



# Yellowstone, october 2017

Report by Sophie and Manuel

We went to Yellowstone the week before the park closed.



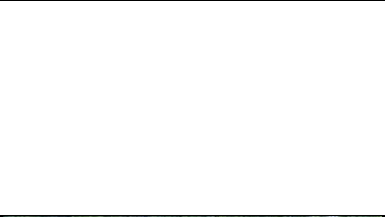



On the bright side there were few people around: A couple of tourists and some wolf-group people. On the other hand, it was difficult for us to get something to eat since almost every shop and restaurant was already closed: Nice surprise for the Honeymoon. When we arrived at our accommodation the lady told us “I was wondering what you were going to cook” and the last bistro open didn’t have any vegetables anymore - but the elk sticks from the park (Fishing Bridge Store) are very good. This shouldn’t be a problem though if you are well prepared.







It was our first time in Yellowstone and we don’t really have a comparison but apparently animals move around a lot in winter and bears move outside de park a lot then. You cannot predict where they are going to be since they try to eat as much as possible. In the 5 days we were there we heard of only 4 grizzly bear sightings. They were seen in Hayden Valley, Tower Junction and Mammoth.

It seems that it’s a good time for wolf sightings though. The wolf group people talked about 2 packs and one lone wolf in Lamar Valley and we saw a pack in Hayden Valley.

We are still unsure if spotlighting is allowed or not. We asked if it was permitted at the north-east entrance and the guy told us that it was no problem. However, we were then stopped by some guy who said he knew some other guy high up in the hierarchy of the National Park and that what we did was “illegal and wrong”. Spotlighting during two nights didn’t produce much for us anyway besides red fox and coyote.

Conclusion: If you dress warmly and bring food supply, it’s a good time to visit Yellowstone. Apparently not the best time to see bears but we wouldn’t event want to know how crowded it could be in Summer.

<p><b>Coyote</b></p>	<p><i>Canis latrans</i></p>	<p>Several sightings in Lamar Valley, Mount Washburn and Hayden Valley</p>	
<p><b>Gray Wolf</b></p>	<p><i>Canis lupus</i></p>	<p>Two sightings: One lone wolf in Lamar Valley and a wolf pack of 8 wolves, two of them attacking Elks in Hayden Valley. We just missed two packs by a couple of minutes: One pack in Lamar Valley and another going up Mount Washburn and looking down to Lamar Valley.</p>	
<p><b>Red fox</b></p>	<p><i>Vulpes vulpes</i></p>	<p>Two sightings at night: One in Lamar Valley and one on the way from the north-eastern gate to Silvergate.</p>	
<p><b>Black Bear</b></p>	<p><i>Ursus americanus</i></p>	<p>One sighting on the way from Mammoth to Tower Junction.</p>	
<p><b>American Bison</b></p>	<p><i>Bison bison</i></p>	<p>Countless sightings mainly in Lamar Valley.</p>	
<p><b>Bighorn Sheep</b></p>	<p><i>Ovis canadensis</i></p>	<p>One sighting of one flock in Lamar Valley. There is a flock around the north entrance as well.</p>	

<b>Mountain goat</b>	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>	One sighting on the mountains. If you come from the north-east entrance, scan the mountains just after the forest.	
<b>Pronghorn</b>	<i>Antilocapra americana</i>	Several sightings inside and outside the park, most of them in Lamar Valley.	
<b>Mule deer</b>	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>	Several sightings inside and outside the park.	
<b>Elk</b>	<i>Cervus canadensis</i>	Lots of sightings mainly around Mammoth.	
<b>Moose</b>	<i>Alces alces</i>	Three sightings in total. Two sightings of maybe the same individual. Both in Lamar Valley and one at the Trout Lake. One young male crossed the road when we drove from Cooke City to Cody.	
<b>Least Chipmunk</b>	<i>Tamias minimus</i>	Seen a couple at Blacktail Plateau Drive.	
<b>American red squirrel</b>	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	Several sightings all over inside and outside the park.	
<b>Uinta ground squirrel</b>	<i>Urocitellus armatus</i>	Seen a couple crossing the road.	

<b>Golden-mantled ground squirrel</b>	<i>Callospermophilus lateralis</i>	One crossing the road at Blacktail Plateau Drive.	
<b>Western jumping mouse</b>	<i>Zapus princeps</i>	One crossing the road at night.	
<b>Suicide mouse</b>	<i>Mus mortem</i>	A lot crossing the road at night but too quick for us to identify – maybe Meadow vole?	