

# Yellowstone in Spring

Naturetrek Tour Report

4th – 16th June 2023

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Osprey by Laurence Rose



Grizzly Bears by Laurence Rose



Green Gentian by Maggie Collins



Grand Prismatic Spring by Laurence Rose

Tour report written by joint contribution of the tour group.

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Tour participants: Jesse Thurgood (leader) and 6 Naturetrek clients

## Day 1

**Sunday 4th June**

### UK to Jackson, Wyoming

We arrived in the evening and were met at Jackson Hole Airport by Jesse Thurgood, our leader for the trip. We settled in to a hotel in Jackson for our first night in the USA.

## Day 2

**Monday 5th June**

### Mostly sunny with a few clouds

To build ourselves up for our excursions we had a sustaining American breakfast at a local restaurant, on the way noting Violet-green Swallows among the common urban bird species that would soon become familiar. We then set off for the Grand Teton National Park. The southern boundary of the Park is a few miles north of Jackson, but we could see how stupendous the landscape was even before we reached the Park boundary. We stopped at the National Park sign by the road and photographed ourselves – and the magnificent mountains of course. The more or less flat expanse of the Snake River valley extended from where we were right to the foot of the mountain range, emphasising its height.

We explored the southern part of the National Park in the morning, heading up the valley of the Gros Ventre River, which is a tributary of the Snake River. We looked for Moose, without success but saw two of the Park's smaller mammals near the riverside: Uinta Ground Squirrel and Least Chipmunk. They were bobbing about close to us and were clearly used to tourists. We then drove down a nearby road called Mormons' Row. Mormons had settled this area in the past and some of their historic farm buildings remain here. At one old wooden barn we admired the stunning colours of the Mountain Bluebirds perching on its roof and Western Tanagers in the nearby trees.

Next we visited Schwabacher's Landing, which is on a quiet offshoot channel of the Snake River that had been dammed by beavers. We continued our Moose-hunt along the river shore. We had no luck, but we saw our first American Red Squirrel and songbirds such as White-crowned Sparrow and American Yellow Warbler.

We continued north and saw a major highlight of the day - a large herd of Bison grazing the prairie-like grassland near the road. There were several calves in the herd, most of them napping. They were a lighter brown compared to the dark brown, moulting, adult Bison. The adults went on munching without a glance at us. We went next to a small wetland near the dam which holds back Jackson Lake. We saw a smart Red-winged Blackbird and a pair of Cinnamon Teal and some of the group saw a Wapiti (Elk) and a calf. We returned to Jackson via the Teton Park Road and had good views of a Coyote, which ignored us completely! It was hunting through the sagebrush and we watched it make several unsuccessful pounces on potential prey.

## Day 3

Tuesday 6th June

### Sunny and warm, with thunderstorms at the end of the day

Today we made an early start to try to be up before the Moose. We visited the Gros Ventre valley again, but we were either too early or too late. We stopped by the main highway afterwards and enjoyed the early morning light on the Grand Teton mountain range together with the flowers in the foreground: the vivid yellow flowers of the Arrowleaf Balsamroot and delicate blue flowers of the Low Larkspur. Several Wapiti were seen among the sagebrush. We continued on to Oxbow Bend on the Snake River, a super viewpoint where Mount Moran can be seen reflected in the water. A mystery mammal was seen swimming arrow-straight across the river and after some debate we agreed that it was a Muskrat. We also had a discussion about the identity of the geese on the river. Some of them appeared to resemble Cackling Geese more than the familiar Canada Geese. Although genetic analyses separate the two species, they are reported to hybridise, so it is difficult to be definitive.

We drove on northwards to an open area among forest, near Pilgrim Creek, in the hope of seeing bears. There was a “bear jam” of cars and trucks when we arrived so we thought we might be lucky – but no bears. Breakfast beside Jackson Lake cheered us up, and we travelled east to Two Oceans Lake. The lake is right on the watershed between the Pacific and the Atlantic sides of the USA, hence its name. We hiked part of the way around the lake, through open woodland and meadows full of a rich variety of herbs. A large-leaved, pink-flowered herb called Sticky Geranium was abundant and the habitat stirred memories of England’s upland meadows overflowing with Wood Crane’s-bill, another large-leaved geranium. Jesse found some fresh bear scat on the path and we stayed close to him and his bear spray after this. He also pointed out a bear print on the path, just as we were starting to relax on the way back. There was some quality birding to be had: a singing Lazuli Bunting was a highlight, as was a very confiding Red-naped Sapsucker and a colony of Tree Swallows occupying disused woodpecker holes. The lake itself held a male-only flock of about 200 Common Mergansers (Goosanders to the Brits).

