



SUMMER ADVENTURES
ON THE ROAD

Into the Wild



YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

DID YOU KNOW?

Yellowstone boasts of a large variety of animal species. There are nearly 300 species of birds, 16 species of fish, five species of amphibians, six species of reptiles, and 67 species of mammals. Herds of bison and elk and large predators such as wolves, grizzly bears, and mountain lions roam the mountains, valleys, and basins of Yellowstone National Park.

Some of Yellowstone's animals live in the park year-round or migrate here during certain seasons because of the ecosystems in the park. The mountains, grassy meadows, hydrothermal basins, rivers, and valleys provide habitats for a variety of animals. For example, bighorn sheep climb the steep terrains, so you might see them on cliffs in the Tower area. Ospreys eat fish, so you see them soaring above rivers searching for a meal. Bison graze on grasses and sedges, so you are likely to see them in big, noisy herds in the Hayden and Lamar Valleys.

PG 3

Animal Habitats
Ages 4-8

PG 4

In a Word
Ages 4-8

PG 5

The Great Elk Migration
Ages 9+

PG 7

In a Word
Ages 9+

PG 9

Answers (no peeking!)

Book List

READY TO EXPLORE?



FIND THE ANIMAL HABITAT

ACTIVITY | Ages 4-8

Did you know you can find hundreds of species of birds, 16 species of fish, five amphibian species, six reptile species, and 67 species of mammals in Yellowstone? Yellowstone's animals live in a biodiverse ecosystem, and you will undoubtedly see some of them on your real or imaginary road trip to Yellowstone. Animals may roam around the park and migrate between seasons, but they often spend time in specific areas, called habitats.



TO DO

Click the links below to learn more about each animal. Then, help these animals find their place in the park by drawing a line from the animal to its preferred summer habitat.

BISON

in packs around the park

BIGHORN SHEEP

in or on the banks of rivers and streams

BLACK BEAR

grazing in the Hayden and Lamar Valleys

OTTER

in high altitudes and steep terrain

ELK

nesting in trees near lakes and rivers

EAGLE

between Mammoth Hot Springs and the Northeast Entrance

GRAY WOLF

in high-elevation grasslands

IN A WORD

ACTIVITY 1 Ages 4-8

An **ecosystem** is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life.



Biodiversity is the variety of species of plants and animals that live in one environment.

Use the clues to finish each word relating to the biodiversity of Yellowstone's ecosystem.

1. **SPE** _____ There are almost 400 of their animal type in Yellowstone.
2. **MAM** _____ These animals are warm-blooded!
3. **VOL** _____ It's a sleeping giant.
4. **GEY** _____ Riverside and Castle are two of these blowing their tops off!
5. **BIS** _____ This animal eats a lot of grass.
6. **SEM** _____ This word describes Yellowstone's climate.
7. **HAB** _____ Animals live here.
8. **AMP** _____ These animals are cold-blooded!
9. **NAT** _____ These plants and animals have lived in the park for a long time.
10. **REP** _____ They like to slither here and there, and six types live in the park.

EXPLORE MORE

You can find more about [biodiversity](#) and [ecosystems](#) at the National Geographic Society and [Yellowstone](#) websites.

THE GREAT ELK MIGRATION

ACTIVITY | Ages 9+

MATERIALS

Device with internet connection

TO DO

In this activity, think about how the great elk migrations in the Yellowstone region affect the environments the elk herds travel through. An ecosystem is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscape, work together to form a bubble of life.



