Winter Weather and Driving in Yosemite

The Tioga, Glacier Point, and Mariposa Grove Roads are closed each year from after the first significant snowfall to about late May or early June. Other roads are generally plowed and maintained, but can close or present delays during storm periods. Motorists are advised to always carry chains and check weather and road conditions before travel. 

Icy and wet roadways can exist throughout the park! To check conditions, call 209/372-0200 for roads inside the park and 800/427-7623 or visit www.dot.ca.gov for highways connecting to Yosemite.

Tour The Ahwahnee...

Step back to an earlier era of history as you explore the National Historic Landmark that opened in 1927. Notable for its architecture and artful decor, the hotel provides a cozy atmosphere to relax and enjoy a warm drink in. (“Food & Beverage,” page 7).

... or Curl Up in Front of a Fireplace!

The Ahwahnee has three oversized fireplaces that match the proportion of the structure and that have always provided heat during the year’s cooler months. Bring a book, a warm drink, or at least a pair of frosty hands for a good warm-up in front of the flames.

Take a Photography Class

Learn how to best capture the landscape of Yosemite by joining a photography expert from the Ansel Adams Gallery. Several classes are offered each week. Some have fees, some are free. Learn more and sign up at the Ansel Adams Gallery in Yosemite Village. Shuttle stops #5 and #9. (See pages 5 and 6.)

Hike to Mirror Meadow

Situated at the base of Half Dome, the site of Mirror Lake frames reflections of Yosemite’s most iconic cliff. (The lake itself is dry until the first significant precipitation of the season, however.) The quiet trail is gentle and follows Tenaya Creek as it winds its way through the eastern Valley. The trail starts at shuttle stop #17. (Please note, the back of the Mirror Lake Loop is currently closed due to rockslide. See Valley map on the back of this Guide.)

Artwork in this issue provided by participants in Yosemite’s varied and numerous youth programs. To learn more, please read our Feature Story on page 10.
Experience Your America    Yosemite National Park

Discover Yosemite
Let your curiosity guide you to new places

Entrance Fees
Reservations are NOT required to enter Yosemite. The park is open year-round, 24 hours/day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>for 7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>for 7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yosemite Pass</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>for one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interagency Annual Pass</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>for one year at all federal recreation sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interagency Senior Pass</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>for permanent residents 62 and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interagency Access Pass</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>for permanently disabled U.S. citizens or permanent residents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reservations
Campground Reservations
877/444-6777
www.recreation.gov

Lodging Reservations
801/559-5000
www.yosemitenationalpark.com

Regional Info
Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)
www.yarts.com

Highway 120 West
Yosemite Chamber of Commerce
800/449-9120 or 209/962-0429
Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau
800/446-4425-1333
www.tcvb.com

Highway 41
Yosemite Sierra Visitors Bureau
559/683-4636
www.yosemitethisyear.com

Highway 132/49
Coulterville Visitor Center
209/878-3074

Highway 140/49
Mariposa County Visitor Center
866/245-3866 or 209/666-7081

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau
209/742-4567
www.homeofyosemite.com

Highway 120 East
Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce and Mono Lake Visitor Center
760/647-5353 or 209/724-8104
www.yosemite-gateway.org

Yosemite Valley
Iconic Yosemite Valley is known around the world for its impressive waterfalls, cliffs, and unusual rock formations. It is open year round and can be reached via Highway 41 from Fresno, Highway 140 from Merced, and Highway 120 west from Manteca. The Valley is known for massive cliff faces like El Capitan and Half Dome, and its plunging waterfalls including Yosemite Falls, the tallest waterfall in North America. Take an easy stroll to the base of Lower Yosemite Fall or, if you’re looking for a bigger challenge, hike to Vernal and/or Nevada Falls. Admire El Capitan, the massive granite monolith that stands 3,993 feet from base to summit. Whether you explore the Valley by foot, car, or with a tour, the scenery will leave you breathless and eager to see what’s around the next corner.

Granite, the Merced River, trees, and meadows compose the Valley’s unique blend. (Photo by Christine White Loberg)

Tioga Road and Glacier Point Road close after the first significant snowfall. Overnight parking ends October 15. For current road and weather information, please call 209/372-0200.
Glacier Point Road

Glacier Point, an overlook with a commanding view of Yosemite Valley, Half Dome, and the Yosemite's high country, is located 30 miles from Yosemite Valley. Although the road is closed to vehicles past the Badger Pass Ski Area in winter months, a system of cross-country ski tracks is maintained along the road, and numerous snowshoe and ski trails originate from it. Badger Pass Ski Area (open December 16, conditions permitting) offers downhill skiing, tubing, and ski instruction. From Yosemite Valley, take the Wawona Road (Highway 41), then turn left onto Glacier Point Road.

