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ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

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Welcome



Welcome to Acadia National Park, located on the rock-bound Maine island of Mount Desert. Here you will find soaring granite cliffs butting up against sand and cobblestone beaches. Glacier-carved mountains rear up from the sea, cupping deep lakes, while meadowlands, marshes and dense forests permeate the landscape.

The ocean makes its presence felt everywhere, whether by sight, sound or smell. Acadia National Park was first established as Sieur de Monts National Monument on July 8, 1916, by President Woodrow Wilson;

however, it was countless stewardship-minded individuals at the turn of the 20th century that created the first eastern national park, recognizing its singular beauty, and ecological value and the need to protect it in perpetuity.

The National Park Service (NPS) protects this unique resource and its visitors. This American Park Network guide to Acadia National Park is provided to help plan your visit to the park. It is made possible by the sponsors whose messages appear inside. For more park information, call **(207) 288-3338**.

FUN FACTS

Established: Since it opened in 1916, Acadia National Park has boasted a number of firsts. It was the first eastern national park, and perhaps more significantly, it was the first national park whose land was donated entirely by private citizens.

Land Area: Acadia encompasses more than 47,000 acres, the vast majority of it on Mount Desert Island (pronounced like “dessert”).

Highest Elevation: The summit of Cadillac Mountain at 1,530 feet.

Mileage: The park has over 150 miles of hiking trails, and 45 miles of carriage roads with 16 stone bridges.

Plants and Animals: Approximately 165 species of native plants and 60 species of land and marine mammals, and more than 150 breeding species of birds are known to call the park home.

Popular Activities: Visitors can enjoy naturalist-guided walks and talks, biking, fishing,

carriage rides, boat cruises, hiking, kayaking, cross-country skiing and ice fishing.

Bicycling: Most of Acadia National Park’s paved roads and 45 miles of its picturesque carriage roads are open to bicycles.

Hiking: More than 125 miles of hiking trails and 45 miles of carriage roads weave through the park.

Camping: There are two campgrounds on Mount Desert Island, one campground on Schoodic Peninsula and five lean-to shelters on Isle au Haut. Reserve in advance at **Recreation.gov**.

Lodging: You can find a variety of accommodations and a total of 4,500 rooms surrounding the park on Mount Desert Island.

Visitors: More than 3.5 million people visit the park every year to experience the beautiful coastal landscape.

Recognition: In 2023, Acadia National Park’s trail system was added to the National Register of Historic Places. It has the largest system of trails listed in the national register.

Contents



American Park Network® publishes Oh, Ranger! ParkFinder™, OhRanger.com, and Oh, Ranger!® guides—a collection of visitor guides for public lands all across America—and operates Oh, Ranger! Wi-Fi in parks and public lands. American Park Network is an official partner of the National Forest Foundation, National Parks Conservation Association, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, American Hiking Society and the Student Conservation Association.

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ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

WELCOME	2
WHAT'S NEW!	4
PLAN YOUR VISIT	6
PARK REGULATIONS & SAFETY	15
WHO'S WHO AT THE PARK	17
HISTORY & CULTURE	18
SIGHTS TO SEE	22
CENTERFOLD MAP 	
PRESERVATION	27
MOUNT DESERT ISLAND	29
THINGS TO DO	31
WALKING & HIKING	38
CAMPING	40
JUST FOR KIDS	41
NATURE & WILDLIFE	42
PHOTOGRAPHY	46
IF YOU ONLY HAVE A DAY	48

Cover: A stunning view where Acadia's rugged cliffs meet its coastline.
Credit: Harry Collins



FOR ANSWERS TO ALL YOUR
QUESTIONS, GO TO
OhRanger.com

What's New!

The Truth About America's Public Lands



"No amount of experimentation can ever prove me right; a single experiment can prove me wrong."

– Albert Einstein

I think everyone can agree that Albert was a pretty smart guy. His quote suggests he was also quite open to being proven wrong. Einstein set the bar for both genius and humility by his unyielding embrace of the scientific method.

In a world where information is often clouded by personal perspective, it's crucial that we follow Einstein's lead and proceed with care when it comes to facts and truth. Facts, by definition, are verifiable, objective data – things we can observe, measure and ultimately prove. In the absence of new learning, facts are grounded in evidence that remains constant despite opinion or belief. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines truth as *"being in accord with fact or reality."* One person's reality may be quite different from another's. Truth, therefore, requires context. If we're open, it's not that hard to see how different life experiences may provide us with wildly different (and subjective) realities.

America's public lands are steeped in both facts and truth. From the geology of the Grand Canyon to the biodiversity in Yellowstone, facts about these places are backed by years of research and scientific study. But the truth of these lands is more complex. It's about the cultural significance they hold, the stories they tell, and the way they connect us to the past and to each other. The truth includes understanding the important role these lands play – for future generations, to native communities, with regard to preservation, as engines of economic development and so

much more. 'Truth' may lead one person to favor mining while another's truth may dictate conservation above all else.

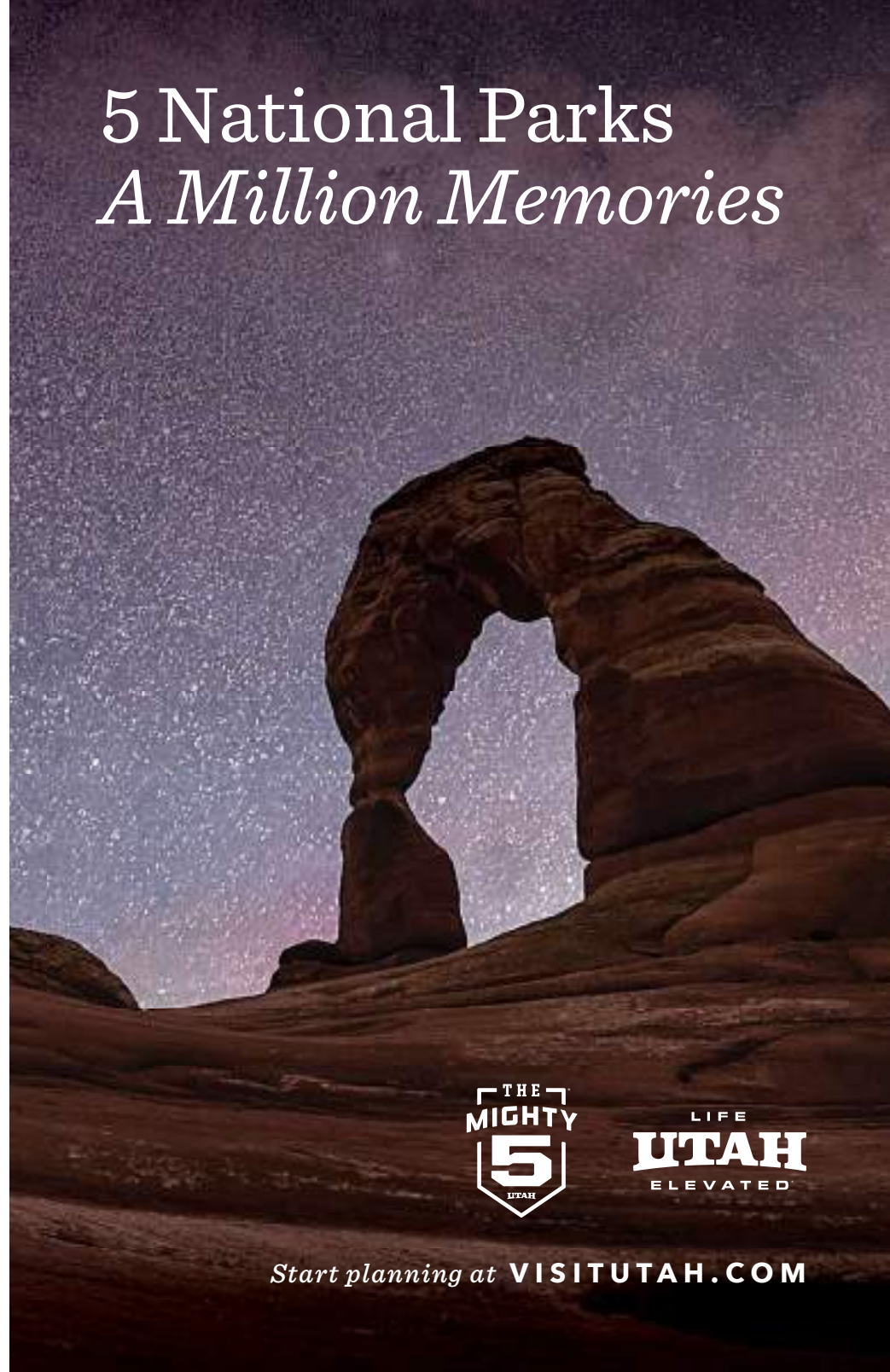
As with many issues, we won't all agree on how to balance facts and truths. Different perspectives exist on how to best utilize public lands. We need to resist the urge to simply dismiss the opinions of others whose views don't align with our own. Facts provide a foundation for understanding. Truth is shaped by personal and collective values. It's essential that we utilize facts in decision-making while, at the same time, embrace the truth in its full complexity. There's never been a better time to commit to listening, remaining open and considering different experiences and values. Only then can we have constructive dialogue that leads us to common ground. The Organic Act of 1916 created the National Park Service and placed equal weight on conservation as it did recreation, which are often in direct conflict. More than a century later, it's still hard to reconcile such opposing goals... and that's a fact!

Let's approach the stewardship of our public lands with an acknowledgement of facts, a respect for truth and an openness to understanding each other's perspectives, especially when we disagree. Together we can ensure that America's public lands remain a rich resource and a legacy for generations to come!

Founder & Editor-in-Chief

mark@americanparknetwork.com

5 National Parks *A Million Memories*



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GETTING TO ACADIA

Acadia is located two-thirds of the way up the Maine coast, approximately 164 miles from Portland, 270 miles from Boston and 475 miles from New York City.

By Car: From Bangor (47 miles from the park), take U.S. 1A south from Bangor to Ellsworth, then take Route 3 east to the Hulls Cove park entrance. From Portland (164 miles from the park), take Route 1 north along the coast to Ellsworth, then take Route 3 east to the Hulls Cove park entrance.

There are four entrances to the popular Park Loop Road section of Acadia on Mount Desert Island: the Hulls Cove Entrance, located on Route 3; the Cadillac Mountain Entrance, located on the outskirts of Bar Harbor on Route 233; the Sieur de Monts Entrance, located on Route 3 south of Bar Harbor; and the

Stanley Brook Entrance, also located on Route 3 in the town of Seal Harbor. Other sections of the park are reachable from various public byways on Mount Desert Island. The Schoodic Peninsula section of the park is located off Route 186, near the town of Winter Harbor. Isle au Haut is easy to get to by mail boat from the village of Stonington. **Note:** Acadia offers public EV charging stations for electric vehicles at park headquarters off Eagle Lake Road and Schoodic Peninsula. The park anticipates adding new stations at Blackwoods and Seawall Campgrounds in the near future.

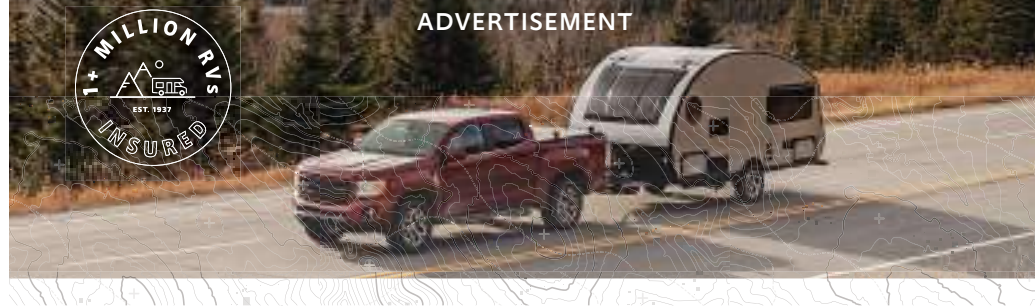
By Air: The Hancock County-Bar Harbor Airport (BHB), located on Route 3 in Trenton, is served by Cape Air, with direct connections to Boston. You must rent a car and drive to Acadia from the closest major airports, **Bangor International Airport** (45 miles away) or **Portland International**

FEDERAL RECREATION LANDS PASSES

A federal recreation pass is helpful if you plan to visit many national parks, forests or other federal lands. For information, call (888) 275-8747 or visit store.usgs.gov/pass.