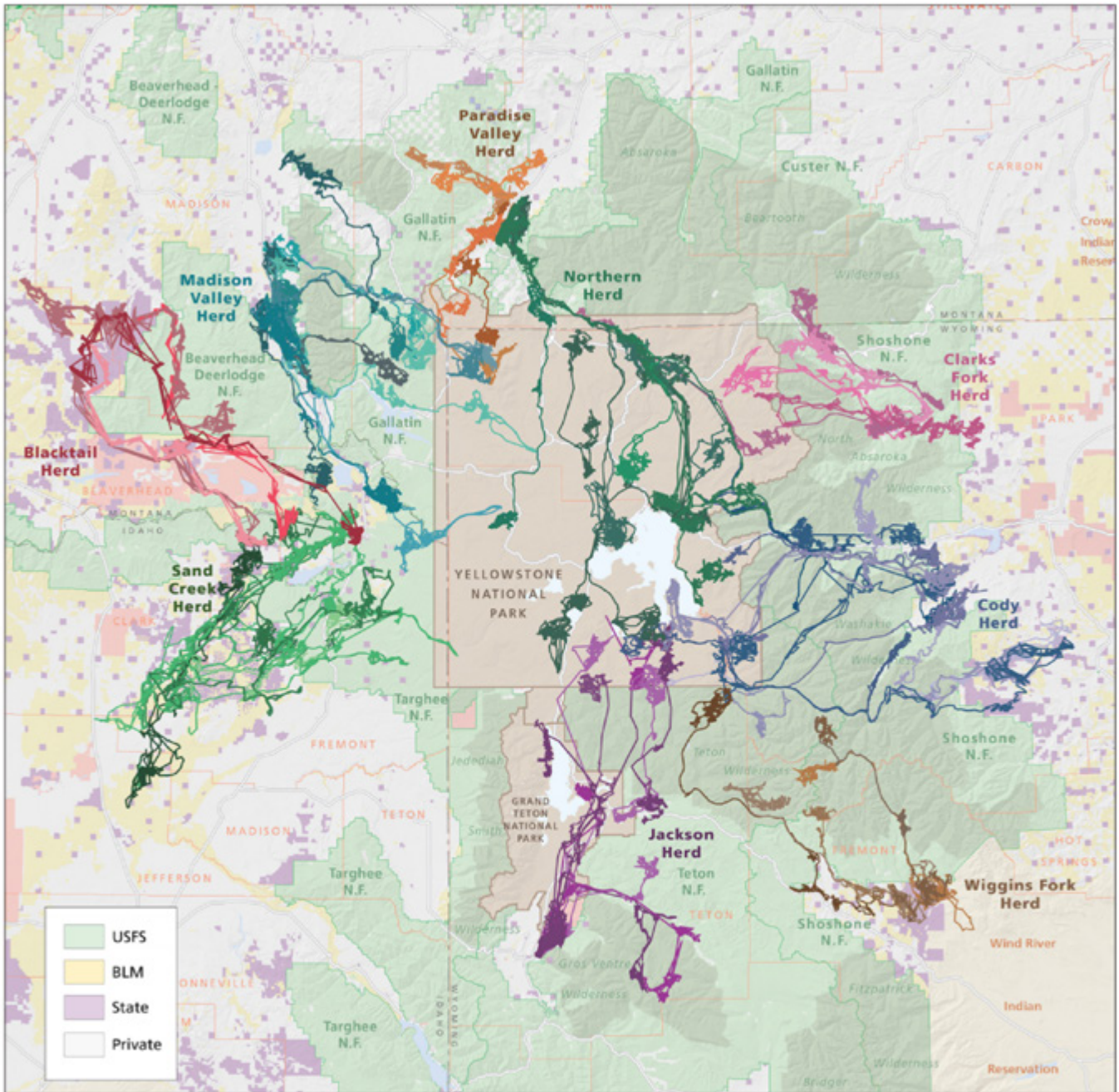
- 1 Watch one (or both!) of these National Geographic videos:
 - [*Yellowstone's Great Migration*](#)
 - [*Take an Epic Journey With the Elk of Yellowstone*](#)
- 2 Study the elk migration map on the following page and think about:
 - Which herds pass through Yellowstone?
 - Which herds stay outside Yellowstone?
 - Do the herds interact?
 - Do you see any patterns?
- 3 Think about the following questions, then list up to five observations you have about the elk migrations and the ways they shape the Yellowstone region's ecosystem:
 - What environmental and weather events might cause the herds to migrate?
 - Is it possible that the migrations affect other animals? In what ways?
 - How might the migrations affect plant systems, such as trees, grasses, and bushes?
- 4 Discuss the following questions with a friend or family member:
 - If the elk population and migration patterns changed, how might that change affect the ecosystem?
 - What animal migrations occur in your area? How do they affect your ecosystem?

