



# YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY

## OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

### SUGGESTED GEAR LIST FOR

#### YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHY: CAPTURING HORSETAIL FALLS & WINTER LANDSCAPES

#### WHAT TO WEAR:

Dress for winter conditions! Workshops continue rain or shine, so come prepared for any weather with layered clothing and waterproof outerwear. We recommend long underwear, fleece outerwear, parka or shell and waterproof hiking boots. Don't forget hats, gloves and extra socks! A pair of gaiters (like you see cross-country skiers using) will help keep your legs warmer and feet dry if there is deep snow. An umbrella can also be helpful on rainy days and a pair of water-resistant over-pants can make kneeling or lying on fresh snow for that frosty close-up a lot more comfortable.

- We recommend checking the weather [here](#) for updates before you arrive

#### EQUIPMENT & GEAR TO BRING:

You'll need to bring the following gear for this workshop:

- Daypack with snacks and water
- Camera, lenses [lenses from mild to strong telephoto which range between 70mm to 400mm (on a 1.5X magnification factor SLR type camera) are most useful], clear glass or UV only filters for lens protection, film and/or digital storage card
- Tripod, cable or remote release, extra batteries, and battery chargers
- Lens blower bulb and lens cloth for de-fogging lenses
- ✓ *Program leader will provide a supplemental equipment list before the workshop via e-mail (see last year's list below)*

We also suggest the following equipment:

- Sunscreen, sun hat, and sunglasses
- "YakTrax" ice grippers for your shoes
- Field guides
- Notebook/pencils, sketchbook, journal

- A piece of an ensolite pad or a small ground cloth is handy to sit on when we stop for lunch.

## **DRIVING IN WINTER**

In addition, your vehicle should be prepared for winter conditions. This includes: having a good ice scraper/snow brush and snow shovel in your car, making sure your radiator has fresh anti-freeze, checking your tire chains for fit and making certain your auto battery is in good condition. Most of the time, chains are not required if you have a 4-wheel drive vehicle running M&S rated tires, however park officials do require even 4-wheel drive vehicles to carry tire chains in case the roads get really icy. Also, do not forget to fill your gas tank BEFORE you reach the park, as there is no gas available in Yosemite Valley.

There are three entrances to Yosemite Valley: Hwy 120 to the NW, Hwy. 140 to the W and Hwy 41 to the SW. If it is snowing down to 4000', it is recommended that you enter the park via Hwy 140. It's the lowest entry and you have the least chance of having to chain up your vehicle. Both other entry roads traverse higher country and they are more likely to have snowy roads. I highly recommend arriving before dark. This will give you a chance to check out the location of our meeting room and your accommodations before dark sets in.

### **Photographic Gear: (2014 list)**

**Cameras:** All formats are welcome. Make sure your camera is clean (especially the lenses and battery contacts) and test all functions at home before the workshop! It is recommended you also bring a backup camera with you even if it is just a point-and-shoot. If you have a new camera, learn how your camera functions operate AT HOME. Do some test shooting also at home BEFORE the workshop to make sure the camera, batteries, media cards, etc. are all functioning as expected. And, don't forget to bring the camera manual with you!

**Batteries:** Cold can shut down old batteries faster than you can blink an eye. Install fresh batteries in all equipment you plan to use and carry an extra set in your warm pocket. If you have a choice of battery type, nickel cadmium re-chargables & lithium perform very well in cold weather. Alkalines will perform better than standard non-alkaline batteries. If you use a digital camera, a backup battery or two is a must. Charge all digital camera batteries before leaving home and do not forget to bring the battery charger with you for recharges every evening.

**Lenses:** Strictly a matter of personal taste. For general landscapes with digital SLR cameras, focal lengths or zooms in the range of 16 mm to 100 mm are ideal. One additional lens with more reach is nice to have along should we spot wildlife like an 80-200mm zoom or a 100-

300mm zoom. A macro lens or supplementary close-up lenses are great if you like to do close-ups. Make sure all the glass is clean and that each lens you use is equipped with a clear glass, UV, or Skylight 1A Haze filter to protect the front of your lens during fog wipe-downs, snow or rainfall.

**Tripod:** A tripod is very useful for early morn or late eve long exposures and is highly advisable. One that goes down to ground level and also up to eye level is ideal. Two manufacturers that I can recommend are Gitzo and Bogen. My Gitzo Mountaineer is my favorite winter tripod because its carbon fiber construction doesn't get as cold as metal, it is very light, and, its large leg tightener grips are easy to grip with gloved hands. The Mountaineer model is meant for serious photographers and cost is steep. If you're on a tight budget you will find carbon fiber tripods for less now available from several other manufacturers like Slick, Induro and Flashpoint. The metal Bogens are fine if you are looking for value.