Type	Cost	Availability	Details
Annual Pass	\$80 \$20	General Public Senior Pass (62+)	This one-year pass is available on site, by phone or online (see above).
Senior Pass	\$80	U.S. residents age 62+	This lifetime pass is available on site, online, or via mail order. ID required.
Military Pass	Free	Active U.S. military and their dependents	This one-year pass is available on site. ID (CAC Card or DoD Form 1173) required. \$10 handling fee if purchased online.
Access Pass	Free	U.S. residents with permanent disabilities	This lifetime pass is available on site or via mail order. ID and documentation required. \$10 handling fee if purchased online or by mail.
Volunteer Pass	Free	250 cumulative volunteer service hours	Inquire locally to obtain information about this one-year pass.

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Do you really need RV insurance on your travel trailer?

As RVers, we know the allure of the open road and the freedom it offers. However, with freedom comes responsibility, including the important decision of securing insurance.

What is RV insurance?

RV insurance is designed to cover various types of RVs, including travel trailers, toy haulers, motor homes, fifth wheels, and camper vans. While liability insurance is not required for most travel trailers, having RV coverage could benefit you and your adventures.

How can RV insurance protect you?

- **Protection against accidents:** May provide financial protection for repair costs, medical expenses, and liability in case of an accident.
- **Coverage for theft and vandalism:** Could help with repairs or replace your trailer with less out-of-pocket expenses if it's lost or stolen.
- **Natural disasters and weather events:** May cover the cost of damage from storms, floods, or other natural disasters.

Is your travel trailer covered under your home or auto insurance?

While your home or auto policy can protect your trailer in certain instances, it can also leave you with gaps in your coverage.

For example, your auto policy may only cover your trailer while you're on the road, not if you're parked or at a campsite. The same goes for home insurance—if you're on your home's property it might be covered, but damage from a storm at a campground wouldn't be.

What specialized coverages does Progressive offer?

Progressive offers a variety of specialized coverages that aren't included on a standard auto insurance policy like:

- **Roof Protection Plus®:** Covers repairs or replacements for RV roofs, including if the cause is wear and tear.*
- **Pest Damage ProtectionSM:** Covers the cost of repairs from pest infestations.*

Confidence on the road

Having RV insurance gives you confidence you're protected no matter where you roam. From remote national parks to bustling campgrounds, RV insurance ensures you have the support and financial protection you need if something goes wrong.

While insurance for your travel trailer may not be legally required, it's a crucial investment in protecting your RV, finances, and peace of mind.

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Jetport (164 miles away). Portland offers service from most U.S. metropolitan areas on American, Avelo, Breeze, Delta, Frontier, JetBlue, Southwest, Sun Country, and United. Bangor offers service on Allegiant, American, Breeze, Delta and United.

By Train: There is no passenger rail service to Acadia National Park. There is Amtrak service between Boston, MA and Portland, Brunswick and Freeport, ME.

By Bus: Greyhound and Concord Coach Lines offer bus service between Boston and Bangor year-round. For more information, call Greyhound at **(800) 231-2222** or visit greyhound.com; or call Concord at **(800) 639-3317** or visit concordcoachlines.com.

By Local Transportation: Downeast Transportation runs year-round on Mount Desert Island and between Bar Harbor and Ellsworth; please call **(207) 667-5796** or visit downeasttrans.org for more information.

By Ferry: Isle au Haut may be reached via mail boat from Stonington on Deer Isle. Reservations are not taken and the number of day visitors allowed on the island is limited; please call **(207) 367-5193** or visit isleauhaut.com for more information.

The state-owned Swan's Island Ferry provides year-round service from Bass Harbor to Swan's Island; for more information, please call **(207) 244-3254** or visit maine.gov/mdot/ferry/swansisland.

The **Cat Ferry** offers high-speed service between Yarmouth, Nova Scotia and Bar Harbor, ME from May 15 to October 15. For more information, visit ferries.ca or call **(877) 762-7245**.

Travel through the park by automobile, bicycle or foot. Taxis are available in Bar Harbor, and rental cars are available at the aforementioned airports. The recently-upgraded Island Explorer shuttle runs from June 23 to October 13. Bus service on Schoodic points begins a little earlier on May 21. Visit exploreacadia.com for a detailed schedule. See the enclosed map for more information. In August 2022, Acadia GEM—a clean, all electric, and fun way to explore the park was also launched. These electric motorcars with glass roofs and removable doors are a low speed, compact, environmentally friendly, and unique way to experience Acadia. For more information please visit acadiagem.com or call **(207) 288-8983**.

ENTRANCE FEES

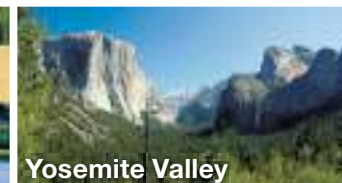
A fee is required to visit any part of the park. All visitors over age 16 must have a park entrance pass. All vehicles must display a pass clearly visible through the windshield. The \$35-per-vehicle fee is good for seven days. An annual Acadia Park Pass costs \$70 and is good for a year. Fees for visitors on a motorcycle are \$30, \$20 for those on foot or bicycle and \$20 per person for vehicles with 16 or more passengers. Acadia participates in the digital pass program. Digital passes for select federal public lands, including Acadia National Park, are also available at recreation.gov/pass or in the recreation.gov app. **Note:** Acadia transitioned to a fully cashless fee system in April 2025. Visitors who are only able to pay with cash may purchase a park pass from a third-party vendor. Reservations are required for Cadillac Summit Road from sunrise to sunset between late-May and mid-October. Reservations can be made at recreation.gov.



Grand Canyon



Yellowstone Park



Yosemite Valley



Grand Tetons



Glacier Park

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HOURS OF OPERATION

The park is open year-round, 24 hours daily; however, most park roads are closed December 1 through April 14. Before visiting the park in the winter, call **(207) 288-3338** and press zero for more information.

EVERY KID OUTDOORS

To help engage and create our next generation of park visitors, supporters, and advocates, the Obama Administration in partnership with the Federal Land Management agencies launched the Every Kid Outdoors initiative. The immediate goal is to provide an opportunity for each and every fourth grade student across the country to experience their federal public lands and waters in person.

All fourth-graders have access to their own Every Kid Outdoors pass at everykidoutdoors.gov. This pass admits the pass owner and any accompanying passengers in a private noncommercial vehicle to the park. Obtain and print the pass by visiting everykidoutdoors.gov to present it at the park. The Every Kid Outdoors pass is valid until August 31, 2025.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS	
General Park Information nps.gov/acad	(207) 288-3338
Emergencies	911
Lost and Found	(207) 288-8782
Weather Information	(207) 667-8910
Camping	(207) 288-3338
Bar Harbor Area Chamber of Commerce barharborinfo.com	(207) 288-5103 (800) 345-4617
Mount Desert Chamber of Commerce mountdesertchamber.org	(207) 276-5040
Southwest Harbor / Tremont Chamber of Commerce acadiachamber.com	(207) 244-9264

WEATHER

Acadia’s coastal location makes for ever-changing weather patterns, including days of brilliant sunshine and occasional mornings when the island is wrapped in a soft blanket of fog. Acadia’s proximity to water takes the edge off the summer heat and the winter chill. During July and August, high temperatures usually range between 70 and 80°F, often accompanied by a sea breeze. In spring and fall, expect highs in the 50s and 60s. In November, the winter season sets in and persists through March, when daytime temperatures hover in the 30s and may dip to zero at night. Always be prepared for changes in weather and dress in layers.

VISITOR CENTERS

Spring and winter park services will be offered at the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce at 2 Cottage St. in Bar Harbor. During the summer season, there is one visitor center at Acadia. The NPS runs **Hulls Cove Visitor Center**, located just off Route 3 at the start of the Park Loop Road. From May 2 to October 31, Hulls

Cove Visitor Center opens at 8:30 a.m. and closes at 4:30 p.m. This two-story building houses an expanded book shop, restrooms, and information booths. Visitor passes are also sold here. At Hulls Cove, you can shop for books, maps and posters and sign up for programs like birdwatching or tide pool walks.

The **Rockefeller Welcome Center**, run by the Schoodic institute, offers educational exhibits on naval history as well as park information and a park store between May 1 and October 27. The center is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The **Acadia Gateway Center**, set to open this summer, is a regional transportation hub and statewide visitor information center with a year round park and ride is located on the west side of Route 3 approaching Trenton. It is an ideal location for visitors to get information, purchase park entrance passes, and leave their cars while riding the Island Explorer to the park and surrounding communities.
Note: As of 2025, the Thompson Island Information Center is permanently closed.

BAR HARBOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce operates a visitor center near Acadia National Park. Stop by the Downtown Welcome Center, located at 2 Cottage St. in downtown Bar Harbor. The welcome centers offer park and regional information, as well as free Oh, Ranger! Wi-Fi™. For information, call **(207)-288-5103** or visit visitbarharbor.com.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Park facilities and activities that are wheelchair-accessible are marked by the

wheelchair symbol (♿). Please see the “Federal Recreational Lands Passes” chart in this chapter for more information about the free Access Pass, which waives entrance fees for U.S. citizens or permanent residents with permanent disabilities.

Camping: Blackwoods Campground has 12 wheelchair-accessible sites, each with compacted gravel walkways leading to the fire grill, picnic table, restrooms and the central amphitheater. Seawall Campground has 14 accessible camping sites, including drive-in, RV and group. The Schoodic Woods campground has 78 ADA camp sites as well as wheelchair-accessible restrooms and an amphitheater.

Carriage Roads: The carriage roads that wind through the park are closed to all motorized traffic, except Class 1 e-bikes, and are ideal for wheelchair users. Visit nps.gov/acad for updates.

Picnics: A wheelchair-accessible picnic site is available at the Fabbri, Thompson Island, Bear Brook, Frazer Point, Pretty Marsh and Seawall picnic areas, where restrooms are also wheelchair-accessible. Limited access is available at other picnic areas.

Service Animals: Visitors may use service animals while visiting park sites and programs. Please refer to the “Park Regulations & Safety” chapter for more information.

Swimming: Echo Lake Beach and Ike’s Point offer wheelchair access via a boardwalk. An accessible chair with large inflatable tires is available at Echo Lake Beach during summer; contact **(207) 288-8807** at least five days in advance for arrangements.

Tours: Boat tours are accessible to wheelchair users, but only with assistance.

Carriages at Wildwood Stables can accommodate wheelchairs. Call **(877) 276-3622** for availability and rates.

LODGING & DINING

Accommodations are not available within the park boundaries, but inns, motels, bed and breakfasts, and campgrounds are plentiful around Mount Desert Island. The only restaurant in the park is **Jordan Pond House**, famous for its popovers and afternoon tea. See the "Who's Who At the Park" chapter for more details.

Neighboring communities also offer great dining opportunities, where menus feature regional specialties made from fresh Maine blueberries and, of course, **Maine lobster!** For more information about lodging and dining, contact the chambers of commerce listed in the chart in this chapter.

LODGING

When it comes to putting a roof over your head, Mount Desert Island has something for everyone. Altogether, the island has 4,500 rooms. Choose from a romantic bed and breakfast to a state-of-the-art hotel with conference facilities. There are seaside lodges and roadside motels, pint-size inns, full-scale resorts, guest houses and cottages.

Budget-conscious travelers may consider renting an apartment or staying at the local YWCA in Bar Harbor. Private campgrounds are another economical alternative.