EXPLORE MORE

National Geographic Case Study:
[Protecting Elk Migration in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem](#)

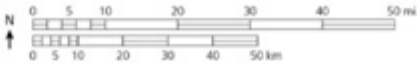
THE GREAT ELK MIGRATION

ACTIVITY | Ages 9+



Elk Migrations of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem

- Blacktail Herd
- Clarks Fork Herd
- Cody Herd
- Jackson Herd
- Madison Valley Herd
- Northern Herd
- Paradise Valley Herd
- Sand Creek Herd
- Wiggins Fork Herd



WYOMING MIGRATION INITIATIVE

© 2015 University of Wyoming
 Source: Atlas of Wildlife Migration: Wyoming's Ungulates (in production)
 Cartography: University of Oregon InfoGraphics Lab
 Elk data contributed by: Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; Idaho Fish and Game, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Iowa State University, and Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies

September 18, 2015 DRAFT

IN A WORD

ACTIVITY | Ages 9+



An **ecosystem** is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life.

Biodiversity is the variety of species of plants and animals that live in one environment.

Use the clues to finish each word relating to the biodiversity of Yellowstone's ecosystem.

- 1. SPE** _____ There are almost 400 of their animal type in Yellowstone.
- 2. MAM** _____ These animals are warm-blooded!
- 3. BIO** _____ These factors include plants, animals, and other organisms.
- 4. ABI** _____ These factors include rocks, temperatures, and humidity.
- 5. TRO** _____ This term does *not* describe Yellowstone's climate.
- 6. CAR** _____ It wants to know: *Where's the beef?*
- 7. HAB** _____ Animals live here.
- 8. AMP** _____ These animals are exothermic.
- 9. NAT** _____ These plants and animals have lived in the park for a long time.
- 10. REP** _____ They like to slither here and there, and six types live in the park.
- 11. ADA** _____ Any heritable trait that helps an organism survive or reproduce in its environment.
- 12. HER** _____ They ate their greens today.

EXPLORE MORE

You can find more about [biodiversity](#) and [ecosystems](#) at the National Geographic Society and [Yellowstone](#) websites.

BLANK PAGE TO CAPTURE YOUR NOTES



ANSWERS

PG 3

BISON

in packs around the park

BIGHORN SHEEP

in or on the banks of rivers and streams

BLACK BEAR

grazing in the Hayden and Lamar Valleys

OTTER

in high altitudes and steep terrain

ELK

nesting in trees near lakes and rivers

EAGLE

between Mammoth Hot Springs and the Northeast Entrance

GRAY WOLF

in high-elevation grasslands

PG 4

1. **SPECIES**

2. **MAMMALS**

3. **VOLCANO**

4. **GEYSER**

5. **BISON**

6. **SEMI-ARID**

7. **HABITAT**

8. **AMPHIBIANS**

9. **NATIVE**

10. **REPTILES**

PG 7

1. **SPECIES**

2. **MAMMALS**

3. **BIOTIC**

4. **ABIOTIC**

5. **TROPICAL**

6. **CARNIVORE**

7. **HABITAT**

8. **AMPHIBIANS**

9. **NATIVE**

10. **REPTILES**

11. **ADAPTATION**

12. **HERBIVORES**

FULL LINKS

PG 3

Bison

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/american-bison>

Bighorn sheep

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/nature/bighorn-sheep.htm>

Black bear

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/black-bear>

Otter

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/river-otter>

Elk

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/nature/elk.htm>

Eagle

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds/facts/bald-eagle>

Gray Wolf

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/gray-wolf>

PG 4

Biodiversity

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/topics/resource-library-biodiversity/?q=&page=1&per_page=25

Ecosystems

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/topics/resource-library-terrestrial-ecosystem/?q=&page=1&per_page=25

Yellowstone National Park

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/index.htm>

PG 5

Yellowstone's Great Migration video

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/video/yellowstones-great-migration/>

Take an Epic Journey with the Elk of Yellowstone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rS3P9gl7CUU>

National Geographic Case Study: Protecting Elk in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem

https://media.nationalgeographic.org/assets/file/Case_Study_Arthur_Middleton_SECURE.pdf

PG 7

Biodiversity

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/topics/resource-library-biodiversity/?q=&page=1&per_page=25

Ecosystems

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/topics/resource-library-terrestrial-ecosystem/?q=&page=1&per_page=25

Yellowstone National Park

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/index.htm>