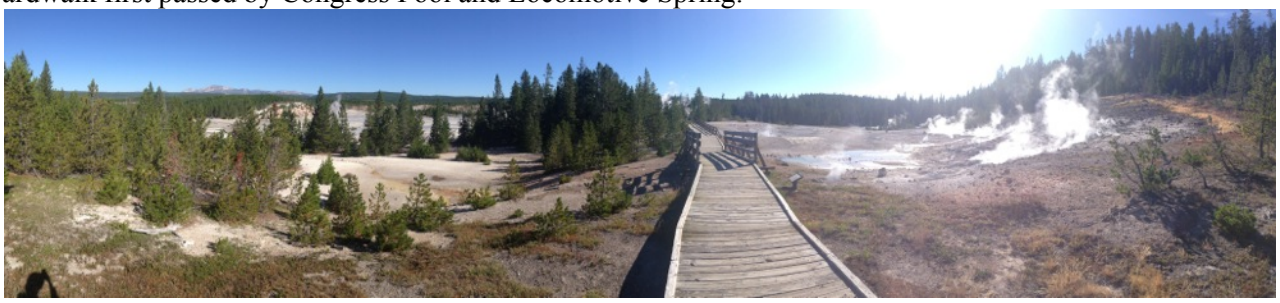
NORRIS GEYSER BASIN, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Our final walk of this trip to Yellowstone was the Norris Geyser Basin; from here, we headed home. The Norris Geyser Basin contains the Porcelain Basin (which seems to have a higher concentration of geothermal features and which we did first), and Back Basin.

Looking towards Porcelain Basin from the Norris Museum:

The boardwalk first passed by Congress Pool and Locomotive Spring:



This is called a solfatara:

Looking towards the main Porcelain Basin area and Mt. Holmes in the distance:

This sign notes that this solfatara has a higher concentration of sulfuric acid than most, and therefore the gases and steam from underground can escape easier, since the sulfuric acid has broken down more of the rock and therefore the channels are wider:

Panorama of the Congress Pool area:

This is the most geothermally active part of Porcelain Basin:

Porcelain Springs seemed to me to be the most impressive part of the Norris Geyser Basin:

Somehow, this area seemed too unreal to be found naturally occurring:

This sign regarding Porcelain Springs informs readers that the mineral siliceous sinter (or geyserite) is deposited by the hot water coming from underground, and, although it helps cause this area to be one of the fastest changing locations in the Norris Geyser Basin, it is deposited at a rate of less than one inch per century:

Looking towards Mt. Holmes over Porcelain Springs:

Panorama of Porcelain Springs and the Porcelain Basin area from near the end of the boardwalk on the trail to the Norris Campground (this section of the boardwalk gives the best views of Porcelain Springs):

A particularly high-spouting geyser in the Porcelain Springs area; according to a map of the area, some of the geysers here are Ragged Spouter, Feisty Geyser, and Blue Geyser:

From here, we continue down the main trail to the boardwalk through the central portion of the Porcelain Basin:

Hurricane Vent:

Colorful blue pools in this area:

There were a lot of tourists already in this area, as it was the weekend. Panorama of the main Porcelain Basin area:

Looking back across a blue pool at Black Growler Steam Vent:

This informative sign is about the colorful thermophiles living in this area. These thermophiles living at temperatures of 122 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit become covered with rust, as they use iron from nearby Whirligig Geyser's iron-rich water; since they use chemicals from the geyser, they are called "chemotrophs". Thermophilic algae living at relatively cooler temperatures of 100 to 133 degrees Fahrenheit use sunlight for energy and are called "phototrophs". Despite the Norris Geyser Basin's high acidity, these thermophiles thrive:

Panorama looking towards Sieve Lake :

The colorful bacteria were highly concentrated in this area, and seemed almost as vividly colored to me as the ones at the Midway Geyser Basin:

Panorama of the colorful thermophiles near Whirligig Geyser:

Panorama from the overlook looking towards Pinwheel Geyser:

Looking back towards the Porcelain Springs, which had the most steam rising from it of any location in this area:

Looking across Porcelain Basin towards the Black Growler Steam Vent:

There were many dormant-appearing geothermal features along the trail in the northern part of Porcelain Basin:

Looking over towards steam rising behind Crackling Lake:

Panorama of the colorful area near Crackling Lake:

One final photo of the Crackling Lake area, with Mt. Holmes in the background; also note the mud pots in front, which I believe are called the Teal Blue Bubbler:

Black Growler Steam Vent was one of the more dominant geothermal features in this area, other than the Porcelain Springs area:

From here, we headed towards the Back Basin loop; this is the first geothermal feature we encountered, called "Forgotten Fumarole":

Looking towards Minute Geyser and Branch Spring after entering the main section of the Back Basin trail:

Another photo of Minute Geyser:

Sign at Minute Geyser; this geyser no longer erupts every 60 seconds as early park visitors clogged its west vent by throwing in rocks:

Continuing along the trail, we see many more pools and areas spewing steam:

The Monarch Geyser Crater:

Fearless Geyser (seen to the right in the photo):

This geothermal area is not nearly as concentrated as Porcelain Basin:

The trail to Veteran Geyser, which we checked out from the other side of the Back Basin loop:

Panorama of the boardwalk as we continue through Back Basin:

Vixen Geyser, which was spurting up some water as we were walking towards it but stopped once we reached it:

This geyser had a nice appearance, with the rocks piled around it:

Continuing along the boardwalk again, with many of the steam vents and geysers in the center of the Back Basin boardwalk loop now visible:

Pearl Geyser:

Porkchop Geyser was a very interesting geyser to read about, as it has been at times a hot spring, a geyser, a perpetual spouter, and then returned to being a hot spring:

Another panorama of all the steam plumes rising from the ground:

Porkchop's brilliant blue pool can be seen in the center of this photo:

Porkchop Geyser's pool is shaped like a porkchop, hence the name:

Looking across a murky spring:

There were lots of small geothermal features in this area of the Norris Geyser Basin:



Yellow Funnel Spring:

Blue Mud Steam Vent:

Looking back towards what I believe is called Hydrophane Springs:

Green Dragon Spring, which, like many geothermal features named after a dragon, had so much steam escaping from it that it was not really possible to see where it was all coming from:

Panorama of the Gray Lakes with Green Dragon Spring to the left:

Continuing along this boardwalk: