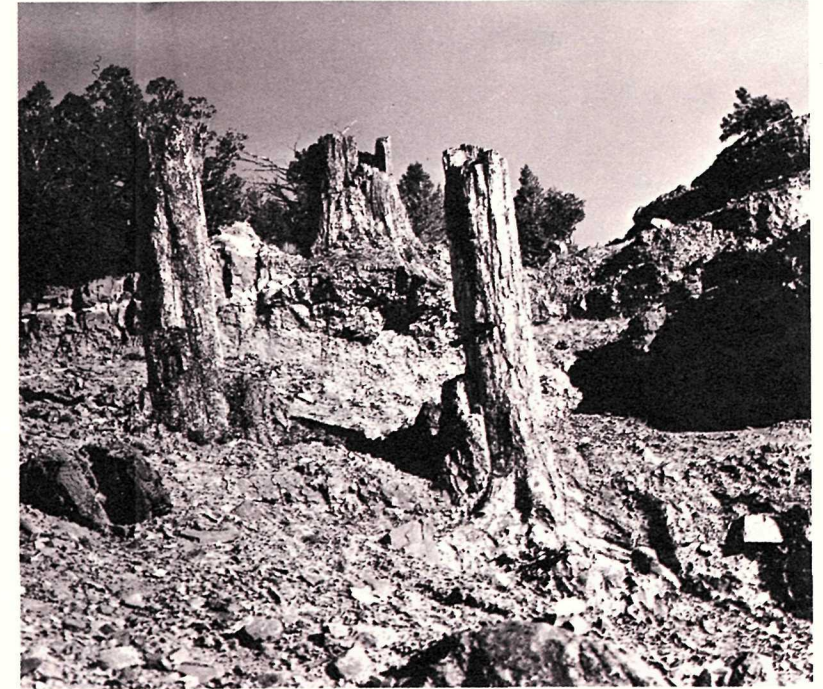


NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1916
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1966
50TH ANNIVERSARY

YELLOWSTONE

NATIONAL PARK, WYOMING • MONTANA • IDAHO

The Yellowstone! “Wonderland” of the early explorers — geysers, hot springs and bubbling mud volcanoes, crystal pools and canyons. Yellowstone is spectacle—the beautiful and strange; it is a world unbelievable and tall tales come true; it is grace and color, majesty and calm, and the elements of this earth worked into scenes and stories that could hold you for a lifetime.



Yellowstone is a paradox. It owes its existence, its scenery, and its geysers to radically different agents: fire and ice. The interesting part of the story began almost 60 million years ago when volcanic mountains in and around the park belched forth fiery clouds of gas, dust, and rock fragments. Dust clouds, landslides, and lava flows covered the flanks of the mountains and buried nearby valleys to produce the park's fossil forests. You can see the rocks formed then in the slopes of Mount Washburn.

Periods of volcanic activity occurred irregularly through millions of years to the present. Time after time great sheets of lava spread across the Yellowstone country, filling valleys and lapping at the slopes of mountains. These flows were dissected by streams, then covered by new flows. Obsidian Cliff, by which you may drive, is an ancient lava flow; but the most recent are found in the southwest corner of the park on the Pitchstone Plateau — formed there only a few thousand years ago.

The Yellowstone valley north and south of Tower Junction has many remnants of flows plastered against its walls. Because these lavas are black, they show up well.

The geysers and hot springs, in one way or another, owe their thermal energy to heat from the

earth's interior. Does the heat come from molten rock in the earth's crust, or is it produced by recent lava flows which are still cooling in buried valleys? No one knows.

During the last half million years or so another tremendous force sculptured the Yellowstone scene — glacial ice. At least three times the climate grew cold enough to form permanent ice on the mountains north and east of Yellowstone. As the ice masses grew, they moved down former stream valleys much as lava had and, like the lava, covered much of Yellowstone to a depth in some places of more than 1,000 feet.

These great rivers of ice quarried huge rocks and masses of debris from the terrain they crossed. They deepened and broadened valleys, sharpened some mountain peaks, and ground down others. As the ice melted, it left great drifts of debris on the Yellowstone Plateau and formed lakes where none exist today. Perhaps the most obvious single reminder of glaciation in the park is the house-sized boulder of granite near Inspiration Point. Torn from the Beartooth Plateau more than 25 miles to the north, the boulder stands as a monument to nature's changing ways.

Every living thing in Yellowstone — the flowers, trees, and wildlife — must fit its way of life

to Yellowstone's environments. Thus it has always been. Because of both its size and different elevations, the park provides a variety of living conditions suitable to a variety of plants and animals.

You will notice the changes in plants and animals as you explore the park. Antelopes, cottontails, and cactuses are common on the lowlands near the North Entrance. Much of the park is covered by lodgepole forest, but high in Dunraven Pass you will find whitebark pine. On Mount Washburn bighorn and pika replace antelope and cottontail, and no trees grow.

