

Digging Deeper

Wildlife

What was the title of your article?

What wildlife did you read about?

What was something unique about this animal?

Why is Wyoming land important for this animal?

How can you as a steward use and care for Wyoming's land for wildlife?

Recreation

What was the title of your article?

What recreational activity did you read about?

What was something unique about this recreational activity?

Why is Wyoming land important for this recreational activity?

How can you as a steward use and care for Wyoming's land for recreation?



Bitterroot Ranch

2018 Landowner of the Year - Lander Region



The Bitterroot Ranch is a 2,150 acre ranch split between locations near Dubois and Riverton. Bayard Fox, his wife Mel, along with their son Richard and daughter-in-law Hadley operate this unique ranch that blends a working cattle ranch and dude ranch that provides important wildlife habitat and world class horse riding experiences for their guests. Their ranch provides excellent habitat for Yellowstone cutthroat trout, pronghorn, mule deer, elk, moose, waterfowl, and other wildlife. Grizzly bears and wolves also frequent the Dubois ranch.

Since 1971, Bayard and family have been operating the Bitterroot Ranch as a working guest ranch giving people from around the World a unique experience participating in cattle drives and the work involved in western ranching.

The East Fork that flows through their property and adjoining lands support a robust population of Yellowstone cutthroat trout along with other species such as mountain whitefish. Over the past 6 years, Bitterroot Ranch has been very engaged and active improving aquatic habitats to support this important fishery.

Once autumn's colors disappear and the Ranch's cattle and horse herds have been rounded-up from the Dubois country, they head to 1,522 acres near Pavillion that provides the forage needed during the cold winter months to sustain the herds. This low land ground also provides a smorgasbord for pronghorn, mule deer, and waterfowl throughout the calendar year with irrigated hay fields, wet meadows, and wetland areas.

Bitterroot Ranch's dedication to sustain quality wildlife and fisheries habitat, their cooperation with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and their overall love of wildlife and open spaces proves they are well deserving of this award.

Article reprinted from Wyoming Game & Fish Department:
<https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Get-Involved/Landowner-of-the-Year/2018/Bitterroot-Ranch>



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Winter Wildlife in Wyoming



photo credit: Bill Sincavage

WHERE TO SPOT WINTER WILDLIFE IN WYOMING

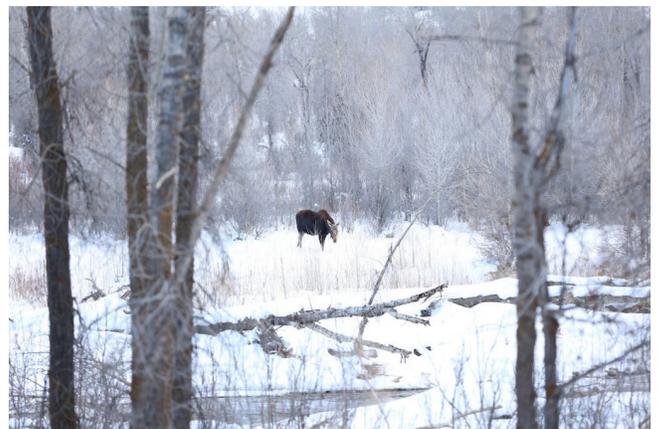
Not all of Wyoming's creatures hibernate in the winter. In fact, winter offers many opportunities to see Wyoming's wildlife through a whole new light. Bison, elk, birds and many more types of wildlife make the snow covered plains and mountains of Wyoming their winter home. Fewer crowds, deep snow and cooler temperatures make winter the best time to see wildlife in Yellowstone National Park and throughout Wyoming. Some animals you might see include pronghorn antelope, bull elk, bald eagles, bighorn sheep, bison and coyotes. Take a look at where you can spot these wild Wyoming residents this winter.

The National Elk Refuge

The National Elk Refuge is a winter sanctuary for Jackson's elk herds and other wild friends such as bison, coyotes, wolves, eagles, ravens and magpies. Bighorn sheep can frequently be seen at Miller Butte within the refuge.