Wawona and Mariposa Grove

The Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias is located 36 miles (1 ¼ hours) south of Yosemite Valley via the Wawona Road (Highway 41), two miles from the park’s South Entrance station. The road to the Mariposa Grove is closed from sometime in December to April. The nearby Pioneer Yosemite History Center in Wawona is a collection of historic buildings associated with people and events that shaped the national park idea in Yosemite.

Crane Flat and Tuolumne Grove

Crane Flat is located 16 miles from Yosemite Valley at the junction of the Big Oak Flat and Tioga Roads. A number of hikes through pleasant meadows are available—when snow covers the ground these turn into delightful ski and snowshoe tracks. To see giant sequoias, park at the Tuolumne Grove parking area located on the Tioga Road, and walk one steep mile down to the Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias. Or, park at Merced Grove trailhead and walk two steep miles down to this small grove. These groves north of Yosemite Valley are smaller than the more-famous Mariposa Grove, but are quieter and off-limits to vehicles. Remember that the walk down is easier than the walk back up.

Tuolumne Meadows and Tioga Road

Closed to vehicles in the winter, the Tioga Road offers winter adventurers a 39-mile scenic ski or snowshoe past forests, meadows, lakes, and granite domes. The road’s elevation ranges from 6,200 to just under 10,000 feet. In winter, Tuolumne Meadows is often reached by skiers from either Yosemite Valley Trailheads or the east entrance of the park by ways of Lee Vining Canyon.

Hetch Hetchy

Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, a source of drinking water and hydroelectric power for the City of San Francisco, is home to spectacular scenery and the starting point for many wilderness trails. The area’s low elevation makes it a good place to hike in autumn and winter. Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is located 40 miles from Yosemite Valley via Highway 120 and Evergreen and Hetch Hetchy Roads. Hetch Hetchy Road is open limited hours: 8 am to 5 pm through March 31. The road is accessible via the Big Oak Flat Road and Evergreen Road and is a 1 hour and 15 minute drive from Yosemite Valley. Trailers, vehicles over 25 feet long, and RVs and other vehicles over 8 feet wide are not allowed on the narrow, winding Hetch Hetchy Road.

Did You Know?

Yosemite National Park features an amazing array of youth and education programs designed to meet the learning objectives of educators, inspire participants, and create meaningful connections to national parks and all public lands while supporting the development of a life-long stewardship ethic. Yosemite features programs for youth beginning at age 4 and continuing up to young adults, age 25.

For more information on youth and education programs offered within Yosemite National Park, as well as other inspiring ways for youth to connect to the park, please contact the Education Branch at 209/375-9503 or email yose_education@nps.gov.
The Incomparable Yosemite Valley

Yosemite Valley embraces one of the world’s most outstanding concentrations of waterfalls, granite walls, meadows, wildflowers, and trees. The Valley also harbors a rich collection of human stories, from American Indian lore to the birth of the National Park movement.

**Yosemite Valley**

An unlimited array of possibilities await you in Yosemite Valley. Most involve sightseeing and learning about the scenery before you. See pages 5-6 for more information on program topics and visitor services available.

The base of **Lower Yosemite Fall** is an easy walk from shuttle stop #6. (Both Upper and Lower Yosemite Falls will be dry until rain and snow return.) This hike features educational exhibits and a picnic area, and is accessible to the mobility impaired. Although Yosemite Falls dries up by the end of the summer, Bridalveil Fall is a year-round waterfall that you can visit by car on your way into or out of the Valley. Winds swirling about the cliff lift and blow the falling water in a delicate free-fall.

**El Capitan**, a massive granite monolith, stands 3,593 feet from base to summit. From spring to fall, climbers come from all over the globe to scale El Capitan. Note: Delicate meadows are easily damaged by trampling, so please stay on footpaths.

**Half Dome**, Yosemite’s most distinctive monument, dominates most views in Yosemite Valley. Forces of uplift, erosion from rivers and glaciers, and rockfall all shaped this famous feature into what we see today. Cook’s Meadow, Sentinel Bridge, Tunnel View, Glacier Point, and Olmsted Point are just a few locations with stunning views of Half Dome.

**Happy Isles** is a place to see dramatic natural processes at work. It is easily reached by shuttle at stop #16. Cross the footbridges onto the Isles or wander through outdoor exhibits detailing Yosemite’s geologic story. Shuttle buses may not travel to stop #16 when the road is snow-covered or icy.