After another unsuccessful visit to Pilgrim Creek we headed home to Jackson and watched it being rained on by thundery showers as we approached. Miraculously the rain had stopped by the time we got back to our hotel.

## Day 4

Wednesday 7th June

### Sunny and warm and a few afternoon showers

Fiercely determined to see a Moose, we were on our way even earlier in the morning. We went to Schwabacher’s Landing first. The reflections of the mountains in the river as the dawn light grew were superb. We explored the eastern bank of the river and a highlight was seeing a Calliope Hummingbird feeding from Twinberry Honeysuckle flowers, seemingly unconcerned by the early morning chill. Not long after we came upon Moose scat and then the animal itself appeared, on the other side of the river channel. We had wonderful views as the Moose browsed the riverside shrubs and then entered the water in search of waterweed to munch. The animal was a male, with antlers just developing a covering of velvet. Moose have a strange fold of skin called a dewlap beneath the head and neck. The dewlap on our moose was very thin, but apparently it enlarges through the summer. To us humans the Moose looked as though it was sad, with its long face and lowered head carriage. But it was probably enjoying a tasty breakfast and being the star attraction for a bunch of people! A persistent song from high in the trees revealed a

Green-tailed Towhee, well-camouflaged, but well-seen once pinned down. By contrast, 10 Cedar Waxwings at the top of a dead tree were particularly showy.

After this excitement we moved on to the Teton Point turnout for a breakfast picnic, enlivened by the spotting of an American Kestrel. We drove north along the shores of Jackson Lake and were rewarded by seeing a fine flying flock of American White Pelicans and three Trumpeter Swans swimming on the lake. We checked the Pilgrim Creek 'bear areas' again, but we were out of luck. We made a stop at the Jackson Lake dam, and spotted a female Common Merganser having a wash and brush up.

Our next stop was the summit of Signal Mountain, conveniently reached by a road which winds upwards through a forest of pine, spruce and fir. The summit is a relatively modest 2355m, but it commands fine views of the Snake River valley and the surrounding mountains. After enjoying this wild landscape and a Turkey Vulture that soared effortlessly over, we came down Signal Mountain and moved on to Jenny Lake. In the trees beside this scenic Lake we spotted Western Tanager and Chipping Sparrow. After driving south down the Moose-Wilson Road, where a Mule Deer was seen in the forest, we stopped at the small wetland on the northern edge of urban Jackson. We were rewarded by views of Brewer's Blackbird and about ten displaying Yellow-headed Blackbirds with their distinctive buzzing call, before we retreated from the rain back to our hotel.

## Day 5

Thursday 8th June

### Mist and rain showers, brighter in the afternoon

Today we set off towards Yellowstone National Park, which extends close to the border of Grand Teton National Park along this Park's northern edge. Just inside Yellowstone National Park we stopped at Moose Falls on Crawfish Creek. We were able to stand quite close to the thundering water and spotted a pair of American Dippers. One was foraging upstream of the Falls, and one downstream. Several times both birds flew up and carried food to a hidden nest behind the water where it plunged over the cliff.

Our next destination was West Thumb Geyser Basin, which lies close to Yellowstone Lake, a huge area of water covering a large portion of the centre of the Park. First the Brits learned the proper way to say geyser, which is not pronounced "geezer" but "gizer". At the start of the path to the basin we were surprised by a Snowshoe Hare, which lolloped casually across the path close to us. The Geyser Basin was our first look at the extensive hydrothermal landscapes in the Park. Jesse explained the different thermal features, starting with paint pots and mud pots. Paint pots have cloudy water, while mud pots contain thick gooey...well, mud. These features contrast with the clear blue water of the pools where hot springs bubble to the surface. On the boardwalk above the outlet streams of Lakeshore Spring and Black Pool, Jesse showed us how varied the colours were in the streams, compared to the blue of the springs and pools themselves. Orange, yellow and brown were the main colours and in fact were created by mats of micro-wildlife, called 'thermophiles' – heat lovers. Yellowstone is a very rare and unusually accessible place to see these mats of Bacteria and Archaea. Other places to go are inside active volcanoes and down to deep sea hot springs, if preferred... Much of the intervening ground between the springs was bare of vegetation and signs warned us the ground was hot and unsafe. Remarkably we saw a female Killdeer and chicks there, seemingly unconcerned by the hot surroundings. Five Western Grebes were the first of several sightings of this lovely bird, while a Canada Jay proved to be the only one of the trip.