Grand Teton National Park

Antelope Flats is another excellent place to catch a glimpse of wildlife in Grand Teton National Park. Look for bison, deer, elk, moose, antelope, coyotes, foxes and bald eagles. The Gros Ventre River area affords spectacular views of the Tetons and the chance to spot a moose.



Winter Wildlife in Wyoming

Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge

Located in Sweetwater County, Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge is a migration corridor for many types of birds, including hawks, finches and trumpeter swans. The refuge is also the winter hangout of rabbits, beavers, porcupines, deer and pronghorn. Because winter can be a rough time for the animals at Seedskaadee, a few of the refuge's roads are closed to vehicles in the winter to limit stress to inhabitants. Contact the refuge's headquarters before visiting for more information.

National Bighorn Sheep Interpretive Center

At the National Bighorn Sheep Interpretive Center in Dubois, life-sized dioramas and interactive exhibits tell the story of one of the region's most beloved residents: the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. The Whiskey Mountain area just east of Dubois is the stomping ground of the largest wintering sheep herd in North America. For a real treat, call the center to schedule a winter tour of nearby sheep herds. The areas where these majestic animals roam are also home to ancient petroglyph carved by native tribes; see if you can spot ones depicting bighorn sheep.

Casper Mountain

With about 26 miles of groomed trails, the Casper Mountain area attracts snowshoe enthusiasts and cross-country skiers in the winter. The tree-lined trails offer optimum spots to catch roaming mule deer, a variety of birds and pristine views of the valley. The Casper Mountain Trail Center is a great place to warm up and grab a bite to eat.

Will you have a 'Three Dog Day?'

If you're lucky enough to see a fox, wolf and coyote all in one day, that's considered a "Three Dog Day." Documentary filmmaker Ken Burns and his producer/writing partner Dayton Duncan had one during their first winter trip to Yellowstone. The duo toured America's first national park and saw a red fox dive into fresh snow, a pack of wolves make their presence known to a resting herd of bison and a team of coyotes on the side of the roadway. Will you be next?

Article reprinted from Travel Wyoming:

<https://www.travelwyoming.com/article/where-spot-winter-wildlife-wyoming>



Outdoor Adventure Haven



Lander: Wyoming's Outdoor Adventure Haven

The town of Lander offers the peace and tranquility of a remote mountain town with enough excitement and adventure to keep you entertained for days.

Epic rock climbing, hiking, backpacking, and fishing await you in and around this town's prized state park: Sinks Canyon. Here you'll (willingly) get lost in fields of endless wildflowers, hike to summits offering stunning views, and rock climb your way up towering crags that offer a rare thrill, only to be experienced in Wyoming's Wind River Range. Home to the annual International Rock Climbers Festival, it is no wonder that thousands of accomplished rock climbers flock to this area of the state on a regular basis.



Sure, you've got world-class rock climbing right at your finger tips, but what every visitor (self-proclaimed rock climber, family vacationer, or otherwise) will for sure experience is this town's inviting atmosphere and warm hospitality. "Lander is one of those special places people choose to visit because they feel welcome from the instant they step foot in our community," said Gary Michaud, City Resource Coordinator of Lander, Wyoming. "Our city is centrally located in an extremely scenic part of the state, offers quality local restaurants, a great shopping experience, and award-winning microbrews." Community, among Lander's glorious mountain views, is one of the key elements that makes this town all that it is.

Outdoor Adventure Haven

Run into Wild Iris Mountain Sports (or any other store for that matter!), and the employees will offer up need-to-know tips to get you up that challenging route, point out the best hiking and camping spots, and show you what you need to experience all this area has to offer. The same goes for any one of the town's delicious little foodie hot-spots. While Lander may be coined as a "climber's town", we argue that foodies from rivaling cities will be pleasantly surprised at what this town has to offer from a culinary standpoint. Gannett Grill is a must for anyone looking for a chill, laid-back atmosphere with a local, grass fed all-beef burger that will knock your socks off. You'll be hard pressed to leave this place without conversing with a local and subsequently making a new friend. Looking to start your day of adventure off right? Make your way to the Middle Fork for the best cup of French press coffee you've had in years and a decadent side of beignets (fried donuts). If you're traveling in the summertime, we recommend sitting out by the patio where you'll enjoy the fresh breeze and the peaceful sound of the creek right along the picket fence that encloses this delightful little area. After you've indulged, set out to do some exploring. After all, it is Lander, and all of this beauty is just waiting to be discovered.