Some of the larger mammals do live throughout Yellowstone. You might expect to see an elk in any meadow or a moose in any willow thicket. Coyotes and bears wander everywhere, as do the deer.

If you remember this element of change and watch for it, you will be surprised how obvious it really is, particularly in the plant world. Flowers are in full bloom at Mammoth Hot Springs in late May when Yellowstone Lake is covered with ice and much of the park is still snowbound. As winter retreats up the mountain slopes, spring advances in soft pursuit but does not reach Mount Washburn until mid-July. Summer's hot winds are curing the grasses at Mammoth while spring flowers nod on the summit of Mount Washburn!

Geysers and Hot Springs

For many, Old Faithful is the park's greatest attraction. There are numerous other geysers that share the Upper Basin, such as Riverside, Grotto, Castle, and Beehive. Eruption times for the most predictable geysers are posted in the Old Faithful Visitor Center.

Proceeding down the Firehole River you come to Midway and Lower Geyser Basins which offer boardwalk trails and loop roads to points of interest. The Fountain Paint Pots Trail in the Lower Basin presents more varied hot water phenomena in a concentrated area than in any other you can visit.

Norris Geyser Basin contains a variety of small geysers, plus violent and unpredictable Steamboat Geyser. Steamboat has hurled water and steam more than 300 feet in the air and may do so again at any time.

Mammoth Hot Springs are quite different from other springs and geysers. Here the hot waters cascade over series of delicately colored rimstone pools. Limestone contained in the waters is deposited rapidly to form terraces and pools that literally change from day to day.

Shoshone Geyser Basin deserves special attention. It lies in wilderness seclusion at the west end of Shoshone Lake. If you have a day, hike there from Lone Star Geyser; perhaps you will catch a bit of mountain man Jim Bridger's feeling of awe long ago as he wandered amid the boiling cauldrons and hissing steam vents.

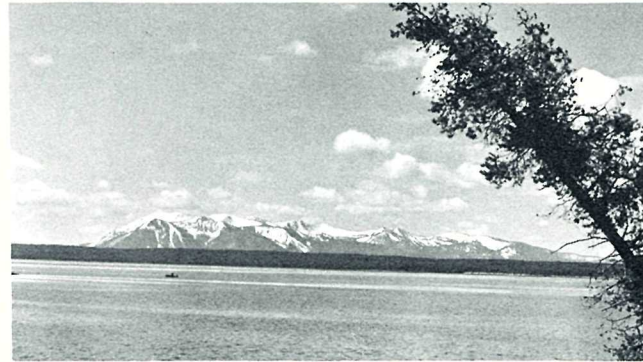
Lakes, Canyons and Mountains

As the west side of the Grand Loop draws those fascinated by the geysers, so the east side attracts those who love canyons and falls, the contrast of placid and violent waters, or the soaring heights of mountain wilderness.

The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone leaves many people breathless. Go to Artist's Point, Inspiration Point, or Grandview — look down at the tiny river below, at the wisps of steam, the pastel canyon walls, and the sailing osprey. Or stand on the lip of the Lower Falls; watch the bottlegreen Yellowstone River break into frothy white jets as it drops away 309 feet into the canyon below; listen to its constant wild roar;

feel the spray on your face. If you do this, experience this, you will gain an understanding of a river that can't be found in any book.

Yellowstone Lake is a mixture of charm on summer days, anger in sudden storms, beauty in the quiet of evening sunset. Sit on shore with your back against a log, watch a sunset on the Absaroka Mountains to the east, and let your mind drift. Suddenly you hear the muted sounds of nature, the lapping of wavelets on shore, the murmur of sleepy birds in the spruce nearby; you feel a part of nature rather than apart from it.



Dunraven Pass, or the summit of Mount Washburn, between Canyon and Tower Junction are wonderful places to see and feel the wilderness that drew and held the mountain men more than a century ago. Walk a hundred yards from your car into the flower fields; let your eye wander across the green meadows and black-green forests, across the sudden chasm of the Grand Canyon, up the far slopes to the snow-capped mountains north and east. No sign of man's handiwork intrudes, nothing inhibits your feeling of oneness with nature.

Wildlife

Elk, moose, deer, bison, antelope, and coyote are abundant in Yellowstone but they are not found everywhere. Like people, they prefer to live in special places at certain times. Here they are allowed to wander unmolested as they will.

You will increase your chances of seeing wildlife if you fit your schedule to theirs. Many a meadow is dotted with elk at dawn but empty when the sun beats down and insects become active. At evening again the grazers make their appearance.

Coyotes hunt mice along the roadside, and ducks and geese parade their young at dawn, but these

and other shy creatures take cover as traffic increases.

