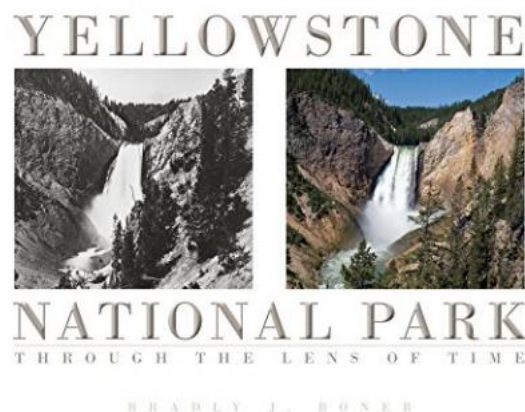


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Yellowstone National Park: Through The Lens Of Time

By **Scott Johnson** ([/users/johnsos3yahoomcom](#)) on June 9th, 2017

Yellowstone National Park: Through the Lens of Time (<https://www.amazon.com/Yellowstone-National-Park-Through-Lens-ebook/dp/B01N18U8VH?SubscriptionId=AKIAJ3XPNHOCIG2VWH3A&tag=nationalparkstraveler-20&linkCode=xm2&camp=2025&creative=165953&creativeASIN=B01N18U8VH>)

Author : Bradley J. Boner

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Editor's note: The reviewer supported the publication of this book on Kickstarter and worked in the same newsroom as the author for one summer more than a decade ago.

In 1871, a government-sponsored expedition led by Ferdinand V. Hayden set out to explore and document the Yellowstone region, spurred by tales so outlandish that many considered them works of fiction. Hayden, a scientist, made certain to include a photographer in his party to provide visual evidence of the territory's wonders and to convince any doubters. That photographer, William Henry Jackson, captured some of the first images of now-iconic locations like Mammoth Hot Springs and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, and these pictures were instrumental in the designation of Yellowstone as the world's first national park.

Nearly 150 years later, Bradley J. Boner, a photojournalist based in Jackson Hole, spent four summers (2011-2014) retracing the steps of the 1871 Hayden Survey. He went on a personal "scavenger hunt" to find the exact location of every one of Jackson's photographs based on the images themselves and descriptions published by members of the party, then "rephotographed" from each spot to show how the park had (or hadn't) changed.

The result is **Yellowstone National Park: Through the Lens of Time**, a 300-page visual and historical showcase of Jackson's work during the survey, complete with descriptions of the locations by those in the party. Each of Jackson's more than 100 black-and-white photographs is given an entire page, printed as large as possible in the coffee table-sized book, with Mr. Boner's excellent contemporary, color image on the facing page. The comparisons show a landscape largely unchanged, though at times the hand of man (roads, power lines, boardwalks) or nature (erosion, geothermal activity, earthquakes) has intervened.

"When looking upon a scene for the first time myself, I couldn't help but think I was feeling the same sense of awe the Hayden party must have experienced when they stood in the same place almost a century and a half earlier," Mr. Boner writes.

One pair of images captured just above the brink of Tower Fall shows both the fragility and endurance of nature. A volcanic spire known as Sulphur Rock has shed some of its girth due to erosion, while nearly 10 granite boulders sit in the creek exactly as they were almost a century and a half ago. Each side-by-side encourages this type of careful examination.

The work spans some of the most-trafficked and most-remote areas of the vast wonderland. Mirror Lake and the Mirror Plateau was "by far" the most difficult location to reach, and Mr. Boner spent nine days paddling more than 60 miles of Yellowstone Lake with a friend to reach 13 of Jackson's photo points. He had a chaperone from the Park Service for special access to some areas that are off-limits to most visitors, and received permission from owners of land outside the park, but provides GPS coordinates for the locations that are accessible to the public if you want to retrace the steps yourself.

Words from those on the expedition – Jackson himself, Hayden, Thomas Moran, Albert Peale, and Capt. John Barlow – accompany most images and express amazement while colorfully and thoroughly describing a scene that few had ever witnessed before. Each piece of information has been fact-checked, and Mr. Boner adds corrections, clarifications, updates, and background where prudent. So although photography is the showcase, **Through the Lens of Time** is also filled with interesting tales and facts about Yellowstone.

