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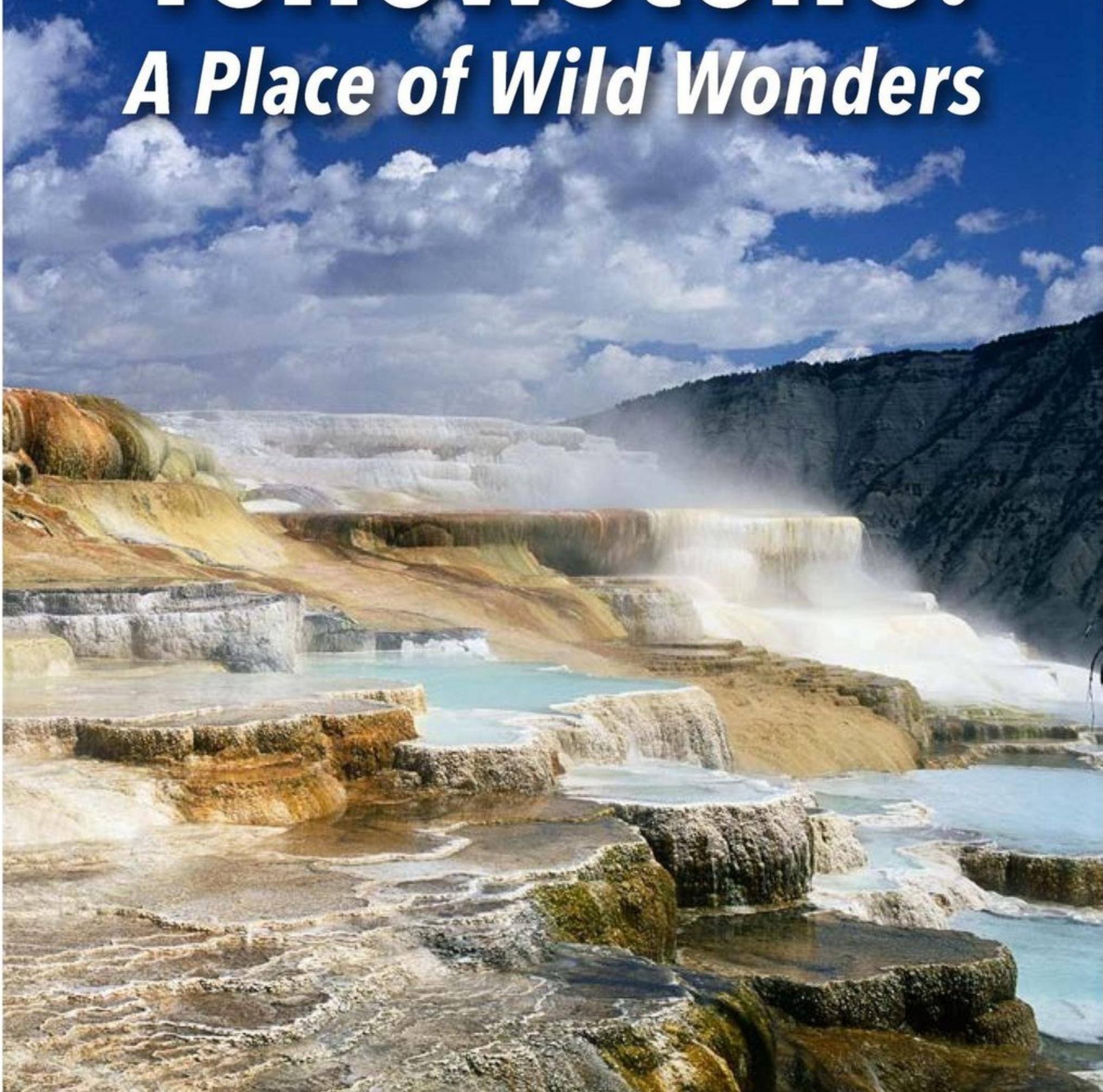
# Yellowstone: *A Place of Wild Wonders*

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Written by Mike Stark

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# Yellowstone: *A Place of Wild Wonders*



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## Focus Question

What is Yellowstone, and why  
do people visit there?

