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YELLOWSTONE NATURE NOTES

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This is one of a series of bulletins issued regularly for the information of those interested in the Natural History and History of Yellowstone National Park and the unmatched educational opportunities offered by this region. PUBLICATIONS USING THESE NOTES WILL PLEASE GIVE CREDIT TO "YELLOWSTONE NATURE NOTES" AND TO THE AUTHOR.

Edmund B. Rogers	C. Max Bauer
Superintendent	Editor

Again "Nature Notes" is on the general subject of Winter Life in Yellowstone. In this issue we begin a series of articles on the Yellowstone elk or wapiti (*Cervus canadensis canadensis*). Ever since the winter of 1919 and 1920, when an exceptionally large number of wapiti died, a problem has been faced on the winter feed for these animals. The articles dealing with this subject will be six or eight in number and attempt to place before the reader the facts regarding elk in Yellowstone Park. -- The Editor.

WINTER WORK IN YELLOWSTONE
by
Clerk Loustalet J. Quinn

Do you really stay in the park all winter? But aren't you snowed in? How many stay there and what do you all do? How can there be any work for you there when the park is closed to visitors? These are the questions a Yellowstone Park employee answers over and

over again during the vacation which he takes in the winter because you have yours in summer.

Everyone knows that Yellowstone Park was set aside for "the benefit and enjoyment of the people" but few realize the tremendous task those have who are charged with carrying out this ideal.

When the last summer visitor is gone and the business operators have closed up shop and followed him, the Park Superintendent and his assistants draw long breaths, review the last season's mistakes and accomplishments and set themselves to a busy winter of preparing for a bigger and better season next year.

The ranger force, having given its summer to protection of the park's first interest -- the people, turns to the second -- the wildlife. While rangers are stationed at various points in the park throughout the winter, the whole area must be covered regularly by men on skis or snowshoes, who not only protect the wildlife of the park from possible poachers and hunters, but study the needs and habits of the birds and animals. These men on patrol also gather information on snow and weather conditions for use in scientific studies not alone by the National Park Service but by the Weather Bureau and the Geological Survey.

When the ranger is not on winter patrol, he does not relax by the fire and read a book, but records his observations and compiles the data for information of scientists and all lovers of nature, or he may be engaged in rounding up the buffalo or trapping elk for shipment to other areas for restocking purposes or to zoos in this country and others.

The naturalists also are engaged during the winter with the assembling of information on the park for the interested public. Everyone wants to know if the geysers play in the winter and whether Old Faithful was on schedule last summer. "Nature Notes", edited by the education department, records data on these natural phenomena as well as individuals' observations of the park wildlife. This department also has charge of the reference library and of all museum exhibits and a great deal of winter time is devoted to accessioning and classifying these books and exhibits. Papers, pamphlets and books written on every phase of this great park are sent to the naturalists for review and criticism before they are submitted for publication and original work is also done by these men for Government bulletins and general publication.

Because our engineering and mechanical departments are on the job all winter we are not entirely snowed in at Mammoth and it is the work they do in these long months that gives you the comforts afforded by good highways, parking areas and campgrounds in the summer.

The electrical, plumbing, carpenter, painting and commissary departments seemingly spend most of their winter catering to the Mammoth residents. They see that we are supplied with heat, light, telephones, sanitation facilities, repairs to our living quarters and office buildings and other necessities of life, but they are the backbone of the structure that operates the park for your benefit and enjoyment. These departments, though consisting of only a few men during the winter, are greatly expanded in the summer and plans must be made and personnel arranged for so that when summer comes those departments can be all about the park doing the things for your comfort that they have done all winter for ours.

Then too there are the clerks, bookkeepers, and stenographers who, between correspondence, accounts, purchases, inventories, filing, etc. keep really busy.

Working with the permanent National Park Service organization of 131, are the 15 facilitating personnel, four officers and 240 enrollees of two C. C. C. camps, two representatives of the U. S. Weather Bureau, four of the Post Office Department, varying numbers from the Bureau of Public Roads, 187 workers, employed on PWA and WPA projects, our two teachers, and those who operate the general store, making a total employed in winter operation of the park approximately 460. These, with their families, give a population of 550.

With the exception of the ten or twelve rangers and their families who are stationed out in the park, from 20 to 90 miles away by trail and much more than that by open roads, these people all live in the little community, of Mammoth, five miles from Gardiner and 63 from Livingston, Montana. We go "out" for vacations and occasionally wildlife, wintersports, or camera enthusiasts come in, but mostly there is "just us" and we are always glad when the season opens and you are back.