As a rule, the best seasons for bird and other wildlife observations are spring and autumn. Mammals occupy a limited roadside range during winter and are often still on these ranges in May and early June. Antelope, deer, and elk are common north of Mammoth, and bison linger in Lamar and Hayden Valleys. Bird migrations are in full swing.

With the onset of summer the animal populations spread over the high country summer range where they find plenty of food and some relief from insect pests. Some birds move on north; others nest here, but become quite secretive on and around their nests.

In autumn the trend reverses. Birds are moving south and early snows nudge grazing animals out of the high country to sites nearer the roads. It is a memorable experience to sit at the edge of a meadow on a frosty September evening and listen to the bull elk bugling their challenges.

Dangerous Animals

Bears — all bears — head the list of dangerous animals in Yellowstone National Park. We all like to see bears and photograph them, but we should treat them with respect. They look so sleepy and friendly and the cubs are cute, yet every year visitors are bitten or clawed and thousands of dollars worth of equipment is destroyed.

If you are caught in a "bear jam," stay in your car with the windows rolled up. When you set up camp, don't put food in your tent! It draws bears like a magnet. The bear may come right in with you during the night. To discourage this uninvited guest, keep your food locked in your car. Never



feed a bear; most people who have been bitten were feeding bears — in violation of park regulations.

Although bears cause the most trouble, *no park animals are tame*. You would never think of slipping through a zoo fence to photograph a bear or an elk, so do not approach them closely here.



Wilderness

You can't drive far in Yellowstone without wondering what lies beyond the road or around the river's bend. Why not go and see? There are hundreds of miles of trails in Yellowstone that reach all parts of the park. Some of these trails require a degree of skill to travel because they are long and traverse rough terrain; but many are quite pleasant for a 1- or 2-hour walk or ½-day hike.

If you want to try wilderness walking, you might join one of the short ranger-conducted hikes. Park rangers will be glad to suggest other hikes in keeping with your interest.

Wherever you go and however long you stay, it is common sense to let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return. Should an accident occur, it's good to know someone will come looking. Of course, you should tell that person of your return when you get back. Rangers don't like searching the woods for a "lost" person who is sleeping peacefully in a hotel.

Man and Yellowstone

The Yellowstone region was occupied by prehistoric man after the last ice age and visited by modern Indians. Yet, it was not seen by white men until John Colter passed through during the winter

of 1807-8. He, and other fur trappers were followed by goldseekers after 1863; the stories circulated by them created a keen interest in this region.

The Washburn-Langford-Doane party, which came in 1870 to verify the stories being told on the Montana frontier, were so impressed that they worked for preservation of the Yellowstone region as a public park; as a result, Yellowstone National Park was established on March 1, 1872.

The new park — the first of its kind to be placed under Federal management — passed through some difficult years, but its success as a form of land management was apparent by 1892, leading to establishment of other National Parks — ultimately, the National Park System.

Camping

Both trailer and tent campers are welcome in all campgrounds on a first-come, first-served basis. Campgrounds are free, but there are no utility connections for trailers. Because demand exceeds supply, campers are limited to 14 days in any campground during the heavy use season.

You may prefer primitive camping to the more modern campgrounds. If so, ask a ranger for suggestions about the campground best for you.

Back-country camping is fun and Yellowstone's wilderness is particularly attractive. You can rent equipment you will need right in the park. Check in at any ranger station for the necessary fire permit and for suggestions about equipment and places to camp.

Fishing

Fishing is excellent in Yellowstone, and you don't need a license! However, there are regulations with which you should be familiar. Pick up a copy of them at a ranger station and read them.



The only game fish native to Yellowstone National Park is the cutthroat or black spotted trout. It is still king in Yellowstone Lake and abounds in many other park waters. Rainbow, lake, and brown trout have been introduced into many streams and lakes over the years and now form breeding populations.

There are many fishermen along roadside streams, but if you venture into the back country you will find prime trout streams and quiet lakes with few fellow anglers.



Boating

Most streams and some lakes are closed to all boats while others are zoned for use with hand-propelled boats. You may get your permit and a copy of the boating regulations at the launching sites, and you will need both. The regulations are for the protection of yourself, the wildlife, and the wilderness.

You will want to be careful cruising Yellowstone and Lewis Lakes. The waters are icy cold and the blue skies can suddenly fill with storm clouds blasting you with gales of wind. Don't take chances; use common sense.

The Interpretive Program

Wherever you spend a day or night in the park, you can take advantage of at least a part of the interpretive program — an evening campfire program, an early morning bird walk, or a hike to the fossil forests of Specimen Ridge. These activities and many others of equal interest are presented by park rangers to help you gain a better appreciation of this wonderland.

At any visitor center the park ranger on duty will be glad to give you a copy of the interpretive program for the entire park.