## Words to Know

explorers

hot spot

national park

Native

Americans

protected

wildlife

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Yellowstone: A Place of Wild Wonders

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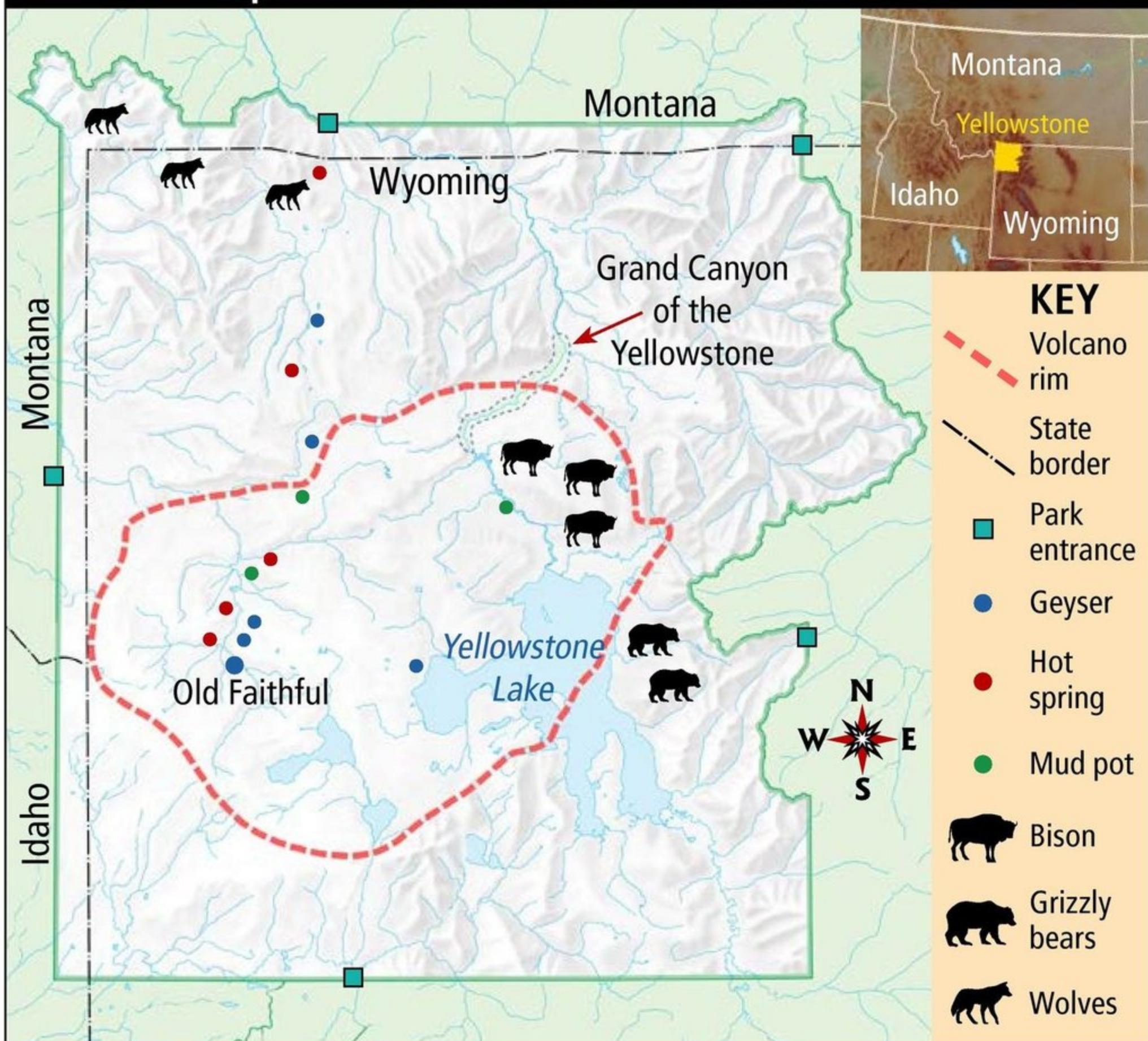
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### Correlation

LEVEL K	
Fountas & Pinnell	J
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## Important Sites in Yellowstone National Park



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## Introduction

Colorful pools and wild animals. Streams of hot water that shoot out of the ground. People can see these things and more at Yellowstone, which became the world's first **national park** in 1872. National parks are areas of special, protected land.