**Winter sports** get underway in November and December. Badger Pass Ski Area is tentatively scheduled to open on Dec. 16, and the ice rink at Curry Village is open daily! To learn more: 209/372-8341.

**Tunnel View**, along Wawona Road (Hwy 41) provides a classic view of Yosemite Valley, including El Capitan, Half Dome, Sentinel Rock, Cathedral Rocks, and Bridalveil Fall. It is particularly spectacular at sunset or after the clearing of a storm.

To experience the Valley on foot, stop by a visitor center for a trail map and the most current trail conditions, or see below for a list of popular Valley day hikes.

**Weather permitting, a motor coach tours is available in Yosemite.** To experience the Valley with a guide, take the Valley Floor Tour. This 2-hour tour departs several times daily from Yosemite Lodge.

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**Yosemite Valley Day Hikes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAIL / DESTINATION</th>
<th>STARTING POINT</th>
<th>DISTANCE / TIME</th>
<th>DIFFICULTY / ELEVATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridalveil Fall</td>
<td>Bridalveil Fall Parking Area</td>
<td>0.5 mile round-trip, 20 minutes</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Yosemite Fall</td>
<td>Lower Yosemite Fall Shuttle Stop #6</td>
<td>1.0 mile round-trip, 20 minutes</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Yosemite Fall Trail to Columbia Rock</td>
<td>Camp 4 Near Shuttle Stop #7</td>
<td>2 miles round-trip, 2–3 hours</td>
<td>Strenuous 1,000-foot gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of Upper Yosemite Fall</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>7.2 miles round-trip, 6–8 hours</td>
<td>Very Strenuous 2,700-foot gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirror Lake (A seasonal lake)</td>
<td>Mirror Lake Shuttle Stop #17</td>
<td>2 miles round-trip, 1 hour</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernal Fall Footbridge</td>
<td>Happy Isles Shuttle Stop #16</td>
<td>1.4 miles round-trip, 1–2 hours</td>
<td>Moderate, 400-foot gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of Vernal Fall</td>
<td>Happy Isles Shuttle Stop #16</td>
<td>3 miles round-trip, 2–4 hours</td>
<td>Strenuous 1,000-foot gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of Nevada Fall</td>
<td>same as above</td>
<td>5 miles round-trip, 3–4 hours</td>
<td>Strenuous 1,800-foot gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Mile Trail to Glacier Point (Closed in winter)</td>
<td>Southside Drive</td>
<td>4.8 miles one-way, 3–4 hours one-way</td>
<td>Very Strenuous, 3,200-foot gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Floor Loop</td>
<td>Lower Yosemite Fall Shuttle Stop #6</td>
<td>13 miles full loop, 5–7 hours full loop</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yosemite Valley and Badger Pass

**WAWONA**

**Events and Programs**

Where to go and what to do

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**YOSEMITE VALLEY AND BADGER PASS**

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Friday

8:00am Adventure Hike - Snowshoe to Dewey Point (6 ½ hrs). Badger Pass Nordic Center, Mountaineersving School TicketsInfo at any tour desk (YMS) $  
10:30am Snowshoe Fall Tours - Explore the Winter Landscape Conditions permitting. 2 hrs, meet at Badger Pass A-Frame for naturalist tour of winter landscape. Bring warm clothing, snowshoes provided. (NPS)

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Saturday

5:30pm Vintage Music (Dec 25 only) 4 hrs, Live music & historical programs with pianist/fiddler Tom Bopp, programs are available by request, usually given at 8:30pm, check the holiday schedule for details, Wawona Hotel Lounge (DNC).

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Sunday

9:00am Camera Walk - Wild About Wildlife 1 hr, Front of Yosemite Valley Visitor Center (NPS)

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Programs listed in ALL CAPS AND COLOR are especially for children and their families

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**Access for People with Disabilities**

Accessible parking spaces are available just west of the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center. To reach these, enter the Valley on Southside Drive. Turn left on Sentinel Drive. Turn left on Northside Drive, then follow this road for one mile to Park Entrance Station. Parking is indicated by a blue and white sign.

For a complete list of accessible services, recreational opportunities, and exhibits, pick up an up-to-date Yosemite Accessibility Guide which is available at entrance stations, visitor centers, and online at npwa.gov/park/park/park.html

A sign language interpreter is available for deaf and hard-of-hearing visitors. Call 209/372-0445 to request an interpreter. Advance notice of at least two weeks is required. 

FAQs

- **NPS** National Park Service
- **DNC** Dine & Convent in Yosemite
- **AAG** The Ansel Adams Gallery
- **YC** Yosemite Conservancy
- **$** Programs offered for a fee
Even when it's cold outside, Yosemite Valley offers great activities and programs for the whole family.

