



FINDING AID

John Burger Photographs 1959-2006 (bulk dates: 1959-1968)

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HISTORY

Over the course of the late 1960s, and again in the 1990s, and 2000s, entomologist John Burger produced thousands of slides of various features and changes throughout Yellowstone National Park.

John Frederick Burger was born in 1940 and first fell in love with Yellowstone when he was 16 during a summer camp spent on the Park's trails. He had already developed an interest in entomology as a child, an enthusiasm that was refined during his studies as an undergraduate at Grinnell College in Iowa. It was during this period that he further cultivated a passion for Yellowstone working as a dishwasher for the Yellowstone Park Company. He spent the summers of 1965-1967 in Yellowstone and Gardiner, Montana, studying the flies that pestered both bison (a native species) and cattle (a non-native species) and completed a master's degree and a Ph.D. at the University of Arizona. Throughout his graduate studies, his efforts focused on forensic entomology, but he developed a passion for "bloodsucking" insects as well, a specialization that has persisted throughout his career. Between 1959 and 1968, Burger took hundreds of photographs of Yellowstone as a graduate student of entomology. Burger later became a project entomologist at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, organized the First Inter-Regional Conference on North American Black Flies in 1977, and worked at the Smithsonian Institute.

In 1977, Burger became an assistant professor at the University of New Hampshire (UNH). Throughout the 1980s, he studied true flies (family: *Tabanidae*) as far away as Southeast Asia, described two new species of *Pangoniini*, reclassified the genus *Stonemyia*, and proposed new genus *Pegasomyia*. He was also instrumental in elimination of a costly black-fly problem at the Balsams Grand Resort Hotel in Dixville Notch, New Hampshire. In 1990, after the fires of 1988 ravaged over one million acres of Yellowstone National Park, Burger developed an interest in the way fires change ecosystems and began returning to Yellowstone every summer to photograph the changes in vegetation. In the 1990s and into the 2000s, he wrote two articles published in *Yellowstone Science*, described the new species *Ectenopsis* based on his work in New Zealand, was awarded the Cogswell Professorship at UNH, described five new species of Costa Rican flies, and has become an oft-quoted expert on equine encephalitis, wintertime tick populations, and post-disaster insect infestations. He is an established authority on taxonomic description in general and the *Tabanidae* family in particular.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

John Burger Photographs
1959-2006 (bulk dates: 1959-1968)

CATALOG NUMBER YELL 127399

VOLUME 0.75 LF

DESCRIPTION Over 1,600 color photographic slides of wildlife, park features, geographic areas, geologic events, and ecological change throughout Yellowstone National Park.

Between 1959 and 1968, Burger took hundreds of photographs of Yellowstone as a graduate student studying fly species that fed on bison and cattle. Burger then had a long hiatus from Yellowstone while he married, started a family, and pursued his career at the University of New Hampshire. After the 1988 fires decimated over one million acres of Yellowstone, Burger returned, fascinated by the changes that had occurred in the vegetation since his first series of photographic slides from his youth. He has returned every summer since. In a 2007 interview with Yellowstone Science, Burger estimated that he has amassed a total of 5,000-6,000 slides; these are but a portion of his collection.

The slides from the early period cover a variety of subjects and seasons. Park wildlife appears occasionally, as do Burger's companions like longtime Park naturalist and biologist, Mary Meagher. Burger himself is in some of the slides. Many of the geologic features seen throughout Yellowstone are represented here along with patrol cabins and the Lamar Ranger Station where Burger did research in the late 60s. Significantly, these slides also include photographs Burger took of the damage from the 1959 earthquake (particularly to roadways) as well as the Canyon Hotel just before, during, and after it burned to the ground in 1960.

The later slides were taken after the 1988 fire, throughout

the 1990s and 2000s. Burger used many of these slides for lectures at the University of New Hampshire. These slides are focused primarily on burn sites around the Park, including older burned areas and sites of the 1988 fire, but also include general winter scenes from January 1994 and a sampling of photographs Burger took of old growth, firestorm, blowdown, and re-growth areas.

ORGANIZATION

Arranged chronologically; all comparative slide sets are together

PROVENANCE

Gift of John Frederick Burger, 2006

RESTRICTIONS

NO

*ASSOCIATED
MATERIALS*

Yellowstone National Park Museum Collections: Notice to Bears: Beware of Sabotage poster; Acc. # 980: Mosquitoes - Entomology Collection; Acc. # 1399: Entomology Collection (on loan to University of New Hampshire); Acc. # 1470: Larvae of Black Flies - Entomology Collection