Continuing with our hydrothermal theme, we went on to the Upper Geyser Basin, which is where Old Faithful Geyser is located. Our visit was nicely timed to catch Old Faithful spouting water over 100 feet into the air, an event repeated every 90 minutes or so. A lot of other spectators were there too and the Geyser performed 'faithfully' for us. There were many other hydrothermal features in the landscape around Old Faithful: indeed, the ground was gently steaming in many places. Leaving Old Faithful, we drove northwards to the Middle Geyser Basin, which lies in the floodplain of the Firehole River. We got the same impression of a steaming landscape: a very strange sight.

After this introduction to geyser basins we travelled on to our hotel in West Yellowstone. On the way we had a good view of an Osprey in hunting mode at the top of a tree beside the Firehole River.

## Day 6

Friday 9th June

### Sunny and warm

After leaving West Yellowstone, we had a chance sighting of Bison by the Madison River. We had some very close views, from the safety of the minibus. Next we stopped to view Firehole Falls, where we saw another pair of American Dipper and a bit further on we spied an Osprey on a nest on our side of Firehole River. We thought it could be the Osprey we saw yesterday, or its mate. Great views through the telescope showed both birds on the nest for part of the time. We carried on south and saw a herd of Bison at Fountain Flats, with the steaming Lower Basin geysers behind them: a perfect photo stop.

Our much-anticipated visit to Grand Prismatic Spring came next after the Bison-watching and it did not disappoint. We left the minibus in the car park and crossed the bridge over Firehole River. We could see steaming outlet channels from the hot spring area flowing into the river and speculated how warm the river water might be as a result. The Grand Prismatic Spring and its companion pools can be viewed close-up thanks to a stout boardwalk which makes a circuit round these features. The Grand Spring itself had an amazing liquid pattern of colour surrounding it. The thermophiles were active, particularly creating extensive patches bright orange colour around the Spring. The micro-species that was probably responsible is called *Phormidium*, a cyanobacterium, which is happy in water of 35-57°C.

After our close-up views we drove to a track south of the spring and walked up to an overlook, so we could see the spring from above. It was made up of quite astonishing concentric circles of colour: yellow, brown, orange and white around the blue centre of the spring.

In search of more geysers, we continued on to the Upper Geyser Basin, where we had had limited time on our previous visit. We walked northwards from Old Faithful, stopping at some of the many geysers to watch the show of steam and water fountains. Castle Geyser and Grotto Geyser had wildly-shaped cones of silica, deposited when silica-rich water from underground reaches the surface. At the furthest point in our walk we visited the weird Morning Glory Pool. It had startling concentric bands of white and vivid yellow around a core of lurid green. On our way back we hiked around the boardwalks of Geyser Hill, a massive thermal landscape of steam and bare, hot, ground.

On our way return to West Yellowstone we watched a pair of Bald Eagles in flight over the Madison River, a good bonus at the end of a terrific day.

## Day 7

Saturday 10th June

Cloudy with light showers in the afternoon

On our way back into Yellowstone National Park, we saw Bald Eagles again along the Madison River Valley. We drove on to the Hayden Valley in search of bears and Wolves. We did not see them, but had good sightings of birds and plants. A surprise addition to the animals seen was spawning Yellowstone Cut-throat Trout, shown to one member of the group by some young fishermen at LeHardys Rapids.

Highlights among the plants were American Globeflower (*Trollius laxus*), White Marsh-marigold (*Caltha leptosepala*), Mountain Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium montanum*) and, most striking of all, the tall spikes of the Green Gentian (*Frasera speciosa*). This perennial herb has flowers in an unusual combination of white, yellow, purple and green, well worth a photograph.

We spotted a nice selection of water birds in the Hayden Valley, included 12 Lesser Scaup, the first of what would become a familiar duck, 12 stunning male Barrow's Goldeneyes and four dainty Buffleheads. The birding got better, as one of the party spotted a Clark's Nutcracker from the bus. We managed to stop and get good views of this Rocky Mountains speciality. At the end of the day, another species named after the same explorer, the Clark's Grebe, was a surprise at Alum Creek. In between, the highlight of the day was a close encounter with a group of exquisite Harlequin Ducks, seven males and four females, who shared the Le Hardys Rapids with a nesting pair of American Dippers.

Three people in the group had a fleeting glimpse, from the minibus, of an American Marten as it ran across the road. Another highlight was a large herd of Bison seen swimming across a creek and then scrambling up the slopes beyond.