Valley Visitor Center and Bookstore
Visitor center and bookstore hours are 9 am to 5 pm, just west of the main post office (shuttle stops #5 and #9). The center offers information, maps, and books in the attached bookstore. Explore the exhibit hall and learn how Yosemite’s spectacular landscape was formed, how people have interacted with it through the centuries, how wildlife adapts and survives, and how your national park continues to evolve.

Yosemite Museum
Located in Yosemite Village next to the Valley Visitor Center. Open 9 am to 5 pm.

Ansel Adams Gallery
The gallery is located in Yosemite Village next to the Valley Visitor Center and is open daily. Hours are 9 am to 5 pm.

Wilderness Permits
Wilderness permits and bear canisters are required year-round for Wilderness travel. They can be obtained at the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center from 9 am to 5 pm.

FILM: SPIRIT OF YOSEMITE
This inspiring visitor-orientation film is shown every 30 minutes, Monday - Saturday between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm, and Sunday between noon to 4:30 pm in the Valley Visitor Center Theater. Please note, on December 25 the Spirit of Yosemite will be shown at 9:30, 10 and 10:30, then every half hour between 2:00-4:30.

Yosemite Outdoor Adventures
The non-profit Yosemite Conservancy sponsors this year-round series of fun, educational field programs; they’re a great way to deepen your connection to our park.

January 7, Mariposa Grove Snowshoe Trek
Big tree magic with Ranger Ewart

February 11, Sequoias and Snowshoes
Shirley Spencer heads into Mariposa Grove

Starting January 1: Hours of operation
10am-5 pm, Christmas Eve hours: 9-3 pm
Closed Christmas Day

The gallery offers the work of Ansel Adams, contemporary photographers, and other fine artists. See page 5 for photo walk and other event times.

Staff Show:
January 3rd - February 17th (Reception Saturday January 14, 2-4 pm) For more information, call 209/372-4143, or visit www.anseladams.com.

Yosemite Lodge
The gallery is located in Yosemite Valley next to the Valley Visitor Center.

Camping in Yosemite
Camping is available on a first come, first served basis in Yosemite Valley at Upper Pines and Camp 4.

Reservations are required March 15 through November for Yosemite Valley’s car campgrounds and summer through fall for Hodgdon Meadow, Crane Flat, Wiwina, and half of Tuolumne Meadows.

Campground reservations are available in blocks of one month at a time, up to five months in advance, on the 15th of each month at 7 am Pacific time. Be aware that nearly all reservations for the months of May through September and for some other weekends are filled the first day they become available, usually within seconds or minutes after 7 am.

To make reservations, visit www.recreation.gov (recommended) or call 877/444-6777

Winter Theater LIVE
The Spirit of John Muir: Stories of Ice and Snow
Come travel along with John Muir on some of his famous chilly winter adventures and learn what drove him to his spirited defense of wilderness.

Actor Lee Stetson’s vibrant portrayal of John Muir has enthralled Yosemite visitors for over 25 years. Show lasts approximately 60 minutes. Tickets and more info available in advance at the Yosemite Lodge at the Falls Tour Desk or at the door. See page 6 for details.

POST OFFICE
Yosemite Village Main Office Monday-Friday: 8:30am to 5pm Saturday: 10am to noon Yosemite Lodge Post Office Monday-Friday: 12:30pm to 2:45pm El Portal Post Office Monday-Friday: 8:30am to 5pm closed for lunch from 12:30 to 1:30

Wawona Post Office Monday-Friday: 9am to 5pm Saturday: 9am to noon

BOOKS, GIFTS & APPAREL
Yosemite Village
The Ansel Adams Gallery
9am to 5pm
Yosemite Bookstore
Inside Yosemite Visitor Center
9am to 5pm
Yosemite Museum Store
9am to 5pm, may close for lunch

Village Store
9am to 8pm
Habitat Yosemite
11am to 4pm Thurs.-Sun. only
Sport Shop
10am to 4pm

The Ahwahnee
The Ahwahnee Gift Shop
8am to 6pm
The Ahwahnee Sweet Shop
7am to 10pm
Yosemite Lodge
Gift/Grocery
8am to 7pm
Nature Shop
11am to 7pm
Curry Village
Mountain Shop
9am to 6pm
Curry Village Gift/Grocery
9am-7pm
Wawona Area
Wawona Store and Pioneer Gift Shop
8am to 5pm

WINTER SPORTS
Badger Pass Ski Area and Sport Shop
Scheduled to open December 16, weather and conditions permitting.