Old Faithful is not the largest geyser in Yellowstone, but it is the one most people go to see.

## A Hot Spot

Many people who go to Yellowstone want to see Old Faithful geyser.

A geyser is a hole in the ground that shoots steam and hot water into the air. Yellowstone has about three hundred of them. Old Faithful shoots water 100 feet (30 m) high about every ninety minutes.

## Yellowstone Supervolcano

Yellowstone is home to an old caved-in volcano. Over the past two million years, the volcano has had three big eruptions. The rim of the caved-in volcano is huge. It is more than 45 miles (72 km) across in some places. People still watch Yellowstone closely. The volcano doesn't look as if it is going to erupt again soon.



Yellowstone has the third largest hot spring in the world (main). Mud pots are areas that are filled with clay and ash from volcanoes (inset).

**Yellowstone is on top of a hot spot.**  
Heat from Earth's center warms up rocks and rainwater in the ground. Then hot water and steam move up and shoot out of the ground. The hot spot has also made hot pools of smelly mud and many colorful hot springs.



The bison is the biggest land animal in North America. Thousands of bison live in Yellowstone.

## Wildlife

Many kinds of animals live in Yellowstone. The biggest animals in Yellowstone are bison. They can weigh up to 2,000 pounds (907 kg). Bison are hairy animals with a hump on their back. They roll in the dust to fight off flies and to get rid of their old fur.



Visitors to Yellowstone used to feed the grizzly bears. Today, this is against the rules because it is dangerous.

The next-biggest animals are grizzly bears. They can weigh 800 pounds (363 kg) and are fast for their size. In the winter, grizzly bears sleep in dens under the ground for months.



From 1995 to 1997, forty-one wild wolves were brought to Yellowstone from Canada and Montana.

People forced wolves out of Yellowstone over one hundred years ago. Later, workers for the national park brought them back. About one hundred wolves live in Yellowstone today.



deer



fox



elk



golden eagle

More than 350 other kinds of wild animals also live in the park. People may see elk, deer, golden eagles, fish, beavers, and foxes. Yellowstone is a safe place for them.



Native Americans would stay in Yellowstone for a time, hunt for food, and make tools. Old shelters still stand in the park today.

## History

**Native Americans** were the first people to visit Yellowstone. They visited the area for thousands of years before it became a national park.



Later, **explorers** went to Yellowstone. The United States decided that the land, water, and animals were special. Yellowstone was set aside to be protected forever. The first national park was born.



Paintings were made to show off Yellowstone's beauty (top). Men explored Yellowstone before it was a park (bottom).



Gettysburg National Park helps people remember the battle that happened there (top). Grand Canyon National Park protects one of the biggest canyons in the world (bottom).

There are now over fifty national parks in the United States. Some protect special natural areas. Others protect places that are important to history.



## Conclusion

About three million people come from all over to visit Yellowstone every year. They fish, hike, camp, watch **wildlife**, and visit the hot springs. In Yellowstone, people can see natural beauty unlike anything else.



The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone is one of the most amazing sights in the park (main). Travel posters encourage people to visit Yellowstone (inset).

Now that  
Yellowstone is  
protected as a  
national park,  
it will always  
be around.

## Glossary

<b>explorers</b> <i>(n.)</i>	people who visit and learn about new places (p. 12)
<b>hot spot</b> <i>(n.)</i>	a place in the Earth's crust where hot, liquid rock rises close to the surface (p. 6)
<b>national park</b> <i>(n.)</i>	an area of government-owned land protected for its historic importance or wonderful natural landscape and wildlife (p. 4)
<b>Native Americans</b> <i>(n.)</i>	people whose ancestors lived in the Americas before Europeans arrived (p. 11)
<b>protected</b> <i>(adj.)</i>	guarded or defended from harm or danger (p. 4)
<b>wildlife</b> <i>(n.)</i>	wild animals that live in their natural habitats (p. 14)

# Yellowstone: A Place of Wild Wonders

A Reading A-Z Level K Leveled Book

Word Count: 406

## Connections

### Writing and Art

Imagine you are visiting Yellowstone. Draw a picture and write a postcard to a friend about your experience.

### Science

Choose two animals that live in Yellowstone. Use a Venn diagram to compare how the animals are alike and how they are different.

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