Hike, bike, climb, run, walk, drive, ride, or wander. Whatever your fancy, just make sure you get outside. The Wind River Mountains are easily one of the most incredible sights in the entire state, but the vastness and remoteness of this range can be overwhelming. It's hard to decide where to go and what to do first! For some guidance, check out one of the area's local outfitters, or stop by Wind River Outdoor Company. Better yet, stay at a dude ranch nearby, like Allen's Diamond Four Ranch, where you'll get to go on a guided pack trip to drink in the area's majestic surroundings. Need an exciting excuse to get away and experience Lander

for real? The town has several annual events that bring out the charm and vibrancy of the Wind River Country. Climb with the pros at the International Climbers Festival, or drink in the city's local art at Lander Riverfest where original, handcrafted art is sold and entertainment, demonstrations, food, and live music are in plenty. What are you waiting for? Grab your backpack, hiking shoes, a tent, and your carefree spirit, and throw caution to the wind as you explore one of Wyoming's best kept secrets: Lander, Wyoming. We'll see you there!

Article adapted from Travel Wyoming:

<https://www.travelwyoming.com/article/lander-wyomings-outdoor-adventure-haven>



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Yellowstone in the Winter



A Winter Guide to Yellowstone

Something special happens to Yellowstone in the winter. The snowy forests take on a mystical silence, clouds of steam billow up gently around deserted hot springs, and an air of solitude permeates the pristine, snow-covered wonderland. Yellowstone, with its geothermal features, lakes, waterfalls and wildlife, is stunningly beautiful and peaceful when blanketed with crisp, white snow. To truly experience the serenity of the season, spend some time exploring Yellowstone's magnificent backcountry.

Getting There

The Yellowstone Regional Airport, two miles outside of Cody, is about 50 miles from the park's East Entrance. It offers service from Salt Lake City and Denver. Jackson Hole Airport, on the edge of Grand Teton National Park, is about 50 miles south of the park and offers service from Salt Lake City, Dallas/Fort Worth, Chicago, Atlanta and Denver. The Gallatin Field Airport in Bozeman, Montana, is about 90 miles from the park's north entrance, which is the only entrance open to car traffic in the winter. Car rentals and shuttle service to nearby towns and hotels are available at all of the airports.

Traveling in the Park

Cars are not allowed in the park after November 3, except on a limited stretch of road to Mammoth Hot Springs through the North Entrance. Roads begin to open again late April, weather permitting. Until then, visitors can enter the park through other entrances via scheduled snowcoaches or on foot, snowshoes or skis. There are several authorized snowmobile and snowcoach guides near Yellowstone.

Yellowstone in the Winter

Activities

Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing:

Both activities are great ways to experience Yellowstone's backcountry in the winter. There are miles of trails winding through the vast wilderness, and all are open for exploration on foot. There are several outfitters nearby who rent gear, and several companies specialize in guided trips if you'd rather not venture out alone.

Snowmobiling

An extension of the Continental Divide Snowmobile Trail, the trails of Yellowstone may be explored only with an authorized commercial guide or with a Non-Commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program permit. Several hundred snowmobiles are allowed each day, but since it's such a popular spot, it's advisable to make advance reservations.

Lodging

Two lodges in Yellowstone are open during the winter season. The cozy Old Faithful Snow Lodge & Cabins is open from December 16, 2016 to February 27, 2017. The hotel offers equipment rentals, guides and tours. It fills up fast, so make reservations as early as possible. There are plenty of places to stay in the towns surrounding the park too, from ranches and cabins to vacation rentals and B&Bs.

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