DINING

Acadia is not only a feast for the eyes. No visitor can claim to have truly experienced Maine without sampling such specialties as boiled lobster, steamed clams, clam chowder, baked beans, blueberry pancakes and pie. You will find these dishes—and much more—at restaurants around the island.

Mount Desert Island has an assortment of dining establishments—from casual lobster pounds (or shacks) to upscale spots that serve haute cuisine. There are also cafés, chowder houses, delis, grills and sub shops. Your best bet will likely be seafood, since the island's fishing boats bring a harvest back from the sea every day.

VISITOR SERVICES

While Acadia is open year-round, most park facilities are closed between late October and mid-May. In season or out, many supplemental services are available in the local communities.

BANKS

Banks and ATMs are available in all communities.

CAMPING SUPPLIES

Sleeping bags, air mattresses, lanterns, portable stoves, cookware, backpacks, propane fuel and firewood are available for purchase in Bar Harbor and other major surrounding towns. For more information, contact the chambers of commerce listed in the chart in this chapter.

EMERGENCIES AND MEDICAL SERVICE

In the park, call **911** for emergency medical or police assistance, or to report any accident. While there are no doctors stationed in the park, first aid is available island-wide. Bar Harbor is home to the **Mount Desert Island Hospital**, a modern, 25-bed facility located on Wayman Lane one block off Main Street. It provides 24-hour emergency and cardiac care as well as cardiac intensive care, pediatric and laboratory services and respiratory therapy. Medical facilities are also available in Northeast Harbor, Southwest Harbor and Ellsworth. The region's largest hospital, **Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center**, is located 45 miles away in Bangor.



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MAINE LOBSTERS

Of all the creatures that inhabit Maine's cold ocean waters, none is better known or more highly prized than the **lobster**. This hardy crustacean once adorned the state's license plate and is featured on menus along the coast.

The lobster's fame is well deserved. Its meat—found in the powerful front claws, the large tail and the spindly legs—is sweet and succulent—a true delicacy. Its taste makes all the effort it takes to catch, cook and eat a lobster seem well worthwhile.

Two hundred years ago, the lobster did not enjoy its present luxury status. Early Maine settlers used lobsters as fertilizer, and legend has it that prison inmates complained about having to dine on lobster three times a week. Perhaps familiarity bred distaste, as lobsters were once so plenti-

ful that they could be gathered at low tide along Maine's rocky shore.

Today, lobster fishing requires considerably more work. Lobsters live on the ocean floor where they feed on snails, clams, mussels and other marine life. Lobstermen catch their prey using box-shaped wire traps, which they drop overboard and mark with brightly painted buoys (their distinctive color combinations are registered with the state). During the seven years it takes a lobster to reach its legal catch size, it regularly molts its shell. Most lobsters average around 1.5 pounds in weight, but lobsters as large as 40 pounds have been reported!

Maine is one of the best places to learn about and enjoy lobsters. While you're in town, stop by one of the many lobster pounds to get a taste of this delicacy.

by Federal Express. In other towns, certain stores are designated drop-off locations. For more information, call **(207) 288-5885**.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Numerous churches serve Mount Desert Island and the nearest synagogue is 20 miles away in Ellsworth. For information about services, consult local newspapers, the Mount Desert Islander and the Ellsworth American. Ecumenical services are held weekly in the summer at Blackwoods campground.

SERVICE STATIONS

Several service stations are located in all towns. Auto repair shops and tire dealerships are also available in Bar Harbor and Ellsworth, located 20 miles north on Route 3.

TIDE TABLES

Nearly all local newspapers and guidebooks include seasonal tables of daily tides, sunrise and sunset.

GIFT SHOPS

Area gift shops sell Maine-made crafts such as pottery, porcupine-quill jewelry, American Indian baskets and miniature lighthouses. Also look for local delicacies like maple syrup, strawberry and blueberry jam and even bottles of blueberry wine produced at a nearby winery. The shops also carry books, videos, t-shirts, postcards and other Acadia souvenirs.

PETS AND KENNELS

Pets must be kept on leashes no longer than six feet and must be under control at all times. The park has no kennel facilities. Veterinary care is available in Bar Harbor.

POSTAL SERVICES

For complete postal services, visit the Bar Harbor Post Office at 55 Cottage St. The post office is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. Call **(207) 288-3122** for more information. Bar Harbor is also serviced

Park Regulations & Safety



Make the most of your visit to Acadia by planning ahead and becoming acquainted with safety precautions and park rules.

SAFETY TIPS

Please review and observe the following tips, which are designed to enhance your safety and enjoyment during your visit.

SHORELINE EXPLORING

Exercise caution along Acadia's rocky shoreline. Loose gravel on rocks creates dangerous footing. Wet rocks are slippery and a sudden wave can sweep the unsuspecting sightseer into the sea.

TICKS

Ticks are prevalent in Acadia, mostly active late spring to early fall. Tick-borne diseases, like Lyme disease, are an increasing public health concern across the region. To limit your exposure, walk in the middle of trails away from tall vegetation, wear light-colored clothing so ticks are easier to spot, wear pants tucked into socks, spray your shoes and clothing with repellent and check yourself and pets carefully after walks. Learn more at [cdc.gov/ticks](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks).

HIKING

- **Be prepared.** Carry a trail map, wristwatch, knife, matches, flashlight, water, food, insect repellent, rain gear and a first-aid kit.
- If you become lost, exhausted or injured, **stay calm and stay on the trail.** Ask passing hikers for assistance. Do not bushwhack or travel in darkness. Should evening fall, you are better off staying where you are and waiting for help to arrive.

- **Stay on the trail** so you won't get lost.
- **Hike with a partner** and leave an itinerary with a responsible person, or on the dashboard of your vehicle.
- **Choose trails that match your skill and fitness levels.** Purchase a park hiking map at visitor centers to find the right trails to match your hiking experience.
- **To prevent blisters**—the most common ailment on the trail—wear comfortable shoes and quality outdoor socks to cushion and protect your feet.

HYPOTHERMIA

Because of Maine's fickle weather, dress in layers and bring rain gear. This is not only for comfort, but also to prevent hypothermia. This potentially fatal condition occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can generate it. Being wet on a breezy summer day can also bring on the condition. If you find yourself or a member of your party shivering uncontrollably and acting disoriented, seek shelter; remove all wet clothing; wrap up in a blanket; and drink warm, nonalcoholic liquids. Serious cases of hypothermia require prompt medical treatment.

PARK REGULATIONS

ACCIDENTS

Accidents must be reported to park rangers if they involve personal injury or property damage.

BICYCLES

Bicycles are permitted on all paved park roads and Acadia's network of carriage roads, except marked private ones.

Bicycles are not allowed on hiking trails. Use caution on the narrow, winding Park Loop Road. Class 2 and 3 e-bikes, which are considered motor vehicles under the Code of Federal Regulations, are not permitted on carriage roads or the shuttle.

CAMPING

Only camp in designated campsites at Blackwoods, Seawall, Isle au Haut and Schoodic Woods campgrounds. Remember to reserve your campsite at [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov).

FIRES AND FIREWOOD

Gathering dead and downed wood within the campgrounds is prohibited. Only use wood from park-provided woodpiles or dead/downed wood from elsewhere in the park. Only build fires in designated fire rings or fireplaces in campgrounds and picnic areas. It is against Maine state law to bring firewood into Maine from out of state. Contained charcoal and wood fires are only allowed in campgrounds and designated picnic areas with park-provided receptacles or in private grills. All fires should be monitored closely at all times.

WEAPONS AND FIREWORKS

Firearms regulations vary by park. Check with the National Park Service or the park you plan to visit before your trip for most up-to-date information. The possession or use of firecrackers or fireworks is prohibited.

HUNTING AND FISHING

Hunting and trapping are prohibited. Fishing is permitted in accordance with Maine state law. A state license is required for freshwater fishing for Maine residents 16 years or older and non-residents 12 years

or older. The fee for a one-day license is \$11. Licenses cannot be purchased in the park, but are available at some town offices, hardware stores or online at [mefishwildlife.com](https://www.mefishwildlife.com). Call (207) 287-8000 for more information.

PETS

Pets must always be on leashes no longer than six feet. They are allowed in all park locations except Duck Harbor Campground on Isle au Haut, Wild Gardens of Acadia at Sieur de Monts, hiking trails that require iron rungs or ladders, park buildings and on ranger-led programs. Pets are prohibited on Echo Lake Beach between May 15 and September 15, and Sand Beach between June 15 and September 8. Always clean up after your pet.

DRIVING

The speed limit is 35 mph in the park unless otherwise noted. All-terrain vehicles are prohibited. All motorized vehicles are prohibited on park trails and carriage roads.

KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

Don't feed, chase or harass wildlife. Please do not approach animals, and be sure to throw your trash in proper receptacles. If animals begin to associate people with food, they may lose their fear of humans and consequently lose their ability to find food on their own.

TAKE ONLY PICTURES

The possession, destruction, removal or disturbance of park property or natural and cultural resources is prohibited. If you witness vandalism or notice other physical damage, you can email nps_isb@nps.gov or call (207) 288-3338.

Who's Who At The Parks

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Since its founding in 1916, the NPS has endeavored to preserve America's parklands for generations to come. The NPS, federal custodian of Acadia National Park, is responsible for preserving and protecting the environmental and cultural values of our national parks, protecting the fish and wildlife therein and providing for public use and enjoyment of the parks. For more information, contact: Acadia National Park, P.O. Box 177, Bar Harbor, ME 04609; (207) 288-3338, or visit [nps.gov/acad](https://www.nps.gov/acad).

EXPLORUS AT ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

ExplorUS at Acadia National Park operates under contract with the NPS to provide food service and shopping inside of the park for visitors. ExplorUS operates the Jordan Pond House, where visitors can enjoy tea and popovers overlooking Jordan Pond and The Bubbles mountains. It also operates the park's three gift shops at Jordan Pond, Cadillac Mountain and Thunder Hole. For more information, please contact info@acadiajordanpondhouse.com or call (207) 813-4342.



EASTERN NATIONAL

Chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1948, Eastern National is a nonprofit cooperating association that promotes the historical, scientific and educational activities of the NPS. It also supports park research, interpretation and conservation programs. For more information, contact: Eastern National, Acadia National Park, P.O. Box 177, Bar Harbor, ME 04609; (207) 288-4988, or visit [easternnational.org](https://www.easternnational.org).

FRIENDS OF ACADIA

Friends of Acadia is an independent, nonprofit organization that works to preserve and protect the park and its surrounding communities through conservation grants and programs, volunteerism and advocacy. For more information, contact: Friends of Acadia, 43 Cottage Street, P.O. Box 45, Bar Harbor, ME 04609; (800) 625-0321 or (207) 288-3340, or visit [friendsofacadia.org](https://www.friendsofacadia.org).

MOUNT DESERT ISLAND AREA CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Helpful information is available at the following chambers of commerce:

Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce, 2 Cottage St., Bar Harbor, ME 04609; (207) 288-5103, [visitbarharbor.com](https://www.visitbarharbor.com);
Mount Desert Chamber of Commerce, 42 Harbor Drive, PO Box 675 Northeast Harbor, ME 04662; (207) 276-5040, [mtdesertchamber.org](https://www.mtdesertchamber.org);
and **Southwest Harbor/Tremont Chamber of Commerce**, 329 Main St., Southwest Harbor, ME 04679; (207) 244-9264, [acadiachamber.com](https://www.acadiachamber.com).

History & Culture



Some 500 million years ago, what we now know as Mount Desert Island began taking shape on the ocean floor. Erosion swept sediments—sand, silt and mud, and later volcanic ash and seaweed—from the North American continental plate out to sea. There, they slowly amassed and hardened into what would become some of the island bedrock.

Magma, or molten rock, transformed some of this sedimentary rock as it rose through the Earth's crust. The overlying bedrock was shattered, and in some places consumed, by the magma as it made contact.