## Day 8

Sunday 11th June

Sunny with some clouds

Our first stop was at the Mud Volcano, not far from Canyon Village. It was very different to the clear hot springs we had seen on previous days, being a glutinous, churning pool of grey-coloured mud. It had an entertaining soundtrack of 'blerps' and 'bloops' as bubbles of mud burst at the surface.

A highlight of the day was our visit to the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River. We saw the Upper Falls first, from Uncle Tom's Overlook. A large volume of water was flowing over the Falls, presumably from snowmelt, after a particularly deep snowfall during the past winter. We moved on to the Lower Falls, which were even more impressive. The Falls and the Yellowstone River are in a deep gorge here. The gorge is largely cut through bare rock, plus some softer sediments that have been deposited from eroded rock higher up. We viewed the dramatic landscape at a place called Artist Point. The name refers to the artist Thomas Moran. In 1872 he painted a view of the Lower Falls and gorge, called 'Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone'. It is now one of the most famous landscape

paintings in America. In the painting, and in reality, much of the rock is satisfyingly yellow, though apparently this is not why the National Park was called 'Yellowstone'. There are other rock colours in the gorge apart from yellow, especially the gorgeous pinks and reds of sediment cones below cliff faces.

Before returning to our hotel, we stopped at a spot known locally as Three States View, where Montana and Idaho can be seen from within Wyoming. What was supposed to be a brief stop was prolonged by the discovery a few metres away of a Red-Shafted Flicker's nest, with both adults flying to and fro, bringing food to their chicks.

## Day 9

Monday 12th June

### Sunny with a few cloudy spells

We returned to the Canyon Village area this morning. As we were travelling along the road, we passed through a forest and came out into the open near the Gibbon River, to be surprised by the sight of a Grizzly Bear loping along parallel to the road, only about 60 feet from the van! The bear returned to the cover of woodland further on but it gave us a great view.

We then took the Dunraven Pass road. We had fine views of the landscape towards the mountains on the horizon from the Washburn Hot Springs Overlook. Pockets of mist were still rising from the valleys, but the mountains were clear in the distance.

It was still quite dark, but soon the sun rose on what was to become a memorable day for bear-watching. From the Dunraven Pass road on Mount Washburn we looked down over the meadows below, to see a brown bear, looking at first sight like another Grizzly, but which turned out to be our first Black Bear, in its less common colour-form. A Clark's Nutcracker tried to compete for attention. Soon after, we had close views of an unmistakable female Black Bear and her two cubs by the side of the road; three female Bighorn Sheep on the opposite side of the road seemed unconcerned. At Dorothy's Seat we looked across the river to see a distant Black Bear walking up the grassy hillside opposite, while closer by, a pair of Coyotes treated us to a howling recital. We had a brief, long-distance, glimpse of a Mountain Goat, high up on the hillside.

One of the bird highlights was a pair of Sandhill Cranes at Junction Butte, collecting food from the marsh and bringing it to their two chicks, only a week or so old, who were standing on a rock in full view.

At the end of our day in the field we made our way to Gardiner, at the northern edge of the Park, to get to our next hotel, seeing yet another Black Bear before we left. Close to the road in small parking area we had our only sighting during the trip of Bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*). The flowers of the Bitterroot are a very attractive pink, and *Lewisias* are popular garden plants. On the way out at the north gate of the Park we stopped to overlook a small pond, and a White-throated Swift sped low over the ground between us a few feet away. Beside the road we saw a grand entrance arch – called the Roosevelt Arch, which was built there in 1903. It was dedicated to President Roosevelt, but appropriately for the place, "Teddy" Roosevelt, not Franklin D. Roosevelt. A notable wildlife sighting was the presence of Wapiti (Elk) close to the edge of town. Some animals were sitting down and relaxing, perhaps feeling that an attack by a predator was unlikely so close to human habitation.

## Day 10

Tuesday 13th June

Grey skies and drizzle in the morning but brightening up in the afternoon

An early start enabled us to reach the Lamar Valley in time to get views of a mammal we had been strenuously hoping to see during the trip – a Wolf. First we saw a female Grizzly Bear and two cubs high on a distant mountain, only visible through a telescope. Later we spotted a Coyote, which caused momentary excitement until we realised it was not a Wolf! But then we saw a dark-coloured Wolf near the river. It could be clearly seen through the telescope.

A male and female Grizzly Bear cavorting through the sagebrush at Junction Butte were more easily seen, and we watched them for some time, along with a Red-shafted Flicker that appeared to be nesting in the nearby trees. A black-coloured Black Bear, and later, a so-called ‘cinnamon’ Black Bear, which settled to snooze in a pine tree, completed another productive mammal day.