The Park Ranger

The men you see in green uniforms and broad-brimmed hats are park rangers. They are here to help you have an enjoyable, safe visit, and to protect the park and its resources so that your children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy the beautiful Yellowstone you see today.

Who are the park rangers? Most you will meet are seasonal employees—teachers, or students, from our universities and schools. Many return summer after summer to man visitor centers, patrol roads, fight fires, and do the hundred and one other things that call for a park ranger's skill and knowledge.

If you need information or assistance, ask a park ranger.

Lodging, Stores and Service Stations

Service stations are located near most major road junctions; stores at areas of heaviest use—such as Old Faithful, Canyon, and Lake-Fishing Bridge.

Any hotel or lodge can make reservations anywhere in the park for you. It's best to make reservations early in the season as accommodations are filled every night during the peak season of July and August.

Administration

Yellowstone National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

The National Park System, of which this park is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.

A superintendent, whose address is Yellowstone National Park, Wyo., 83020, is in immediate charge.

America's Natural Resources

Created in 1849, the Department of the Interior—America's Department of Natural Resources—is concerned with the management, conservation, and development of the Nation's water, wildlife, mineral, forest, and park and recreational resources. It also has major responsibilities for Indian and territorial affairs.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department works to assure that nonrenewable resources are developed and used wisely, that park and recreational resources are conserved, and that renewable resources make their full contribution to the progress, prosperity, and security of the United States—now and in the future.

Regulations

Regulations are necessary to preserve the park and they have the force of law. Here are a few reminders of the more important ones:

Do not feed or molest any wild animals.

Collecting souvenirs, picking flowers, or acts of vandalism are prohibited.

Make sure your fire is out. Report all fires to the nearest park ranger.

Pets must be leashed and are not allowed on trails.

Motor vehicles and bicycles may be used on roads only.

A fire permit is required for fires away from campgrounds.

A boating permit is required for all boats used on park waters.

Use or display of firearms is prohibited. Possession must be declared at entrance station.

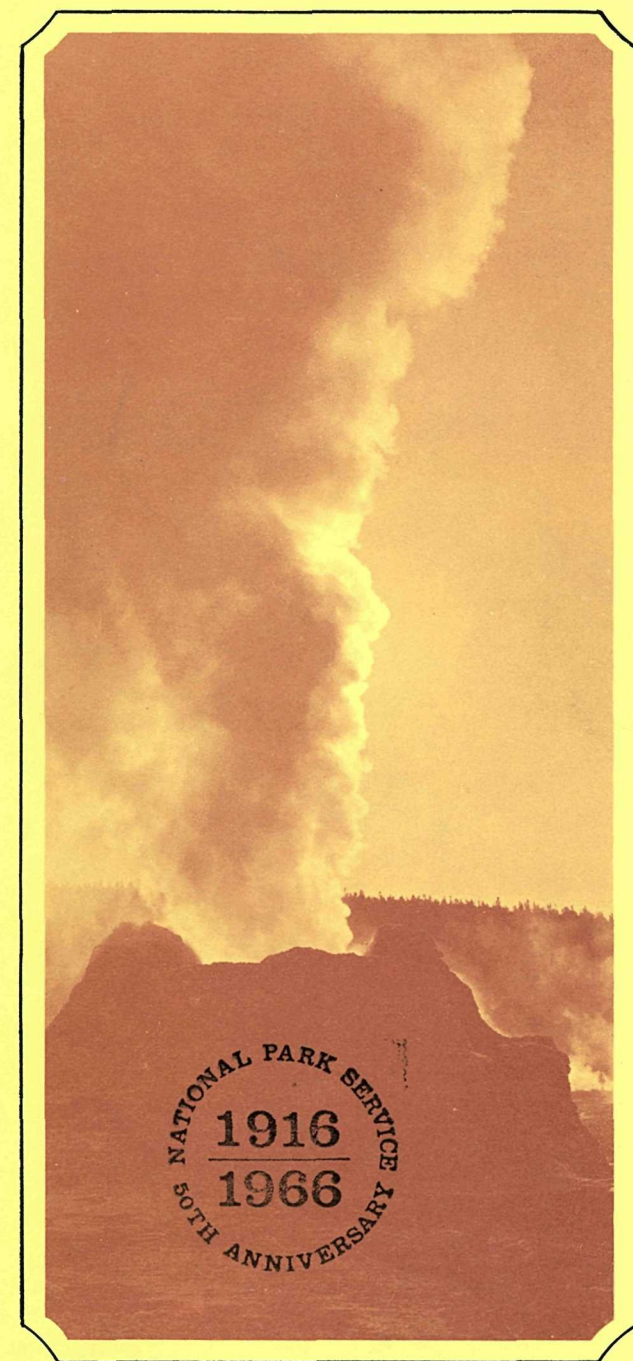
Read the fishing regulations before you fish.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1965 O-784-528

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402 - Price 15 cents



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