By Jesus Dolores, Yosemite Leadership Program Intern
Wawona
Pioneer Yosemite History Center
Go back to a time of horse-drawn wagons, a covered bridge, and log cabins. A visit to the Pioneer Yosemite History Center explores Yosemite’s history and explains how Yosemite was the inspiration for national parks across America and around the world. The center is open all year, with interpretive exhibits and brochures available.

Evening Programs
Join pianist/singer Tom Bopp in the Wawona Hotel lobby from 5:30 pm to 9:30 pm. See page 5 for program details.

Wilderness Permits
Visitors can obtain wilderness permits at a self-service kiosk on the porch of the Wawona Visitor Center at Hill’s Studio, adjacent to the Wawona Hotel. Bear canisters are available for rent at the Wawona Store.

Mariposa Grove
Located near Yosemite’s South Entrance, the Mariposa Grove is the park’s largest stand of giant sequoias, with about 500 trees. A few of these giants are visible in the parking area. Information about access for disabled people is available at the tram boarding area. The road to the Grove closes in November or December and opens sometime in April.

Visitors can walk, ski, or snowshoe when the road is closed to vehicles.

Getting to Mariposa Grove
Allow 1½ hours driving time to reach the grove from the Valley. Cars are prohibited beyond the grove parking lot.

Wawona Hotel*
Dining Room
Breakfast: 7am to 10am
Lunch: 11:30am to 2pm
Dinner: 5pm to 9pm

Gift/Grocery
8am to 5pm

Village Garage
8am to 5pm Monday-Saturday.
209/372-8320

Merced Grove
Yosemite’s quietest stand of sequoias is the Merced Grove, a group of about 20 trees accessible only on foot. It’s a four-mile round-trip hike, ski, or snowshoe (about three hours) into the grove from Big Oak Flat Road (Highway 120 West). Located 3½ miles north of Crane Flat and 4½ miles south of the Big Oak Flat Entrance, the trailhead is marked by a road sign and post labeled B-10.

Tuolumne Grove
This cluster of about 25 sequoias is near Crane Flat at the intersection of Big Oak Flat and Tioga Roads. The former route of the Big Oak Flat Road leads downhill from Crane Flat into the grove. Now closed to cars, this path drops 500 feet (150 meters) in one mile. The trip (you can walk, ski, or snowshoe) is moderately strenuous uphill. Within the Tuolumne Grove there is an easy, half-mile, self-guiding nature trail.
Experience Your America  Yosemite National Park

Protecting yourself...

Keep yourself safe while exploring your park.

There are many ways to experience the wilderness of Yosemite. While the forces of nature can create unexpected hazardous conditions, with a little common sense and some pre-planning, you can minimize the risks associated with many activities.

Around Ice and Water

- Stay off of frozen lakes, rivers and streams and away from swiftly-moving water. Keep children from wandering on or near these hazards.
- Never swim or wade upstream from the brink of a waterfall, even if the water appears shallow and calm. Each year, unsuspecting visitors are swept over waterfalls to their deaths when swimming in these areas.
- Swimming is prohibited in Emerald Pool (above Vernal Fall) and in the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir.

Avoid Hypothermia

Sierra winters are comparatively mild, but temperatures can drop into dangerous territory with little warning. Winter sports require a high degree of preparation and training. Be prepared to shelter overnight even when out just for the day. Know how to use your gear and carry basic repair materials.

Avoid the combination of wetness, wind, and cold. Know symptoms of hypothermia. Carry emergency fire-startering materials and food. Avoid dehydration; carry and drink plenty of water and carry emergency high-energy food.

Water Quality

To protect yourself from disease, treat any surface water before drinking. Treatment methods include boiling for five minutes, use of a Giardia-rated water filter, or iodine-based purifier. To prevent the spread of Giardia and other water-borne disease organisms, use restroom facilities where available, and always wash hands afterwards with soap and water. In natural areas where facilities are not available, wash, camp, and bury human waste at least 100 feet away from any water source or trail, burying human waste six inches deep and pack out any toilet paper.

Traffic Safety

Roads leading to the park are two-lane, narrow, and windy. When traveling on park roads you can protect yourself, other visitors, and park wildlife by observing the following simple rules: Please obey posted speed limits. Yosemite’s roads are used by both visitors and park wildlife. Use turnouts to pull completely out of the road, to take photos, consult the park map, or simply enjoy the park’s scenery and wildlife.

Effects of Altitude

Altitude sickness may develop in otherwise healthy and fit people who are exposed to rapid increases in altitude. It can develop at altitudes as low as 8,000 feet (Yosemite Valley’s elevation is 4,000 feet). Should altitude sickness develop, descend to a lower elevation. The Yosemite Medical Clinic in Yosemite Valley is experienced in diagnosing and treating this sickness.