On our way back to Gardiner we stopped at Mammoth Springs. We visited the building complex on the original site of Fort Yellowstone in search of a special bird. There is a scattering of mature trees on the site and in one of them we got excellent views of a Great Horned Owl, perched in the upper canopy. Less visible were two fluffy white chicks that were old enough to clamber around the tree but were not yet fledged.

## Day 11

Wednesday 14th June

Misty and cloudy with rain showers in the morning, sunny intervals in the afternoon

Undaunted by the weather, we set off for the Lamar Valley again, going as far as Little America pond and Slough Creek, both of which were good for wetland birds such as Ruddy Ducks and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Although we did not see wolves at Dorothy’s Seat, we did have a distant view of two Grizzlies there, and throughout the valley we had the usual great views of Wapiti and Bison. These mammals have been constant in our list of species seen each day. We also saw a Pronghorn Antelope which was wearing a GPS collar: no doubt it was someone’s research animal. *En route* we also saw a Black Bear at Elk Creek.

We drove next to Tower Falls for a lunch break and a quick visit to the Falls. They are on Tower Creek, just before it enters the Yellowstone River. We enjoyed the view of the tall, elegant, waterfall, framed by conifers and crags. After lunch we went to Mammoth Hot Springs, one of the top hydrothermal areas in the Park. The thermal system here is on limestone, so spring water contains calcium, which is deposited on the surface as the mineral travertine. The water, plus mineral deposition, has created amazing stepped terraces of rock. Some are a blinding white while others have the colours produced by thermophiles. The colours we saw at other hot springs we found here too, especially oranges and browns. We were able to get close to the terraces by following the board walks and paths from the top of the Main Terrace down to the base near Fort Yellowstone. After this fascinating walk we returned to Gardiner for dinner.



## Day 12

Thursday 15th June

### Sunny with a few cloudy spells

An early start allowed us to reach the Lamar valley at ideal mammal time. We were thrilled when Jesse spotted a lone Wolf near the river at Dorothy's Seat. We had good views of it through the telescope. We had breakfast at Icebox Canyon (not particularly icy today), beside Soda Butte Creek.

Once refuelled by a substantial meal, we set off for a trip outside the Park. A short drive took us through the boundary at the north-east corner of the Park. Our goal was Beartooth Pass which lies about 30 miles east of the Park boundary. On the way we stopped at Yellowstone Overlook to see the striking shapes of Pilot and Index Peaks to the north-west. The birdwatching was excellent here, with some higher-altitude specialities like Mountain Chickadee, Dusky Grouse and Clark's Nutcracker all showing well. We continued eastwards, past the rushing cascades on Beartooth Creek. We passed Long Lake and began the climb up the zig-zag road to the summit of Beartooth Pass. At 3337m it was the highest place we visited during the trip. The habitats at that altitude were alpine grassland and boulder fields. We explored the grassland to the north of the road and found tiny alpine plants clinging in cracks or forming 'cushions' close to the ground. We spotted deep pink, tiny flowers of *Douglasia* (*Douglasia montana*), with blue Alpine Forget-me-not (*Eritrichium nanum*) and white Alpine Smelowskia (*Smelowskia calycina*). There were alpine mammals present too: we saw Pikas scurrying about, and Yellow-bellied Marmots lounging around. We had good views from the minibus of a pair of Horned Larks, a male displaying to his mate, and several Buff-bellied Pipits running about on the ground, as well as in-flight views of Black Rosy-finches at the snow-line, a species much sought-after even by local birders.

We descended to the forest again and drove back to the Lamar Valley. Here we were astoundingly lucky to see more Wolves down by the river. We counted five animals which were moving around as a loose pack, known as the Junction Butte Pack. When we arrived, one Wolf was on our side of the river, but then the others swam across to join it. After letting us have great views through the telescope they mooched off downriver. Our exciting day was not over because we spotted a Grizzly Bear family of a mother and two cubs at the foot of The Thunderer. We had marvellous prolonged views and were entertained by the cubs, who were racing around playing and climbing trees, just for fun. They must have worked up an appetite because they returned to the embrace of mother bear and both suckled at the same time. A Red Fox passed along the road close to the group, most of whom missed it as they watched the bears. After this tremendous day we drove back to our hotel in Gardiner, where Coyotes were howling nearby.