In other areas, the mass of magma slowly cooled to form granite that is exposed today because the overlying layers have eroded.

LAND OF ICE

The brute force of the **continental glaciers** that blanketed New England two to three million years ago carved out many of the park's loveliest features, including Jordan and Long ponds, Echo and Eagle lakes and stunning Somes Sound, a deep, narrow inlet surrounded by steep cliffs.

The imprint of the last glacier to pass through Acadia is the one that remains most visible today. It advanced out of Canada around 100,000 years ago, crept slowly across New England, and eventually spread 150 miles out to sea.

As the glaciers passed through the valleys, they scoured away the sides of the

mountains causing steep grades and cliffs (including the Precipice Trail section of Champlain Mountain). As the ice sheet traveled, it gathered up large rocks—**erratics**—and carried them considerable distances. Examples of these boulders can be seen at the summit of Cadillac and South Bubble mountains.

Climatic changes eventually halted the glaciers' progress around 18,000 years ago. As the ice sheet receded, the ocean advanced, flooding the valleys and cutting the island off from the mainland. It is now the second-largest island off the east coast of the continental United States.

Today, the sea remains the key agent of change at Acadia. It buffets the steep face of Otter Cliffs each day while polishing the pink and blue-gray cobblestones at Little Hunters Beach and depositing fine shell particles at Newport Cove, the only sand beach on Acadia's coastline.

MAN ON MOUNT DESERT

Ancient native peoples made their home on Mount Desert Island long before European explorers ventured across the Atlantic. Few records of their presence remain: stone tools, pottery, fishing implements and **middens** (large refuse piles of shells, which archeologists estimate are between 3,000 and 5,000 years old).

The people who are now known as the **Wabanaki** inhabited the island at the time the first Europeans made contact in the 1500s. Originally, it was believed the

Wabanakis traveled to **Pemotonet** or "range of mountains," as they called the island, by birch-bark canoe from their winter homes near the Penobscot River's headwaters.

The discovery of middens that included clams harvested in winter provided evidence that some Native Americans spent winter on Mount Desert Island as well. During the summer months, they would hunt, fish and gather berries near Somes Sound. More recently, archeologists have concluded that the Wabanakis may have had settlements both inland and on the coast.

The history of these early island residents is told at the **Abbe Museum**, located just off the Park Loop Road near Sieur de Monts Spring, and the expanded Abbe Museum, located on Mount Desert Street in Bar Harbor.

EUROPEAN EXPLORERS

In 1524, the Florentine explorer Giovanni da Verrazano arrived in the region that is now Maine and the Canadian Maritimes. He is credited with christening the area with the name L'Acadie, or Arcadia. Some historians believe it to be a Wabanaki word; others say it is a corruption of Arcadia, an equally scenic and inspiring region of ancient Greece. Eighty years later, in 1604, the French explorer Samuel de Champlain gave Pemotonet the name: l'Isles des Monts-déserts, which is now known as Mount Desert Island. Champlain, who crossed the Atlantic 29 times and later founded Quebec, is believed to have run aground at Otter Point, where he met members of the Wabanaki tribe.

A party of French Jesuits, who may have settled at the mouth of Somes Sound in 1613, were also warmly greeted by the Wabanaki. The priests intended to establish a mission there but were soon pushed out by English explorers who were determined to expand northward from their settlements in Virginia.

For the next century, the French and British would struggle for control of Acadia. In 1759, the British finally prevailed when they defeated the French in Quebec, but not before a young French nobleman laid claim to a large section of the Maine coast. **Sieur de Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac** stopped long enough on Mount Desert to lend his name to the island's highest mountain before moving on to found the Midwest city of Detroit.

THE FIRST SETTLERS

Many of Mount Desert Island's towns bear the names of the first settlers, including Abraham Somes, a sailor from Massachusetts, who, with his family, settled on the island in 1762. Because of its proximity to sailing routes, the western side of the island was settled first. Later arrivals gravitated to the island's eastern half, where the soil proved better for farming. Then known as Eden, **Bar Harbor** was incorporated as a town in 1796.

By 1820, most island inhabitants were engaged in fishing, shipbuilding, lumbering or farming. This time period is well documented at the **Islesford Historical Museum**, located on Little Cranberry Island and accessible by cruise and mail boats.

SUMMERCATORS

By mid-century, a new industry emerged: tourism. First artists, such as the landscape painters **Thomas Cole** and **Fred-eric Church**, traveled to Mount Desert. Then came journalists and sportsmen, drawn by the promise of the vast, unspoiled wilderness Cole and Church had depicted. Early visitors, known as “rusticators” or “summercators,” bunked with local families. By 1880, Bar Harbor boasted 30 hotels and a national reputation as a summer resort.

That reputation was sealed soon after, when America’s most socially prominent families—the **Rockefellers, Morgans, Fords, Astors, Vanderbilts** and **Pulit-zers**—began summering in Bar Harbor and nearby Northeast and Seal harbors. They built magnificent summer “cottages” of palatial dimensions, entertained lavishly and forever altered the rustic character of the island. Ironically, these same summer colonists also helped preserve the natural beauty of Mount Desert Island. Acadia, the first eastern national park, was created from land donated entirely by private citizens.



NATIONAL PARK STATUS

A Maine politician once remarked, “the portable sawmill created Acadia National Park.” Concerned that this tool of progress would cut a swath through their island paradise, a group of summer residents, led by the president of Harvard University, **Charles W. Eliot**, formed a public land trust in 1901 to protect the island from uncontrolled development. The group had the foresight to appoint **George Bucknam Dorr** as its director. A member of a highly regarded Boston family that had made its fortune in textiles, Dorr would spend the next 43 years (and much of his own wealth) tirelessly working to protect and preserve Acadia for public use.

The land trust’s first notable acquisition was the chiseled headland known as “The Beehive,” in 1908, followed soon by the summit of 1,530-foot Cadillac Mountain. By 1916, Dorr secured national monument status for the trust, and, in 1919, it became the first eastern national park. To honor the amicable terms between the United States and France at that time, it was named Lafayette National Park. Dorr was appointed the first superintendent, a position he held until his death in 1946.

Over the next 10 years, the park doubled in size, due in part to the acquisition of the Schoodic Peninsula, which faces Mount Desert Island across Frenchman Bay. The family who donated the 2,000-acre peninsula had but one small stipulation: Being residents of England, they objected to the park’s Francophile name. Dorr arranged to change the name to Acadia National Park, a move that required an act of Congress. The park’s last major acquisition came in 1943, with the donation of 3,000 acres on unspoiled Isle au Haut, about 15 miles southwest of Mount Desert Island, in Penobscot Bay.



Next to George Dorr, Acadia has had no better friend than philanthropist **John D. Rockefeller, Jr.** He not only donated more than 10,000 acres of parkland (including the stretch of coast between Thunder Hole and Otter Cliffs), but also was responsible for one of Acadia’s most picturesque features, the 45 miles of broken-stone carriage roads that wind through its interior. In 1913, alarmed by the prospect of a park overrun by automobiles, Rockefeller began building 16-foot-wide roads connected by a series of 16 bridges crafted from local granite and cobblestones. Today, equestrians, hikers, cyclists and, in winter, cross-country skiers enjoy the roads. Carriage rides are available through Wildwood Stables. Refer to the “Things to Do” chapter for more information.

FIRE!

In 1947, a fire broke out on Mount Desert Island, consuming some 17,000 acres and burning for 10 days before it was brought under control. No one knows how the fire was started, but some of the driest conditions on record for the area contributed to the quickness and ferocity with which it spread. More than 10,000 of the acres that burned were in Acadia National Park.

The blaze swept down Bar Harbor’s “**Millionaire’s Row**,” incinerating over 60 grand summer cottages, effectively ending the uppercrust resort era. Some surviving cottages have been converted into inns and bed-and-breakfasts. Others remain private residences for a new generation of summercators.

Sights To See



Acadia boasts varied and dramatic scenery, including: a coastline of chiseled granite; the ocean dotted with islands, 26 mountain peaks (that together constitute the highest headlands along the eastern seaboard); close to a dozen glacial lakes and ponds; and **Somes Sound**, the only fiord (a smaller version of a fjord, a glacially carved, u-shaped valley bordered by steep cliffs) in the contiguous 48 states. It is also home to 40 species of mammals, 7 species of reptiles, hundreds of birds species and countless marine species. Please protect them and their habitats.

In shape, Mount Desert Island resembles a lobster claw. Many of Acadia's best-known attractions are on the eastern side of the

"claw," which is separated from the western side by Somes Sound. The park's western half features several mountains, numerous salt marshes and nature trails, and some of the best birdwatching in New England. The remainder of Acadia National Park consists of the dazzling Schoodic Peninsula and several offshore islands, including Baker Island and remote Isle au Haut.

PARK LOOP ROAD

Many natural attractions are found along **Park Loop Road**, a 27-mile, two-lane thoroughfare that winds through the eastern half of **Mount Desert Island**. It is accessible from **Hulls Cove, Cadillac Mountain, Sieur de Monts** and **Stanley Brook** entrances. While you can drive the loop in under an hour, most visitors find

that it takes at least half a day to take in all that this scenic route has to offer.

Please remember: While the park is open year-round, Park Loop Road is mostly closed between December 1 and April 14.

The shoreline section of Park Loop Road is the most heavily traveled in Acadia, and for good reason. The road offers marvelous views of **Frenchman Bay**, as well as front-row seats to the pitched battle between land and sea. Most of the road's scenic highlights can be seen by car. To experience them, however, get out and walk the rolling footpath that winds alongside Park Loop Road.

In this otherwise rock-bound park, **Sand Beach** is a graceful anomaly. Located at Newport Cove, 10 miles from the visitor center, this is the park's only sand beach on the ocean. Swimming at Sand Beach is not for the faint of heart. Ocean temperatures seldom climb above 55°F. Warmer waters for swimming can be found on the western side of the island at Echo Lake, Acadia's other beach site.

A short hike inland from Sand Beach is the **Beehive**, a 520-foot-high mountain with a honeycombed eastern face sculpted by glaciers. The Beehive can be glimpsed from Park Loop Road.

Another feature you can see along Park Loop Road is **Thunder Hole**, located midway between Great Head and Otter Cliffs. Timing is everything here. As wind-driven tides sweep into this narrow granite channel, air becomes trapped, escaping with a thunderous report. At low tide on a calm day, Thunder Hole is stubbornly silent. Just south of Thunder Hole are **Otter Cliffs**, 100-foot pink granite buttresses

rising straight out of the water.

Marked only by a simple set of wooden stairs leading down to the water, **Little Hunters Beach** is often overlooked by motorists in search of grander vistas. But this is one of Acadia's most peaceful and sheltered spots, a steeply pitched cove lined entirely with cobblestones. These small, egg-shaped rocks were polished by the pounding surf (collecting is prohibited).

JORDAN POND AND THE BUBBLES

In a park dotted with glacier-carved ponds and lakes, **Jordan Pond** is perhaps the loveliest. Located on the western side of Park Loop Road, its waters are clear and cool. Its shores are flanked by Penobscot Mountain to the west and Pemetic Mountain to the east, both accessible by hiking trails. The view that sets Jordan Pond apart lies to the north, and rising from the shore are a pair of rounded mountains, aptly named **the Bubbles**.

CADILLAC MOUNTAIN

Whether driving from Park Loop Road to the top of its 1,530-foot summit or hiking up one of the trails, most visitors consider **Cadillac Mountain** the high point—both literally and figuratively—of their trip to Acadia. Not only is Cadillac the park's highest peak, but it is also the tallest mountain on the Atlantic coast north of Brazil. On a clear day (visibility is best during fall and winter), the panoramic views Cadillac commands are unparalleled.

