

Canyon Area Day Hikes

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Yellowstone National Park



Welcome to the Canyon Area

Numerous trails suitable for short or extended hikes into Yellowstone's backcountry begin in the Canyon area. This guide introduces you to several trails selected by the interpretive rangers. Always carry rain gear, extra food and water, and other emergency equipment when venturing into the backcountry. Be sure to obtain current trail condition and bear activity information at the Canyon Visitor Education Center.

Cautions

Hydrothermal areas: The thin ground in these areas breaks easily, and often overlies scalding water. Stay on the trail.

All Wildlife: You must stay at least 100 yards (91 m) away from bears and wolves; and at least 25 yards (23 m) away from all other animals—including birds.



Bears: Although your chance of an encounter is low, your safety is not guaranteed. Minimize your risks by making loud noises, shouting, or singing. Hike in groups and use caution where vision is obstructed.

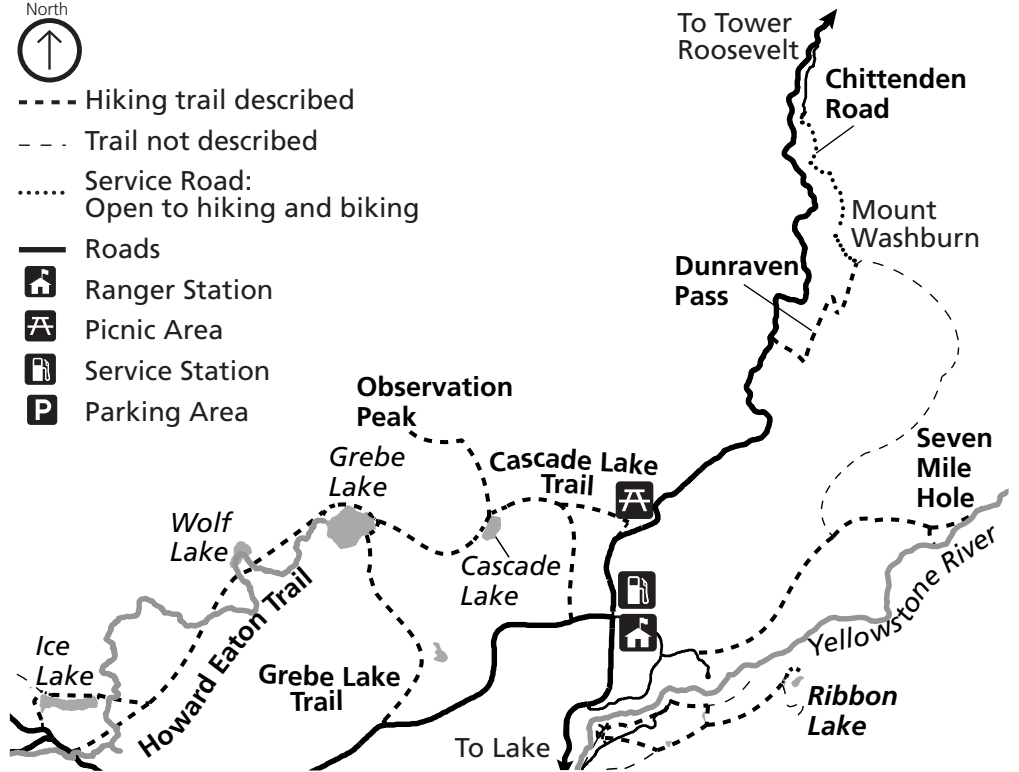
Carry bear spray and know how to use it. Do not hike after dark. Avoid carcasses; bears often defend this food source.

Fishing: Anglers must have a Yellowstone National Park fishing permit in their possession. Consult the park newspaper for purchase locations.

Backcountry Camping: Permits are required for backcountry camping.



- Hiking trail described
- - - Trail not described
- Service Road:
Open to hiking and biking
- Roads
- Ranger Station
- Picnic Area
- Service Station
- Parking Area



Howard Eaton Trail

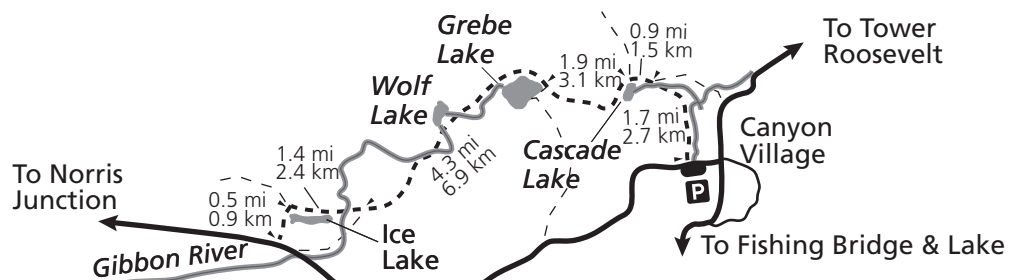
(to Cascade, Grebe, Wolf, and Ice lakes)