Hiking, Backpacking, Backcountry Snow Travel, and Rock Climbing

There are no scheduled winter patrols, so be prepared. Be honest about your abilities and plan with the least experienced member of your group in mind. Tell someone where you are going and when you are due back.

- Be prepared for icy travel before conditions arise. Bring crampons, ice axe, climbing skins, and other traction devices.
- Carry and know how to use a map and compass.
- Check weather forecasts. Snow can occur with little warning, and can make route finding very difficult.
- Avoid dehydration or heat exhaustion; carry and drink plenty of water, and bring high-energy food.
- Be prepared to set up emergency shelter even when out just for the day.
- Know how to use your gear and carry basic repair materials.

Wilderness Permit Details

Information about Half Dome permits is available on our website at www.nps.gov/yose.

Free wilderness permits are required for all overnight trips into the Yosemite Wilderness. Permits are issued and bear canisters are available for rent at the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center, the Badger Pass A Frame, and the Hetch Hetchy entrance during hours of operation. Wilderness permits are available via self registration at the Hill’s Studio in Wawona, at the Ranger Station in Tuolumne Meadows, and on porch at the Big Oak Flat Information Station 24hrs a day. Call the parks main phone line at 209/372-0200, or check the web at www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/wildpermits.htm for additional information.

For summer trips, reservations are taken from 24 weeks to two days in advance of the start of your trip. A processing fee of $5 per permit plus $5 per person is charged to each confirmed reservation. Check the park’s website for trailhead availability and call 209/372-0740.

Weather in Yosemite

Dressing in layers and bringing plenty of water (even during cooler months!) will help you stay safe through Yosemite’s changing weather conditions. As is true of all mountainous regions, weather in the Sierra Nevada can change rapidly in any season of the year. Elevation plays a major role in temperature and precipitation variability, and Yosemite ranges in elevation from 2,000 feet to more than 13,000 feet above sea level.

Temperatures in winter can range well below freezing up into the 60s during the day. Shady spots on trails and roads can remain icy even during the warmth of the day.

Yosemite Leadership Program participants, Photo by Jamie Hussan
**Keep Wildlife Wild!**

Black bears, coyote, deer, and grey squirrels are just a few of the many animal species in the park that are active year round. Learn how to help protect Yosemite’s wildlife.

**Store Your Food Properly.**

4,000 to 20,000 calories worth of grasses, berries, acorns, and grubs— that’s the typical daily diet of most bears. It’s a lot easier for a bear to eat the thousands of calories of food in an ice chest than it is to spend all day nibbling at grasses. Their incredible sense of smell allows them to detect things we can’t, which helps them find food—a black bear can smell a dead deer three miles away. To top it off, bears have excellent vision and can see in color, so they recognize ice chests, grocery bags, and other food containers as potential food sources.

**If you see a bear, scare it away or keep your distance.**

You may not see a bear during your visit because they naturally avoid people. However, if you see one in a developed area (like a campground or parking lot), act immediately to scare it away. Make noise and yell as loud as possible. If there is more than one person, stand together to present a more intimidating figure, but do not surround the bear.

If you see a bear anywhere else, consider yourself lucky—but keep your distance (at least 50 yards, or about the distance made by four shuttle buses parked end to end). If you get too close, you will be helping the bear become used to being around people. Bears that become comfortable around humans lose their natural fear of us and may become too aggressive. When that happens, they sometimes have to be killed.

**Drive the speed limit.**

The most common human-related cause of death for a black bear in Yosemite is being hit by a car. Slow down! Driving too fast is almost always the cause of these accidental deaths.

**Red Bear, Dead Bear**

Did you notice the red bear markers as you drove through the park? Each of them mark a place where a bear was recently hit. Every year bears, hundreds of deer, and countless other animals are killed while trying to cross park roads. Many of these deaths could have been avoided if drivers observed posted speed limits.

Please remember that Yosemite National Park is a wildlife preserve: by driving the speed limit you are helping to protect the park and its wildlife.

**Report Bear Sightings!**

To report bear sightings, improper food storage, trash problems, and other bear-related problems, leave a message for the Bear Management Team at 209/372-0322. Your call can be made anonymously. For more information regarding bears and proper food storage, visit the park’s website (www.nps.gov/yose/bears).

**Coyotes**

Watching a coyote hunting for mice in one of Yosemite’s many meadows can be an amazing wildlife experience. Coyotes are opportunistic carnivores that primarily prey on small mammals. Like bears, their diets change throughout the year with food availability.