## Day 13

Friday 16th June

### Sunny and warm

We had to pack and leave today, which was a wrench. We drove north from Gardiner to Bozeman Airport for our homeward flights. We made very good time and were able to visit a wetland nature reserve called Indreland at the edge of town, and were kindly guided around by a local birder. New for the trip were Belted Kingfisher, Willow Flycatcher, Common Yellowthroat, American Goldfinch and a stunning pair of Black-headed Grosbeaks. All too soon, we had to head for the airport to catch our flights, so drawing to a close a simply wonderful trip.

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## Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only, I = Introduced, Prob = probable <sup>1</sup>Seen at Bozeman only)

		June 2023											
Common name	Scientific name	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cackling Goose species / hybrid	<i>Branta hutchinsii</i>	✓	✓										
Trumpeter Swan	<i>Cygnus buccinator</i>			✓		✓							✓
Cinnamon Teal	<i>Spatula cyanoptera</i>	✓		✓			✓				✓		
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
American Wigeon	<i>Mareca americana</i>	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>			✓				✓			✓		
Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Harlequin Duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>						✓						
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>						✓	✓					
Barrow's Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala islandica</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	
Common Merganser (Goosander)	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>									✓	✓	✓	
Dusky Grouse	<i>Dendragapus obscurus</i>											✓	
Calliope Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus calliope</i>			✓									
White-throated Swift	<i>Aeronautes saxatalis</i>									✓			
Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>											✓	
American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>								✓		✓	✓	✓
Sandhill Crane	<i>Antigone canadensis</i>	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓				
Clark's Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus clarkii</i>							✓	✓				
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		

		June 2023											
Common name	Scientific name	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Wilson's Snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>							H		✓		H	
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>			✓									
Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Nannopterum auritum</i>	✓	✓										
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		
Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>		✓										
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	✓											
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus hudsonius</i>	✓											
Swainson's Hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>												prob
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>									✓			
Belted Kingfisher <sup>1</sup>	<i>Megasceryle alcyon</i>												✓
Red-naped Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus nuchalis</i>		✓										
Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Leuconotopicus villosus</i>		✓										
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>							✓		✓			
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>			✓					✓	✓			
Willow flycatcher <sup>1</sup>	<i>Empidonax traillii</i>												✓
Hammond's Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax hammondii</i>			✓									
Eastern Kingbird <sup>1</sup>	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>												✓
Warbling Vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>		✓	H					H	H		✓	H
Canada Jay	<i>Perisoreus canadensis</i>				✓								
Pinyon Jay	<i>Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus</i>									✓			✓
Black-billed Magpie	<i>Pica hudsonia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Common name	Scientific name	June 2023											
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Clark's Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga columbiana</i>						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	✓		✓	✓								✓
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Poecile atricapillus</i>										✓		✓
Mountain Chickadee	<i>Poecile gambeli</i>		✓			H		H			✓	✓	
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>											✓	
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	✓											✓
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						
Bank Swallow (Sand Martin)	<i>Riparia riparia</i>												✓
American Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Corthylio calendula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	H	✓	
Marsh Wren	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>										✓		
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>		✓					✓	✓				
Red-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>		✓	H				H	H	H	H		
Grey Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>		✓										✓
Common Starling - I	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Mountain Bluebird	<i>Sialia currucoides</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓	
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
American Dipper	<i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓					
House Sparrow - I	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓								✓	✓	✓	✓
Buff-bellied Pipit	<i>Anthus rubescens</i>											✓	
Black-headed Grosbeak <sup>1</sup>	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>												✓
Evening Grosbeak	<i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i>									✓			
Black Rosy Finch	<i>Leucosticte atrata</i>											✓	

Common name	Scientific name	June 2023											
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	✓		✓		✓						✓	
American Goldfinch <sup>1</sup>	<i>Spinus tristis</i>												✓
Pine Siskin	<i>Spinus pinus</i>	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>										✓		✓
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>	✓		✓	H	✓	H	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Brewer's Sparrow	<i>Spizella breweri</i>							✓	✓				
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>		✓		✓	H		✓				✓	
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	H	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>					✓		✓	✓		H		
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	✓		✓	✓								✓
Green-tailed Towhee	<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>			✓									
Yellow-headed Blackbird	<i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓		✓
Western Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>							✓	✓				
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common Grackle	<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	✓											✓
Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
MacGillivray's Warbler	<i>Geothlypis tolmiei</i>		✓								✓		
Common Yellowthroat <sup>1</sup>	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>												✓
American Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga aestiva</i>	✓	✓	✓							✓		✓
Audubon's Warbler	<i>Setophaga auduboni</i>	✓		H		✓		✓				✓	
Western Tanager	<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>	✓	H	✓						✓	✓	H	✓
Lazuli Bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>		✓										