Distance, one way trip: 10.7mi (17.5 km)

Estimated time: 5-6 hours

Difficulty: Moderately easy, little vertical rise

Trailhead: Pullout ¼ mile (0.4 km) west of Canyon Junction on the Norris-Canyon Road



Choose your destination on this trail that passes by four lakes, forest, meadow, and marsh: Cascade Lake (2.6 mi/ 4.2 km), Grebe Lake (4.5 mi/ 7.3 km), Wolf Lake (6.3 mi/ 10.1 km), Ice Lake (10.7 mi/17.5 km) The trail can be wet and muddy through July with many biting insects.

Grebe Lake

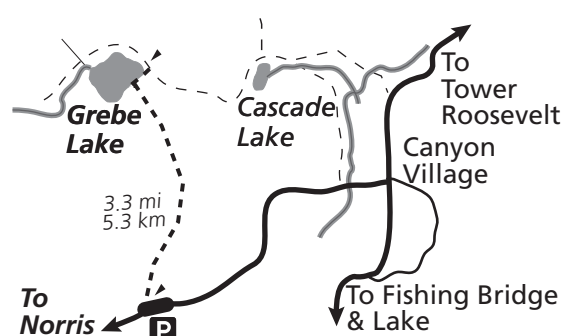
Distance, round trip: 6.2 mi (9.8 km)

Estimated time: 3-4 hours

Difficulty: Moderately easy, little vertical rise

Trailhead: 3½ miles (5.6 km) west of Canyon Junction on the Norris-Canyon Road.

A more direct route than the Howard Eaton Trail, this trail follows an old fire road through meadows and forest, some of which burned in 1988. At the lake you can connect with the Howard Eaton Trail or return the way you came.



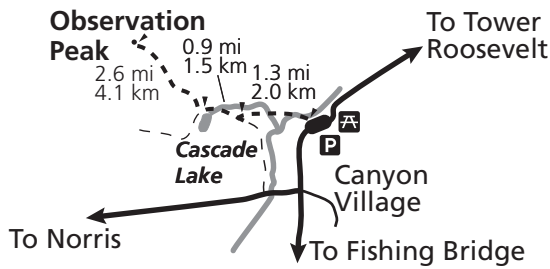
Observation Peak

Distance, round trip: 9.6 miles (15 km)

Estimated time: 5 hours

Difficulty: strenuous; 1,400 foot (425 m) vertical rise in 2.6 miles (4.1 km)

Trailhead: Cascade Lake Trailhead, 1¼ miles (2 km) north of Canyon Junction on the Grand Loop Road.



Hike to a high mountain peak for an outstanding view of the Yellowstone wilderness. Trail passes through open meadows to Cascade Lake where wildflowers abound and wildlife is often seen. Beyond the lake, the trail climbs 1,400 feet in 2.6 miles through whitebark pine forest.

Caution: The trail can be wet and snowy through July. Observation Peak trail is not recommended for persons with heart and/or respiratory problems. Past Cascade Lake, no water is available.

Seven Mile Hole

Distance, round trip: 10 miles (16 km)

Estimated time: 5–8 hours

Difficulty: strenuous

Trailhead: Glacial Boulder pullout on the road to Inspiration Point

For the first 1½ miles, you will walk near the canyon rim and have views of Silver Cord Cascade across the canyon. In another half mile, you will join the Washburn Spur Trail; after an additional .7 mile turn right onto the trail to Seven Mile Hole, which drops more than 1,000 feet in 2.3 miles.

Caution: Watch your footing and conserve your energy. Be especially careful where the trail passes both dormant and active hot springs. Stay on the trail. The only reliable water source on the trail is the Yellowstone river.

Mt. Washburn Dunraven Pass

Distance, round trip: from Dunraven Pass, 6.0 miles (9.6 km);

Estimated time: 3–6 hours

Difficulty: strenuous; 1,343 feet (425 m) vertical rise

Trailheads: Dunraven Pass, 4.5 miles (7.2 km) north of Canyon Junction

Starting at the Dunraven Pass Trailhead you ascend Mt. Washburn on a trail with spectacular views. Look for bighorn sheep and wildflowers. Stay on the trail to avoid destroying fragile alpine vegetation. At the top, enjoy the view and interpretive exhibits from inside the shelter at the base of the fire lookout.

Caution: Be aware of lightning above treeline. There is no access to water along this trail.