Spread out below are island-dappled Frenchman and Blue Hill bays, the whole of the park, and beyond that, much of Maine itself. Some visitors arrive at Cadillac at dawn to see the sun rise in one of



SENTINELS OF THE SEA



There is no symbol of the Maine coast more stirring than the lighthouse. Whether rising tall on the mainland or on a tiny scrap of rock many miles out to sea, these beacons have guided mariners through Maine's many rocky ledges and pea-soup fogs for more than 200 years. Maine is second only to Michigan in its number of lighthouses. More than 60 are found from the Cape Neddick Light at the state's southern tip to the West Quoddy Head Light in Maine's mostly undeveloped Down East region.

Maine lighthouses were originally manned by a lighthouse keeper and often by his family, as well. Romantic in the telling, the life of

a lighthouse keeper (especially an offshore keeper) was, in practice, lonely and fraught with responsibility and risk. Today, all Maine lighthouses are automated and monitored by the U.S. Coast Guard. Some decommissioned lighthouses are being put to use as bed-and-breakfasts.

Acadia boasts four lighthouses spread among the surrounding bays: Bass Harbor Head, Bear Island, Egg Rock and Great Duck Island. Built between 1828 and 1875, all the lighthouses except Great Duck are visible from various points in the park. Only Bass Harbor Head is accessible by car.

SOMES SOUND

Neatly bisecting the eastern and western halves of Mount Desert Island, Somes (rhymes with "homes") Sound is home to the only fiard, a smaller version of a fjord, in the contiguous 48 states. A more poetic meeting of land and sea is hard to imagine. Steep mountains line both sides of the sound, a narrow, 168-foot-deep gorge carved by glaciers. The best views of **Somes Sound**, other than from a sailboat or Acadia Mountain, are from the south-bound side of Sargeant Drive (off Route 198), which closely hugs the sound's eastern shore.

the first places in the United States. Others prefer the mountain's equally dazzling sunsets. Whenever they come, most visitors spend hours clambering over the bald granite dome.

It can be very difficult to find parking at Cadillac Mountain from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and at sunrise and sunset. Ask rangers about other locations that are just as beautiful but less crowded.

Reservations are required for Cadillac Mountain Rd. between sunrise and sunset from May 21 to October 26. Make your reservation at **Recreation.gov** starting April 15.



SEAWALL

The western side of Mount Desert Island includes the more tranquil part of the park. Less visited and congested, it also affords visitors wonderful views of Somes Sound and the mountainous eastern portion of the park. Located on a narrow stretch of Route 102A, between a small pond and a broad expanse of bay, **Seawall** faces the Duck Islands and the Atlantic Ocean. This is an ideal spot for watching many seabirds.

This side of the island is also home to Echo Lake, a favorite spot for anglers, paddlers, picnickers and even swimmers. Visitors who camp overnight here are treated to a spectacular sunrise over Great Cranberry Island.

BASS HARBOR LIGHTHOUSE

Bass Harbor Head Light, which rises from the rocky, southernmost tip of Mount Desert Island, is one of the most photographed lighthouses on the East Coast. The light, which was built in 1858, marks the entrance to Bass Harbor, and beyond it, Blue Hill Bay. Now fully automated and managed by the U.S. Coast Guard, it is the only park lighthouse accessible by car. The lighthouse is located on the western side of the island, on Route 102A. Be prepared for heavy traffic during sunrise, sunset and in the middle of the day. **Note: RVs and buses are not allowed on the road to the lighthouse.**

ISLE AU HAUT

Fifteen miles southwest of Mount Des-

ert at the mouth of Penobscot Bay lies **Isle au Haut**, the most remote section of the park. Accessible by a 45-minute mail boat ride from the village of Stonington (no car ferries are available), Isle au Haut rewards those who make the trip with hiking trails, spruce forests, cobblestone beaches and unobstructed views of the Atlantic.

SCHOODIC PENINSULA

By comparison, Schoodic Peninsula is a model of accessibility, located just one hour by car from Bar Harbor, off Route 186. Still, this 2,366-acre peninsula (Acadia's only wedge of the mainland) does not attract as many visitors as Mount Desert Island.

Visitors to Schoodic can freely explore the six-mile park road (RVs are restricted with the exception of the **Schoodic Woods Campground**), a 440-foot headland, various hiking trails, eight miles of bike paths

and the area's cobblestone beaches. If a crowd collects anywhere, it is usually at high tide at the rock ledge called **Schoodic Point**. The point, which confronts the sea head-on, unprotected by any offshore islands, fully merits the word spectacular. Full of sound and fury, wave after relentless wave hurls itself at the shore, sending plumes of ocean spray into the air—surely one of Acadia's most spellbinding sights.

In 2002, the U.S. Naval Base on Schoodic closed and those 100 acres were returned to the National Park Service, the original owner. The **Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park** has been established there, the purpose of which is to promote and facilitate education and research that is consistent with the mission of the NPS. One of the programs taking place there is the Schoodic Education Adventure, a three-day residential program for fifth through eighth graders.



Find Your Adventure.
JOIN THE CREW!

Scan Me!



 student conservation association

■ Preservation



"In wildness is the preservation of the earth."
—Henry David Thoreau

So wrote America's great naturalist-philosopher more than a century ago. A frequent visitor to Maine's north woods, Thoreau well understood the healing powers of this vast, virgin landscape. By preserving such wildness, he wrote, we are also ensuring our own survival—not just physically, but spiritually.

Every year, millions of visitors travel to Acadia in search of the wildness Thoreau described, making it one of the top 10 most visited national parks in the country. Such popularity has led to a pressing—and complex—dilemma faced by park officials; the more people who seek out Acadia's special beauty, the more endangered that beauty becomes. Park officials must balance visitor use with the protection of the park's precious natural resources.

AREAS AT RISK

The summit of Cadillac Mountain would seem impervious to man or nature, yet this granite dome is also home to a fragile environment of subalpine vegetation, low-lying heathers, shrubs, berries and wildflowers that are extremely sensitive to foot traffic.

The island's sea caves are a unique ocean-side habitat that once supported a variety of marine life. Today, those species are greatly depleted. Some creatures may have been collected as souvenirs, but park naturalists speculate that human footsteps alone may have been enough to disturb this fragile environment. Air quality is also a concern at Acadia. The propane-powered Island Explorer shuttle buses, which annually carries

more than half a million passengers to and from the park from mid-June to Columbus Day, reduce the amount of pollutants and greenhouse gases released into the air.

RESTORING ACADIA

Fortunately, the notion of preservation is as old as the park itself. George Dorr, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and the park's other founders were all conservationists working to protect Mount Desert Island from the ravages of the sawmill and automobile. More than 35,000 acres were donated so that they might be preserved for public use.

There's been progress in the restoration of Acadia's hiking trails and carriage roads. Acadia Trails Forever and the Carriage Road Endowment, established in partnership with Friends of Acadia, support new construction and maintenance. Park trail and road crews, the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps and teams of volunteers rehabilitate stone steps and walls, clear vegetation from drainage systems, build bog walks in wetlands and more.

Park officials have prepared a long-term general management plan for Acadia to protect the park's resources and the visitor experience. In the summer of 2022, Acadia began to undergo a wetland restoration project which will improve flood mitigation, natural water flow, and wildlife passage for a healthier ecosystem. As of April 2023, ground was also broken for a new 32,000 square-foot maintenance facility in Bar Harbor. Additional work is also being done to enhance the park's water system. Each project is critical to achieving Acadia's mission and will provide frontline services to visitors and protect park resources for the next 60 years.

REDUCING HUMAN IMPACT

Because parklands and private property are interspersed, the park inevitably feels the impact of growth and development in neighboring communities. Friends of Acadia's programs and partnerships include the free, low-emissions Island Explorer bus system; advocacy for additional congressional funds; a revolving fund to protect privately held lands within park boundaries; and collaboration on a transportation management plan, viewable at friendsofacadia.org. Visitors are encouraged to follow **Leave No Trace** principles. See Int.org.

LASTING TRAILS

Rock slides, natural erosion and millions of visitors place a heavy toll on the park's trails. To combat degradation, Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park launched "**Acadia Trails Forever**," a \$13 million partnership to reverse these effects. Friends of Acadia is contributing \$9 million of the

funding; the balance comes from admission fees. During a nearly 10-year period, the program allocated \$6.5 million to trail reconstruction and \$6.5 million in endowments to maintain Acadia's 125-mile foot trail system and fund student employment programs. For more information, contact Friends of Acadia, P.O. Box 45, Bar Harbor, ME 04609; **(207) 288-3340**, or visit friendsofacadia.org.

RECYCLING

Acadia has undertaken a solid waste recycling program that includes items used by visitors. Bins for glass, plastic and aluminum are placed throughout the park. From 2001 to 2005, the program recycled an average of more than 18 tons of newsprint, cardboard, plastic and glass per year. Pollution also comes from light. Several Acadia towns have passed ordinances to preserve the island's stunning views of the night sky.



■ Mount Desert Island

Acadia National Park covers much of Mount Desert Island. Most of the park is preserved in its natural state, with commercial activity taking place outside the park in surrounding communities. Busy little resort towns offer modern services, lodging, dining spots, gift shops and antique stores.

The **eastern half** of Mount Desert is the more populated side. It is home to the town of Bar Harbor, which is near the Cadillac Mountain Entrance to Acadia National Park. The **western half**, locally known as the "quiet side," is more rural. The land is punctuated with marshes, coves, inlets and an occasional village.

BAR HARBOR

Bar Harbor (population 5,276) is a vibrant gateway community to Acadia. Where the millionaires' summer cottages once stood, contemporary visitors will find inns, hotels, guesthouses, sidewalk cafés, formal restaurants and block after block of boutiques, specialty shops and galleries.

Bar Harbor is also home to such prestigious institutions as **Jackson Laboratory**, a leading genetics research center, **MDI Biological Laboratory**, and the **College of the Atlantic**, a small liberal arts college, which is also home to the **George B. Dorr Museum of Natural History**, which investigates, interprets and displays the natural world of Maine. The museum showcases dioramas that portray native species in natural and human-altered environments. The museum is housed in the original headquarters of Acadia National Park.

Learn more about the town's history at the **Bar Harbor Historical Society** located at 127 West St. The museum is open for the season starting May 27 through October 25, Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets are \$23 for guided tours, \$18 for general admission, \$16 for seniors, and free for those under the age of seven. For more information call **(207) 288-0000** or visit barharborhistorical.org.

Agamont Park overlooks the town pier and Frenchman Bay at the end of West Street. This summer, mark your calendars for the **Seaside Cinema Outdoor Movie Series**, held here Wednesdays in July and August. Enjoy free seaside movie screenings starting at dusk. Arrive early to secure a good spot and enjoy a family picnic as the sun sets.

NORTHEAST HARBOR

Northeast Harbor (population 488) lies 11 miles from Bar Harbor. This low-key town, punctuated by stately summer homes and boats bobbing at the waterfront, sits on a protected deepwater port—one of the best in the state.

Walk along **Municipal Pier** or poke your head into the town's antique store and old bookshop. On Route 3, **Thuya Garden**, open June 14 through October 13, mixes formal English flower beds with simple Japanese influences. Each June, **Asticou Azalea Garden**, on Route 198, presents more than 20 varieties of azaleas. Seasonal activities include golf and tennis. The garden will be open from May 1 through November 1 for the 2025 season. See gardenpreserve.org for updated times.



The **Great Harbor Maritime Museum** on Main Street is a good place to see some of the island's historical artifacts. The museum is open Monday to Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SOUTHWEST HARBOR

Found on the island's western "quiet side," Southwest Harbor is a large fishing village with a population of 1,764 that looks out over Somes Sound. The second largest town on Mount Desert, it is ranked one of the top 12 commercial fishing harbors in Maine. Boat building is the main industry and some of the world's finest crafts come from here.

The **Wendell Gilley Museum** exhibits more than 200 bird carvings and offers

carving demonstrations. Stop by the **Clark Point Gallery** to view 19th- and 20th-century paintings of the island and other parts of Maine. Visit wendellgillemuseum.org to book your visit.