Unfortunately, coyotes sometimes change their natural behavior to try to obtain human food. Approaching, and/or feeding coyotes can cause them to lose their natural fear of humans. Please do not stop to feed coyotes that you see along the sides of the roads. This encourages them to frequent road sides to beg for food, endangering both coyotes and drivers.

**How to Store Food**

“Food” includes any item with a scent, regardless of packaging. This may include items that you do not consider food, such as canned goods, bottles, drinks, soap, cosmetics, toiletries, trash, ice chests (even when empty), and unwashed items used for preparing or eating meals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>FOOD STORAGE</th>
<th>WHY?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Your Vehicle</strong></td>
<td>You may store food in your car (with windows closed) only during daylight hours. Do not store food in your car after dark. Use a food locker. Remember to clear your car of food wrappers, baby wipes, and crumbs.</td>
<td>Bears can smell food, even if it’s sealed in the trunk or glove compartment, and they recognize boxes and bags as potential food sources. They can easily and quickly break into all kinds of vehicles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Your Campsite or Tent Cabin</strong></td>
<td>You must store all your food in food lockers—not in your tent or tent cabin. A food locker is available at each campsite and tent cabin. Food may be stored out of sight in hard-sided lockers with windows closed.</td>
<td>Bears may enter campgrounds when people are present, and some will even check food lockers to see if they’re secured. Keep food locked closed and latched at all times, even when you are in your campsite or tent cabin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Picnic Areas &amp; on the Trails</strong></td>
<td>Do not leave food unattended. Always keep food within arm’s reach. Don’t turn your back to your food.</td>
<td>Bears may investigate picnic areas or backpacks for food even when people are present, so be alert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Backpacking in the Wilderness</strong></td>
<td>Bear resistant food containers are required throughout the Yosemite Wilderness. Hanging food is prohibited in Yosemite.</td>
<td>In Yosemite and the southern Sierra, bear canisters are the only effective and proven method of preventing bears from getting human food.</td>
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Yosemite... the Ultimate Classroom

By Shauna Potocky

"Yosemite helped me experience a whole new world I was not aware of—Yosemite allowed me to reflect, write in a journal, and helped me experience who I really am."

Jessa Angel Dolores, a University of California Merced student and participant in the Yosemite Leadership Program

Yosemite changes lives and often it does so through remarkable opportunities. Today, there is an amazing and inspiring array of youth and education programs offered within Yosemite National Park that do change lives—in fact, there is no shortage of transformational moments when you talk to students and teachers who participate in some of Yosemite’s programs.

Yosemite is well known for its inspiring geology, waterfalls and wildlife—yet, what may be less known is that Yosemite, with all of its incomparable features, also serves as the ultimate classroom to thousands of students and young adults.

Nearly thirty different youth programs serve participants age 4 to 25, through a variety of engaging opportunities—from Junior Ranger programs, environmental education and field opportunities, college internships, professional development, to the Youth Conservation Corps and California Conservation Corps. Each year the park serves over 26,000 students through education programs and more than 24,000 youth in Junior Ranger and other field based programs.

It is no wonder the opportunities are so diverse, since nearly every subject can be taught in Yosemite—from ecology, geology, wildlife biology, natural and cultural history to art, literacy and leadership. Youth and education programs connect students to the environment, stewardship and public lands in deep and profound ways that are exciting as well as transformational.

From innovative programs such as Adventure Risk Challenge, a rigorous academic program that focuses on literacy and leadership to Parks in Focus, a program that utilizes photography as a teaching tool for learning natural history, ecology, stewardship and the legacy of public lands, there are great ways to connect youth to Yosemite.

For those seeking ranger-led curriculum based programs, Parks As Classrooms, are designed for visiting youth and school groups grades Kindergarten through college. Topics range from climate change, park management, watershed science, wildlife, Indian Cultural Programs and much more. These programs allow students to have a hands-on learning experience right here in the park. For groups who cannot travel to the park, the education team has a solution for that—Parks As Classrooms programs can be delivered via Skype right into a classroom environment!

"Students all over the country read about and study National Parks for classroom projects, and Skype gives Yosemite the chance to make student studies come alive," shares ranger Sharon Miyako. "Education rangers have Skyped with schools in California, and across the United States, answering questions about wildlife, land management, and careers. It’s exciting to see students making positive connections with a place they’ve never stepped foot in."

And the opportunities do not end there! NatureBridge, one of the parks’ education partners, offers an exciting array of programs for students—from 2 to 5 day residential programs as well as summer field courses. Students hike through the dramatic landscapes of Yosemite, explore ancient groves of giant sequoias, ski across snow meadows, and challenge themselves to reach the tops of waterfalls. Through active student engagement, NatureBridge faculty teach science, history, and the arts and give these subjects context through personal experience.