If you use a metal or even a carbon fiber tripod here's a tip to increase your comfort level while handling it in the cold: install upper tripod leg insulation. You can buy this pre-formed at camera shops or make your own out of that tubular foam pipe insulation for \$1.39 from the hardware store. Your hands and shoulders will thank you at the end of each day!

**Cable Release:** Use an electronic one or the cloth clad ones (the plastic clad ones stiffen to useless when cold). Alternative: use the camera's self-timer or a remote release (if you have one).

**Film/ Digital Storage:** Bring plenty! Landscapes are best done with medium to slow speed films and low ISO settings. You may work in color or black and white or both. T-max 100 and Ilford's FP4 125 are excellent B&W films and professional slide films like Kodak's E100 SW or Fuji's Velvia 100 or Provia II 100F are all excellent. Color negative films can do an excellent job with landscapes and if it has always been your film of choice you may want to stick with it.

If you really want to maximizes quick learning. We recommend that you use a digital camera as the results of all field manipulations can be instantly checked in the camera's LCD. LCD hoods or light shields (like those made by [www.hoodman.com](http://www.hoodman.com)) can be invaluable for better viewing of the LCD under bright conditions. A good rubber eyecup on your camera eyepiece can also facilitate viewing (especially for eyeglass wearers) and reduce eye fatigue.

For digital camera users, be sure to bring more than one image storage card as you may find yourself shooting larger files than normal and more of them. Having at least one extra card also covers you in case of card loss or damage. Downloading images to a laptop computer each evening or a digital "wallet" are other options if you do not have several storage cards. For SLR camera users shooting RAW files or high resolution JPGs I'd recommend at least two 4 to 8 GB image storage cards. If you have more empty cards, bring them for possible backups.

### **Additional Filter Recommendations:**

Color Film users: Skylight 1A , Color Balancing 81B

B&W: Film users: # 8 or 12 Yellow, # 23 or 25A red

For digital camera users in both Color and B&W all the above filters can be electronically duplicated in-camera or with post processing software so they are no longer needed in the field. Two filters that can be useful to both film and digital camera users which can't be digitally duplicated are the Circular Polarizer and a Neutral Density (or also, the variable neutral density) filters. There are great ones made by B&W Filters and Sing-Ray but they tend to be pricey. The ones made by Tiffen and Hoya are fine and much more reasonable in cost.

**Camera Packs:** Fanny packs work great for light point and shoot or SLR gear however, a larger daypack like the "Photo Trekker" made by Lowe is excellent if you carry lots of gear. It also has ample room for other fieldwork essentials such as a lunch, water and a parka.

**Moisture Protection:** Cheap moisture protection can come from zip-lock bags for lens storage and, plastic trash bags can be set up to protect a tripod camera in a snowfall (an umbrella is nice also if you can enlist someone to hang onto it!). There are some new accessories on the market that are designed to help keep camera gear dryer in rain or snow. The small umbrella that attaches to your tripod (popabrella.com) a rain cover (shutterhat.com is the one I use) or rain sleeves (optechusa.com) are useful tools to help keep that expensive camera gear dry. If you don't have rain pants, trash bags or a piece of insulate foam pad are the compact ticket to keep pants dry while kneeling in wet snow as you work on close-ups. Blower bulbs and a soft lens cloth are musts for de-fogging lenses.

**The Exposure Notebook:** A small, pocket notebook for exposure records and other notes may be your most valuable learning aid. This is necessary as even though most digital cameras record some camera data, they cannot tell you other pertinent notes (like filter used, Zone System exposure placement, or the name of that mountain or tree!).

If you have questions, please feel free to call Kylie Chappell at Yosemite Conservancy at (209) 379-2317 X 10 [kchappell@yosemiteconservancy.org](mailto:kchappell@yosemiteconservancy.org)

## YOUR PARTICIPATION SUPPORTS THE PARK

Yosemite Conservancy preserves and protects Yosemite and enhances the visitor experience. Proceeds from Outdoor Adventures are used to fund trail repair & access, habitat restoration, and wildlife protection. Join us in providing for the future of Yosemite.  
[yosemiteconservancy.org](http://yosemiteconservancy.org).

