

History of Parks in Science



Thank you to Dr. Tim Watkins, Dr. Jill Baron
and many NPS managers!

Parks for:



recreation



preservation

science



Science for Parks!

Classic Readings in Ecology



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Visitors to Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming encounter many visual treats, from the spectacular Yellowstone Falls and the iconic Old Faithful Geyser, to the bison and wolves living in the nation's first national park. Even small scale views in Yellowstone are compelling, especially the colors in hot pots and deep pools. But far from being merely aesthetically pleasing, these colors are significant because they sparked an important scientific inquiry with long-lasting implications for science, technology, and society.

Scene: A Ranger Talk

Thomas Brock, a vacationing bacteriologist, visited Yellowstone to break up a long car trip between working at two universities. Brock recalled that 1964 day:

“I got out of the car and, by chance, a ranger was giving a talk near a thermal pool. I saw all this color, and he said it was [blue-green algae](#). I got interested right away.”

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