For youth interested in obtaining an internship, the Student Conservation Association commonly features internship opportunities in Yosemite and for some college student’s, their school may have already established a connection with the park, such as Stanford University and the University of California Merced.

For example, a dynamic collaboration between U.C. Merced and Yosemite National Park, led to the development of the Yosemite Leadership Program, which provides U.C. Merced students with the opportunity to develop leadership skills through on-campus and in-park programs that include outdoor education, stewardship projects and professional development. Participants build valuable skills, which serve both their academic and professional careers. In addition, some students also participate in a 12-week internship in which they live and work in Yosemite National Park.

“The Yosemite Leadership Program helps students link theoretical concepts learned in the classroom to real world, practical and professional opportunities by teaching students how to move from theory to action,” shares Jesse Chakrin, director of the on-campus program, “We are helping to develop the next generation of environmental leaders and stewards for Parks, public lands and most importantly, communities.”

With a wide variety of programs, serving various ages and learning objectives, there is just about something for everyone—and the best way to experience what Yosemite has to offer is to explore the options or get involved. Start now and explore some of the opportunities in Yosemite for the youth in your life and help them become connected to their national park—Yosemite, because when you learn in the ultimate classroom, it just might be transformational.

For a full list of Youth In Yosemite programs and contact information, please contact the Education Branch at (209) 375-9503 or via email at yose_education@nps.gov. We look forward to helping connect you to an array of inspiring programs!

The Yosemite Conservancy is a generous supporter of many Youth In Yosemite programs.
Supporting Your Park

Providing for Yosemite’s Future

Enhance the Visitor Experience
It takes a legion of people working together to protect this special park for you and future generations of visitors. You too can extend your connection to Yosemite well after you return home by getting involved with the organizations that partner to preserve Yosemite.

This publication was made possible by the Yosemite Park Partners listed on this page. Read more below or visit www.yosemitepartners.org to learn more about helping these organizations provide for the future of Yosemite National Park.

The Ansel Adams Gallery
The Ansel Adams Gallery, owned by the family of photographer Ansel Adams since 1902, is a center that celebrates the arts and the natural grandeur of our environment. It cultivates an aesthetic appreciation and concern for our world by offering visitors a unique variety of literature and art, as well as programs that inspire creativity. Visit online at: www.anseladams.com.

DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite
DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite (DNC) operates hotels, restaurants, sightseeing tours, recreational activities, interpretive programs, stores, shuttles and service stations in the park under contract with the U.S. Department of the Interior. DNC encourages its employees to develop a strong relationship with the park during their tenure.

For more information and employment opportunities with DNC at Yosemite, visit online at: www.YosemitePark.com

Yosemite Conservancy
Yosemite Conservancy is the non-profit formed by a merger of the Yosemite Association and The Yosemite Fund. The Conservancy has a long history in Yosemite with over 100 years of combined experience supporting the park. Yosemite Conservancy can make the difference you see around you because we are the only philanthropic organization that is dedicated exclusively to Yosemite.

Our mission remains the same: Providing for Yosemite’s future is our passion. We inspire people to support projects and programs that preserve and protect Yosemite National Park’s resources and enrich the visitor experience.

The Yosemite Conservancy has funded over 300 projects through 60 million in grants to help preserve and protect the park. The work of the Conservancy can be found in every aspect of the visitor experience from trail restoration, bear-proof lockers, wilderness permits, wildlife preservation, outdoor education and so much more. Annually the Yosemite Conservancy recruits over 400 volunteers to work in the park to repair trails, remove invasive species, and provide visitor information.

For more information, visit park bookstores or go online at: www.yosemiteconservancy.org

NatureBridge
NatureBridge provides residential field science programs for youth in the world’s most spectacular classroom - Yosemite National Park. Through active student engagement, our faculty teaches science, history, and the arts and gives these subjects context through personal experience. A NatureBridge learning adventure strives to foster a life-long connection to the natural world and responsible actions to sustain it. Find out more about our year-round programs for schools and summer programs for individual teens at www.naturebridge.org/yosemite

Get Involved!
Yosemite National Park is busy planning for the future. Visit us at one of our regular Open Houses on January 25, 2012 from 1pm to 4pm at the Valley Visitor Center Auditorium. Park entrance fees are waived for Open House participants. Sign up for our mailing list and receive emails about current and upcoming plans and projects on our website: http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/planning.htm

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Photos: Center, NatureBridge, above right, Half Dome, by Christine White Loberg