

February 2025 Newsletter

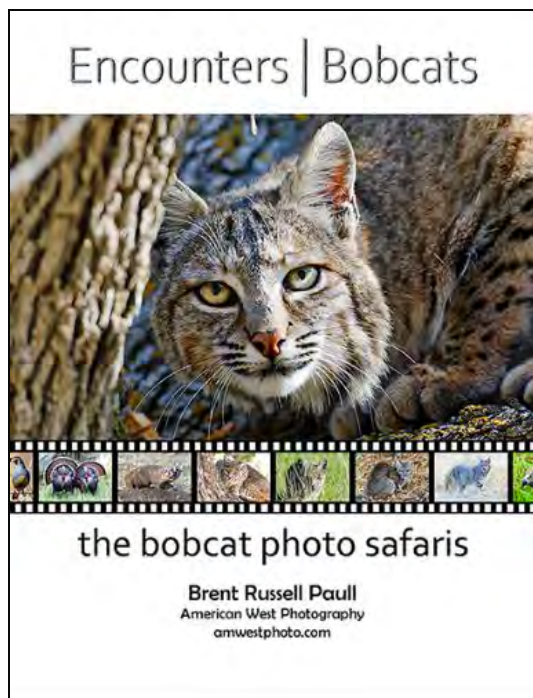
Yellowstone Winter Safari and Utah Raptors Safari



Hi to Everyone,

As I get older I have come appreciate warmer days in the winter here in California. I spent 29 years in Montana (2) and Utah (27) so I thought I was well adapted to the cold, but after 17+ years in California I have lost that ability to shrug off cold weather. I spent 11 days in Yellowstone, the Grand Tetons, and Utah doing those winter safaris, and the day after I get back it is 70 degrees in Tulare. Nice. I always tell folks that winter safaris need to be in winter conditions - and that was certainly the case, maybe a bit too much winter. While it only got down to -17 (traveling through Paradise Valley, MT) most days in the parks hung in the 5 to 22 degree range. So the cold was pretty average, but the amount of snow falling was excessive. We had over a foot of snow fall one day in Yellowstone, and we had some snow every other day as well.

The gallery images show our encounters. We photographed bighorn sheep, bison, coyotes, elk, moose, red fox, goldeneye ducks, trumpeter swans - but no sightings of gray wolves or ermine. I never saw a single set of ermine tracks over the entire safari in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, which is not normal. The wolves were in Bisquit Basin, on the Buffalo Plateau, or in some other area beyond photography sight - but we still had some great encounters highlighted by the falling snow.



The PDF books (above) are available for \$17 each, I'm currently working on my 3rd book about shooting California Songbirds at the different safari locations I go to.

The Utah Raptors Safari was cold, but no snow. Without snow the owls (barn and short-eared) weren't hunting during the daytime, but at night - though I did see a single barn owl hunting in the daylight at Bear River MBR. The harriers were active, as well as tundra swans, and ducks. We saw one flock of ducks off the access road to Antelope Island State Park that must have numbered several hundred thousand birds - I've never seen that many ducks in one place before. So bird numbers were very high.

I have had a single spot open up on the San Juan Island Black Fox Safari in early May ([LINK](#)) to ride with me - so if any of you are interested let me know. Otherwise, the Yellowstone Spring Wildlife Safari is sold out, though I do have two openings for the Arizona-Texas Bird Safari in April. ([LINK](#)) Since we take a large boat out to Santa Cruz Island to photograph the endemic Santa Cruz Island Gray Fox, there is no particular number of photographers, as we normally encounter 15-25 of the foxes. ([LINK](#)) This safari is timed to be on the island during mating season for the foxes, giving us a better chance of photographing two foxes together. This is a rewarding, and easy, wildlife shoot.

The three target animals/birds I'm hoping to shoot this year are the wolverine on the Glacier National Park Safari ([LINK](#)), the Lucy's Warbler on the Morongo Valley Bird Safari ([LINK](#)), and the Northern Saw-whet Owl I will just have to go out and find. Finally, some much-needed rain has fallen in California - so I'm hopeful for the Poppy/Wildflower safari in April. ([LINK](#)) In previous years we have had excellent results, both with flowers and western screech owls. **BRP**

Human judges can show mercy. But against the laws of nature, there is no appeal. Arthur C. Clarke

[Male Northern Harrier \(Gray Ghost\) - Utah Raptor Safari](#)

Click the link above to download the wallpaper in a new window, then right-click and

copy it to your computer. You can see all **FREE** Wallpaper here: ([LINK](#)) The wallpaper is sized to 1980 px by 1080 px to easily fit most computer screens.



All the currently scheduled upcoming 2025 Photo Safaris and Workshops are shown on the Safari Page on my website. That is the most accurate location to view these events. Here is a [LINK](#) to that page. Below are links to the individual safaris for the next several months. New safaris are added every few weeks. Upcoming ZOOM Shows are here - [LINK](#).