Mt. Washburn Chittenden Road

Distance, round trip: from Chittenden Road, 5 miles (8 km)

Estimated time: 2½–4 hours

Difficulty: strenuous; 1,393 feet (425 m) vertical rise

Trailheads: Chittenden Road, 10.3 miles (16.5 km) north of Canyon

Starting at the Chittenden Road Trailhead this route provides the shortest route up to Mount Washburn. The road provides for a wide trail and a steady gradual incline. Look for bighorn sheep and wildflowers. Stay on the trail to avoid destroying fragile alpine vegetation. You may encounter bicyclist, or service vehicles along this route. At the top, enjoy the view and interpretive exhibits from inside the shelter at the base of the fire lookout.

Caution: Be aware of lightning above treeline. There is no access to water along this trail.

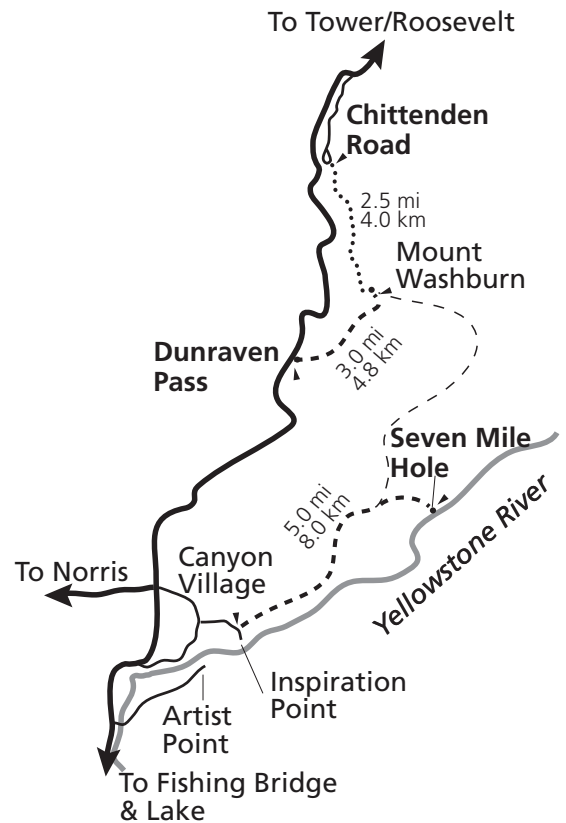
Cascade Lake

Distance, round trip: 4.4 mi (7.0 km)

Estimated time: 2–3 hours

Difficulty: Easy

Trailhead: Cascade Lake trailhead 1¼ miles (2 km) north of Canyon Junction on the Grand Loop Road.



Grizzly bears frequent the Mount Washburn area in the fall, seeking out whitebark pine nuts. Hiking this trail is not recommended in September and October.

These hikes are not recommended for persons with heart and/or respiratory problems.

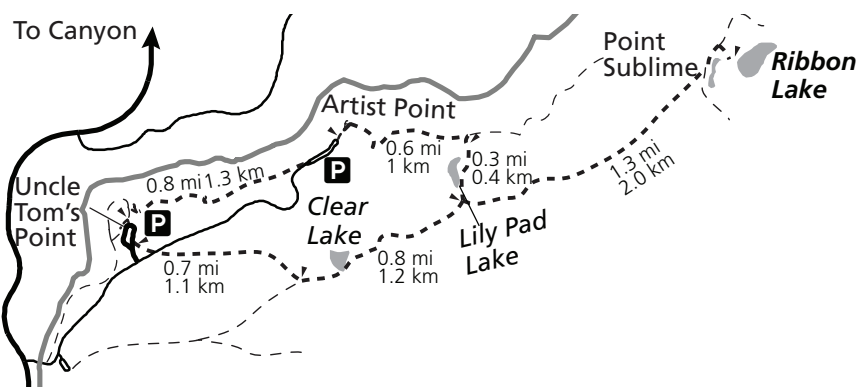
Ribbon Lake Loop

Distance, loop: 5.8 miles (9 km)

Estimated time: 3–4 hours

Difficulty: moderately easy, little vertical rise

Trailhead: 2.3 miles south of the Canyon Junction on the South Rim Drive at Uncle Tom's Point Parking area



Park at the Uncle Tom's Point Parking Area. The trail begins across the road to the south at the Clear Lake trailhead. At the Clear Lake junction turn left. Continue on the trail following the junction signs until you reach Ribbon Lake. Return via the same route, or make an alternate loop by taking a right at the Lily Pad Lake Junction. After .03 mile (0.4 km,) you will reach another junction for Point Sublime and Artist Point. Head west towards Artist Point. Continue to the Artist Point parking area. At the southwest end of the Artist Point parking area connect with the paved South Rim trail. Follow the South Rim Trail along the canyon edge back to your car.

For more information
www.nps.gov/yell

Visitor centers have a free day hike handout for each major area of the park. A "Day Hike Sampler," with a hike or two per area, is also available along with several guides for trails throughout the park.