## Mammals

Mammals		June 2023											
Common name	Scientific name	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Snowshoe Hare	<i>Lepus americanus</i>				✓	✓							
White-tailed Jackrabbit	<i>Lepus townsendii</i>										✓		
American Red Squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	✓		✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	
American Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>												✓
Muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		
Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>	✓				✓			✓	✓			
Wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>									✓		✓	
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>											✓	
American Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>								✓	✓	✓		
Brown Bear (Grizzly)	<i>Ursus arctos</i>								✓	✓		✓	
American Marten	<i>Martes americana</i>						✓						
Pronghorn	<i>Antilocapra americana</i>	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	
Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>			✓									
Wapiti	<i>Cervus canadensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mule Deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>			✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	
American Bison	<i>Bison bison</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mountain Goat	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>								✓				
Bighorn Sheep	<i>Ovis canadensis</i>								✓				
Uinta Ground Squirrel	<i>Urositellus armatus</i>	✓	✓	✓									
Least Chipmunk	<i>Tamias minimus</i>	✓				✓			✓				
Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel	<i>Callospermophilus lateralis</i>					✓			✓	✓			
Columbian Ground Squirrel <sup>1</sup>	<i>Urocitellus columbianus</i>								✓	✓	✓		
Yellow-bellied Marmot	<i>Mamota flaviventris</i>											✓	
Pika	<i>Ochotona princeps</i>											✓	

<sup>1</sup> East of mapped range in Yensen, E. & Sherman, P. W. 2003 Ground-dwelling squirrels of the Pacific Northwest. US Fish and Wildlife Service

## Plants

Plant identification is best judgement largely based on two references, not comprehensive floras	
Johnson, K. F. 2013 Field Guide to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks	
Farcountry Press (a general guide)	
Tilt, W. 2015 Flora of the Yellowstone: A Guide to the Wildflowers, Shrubs & Trees	
Ferns, and Grass-like Plants of the Greater Yellowstone Region of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming	
Gallatin Valley Land Trust: First Edition	

Scientific name	Common name
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Subalpine Fir
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Actea rubra</i>	Red Baneberry
<i>Allium brevistylum</i>	Shortstyle Onion
<i>Alnus incana</i> subsp <i>tenuifolia</i>	Thinleaf Alder
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon Serviceberry
<i>Anemone multifida</i>	Cutleaf Anemone
<i>Antennaria parvifolia</i>	Small-leaf Pussytoes
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Common Bearberry
<i>Arnica cordifolia</i>	Heartleaf Arnica
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	White Sagebrush
<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>	Wyoming Big Sagebrush
<i>Aster spp</i>	Michaelmus Daisy
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Arrowleaf Balsamroot
<i>Barbarea vulgaris</i>	Yellow Rocket / Wintercress
<i>Benterea incana</i> <sup>1</sup>	Hoary Alyssum
<i>Berberis repens</i> <sup>2</sup>	Creeping Barberry



Scientific name	Common name
<i>Besseyia wyomingensis</i>	Wyoming Kittentails
<i>Calendrinia</i> spp	Redmaids
<i>Caltha leptosepala</i>	White Marsh-marigold
<i>Calypso bulbosa</i>	Fairy Slipper Orchid
<i>Castilleja</i> spp	Indian Paintbrush
<i>Cerastium arvense</i>	Field Chickweed
<i>Cirsium scariosum</i>	Elk Thistle
<i>Claytonia lanceolata</i>	Springbeauty
<i>Clematis hirsutissima</i>	Sugarbowl / Hairy Clematis
<i>Comandra umbellata</i>	Bastard Toadflax
<i>Cynoglossum officinale</i>	Hounds-tongue
<i>Dasiphora fruticosa</i>	Shrubby Cinqufoil
<i>Delphinium bicolor</i>	Low Larkspur
<i>Delphinium nuttallianum</i>	Common Larkspur
<i>Dodecatheon pulchellum</i>	Few-flowered Shooting Star
<i>Douglasia montana</i>	Mountain Douglasia
<i>Drymocallis arguta</i>	Tall Cinquefoil
<i>Drymocallis glandulosa</i>	Sticky Cinquefoil
<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	Russian Olive
<i>Equisetum hyemale</i>	Scouring Rush
<i>Erigeron compositus</i>	Dwarf Mountain Fleabane
<i>Eriogonum heracleoides</i>	Whorled Buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>	Sulphur Buckwheat
<i>Eritrichium nanum</i>	Alpine Forget-me-not / King of the Alps
<i>Erysimum capitatum</i>	Western Wallflower
<i>Erythronium grandiflorum</i>	Glacier Lily
<i>Fragaria virginia</i>	Virginia Strawberry
<i>Frasera speciosa</i>	Green Gentian