Jackson is a legend among landscape photographers, but this is the first complete published collection of his images from the 1871 survey. Surely a fulfilling achievement on a personal level for Mr. Boner, his book is a magnificent tribute to all who helped protect Yellowstone and have continued to care for it.

- [Yellowstone National Park \(/park/yellowstone-national-park\)](/park/yellowstone-national-park)

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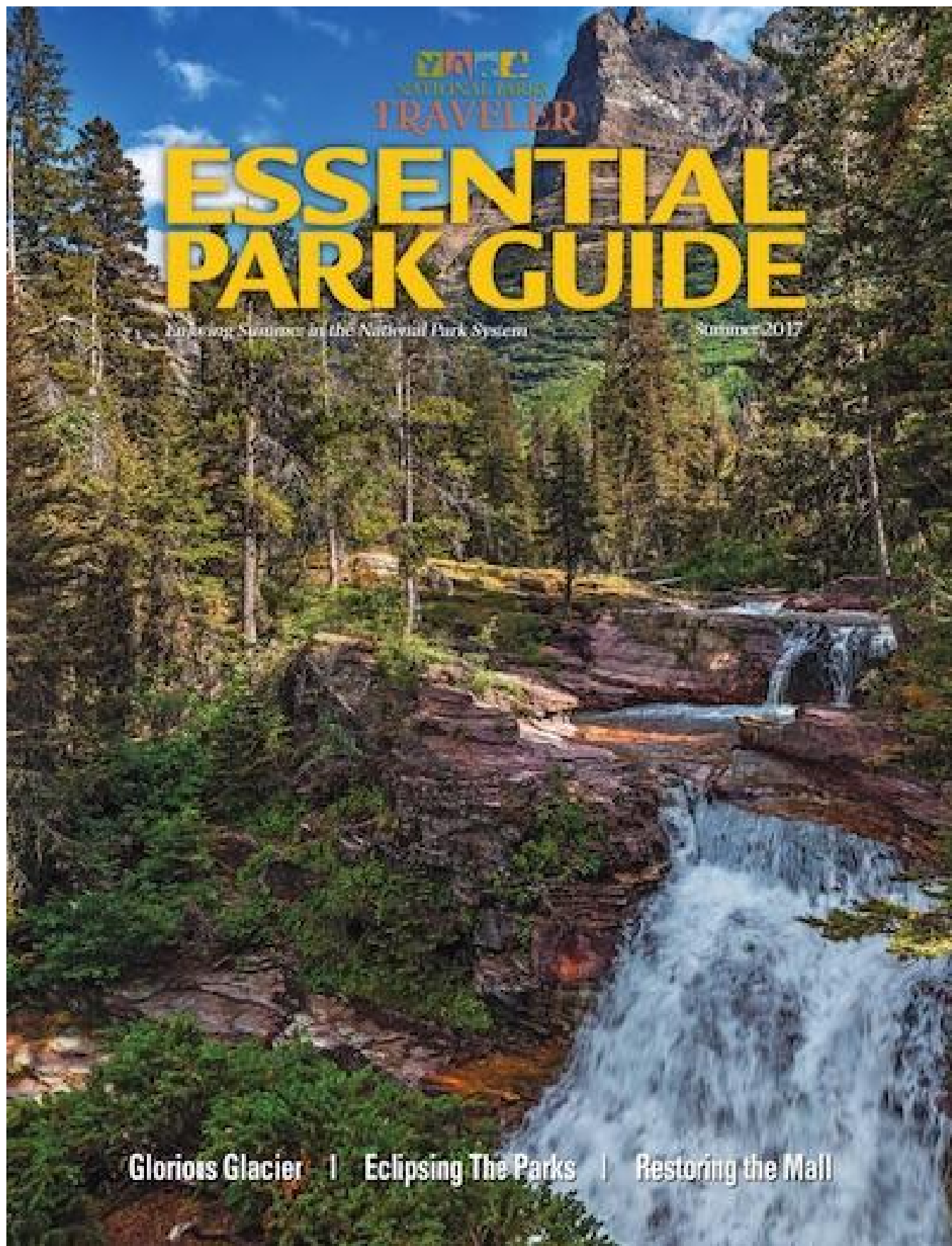


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