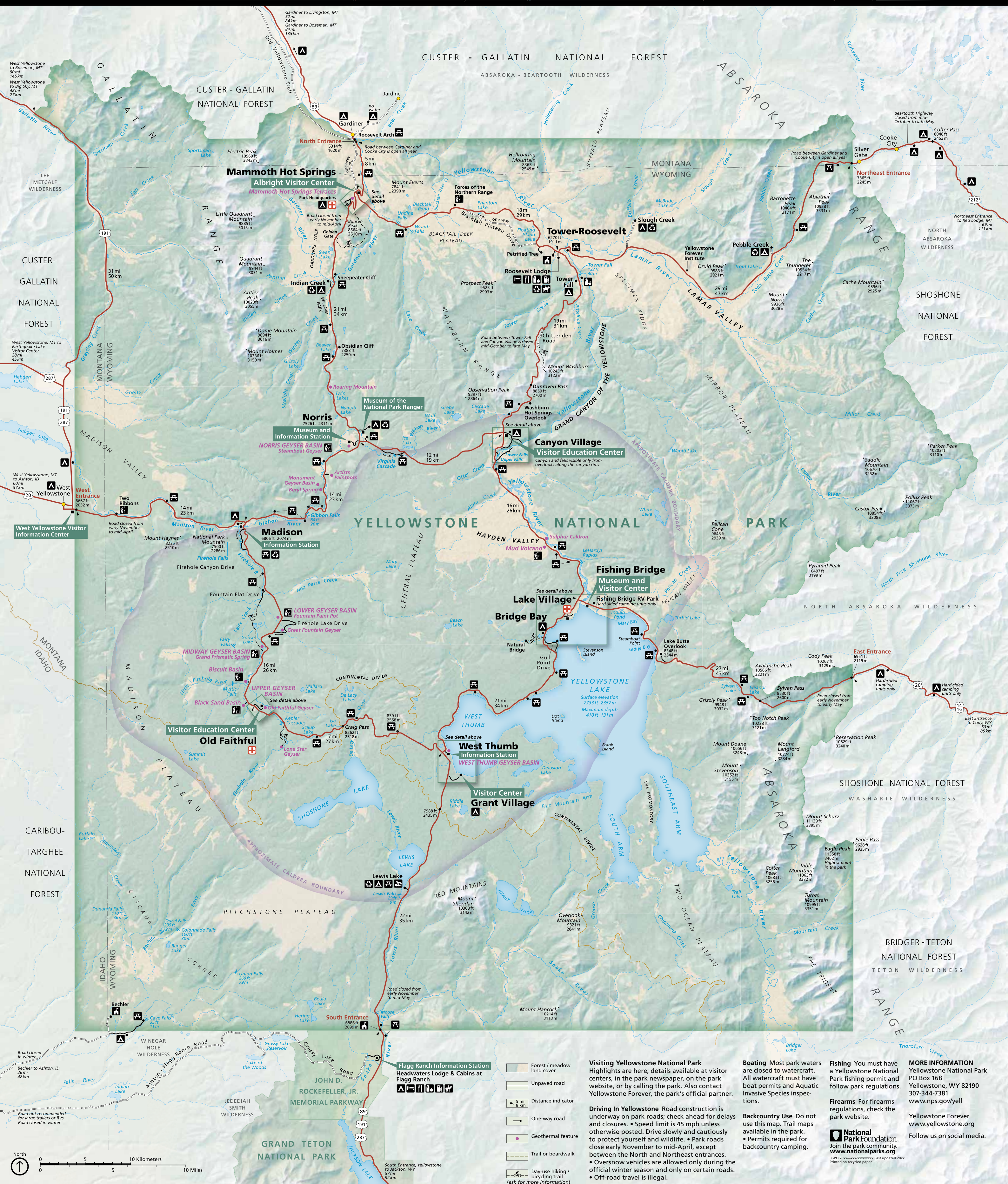
West Thumb • Grant Village

7770ft 2368m



Fishing Bridge • Lake Village • Bridge Bay

7735ft 2358m



Visiting Yellowstone National Park Highlights are here; details available at visitor centers, in the park newspaper, on the park website, or by calling the park. Also contact Yellowstone Forever, the park's official partner.

Driving in Yellowstone Road construction is underway on park roads; check ahead for delays and closures. • Speed limit is 45 mph unless otherwise posted. Drive slowly and cautiously to protect yourself and wildlife. • Park roads close early November to mid-April, except between the North and Northeast entrances. • Oversnow vehicles are allowed only during the official winter season and only on certain roads. • Off-road travel is illegal.

Boating Most park waters are closed to watercraft. All watercraft must have boat permits and Aquatic Invasive Species inspections.

Backcountry Use Do not use this map. Trail maps available in the park. • Permits required for backcountry camping.

Fishing You must have a Yellowstone National Park fishing permit and follow park regulations.

Firearms For firearms regulations, check the park website.

National Park Foundation Join the park community. www.nationalparks.org

MORE INFORMATION Yellowstone National Park PO Box 168 Yellowstone, WY 82190 307-344-7381 www.nps.gov/yell

Yellowstone Forever www.yellowstone.org Follow us on social media.

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