On land, you can golf, hike, rent a bike or have a beachside picnic. Take to the water and hop the ferry to the **Cranberry Isles**, or go deep-sea fishing for halibut or tuna. On the outskirts of Southwest Harbor is the village of **Manset**, home of several boat yards. The nearby town of **Tremont**, home to 1,563 islanders, takes its name from the French *trois et mont*, describing the three mountains seen from the town. Lobstering is the primary industry. **West Tremont, Bernard and Bass Harbor** are smaller villages associated with Tremont.

Things To Do



Although Acadia is dazzling in summer, the park's beauty flourishes throughout the year. By land and by sea, there is no such thing as an off-season at Acadia.

SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL

AMPHITHEATER PROGRAMS

In the evening, Acadia's two campgrounds present free programs in their centrally located amphitheatres. Programs span a range of natural and cultural history topics (ideal for families). You do not have to stay at a campground to attend!

AUDIO TOUR

Eastern National has prepared an audio tour of Acadia National Park. The 56-mile driving tour (which can take between four and six hours to complete) covers the entire Park Loop Road, as well as Sargeant Drive along lovely Somes Sound. Scenic points of interest are highlighted and the park's natural and cultural history is explained. The CD or downloadable audio tour may be purchased at the Halls Cove Visitor Center. Please call **(207) 288-4988** for more information.

BICYCLING

The only tough part about being a cyclist at Acadia National Park is trying to decide which of the many roads to explore. Although **Park Loop Road** is open to cyclists, most opt to ride on the **carriage roads** that are closed to auto traffic and offer a whole new perspective of Acadia. The roads, which wind through the eastern

half of the island, are lined with broken stone and some sections are more suitable for mountain bikes than racing ones. Bikes are not allowed on hiking trails or off of designated roads. Class 2 and 3 e-bikes are considered motorized vehicles and are also prohibited on carriage roads.

For more information, please pick up a copy of a park map. Those seeking to access the carriage roads via shuttle can utilize Bicycle Express shuttle route between Bar Harbor's Kids Corner and the Eagle Lake Carriage Road; visit exploreacadia.com/bikeexpress.html for schedules and availability. Bicycle guides are also available for a fee at Halls Cove Visitor Center. Bicycles can be rented in Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor and Southwest Harbor. Please contact the chambers of commerce listed in the "Plan Your Visit" chapter for more information.

BIRDWATCHING

Sieur de Monts Spring, Ship Harbor and Wonderland trails are all favorite bird-watching spots, as are the summits of Cadillac and Beech mountains during the fall hawk migration. Ask at a park visitor center about ranger-led hawk-watching. Birding is at its peak from late May through September, but there is never a shortage of birds at Acadia. See the "Nature & Wildlife" chapter for more information about birds that can be seen in and around the park.

CRUISES AND WHALE WATCHING

Some of the best views of Acadia are to be had from the ocean.

Out on the open waters of Frenchman Bay, gazing back at Acadia's granite headlands, you'll understand why French explorer Samuel Champlain named the island *l'Isles des Monts-déserts*, a reference to the fact that the mountains looked deserted or bare. A cruise is also an opportunity to learn about Acadia's marine life, from lobsters to harbor seals to pelagic birds. Dress warmly and bring along a pair of binoculars. See the "Nature & Wildlife" chapter for more information about watchable wildlife.

Available cruises include two park ranger-led nature cruises, one of which includes stops on nearby islands. Contact the cruise lines listed or check at a visitor center for details and options. Many other cruises—**whale watches**, **deep-sea fishing** and **lobster fishing**—are also available through local charter boat companies. Contact the chambers of commerce listed in the "Plan Your Visit" chapter for more information.

Acadia National Park Morning or Afternoon Cruise: Departing from Northeast Harbor this 2.75 hour cruise offers superb views of Bear Island Lighthouse, nesting osprey, and basking harbor seals. It includes a 45-minute stop at the 200-year-old lobster fishing village of Little Cranberry Island and views of the vertical Eagle Cliffs. The season lasts from May 17 through October 16 and tickets are \$41 for adults, \$38 for seniors, \$30 for children 6 to 12, and \$19 for children 5 and under. For more information, contact **Sea Princess Scenic Nature Cruises** or visit barharborcruises.com.

Seals and Fjord Cruise: See Acadia's seals and other wildlife on this 2 hour cruise into the Somes Sound Fjord. This

trip is available from June 15 through September 5 and also includes views of Bear Island Lighthouse and Mount Desert Island. Ticket prices: \$37 for adults, \$34 for seniors, \$29 for children ages 6 to 12, and \$19 for those under 5. For more information, contact **Sea Princess Scenic Nature Cruises**, or visit barharborcruises.com.

CARRIAGE TOURS

Wildwood Stables, located on the Park Loop Road, offers multiple scheduled rides daily in open carriages drawn by draft horses. The rides are fully narrated with a history of the park and the carriage roads. Many enjoy the two-hour late afternoon ride to the summit of Day Mountain. The stables are open from late May to mid-October. Reservations are strongly recommended. For visitors with disabilities, there are carriages that can accommodate wheelchairs. For more information, call **(207) 600-7204** or visit acadiabycarriage.com.

FALL FOLIAGE

Fall is foliage season at Acadia National Park and a great time to tour the park. The weather, of course, has the final say when it comes to timing and intensity—warm days and cold nights promise a quicker color change with more brilliant reds, oranges and yellows. Generally, the leaves reach their peak coloration during the first two weeks of October. The Maine Department of Conservation issues weekly foliage reports between mid-September and mid-October, describing the amount of color and leaf fall in seven separate regions of the state. Acadia is part of Zone 2. For more information, please call **(888) 624-6345** or visit mainefoliage.com.

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FISHING

Fishing is allowed on all of Acadia's ponds and lakes. Landlocked salmon and brook trout can be caught in the larger lakes. A state fishing license is required for freshwater fishing, and you must register online to participate in saltwater fishing. Lakes and ponds are under Maine State jurisdiction. Please see the "Park Regulations & Safety" chapter for more information.

FLIGHTSEEING

Flightseeing tours of Acadia, Bar Harbor and other Downeast communities will be a highlight of your trip and give you a different perspective of coastal Maine. Check out coastal lighthouses, Cadillac Mountain, Somes Sound and other scenic areas. Flights depart from **Hancock County-Bar Harbor Airport**.

HORSEBACK RIDING

For park visitors traveling with their own horses, Acadia's carriage roads make ideal riding trails. Stalls and campsites are available. For more information about bringing your horse to the park, call **Wildwood Stables** at (207) 600-7204 or visit acadiabycarriage.com.

MUSEUMS

Abbe Museum, which has one location in the park near Sieur de Monts Spring and another in downtown Bar Harbor, houses a handsome collection of American Indian artifacts. Operating hours are generally Monday through Friday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Visit abbemuseum.org or social media channels to stay up-to-date. The entry fee for adults is \$18, \$14 for seniors, children 5-17 are \$10 and children under five can enter for free. Please call (207) 288-3519 for more information. *Note: Acadia National Park location is closed for the 2025 season.*

The **Sieur de Monts Nature Center** is located near Abbe Museum. The center offers exhibits and activities showcasing the science behind the scenery of the park. The center is open June 16 to October 14.

You need to take a mail or a tour boat to Little Cranberry Island to visit **Islesford Historical Museum**, home to exhibits about New England's maritime history. The museum is open daily from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. from mid June through September. Entry is free. Call (207) 288-3338 for more information.

Lifelike exhibits of animals native to Mount Desert Island are mounted at the **George B. Dorr Museum of Natural History at College of the Atlantic**, located on Route 3 in Bar Harbor. Children will enjoy the hands-on discovery room and summer field studies programs. Limited parking is available; best accessed in summer on the Island Explorer shuttle. Summer hours are Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. from June 24 through September 6. For more information, visit coa.edu/dorr-museum or call (207) 288-5395. Birds of a different feather can be found at the **Wendell Gilley Museum**, located on Route 102 in the town of Southwest Harbor (on the west side of Mount Desert Island). This small gem of a gallery features exhibitions and demonstrations on the Down East art of bird woodcarving. Gilley, a Southwest Harbor native, gained a national reputation for his exquisite woodcarvings. The museum is open year-round. Summer hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit wendellgilleymuseum.org or call (207) 244-7555 for more information.



PADDLING

Whether you are a novice or a skilled paddler, you can enjoy sea kayaking in the waters around Mount Desert Island and canoeing in many of the park's lakes and ponds. Guided tours of varying lengths are available, including overnight camping trips to remote island sites. Call the chambers of commerce listed in the "Plan Your Visit" chapter for more information.

PARK PROGRAMS

Perhaps the best way to appreciate the park is in the company of a park ranger. Park rangers can help you better "read" the landscape, from its natural history to the imprint man has left upon the land. Join a park ranger for a nature walk, bridges tour, evening star watch or children-friendly activities. Some programs require reservations (no earlier than three days in advance). For a current schedule, ask at Hulls Cove Visitor Center or visit the park website.

PICNICKING

There are picnic areas at Bear Brook, Fabbri, Thompson Island, Seawall and Pretty Marsh on Mount Desert Island and at Frazer Point on the Schoodic Peninsula. Each has picnic tables, fire grills, water fountains and restrooms. Picnicking is permitted elsewhere in the park, provided visitors observe Acadia's carry-in, carry-out policy.

ROCK CLIMBING

This adventurous sport is increasing in popularity at Acadia. Mount Desert offers lofty challenges—you can climb Otter Cliffs, 60-foot rocky sea cliffs overlooking the ocean, or the South Wall of Champlain Mountain, a 200-foot scaling up a granite mountain face. There are no outfitters in the park, but you can hire a guide. For more information, please call the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce at (207) 288-5103.

CARRIAGE ROADS



In 1901, a group of wealthy Mount Desert Island summer residents banded together to set aside the land that would later become Acadia National Park. One of the park's early benefactors was **John D. Rockefeller, Jr.**, the millionaire industrialist and philanthropist who later planned and built New York City's Rockefeller Center. Rockefeller hoped the land would one day become "a real gem of the first order among national parks," but, in 1913, that hope was threatened by an unforeseen menace: the arrival of the automobile on Mount Desert Island.

Rockefeller, however, did not take this threat lying down. He wanted to preserve the horse-and-carriage experience for those who preferred a quieter ride to the new-fangled automobile. Over the next 27 years, he built a system of carriage roads crisscrossing his property, most of which he later donated to

the park. Gently graded and lined with broken stone, the "Rockefeller Roads" (as they were known) offered a refuge from the "horseless carriage" for hikers, horseback riders and the open, horse-drawn carriages, which were the summercators' preferred mode of travel. Linking over 50 miles of carriage roads were a series of handsome bridges that were built with local granite and cobblestone. The Rockefeller Roads were not without controversy, however. Some summer residents considered them a scar on the wilderness.

Today, now that the automobile has all but conquered the island, visitors to Acadia can be thankful for Rockefeller's generosity and foresight. Winding through the eastern half of the island past lakes and mountains, these roads are now enjoyed by hikers, joggers, cyclists, cross-country skiers, carriage riders and horseback riders.



SWIMMING

Swimming is permitted at **Sand Beach** (saltwater), **Echo Lake** (freshwater), and Lake Wood (freshwater). Ocean temperatures average an invigorating 55 to 60°F so be prepared to be chilly. Lifeguards may be on duty from early June to Labor Day.

WINTER

Winter at Acadia is as beautiful as summer, and for the resourceful and adventurous visitor, every bit as stimulating. Hulls Cove Visitor Center is typically closed November 1 through May 1. Park Loop Road is closed between December 1 and April 14. In the wintertime, park services are offered at Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce at 2 Cottage Street in Bar Harbor. Park rangers will be glad to help you plan your winter outing to ensure maximum enjoyment and safety.

WINTER CAMPING

Offseason and winter camping is no longer allowed at Blackwoods Campground. Gates will remain closed until the campsite reopens.