CONTAINER LIST**Box Nbr**

01

File Unit Nbr	Title
01.01	1959 Hebgen Lake Earthquake Gibbon Canyon; Gibbon River; Gibbon River Falls; Firehole Canyon Road; Madison Junction; Norris-Madison Road
01.02	1959-1960 (Non-Earthquake) Black Dragon's Cauldron; Constant Geyser; East Entrance Road; Fishing Bridge; Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone; Hayden Valley; Lake; Lewis River Canyon; Liberty Cap; Mammoth; Old Faithful; Opal Spring; Silver Gate; Tower Falls; Yellowstone Lake; Yellowstone River Falls; grizzly bears; Fishing Bridge cafeteria employees; Victor Hugh Durham; mud volcano; Suzie Yorgen; John Pahaska Teepee; Mary Jane Greear; Marlene Wicka; Canyon Hotel before, during and after 1960 fire
01.03	1966 Abiathar Peak; Alum Creek; Amethyst Creek; Cache Creek; Calfee Ridge; Chittenden Memorial Bridge; Cold Creek Pasture; Electric Peak; Hayden Valley; Indian Creek; Lamar Research Center; Lamar River Trail; Miller Creek; Miller Patrol Cabin; Mt. Washburn; Norris-Mammoth Road; Pebble Creek Trail; Pelican Spring; Pyramid Peak; Shoshone Lake; Slough Creek; Soda Butte Creek; Specimen Ridge; Swan Lake Flat; Turbid Lake; Yellowstone River; Mary Meagher; Mary Good; Ethel Ashley; Gary Brown; Jim Cox; Jake Metherell; Marshall Gates; Bob Johnston; horses; elk; bison; petrified sequoia; coyote; moose; Clark's nutcracker; antelope
01.04	1967 Absaroka Mountains; Beartooth Uplift; Bechler Meadows; Bechler River Canyon; Cache Creek; Calfee Ridge; Cave Falls; Chicken Ridge; Colonnade Falls; Daisy Pass; Hoodoo Basin; Iris Falls; Lamar Patrol Cabin; Lolo Pass; Mirror Plateau; Ouzel Falls; Parker Peak; Pelican Peak; Saddle Mt.; Slough Creek; Timothy Camp; Willow Creek; Yellowstone Lake; Ed Bigenho; bison; horses; elk series; moose
01.05	April 1968 Barronett Peak; Cooke City; Lamar Ranger Station; Lamar Valley; Norris Museum; Northeast Entrance; Paradise Valley; Silver Gate; Soda Butte Creek; bloodhound; bighorn sheep; coyote; beaver cuttings; bison; elk; mule deer
01.06	Burn Sites - Aerial, 1991 Bunsen Peak; Cache Creek; Canoe Lake; Canyon; Hot Springs; Lamar Buffalo Ranch; Lamar River; Norris Geyser Basin; Parker Peak; Soda Butte Junction; Specimen Ridge; Solfatara Plateau; Yellowstone Forest
01.07	Burn Sites - Aerial, 1992 Mirror Plateau; Old Heart Lake; Old Timothy Creek; West Thumb; Yellowstone Lake
01.08	Winter 1994 Electric Peak; Lamar Valley; Gardiner, Montana; Mt. Norris; North Entrance; Slough Creek; Soda Butte Creek; elk; pronghorn antelope
01.09	Burn Sites - Aerial, 1994 Heart Lake; Mirror Plateau; Old Timothy

Box Nbr

02

File Unit Nbr**Title**

- 02.01 Comparative - Vegetation Change - Pelican Creek, 1959-1967, 2006
- 02.02 Comparative - 1988 Fires Before and After (Lectures) 1 of 4
Cache Creek; Canoe Lake; Hoodoo Basin; Lamar River Trail; Lower Miller Cabin; Miller Creek; Parker Peak; Saddle Mountain; Upper Miller Cabin
- 02.03 Comparative - 1988 Fires Before and After (Lectures) 2 of 4
Antelope Creek; Blacktail Cabin; Canyon Junction; Carnelian Creek; Chalcedony Creek; Dunraven Pass; Lamar Valley; Mt. Norris; Mt. Washburn; Round Prairie; Soda Butte Creek; Tower-Canyon Road; Mary Meagher
- 02.04 Comparative - 1988 Fires Before and After (Lectures) 3 of 4
Canyon Junction Pond; Canyon-Norris Road; Clearwater Springs; Elk Park; Gibbon River Falls; Mammoth-Norris Road; Norris-Madison Road; Old Faithful; South Twin Lake; Swan Lake Flat; Virginia Cascades
- 02.05 Comparative - 1988 Fires Before and After (Lectures) 4 of 4
Bootjack Gap; Canoe Lake; East Entrance Road; Lewis River Canyon; Mammoth Hot Springs; Old Faithful; Squaw Lake (Indian Pond); Turbid Lake; elk
- 02.06 Comparative - 1988 Fires – Additional
Absaroka Mountains; Blacktail Cabin; Bootjack Gap; Cache Creek; Canoe Lake; Cold Creek; Lamar River Trail; Miller Creek; Mirror Plateau; Mist Pass; Old Faithful; Parker Peak; Shoshone National Forest; Turbid Lake; moose; aspen; coyotes; elk; bison; Bob Johnston; rainstorm; lodgepole pine; pollen
- 02.07 1988 Fires (Post) and Vegetation Change, 1990-2006
Blacktail; Bunsen Peak Road; Canoe Lake; Canyon-Norris blowdown area; Carnelian Creek; Clover-Mist fire; Cub Creek; Grizzly fire; Hoodoo Basin; Lamar River Trail; Lower Miller Cabin; Mt. Holmes; Mirror Plateau; Ninemile Trailhead; Norris Junction; North Fork fire; Old Faithful; Wolf Lake; Arnica cordifolia; lupine; lodgepole pine; whitebark pine; Yellowstone bus