Scientific name	Common name
<i>Geranium viscosissimum</i>	Sticky Geranium
<i>Geum triflorum</i>	Prairie Smoke
<i>Heracleum maximum</i>	Cow Parsnip
<i>Hesperus matronalis</i> <sup>1</sup>	Sweet Rocket
<i>Iris missouriensis</i>	Rocky Mountain Iris / Western Blue Flag
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Common Juniper
<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>	Rocky Mountain Juniper
<i>Lepidium draba</i> <sup>1</sup>	Hoary Cress
<i>Lewisia pygmaea</i>	Alpine Lewisia / Pygmy Bitterroot
<i>Lewisia rediviva</i>	Bitterroot
<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>	Common Toadflax
<i>Linum lewisii</i>	Blue Flax
<i>Lithophragma parviflorum</i>	Small-flowered Woodland Star
<i>Lithospermum ruderae</i>	Western Stoneseed
<i>Lomatium ambiguum</i>	Wyeth Biscuitroot
<i>Lonicera involucrata</i>	Twinberry Honeysuckle
<i>Lonicera utahensis</i>	Utah Honeysuckle
<i>Lupinus spp</i>	Lupin
<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i>	False Solomon's-seal
<i>Maianthemum stellatum</i>	Star-flowered False Solomon's-seal
<i>Mertensia ciliata</i>	Mountain Bluebells
<i>Mertensia oblongifolia</i>	Sagebrush Bluebells
<i>Mimulus guttatus</i>	Yellow Monkeyflower
<i>Myosotis alpestris</i>	Alpine Forget-me-not
<i>Nuphar polysepala</i>	Yellow Pond-lily
<i>Pedicularis bracteosa</i>	Bracted Lousewort
<i>Penstemon speciosus</i>	Royal Penstemon
<i>Phacelia franklinii</i>	Franklin's Phacelia

Scientific name	Common name
<i>Phacelia sericea</i>	Blue Alpine Phacelia
<i>Picea engelmannii</i>	Engelmann Spruce
<i>Phlox longifolia</i>	Longleaf Phlox
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole Pine
<i>Pinus flexilis</i>	Limber Pine
<i>Polygonum bistortoides</i>	American Bistort
<i>Populus angustifolia</i>	Narrowleaf Cottonwood
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Quaking Aspen
<i>Potentilla gracilis</i>	Slender Cinquefoil
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Heal-All / Selfheal
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Chokecherry
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	Douglas Fir
<i>Pterospora andromedea</i>	Pinedrops
<i>Ranunculus glaberrimus</i>	Sagebrush Buttercup
<i>Ribes lacustre</i>	Prickly Currant
<i>Rorippa spp</i>	Yellow-cress
<i>Rosa woodsii</i>	Woods' Rose
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Thimbleberry
<i>Salix species</i>	Willow
<i>Sedum lanceolatum</i>	Lanceleaf Stonecrop
<i>Senecio spp</i> <sup>3</sup>	Groundsel
<i>Shepherdia canadensis</i>	Russet Buffaloberry
<i>Silene acaulis</i>	Moss Champion
<i>Silene latifolia</i>	White Champion
<i>Sisyrinchium montanum</i>	Mountain Blue-eyed Grass
<i>Smelowskia calycina</i>	Alpine Smelowskia
<i>Sorbus scopulina</i>	Greene's Mountain Ash
<i>Spiraea betulifolia</i>	White Spiraea

Scientific name	Common name
<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>	Common Tansy
<i>Taraxacum agg</i>	Dandelion
<i>Thalictrum occidentale</i>	Western Meadowrue
<i>Toxicosordion venenosum</i>	Meadow Deathcamas
<i>Tragopogon dubius</i>	Yellow Salsify
<i>Trifolium spp</i>	Clover
<i>Troilus laxus</i>	American Globeflower
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Common Cattail
<i>Vaccinium globulare</i>	Common Huckleberry
<i>Valeriana occidentalis</i>	Western Valerian
<i>Veronica americana</i>	American Brooklime
<i>Vicia spp</i>	Vetch
<i>Viola glabella</i>	Stream Violet
<i>Viola nuttallii</i>	Nuttall's Violet
<sup>1</sup> Bozeman only	
<sup>2</sup> synonym <i>Mahonia repens</i>	
<sup>3</sup> resembles Groundsel	