WINTER SPORTS

When covered with a mantle of snow, the park's carriage roads make ideal **cross-country ski trails**. Snow also blankets Acadia's lakes, making **ice skating** difficult. Ice fishermen fare well, however, and their fishing shacks are a familiar sight on the park's lakes and ponds between January and early March. Be cautious and ensure that ice thickness is sufficient to support your weight. **Snowmobilers** can use the 27-mile Park Loop Road, but are not allowed on most carriage roads.

Walking & Hiking



Whether you're a casual stroller or card-carrying thrill-seeker, Acadia has a path for you. **The Mount Desert Island** section of the park alone boasts 17 mountains. **Isle au Haut** and **Schoodic Peninsula** have several additional peaks. Because the mountains are all less than 1,600 feet tall, each can be hiked in less than a day and several can be scaled in an hour.

During late summer, many trails are fringed with **wild blueberries**. Regular visitors to Acadia know to head to the hills when the popular Park Loop Road is congested. Even at the height of summer, some of the hiking trails offer peace and privacy.

Not all of Acadia's trails lead uphill. Some of the gentlest paths—such as **Ocean Path**, which runs parallel to the Ocean Drive section of Park Loop Road—offer some of the best scenery. If you arrive at the town of Bar Harbor during low tide, wander out across the gravel bar that leads to **Bar Island**—but don't linger—after 90 minutes, the path will disappear beneath the incoming tide.

Park trailheads and junctions are clearly marked with small, wooden directional signs, and the paths with blue-paint blazes.

Pick up a copy of the NPS map of Acadia, available at the **Hulls Cove Visitor Center** to use as your road map for driving. It shows elevations as well as where to find hiking trails and scenic carriage roads. Detailed hiking maps can be purchased at the visitor center. For more information, refer to the **Carriage Roads** article in the "Things to Do" chapter and the hiking safety tips in the "Park Regulations & Safety" chapter.

For additional reading, pick up a copy of *Carriage Roads of Acadia: A Pocket Guide* by *Diana F. Abrell* (2011).

Please note the following closures for part or all of the season:

A portion of the Hemlock Path connecting Great Meadow Loop and the Jesup Path is closed until further notice for trail restoration work.

Carriage Roads close for all activities and vehicles during the spring thaw and reopen for other activities once the gravel surface becomes firm enough to prevent damage. Pedestrians may still walk the paths during this time. The National Park Service will announce when Carriage Roads reopen in full access. Visit [nps.gov/acad](https://www.nps.gov/acad) for updates before going to a trailhead.



WALKING & HIKING TRAILS

Trail Trailhead	Description	Round-Trip Distance Time	Difficulty Elevation Gain
Bar Harbor Shore Path <i>Bar Harbor town pier</i>	A gravel trail with views of the four Porcupine Islands, and on the shore side, views of Bar Harbor	1.0 mile 30 minutes	very easy level
Great Meadow Loop <i>Village Green</i>	A pleasant loop connecting Bar Harbor to Acadia with historic sites along the way. Access to other trails available	2.0 miles 40 minutes	very easy level
Ocean Path <i>Sand Beach parking area</i>	A gently rolling footpath following Park Loop Road to Otter Cliffs with views of the rock-bound coast	4.4 miles 2 hours	easy fairly level
Schoodic Head Trail <i>Schoodic Peninsula Loop Road opposite West Pond</i>	A gentle trail offering views of Schoodic Peninsula and Mount Desert Island	1.2 mile 35 minutes	easy to moderate 440 feet
Ship Harbor Trail <i>Ship Harbor parking area off Route 102A</i>	A walk through spruce forests and along the salt marsh shore of Ship Harbor, great birdwatching	1.3 miles 40 minutes	easy mostly level (rocky patches)
Beech Mountain Trail <i>Beech Mountain parking area off Route 102</i>	Steep in some sections, this trail on the western side of Mount Desert Island offers views of both Long Pond and Echo Lake. A fire tower crowns the summit (not open to the public).	1.2 miles 1 hour	moderate 839 feet
Great Head Trail <i>Eastern end of Sand Beach off Park Loop Road</i>	This cliff walk loop provides views of Frenchman Bay, Sand Beach and Gorham Mountain.	1.9 miles 45 minutes	moderate 145 feet
Gorham Mountain Trail <i>Gorham Mountain parking area off Park Loop Road</i>	A short but spectacular climb up an oceanside mountain offering continuous views	3.5 miles 1 hour	moderate 525 feet
Jordan Pond Path <i>Jordan Pond parking area off Park Loop Road</i>	This relatively level, but rocky, trail around Jordan Pond boasts views of five mountains.	3.3 miles 1.75 hours	moderate level
Cadillac Mountain North Ridge <i>Cadillac parking area off Park Loop Road</i>	This is the least demanding of four trails up Acadia's highest peak with views of Frenchman Bay, offshore islands and Schoodic Peninsula.	4.4 miles 2.5 hours	moderate 1,530 feet
The Beehive <i>Just north of Sand Beach area off Park Loop Road</i>	A very steep trail along cliff ledges leads to the top of this mountain. Bowl Trail offers a longer, gentler climb.	1.4 miles 1.5 hours	strenuous 520 feet
Acadia Mountain Trail <i>Acadia Mountain parking area off Route 102</i>	The park's best views of Somes Sound can be had from this trail.	2.6 miles 1.5 hours	strenuous 681 feet
Emery Path to Schiff Path <i>Sieur de Monts Spring area</i>	A steady and sometimes steep climb to the top of Dorr Mountain, the first section is terraced with granite steps.	2.8 miles 2.25 hours	strenuous 1,270 feet
Cadillac Mountain South Ridge <i>100 ft. SW of Blackwoods Campground entrance off Route 3</i>	A long, sometimes strenuous, hike up Acadia's tallest peak offers excellent panoramic views of the ocean and mountains.	7.4 miles 4.75 hours	strenuous 1,530 feet

The Jordan Cliffs Trail, Precipice Trail and Valley Cove Trail are closed to public entry to limit disturbance of wildlife through Peregrine Falcon nesting season (spring to mid-summer).

Camping



Acadia National Park has four campgrounds, all within a five-minute walk of the ocean. Two are on Mount Desert Island, and one is on Isle au Haut and another is on the Schoodic Peninsula. Additional camping facilities are located outside the park.

Reservations must be made at all campsites. For Blackwoods Sewall, and Schoodic Woods campgrounds, most reservations are released six months in advance of the first of each month with the remainder released two weeks in advance of the desired arrival date. For more information or to make reservations, please call (877) 444-6777 or visit [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov).

Blackwoods Campground is located off of Route 3, five miles south of Bar Harbor on the eastern half of Mount Desert Island. The campgrounds operate by reservation only between May 2 and October 20, 2025. There are no first-come, first-served sites. All sites must be booked before arrival. The Tent, camper, and motor home sites are \$30 per night and group sites

are \$60 per night. Off-season and winter camping is not permitted.

Seawall Campground, located on the western half of the island on Route 102A, four miles south of Southwest Harbor, is open from May 21 through October 13, 2025. Camping is \$30 a night for drive-to sites or \$22 a night for the many walk-to sites and group sites are \$60 a night. These two campgrounds provide restrooms with cold running water (but no showers), picnic tables, fire rings, dump stations and centrally located amphitheaters for evening ranger programs. Designated campsites can accommodate RVs up to 35 feet long, but neither campground has utility hookups. Public showers and camping supply stores are located within half a mile of campgrounds.

Located three miles south of Winter Harbor about 50 miles from Mount Desert Island, **Schoodic Woods Campground** is open May 21 through October 13, 2025. The site features hiking and biking trails, as well as electric and water hookups for RVs.

The park maintains five lean-to shelters (which can accommodate up to six people) at **Duck Harbor Campground**, open June 19 to October 6, 2025 on pristine Isle au Haut. Facilities include a picnic table, a fire ring, a portable toilet and a hand pump for drinking water. Reservations are required and can be made online starting April 1st. There is a \$20 special-use permit fee. No dogs are allowed in the campground. Duck Harbor is very popular; reserve early. For more information, call (207) 288-3338 or visit [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov).



Just For Kids



A visit to Acadia gives kids a chance to get back to nature and learn about plant and animal life, living history and the wonders of the ecosystem. At the same time, they're able to gain a better appreciation of the role rangers play in keeping America's parks preserved for generations to come. Here's a helpful rundown of some fun ways kids can get involved.

BECOME A JUNIOR RANGER

Kids of all ages can become Junior Rangers by completing the activities in the Junior Ranger booklet, which is available at the visitor center.

VISIT THE NATURE CENTER

Check out displays and learn about climate change through interactive exhibits.

EXPLORE THE CARRIAGE ROADS

Take kids on a horse-drawn carriage ride on Acadia's carriage roads.

GO TO THE WATER

Look for eagles, ospreys, harbor seals, porpoises and other marine life and birds.

DRIVE UP CADILLAC MOUNTAIN

From the top, be the first in America to see the sun rise each day.

VISIT THE ABBE MUSEUM

Kids can enjoy a visit to The Abbe Museum in downtown the Bar Harbor. Fees are

\$18 for adults and \$10 for children ages 5 to 17 (5 and under are free).

STOP BY JORDAN POND HOUSE

Kids will love the homemade popovers and locally made strawberry jam at Jordan Pond House. You can get blueberry lemonade or soda, hot chocolate or root beer to go with them. Kids can sit with parents at outdoor tables, or scamper through the grass while the adults enjoy the views. Jordan Pond House opens from May 16, 2025 to October 26, 2025 and operates from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. From mid-June to early September, Jordan Pond House operates from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. daily.

HIT THE BEACH

Children will enjoy the crashing waves and the combination of sand and shell fragments at Sand Beach. If you're not ready to brave the cold ocean waters here, try heading over to the swimming area at Echo Lake. Echo Lake has lifeguards who are on duty from June through August. There are no lifeguards at Sand Beach.

HIKE UP GORHAM MOUNTAIN

This short hike ascends only 525 feet and offers ocean views. During July and August, you can pick blueberries on some of Acadia's mountains.

VISIT SCHOODIC PENINSULA

Marvel at the surf's sound and fury when it's almost high tide. Tide information is posted at the visitor center and in the ranger-led program schedule.



Despite a number of ecological demands, including harsh winters and overlapping land environments, Acadia's flora and fauna have flourished. Most of the park's animals are adept at avoiding detection, but look carefully (and quietly) at dawn or dusk, and you may see them feeding.

THE FOREST

For centuries, evergreens dominated much of northern Maine. When the last glacier receded, **spruce** and **balsam firs** outnumbered deciduous trees such as birch and aspen. These coniferous trees inhibited the growth of other vegetation with their long shadows and needles, which, as they decayed, produced acidic soil.

These resinous trees are also especially quick to burn and slow to regenerate. Following the 1947 fire, a new forest of sun-worshipping **birch**, **maple** and **aspen** sprang up amid the surviving evergreens. Thus, the fire increased the diversity of Acadia's woodlands and the intensity of its fall foliage. As they grow, the deciduous trees produce the shade required by evergreens, and eventually spruce and fir will stand tall once more in Acadia.

Ramrod straight with reddish-brown bark and sharp, stiff needles, **red spruce** can grow as tall as 110 feet—although on Acadia's rocky mountaintops, dwarf spruce one-tenth that size are common. Outside the park, red spruce is heavily logged for pulp. **White spruce**, which has silvery-brown bark and bluish-green needles, is also found here.

It is no accident that Maine is known as the "Pine Tree State." Several species thrive

in Acadia, including red, pitch and jack pines. But the best known is the **white pine**, which unlike spruce and fir, prefers sunlight to shadow. White pine grows quickly, usually to heights of more than 100 feet. Because of its great size, it was once highly valued for sailing ship masts.

To Acadia's earliest inhabitants, no tree was more important than the **paper birch**. They used the birch's tough, white bark to craft baskets, canoes and wigwams. Prized by native tribes and settlers alike was the **sugar maple**, whose sweet sap produces that New England delicacy, maple syrup.