2024 Safari Schedule

February 19 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

February 24-26 California NWR Bird Safari ([LINK](#))

March 4 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#)) 2 Openings

March 15 Utah Raptors Safari ([LINK](#))

March 23 So California Bird Safari ([LINK](#))

March 24 Santa Cruz Island Gray Fox Safari ([LINK](#))

April 7 California Poppy / Wildflower Safari ([LINK](#))

April 8 Great Horned Owl Safari ([LINK](#))

April 13-19 Arizona-Texas Spring Bird Safari ([LINK](#))

April 28-29 Morongo Bird Safari ([LINK](#))

May 7-9 San Juan Island (WA) Fox Safari ([LINK](#))

May 19 Peregrine Falcon Safari ([LINK](#))

May 22 Mineral King Grouse Safari ([LINK](#))

May 27 to June 3 Yellowstone Spring Wildlife Safari **SOLD OUT**

June 9 Peregrine Falcon Safari ([LINK](#))

June 12-13 Sequoia Black Bear and Mineral King Safari ([LINK](#))

July 10 Sequoia Black Bear and Birds Safari ([LINK](#))

July 28-31 Colorado Wildflowers and Landscapes Safari

August 11 Sequoia Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))

August 20 Sequoia Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))

September 4 Sequoia Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))

September 15-19 Yellowstone Fall Wildlife Safari ([LINK](#)) **2 Openings**

September 22-26 Glacier Wildlife Safari ([LINK](#)) **2 Openings**

October 7-10 Autumn in the San Juan Mountains (CO) ([LINK](#))

October 16 Bobcat Safari **SOLD OUT**

October 21-22 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

November 18 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

November 25 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

December 4 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

December 10-12 Bosque del Apache Bird Safari ([LINK](#))

December 14-16 Texas Wildlife Safari ([LINK](#))

I will be posting the 2026 photo safaris over the next several weeks.

Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari



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Red Fox | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari

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Red Fox | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Running Red Fox | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Red Fox in Snowstorm | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari
amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Red Fox | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari
amwestphoto.com

(Below) Taken on the biggest snow fall days in Yellowstone, the antlerless bull moose covered in snow and the wind-swept cow bison and yearling are just enduring the winter - while the bighorn sheep stuck to the cliffs near the confluence of Soda Butte Creek and the Lamar River. The wind was blowing at least 40 mph with higher gusts when we shot the bison image from my truck - which was being buffeted by the driving winds.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Moose enduring the Winter Storm | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari
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BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Bison Cow/Calf enduring the Wind | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Full curl Bighorn Ram enduring the Snow | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Full Curl Bighorn Ram | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Bison enduring the Storm | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Hunting Coyote | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Coyote enduring the cold | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Bison enduring | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari

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Drake Bufflehead landing | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Two Drake Buffleheads landing | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Drake Bufflehead landing | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Two Winter Bighorn Lambs-of-the-Year | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Coyote Pack crossing Lamar Valley | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Dog Sledding | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com

This image, below, shows the cliffs on the backside of Millers Butte at the National Elk Refuge. This butte is home to dozens of Rocky Mtn Bighorn Sheep - sheep that are regularly hunted by coyotes and gray wolves. This image shows the cliffs on the east side of the Butte, with three coyotes hunting across it. The sheep are on the ridge and to the left, out of frame - but watching the coyotes the entire time.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
3 Coyotes Hunting Bighorn Sheep | Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com

Utah Raptors Safari

Driving the causeway out to Antelope Island State Park from Ogden, Utah we encountered an enormous flock of ducks just before reaching the island. They formed large, dark rafts of ducks with mixed species: northern shovelers (spoonies), northern pintals (sprig), green-winged teal, American wigeons, mallards, and others. I've never seen that many ducks in one place before. There was no way to take a meaningful image of this vast flock, so this image was taken with a 500mm lens. If I could have panned across it would have taken another dozen images to photograph the birds flying, then another dozen to shoot those on the water.



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A few of the Quarter Million Ducks | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



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Drake Northern Shoveler | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



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Northern Harrier | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



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Trumpeter Swans | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



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Pied-billed Grebe with Pond Loach | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



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Drake Redhead Duck | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



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Female Northern Harrier | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



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Female Northern Harrier | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Female Northern Harrier | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Male Northern Harrier - The Gray Ghost | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com

We had an interesting encounter just before sunrise at Farmington Bay WMA with about 40-50 American Coots who were huddled together and covered in frost and ice. Huddling close together must have kept them a few degrees warmer as the temp's were near 11 degrees, with skim ice on most of the ponds.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Ice Covered American Coots | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
American Coot covered in Ice | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Ducks and Canada Geese taking off | Utah Raptor Safari amwestphoto.com

Last Call Notes:

Now, I've only gone through about 10% of all the images I shot, so these are just a representative few. Overall, I shot about 41k images, with 11.5k of those coming in just one day on the Utah Raptors Safari. Each day we had blue skies, overcast light, and snow storms - except in Utah, where we had mostly clear, cold conditions. I'm looking forward to digging into the images deeper.

Tonight, Monday, February 17, I'm doing a second Zoom Show on Using and Creating Actions in Photoshop - starts at 6pm and runs for about an hour, and I will take questions. Copy and paste this link: **<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84994333712?pwd=ityQqMabK4w7UgI6MLTcbnfhDuV710.1>**

Passcode: 305503

Hope to see some of you tonight, otherwise, I hope to see you in the field chasing images, spring is almost here.

Kind Regards,

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Please forward this e-mail to your photographer friends, maybe we can make a connection

that otherwise would never happen. The world of photography is vast and only getting bigger. Also, I can sometimes change safari dates to accommodate folks, so if you would like to do a custom date, or see if I can switch a date, just let me know.