THE WATER'S EDGE

Acadia's intertidal zone teems with marine life that has adapted to Acadia's twice-daily tides, which range between 10 and 12 feet.

Just below the low-water mark is **kelp**, a dense, brown seaweed that can withstand 600 pounds of water force per square inch before breaking. Sheltered by the kelp are crabs, sea urchins, sea anemones, sea stars and jellyfish. Next closest to shore is **Irish moss**, a bushy, purplish-brown seaweed.

When processed, it becomes carrageenan, a thickening agent used in ice cream, cheese, salad dressing and chocolate milk.

At the high-water mark, you'll find a white layer of **acorn barnacles**. These minute crustaceans float to shore and attach to rocks, ship bottoms and pilings, then they form a tough, conical shell.

Periwinkles, tiny snails half an inch long, feed on wet algae with a rough tongue called a radula.



ATLANTIC PUFFIN

Fratercula arctica
Often called "sea parrots" or "clowns of the sea," these pigeon-sized birds have large, bright orange beaks and feet. They live in colonies on rocky islands off the coast and aren't visible from Mount Desert Island but can be seen during some boat cruises. • **Weight** 1 lb • **Size** 1 ft tall • **Active** spring and summer. Photo: iStock

BLACK BEAR

Ursus americanus
It is unlikely that you'll encounter a black bear. They are active from spring through fall, moving through the woods and mountains eating berries, fish or whatever food they can find. By fall, black bears claim a den beneath a rock or fallen tree to sleep for the winter. • **Weight** 200-600 lbs • **Size** 5-6 ft long • **Active** spring, summer and fall. Photo: iStock



BALD EAGLE

Haliaeetus Leucocephalus
The national bird of the United States, the bald eagle lives in coastal woodlands and along waterways, eating fish it catches with its talons. Bald eagles mate for life and can live up to 30 years in the wild. Look for bald eagles near Frenchman Bay. Their seven-foot wingspan makes them hard to miss. • **Weight** 10-20 lbs • **Size** 2-4 ft tall • **Active** year-round. Photo: iStock

COMMON LOON

Gavia immer
Listen for the melodious call of the loon echoing in the woods. Recognizable by their zebra-striped necklace, glossy checkered board feathers and sleek graceful form, these majestic birds can dive as deep as 300 feet to catch their prey. They eat fish, frogs, insects and vegetation. • **Weight** 6-14 lbs • **Size** 28-36 in long • **Active** year-round. Photo: iStock



BEAVER

Castor canadensis
These large, broad-tailed rodents build dams year-round. In September, they start reinforcing their lodges and building food caches to prepare for winter. Look for them at dawn and dusk, when they are most active. • **Weight** 30-60 lbs • **Size** 35-50 in long, including tail • **Active** in Maine year-round. Photo: iStock

EASTERN COYOTE

Canis latrans
This buff- or gray-colored canine resembles a wolf but has a smaller build, narrower muzzle and larger ears. While the coyote is not a common visitor to Mount Desert Island, locals report hearing its distinctive "singing" at night. • **Weight** 20-50 lbs • **Size** 30-40 in (head and body) • **Active** in Maine year-round. Photo: iStock

WATCHABLE WILDLIFE



HARBOR SEAL

Phoca vitulina

These playful animals bask in the sun on ledges and islands at low tide, especially in spring and summer. At high tide, they take to the water, displaying admirable grace as they hunt for herring, mackerel and other fish. Harbor seals are often grey with either dark or light spots or rings. •

Weight 110-350 lbs • **Size** 18-36 in long • **Active** year-round.

RED FOX

Vulpes vulpes

You may see red fox hunting hare and small rodents in open fields and salt marshes, or darting across the park's roads and carriage roads by night. Foxes rear their pups in dens. During fall and winter, their red-brown coats become thick and richly colored. • **Weight** 6-24 lbs •

Size 15-30 in long • **Active** April through August.



HUMPBACK WHALE

Megaptera novaeangliae

These migratory baleen whales can be seen during boat cruises off the coast of Maine. The Gulf of Maine is one of several major feeding areas in the North Atlantic Ocean. No two whale tails are alike—each humpback's flukes have a distinct black and white pattern. • **Weight** 30-40 tons • **Size** 49-53 ft long • **Active** summer and fall.

SNOWSHOE HARE

Lepus americanus

In winter these hares molt their gray-brown coats and grow white fur, which provides camouflage against the snow and helps them hide from predators like coyotes and foxes. The stiff hairs on their feet form a "snowshoe," supporting their weight on the surface of the snow. •

Weight 2-4 lbs • **Size** 16-20 in long • **Active** year-round.



BLACK GUILLEMOT

Cepphus grylle

These birds are quite a striking sight with its bright-red feet and black feathers. The guillemot is only truly black in summer, however; its feathers turn mostly white in winter. This bird eats mostly fish, and can stay underwater for up to two minutes and 20 seconds. • **Weight** 11 to 17 oz • **Size** 12 to 12.5 in • **Active** year-round.

WHITE-TAILED DEER

Odocoileus virginianus

These tall and graceful deer are plentiful in Acadia and are most often seen in areas with open fields. They have a tan coat and a tail with a white underside, which is visible when they run or sense danger. They feed on grasses, tree buds, nuts and acorns. • **Weight** 110-300 lbs • **Size** 6-8 ft tall • **Active** year-round.



A lichen, pale gray in color and known as **old man's beard**, festoons the spruce trees that grow near shore. Like their mountaintop cousins, the trees and plants that grow along the coast are often dwarfed and twisted—the result of fierce winds and salty ocean spray.

MARINE WILDLIFE

Spotting marine wildlife from aboard a boat off the coast of Acadia National Park is a favorite visitor activity. Some of the most commonly seen **whales** include the **finback**, which ranges from 30 to 70 feet in length and has a distinctive white stripe across the right side of its jaws; the **humpback**, which is 30 to 60 feet in length and is noted for its acrobatic behavior, knobby head and snout; and the smaller **minke**, which is usually less than 20 feet in length. **Puffins** can also be seen on islands along Acadia's coast. See the "Things to Do" chapter for more information about ranger-led nature cruises and whale watching tours.

BIRDS

Located at the juncture of the northern and temperate life zones, Acadia attracts more than 300 species of sea, shore, and

land birds, from the **common loon** to the majestic **bald eagle** and **peregrine falcon**. **Sea ducks** also frequent the coastal waters, particularly during the winter months. Of particular note are **buffleheads**, **red-breasted mergansers**, **common eiders**, **black scoters**, **surf scoters** and **white-winged scoters**. The bufflehead has a puffy, bonnet-shaped brow, while the sleek merganser has a crested, almost punkish coiffure. Surf scoters are known as "skunk ducks," not because of their scent but rather for their black-and-white markings.

Black guillemots are distinct both in sight and sound—they have brilliant red feet, a white wing patch and raucous squawks. These impressive birds nest on Long Porcupine Island and are visible along its steep ledges. Guillemots can dive as deep as 165 feet to catch their favorite treats—cod and mollusks. Dozens of brightly colored **warblers** summer in Acadia, filling the woods with their cheerful songs. It is no wonder Acadia is known as a bird-watcher's paradise. See the "Things to Do" chapter for information about birdwatching in Acadia.

Photography



Exploring our national and state parks is one of the best ways to reconnect with nature—and bringing along a camera or binoculars can elevate your experience. Whether you're a seasoned photographer, a casual wildlife or bird watcher, or a first-time visitor hoping to spot something special, a few smart tips can help you get the most out of your time on the trail.

Photography isn't just snapping images—it's a way to tell a story, capture fleeting moments, and preserve the atmosphere of a place. In our parks, every image can reflect the splendor of a landscape, the subtle beauty of wildlife, or the unbridled energy of a waterfall. Whether you're aiming to document your journey, make art, or simply share your experience with others, thoughtful technique makes a big difference. To get the most out of your park visit:

- **Time it right:** Shoot during golden hours (early morning or late afternoon) when the light is soft and warm. Avoid harsh midday sun when shadows are strongest.
- **Pack light but smart:** A mirrorless or DSLR camera with a wide-angle lens for landscapes and a zoom for wildlife covers most situations. Bring extra batteries!
- **Use a tripod:** For steady sunrise or night shots, use a lightweight tripod for better .
- **Compose carefully:** Follow the "rule of thirds" to add depth to your images.

A good pair of **binoculars** is the perfect companion for your trip—they don't just bring distant wildlife into view—it enhances your awareness of your surroundings, helps you spot elusive creatures, and allows you to witness natural behaviors without threatening them. Whether you're birding, watching predators from afar, or scanning the treetops

for movement, using binoculars skillfully can turn a simple hike into a rich, immersive experience. Here's how to get the most from them:

- **Choose the right specs:** An 8x42 pair offers a great balance of magnification, brightness, and stability for most users.
- **Adjust for your eyes:** Use the center focus wheel and diopter ring to fine-tune clarity.
- **Stabilize your view:** Rest your elbows on a surface or use a trekking pole for added support.
- **Scan with purpose:** Look for movement or color changes in the landscape. Animals are often camouflaged and reveal themselves through motion.

To protect both the environment and wildlife, always stay on marked trails to avoid damaging fragile ecosystems. Give animals plenty of space by using zoom lenses or binoculars, and follow all park regulations regarding restricted areas and seasonal closures. Moving quietly and minimizing noise not only reduces stress on wildlife but also increases your chances of witnessing natural behaviors in a more undisturbed way.

ENHANCE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Using cameras and binoculars encourages observation. You'll begin noticing subtle things—a fox's behavior at dusk, the changing texture of bark in different light, or a flash of color in the canopy. These tools sharpen your senses and help you build a more meaningful connection with the outdoors.

From photographing fog rolling through a valley to spotting a hawk soaring overhead, the combination of thoughtful observation and the right gear brings national and state park adventures to life.



IT FEELS SO NATURAL WITH YOU

The southern Caribbean island of Curaçao welcomes you with the warmest embrace. From the moment you arrive, you're immersed in a world of vibrant color, rich culture, and a blend of European and Caribbean flair. Beyond its unique personality and charm, the island boasts endless adventures above and below the sea. Water lovers can enjoy scuba diving, snorkeling, jet skiing, boat trips, the ultimate beach day on one of over 35 beaches, and more. Back on land, activities include museums, spas, tours, biking, safari excursions, golf courses, festivals and beyond. Wherever you turn, you can count on a vibe like no other on an island that is sure to capture your heart.

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If You Only Have A Day

Acadia's compact size makes it easy to take in many of the park's highlights in one day. To make the most of your time, begin your day before 9 a.m. During the summer, the park is busiest between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Don't try to crowd too much into your day. See what you can, see it well and make plans for a return trip.

VISITOR CENTER

Hulls Cove Visitor Center opens at 8:30 a.m. An interpretive display includes information about the park and works from Acadia's artists in residence. You can also pick up a free map and other park literature here.

PARK LOOP ROAD

Acadia's Park Loop Road is an ideal day trip. This 27-mile loop takes in much of the eastern half of Acadia, winding along the rocky coast past Sand Beach, Thunder Hole and Otter Cliffs. It then swings inland through the park's wooded interior, past **Jordan Pond** and **Eagle Lake** and past a series of mountain peaks. There are

frequent turnouts where you can stop to admire the views. On a clear day, you can see Schoodic Point from Otter Cliffs. At the South Bubble turnout, look for the large boulder on the mountaintop that was left behind by a receding glacier.

If time and weather permit, park your car and sample some of Acadia on foot. Some short but scenic walks include the dramatic **Ocean Path** along Frenchman Bay, the hike up **Gorham Mountain** and the trail along the shore of Jordan Pond. Stop by the **Jordan Pond House** for warm popovers and fresh-squeezed lemonade.

The Park Loop Road culminates with the drive to the summit of 1,530-foot **Cadillac Mountain**. From here, you'll be able to survey all of Acadia and the surrounding bays—a view that is especially spectacular at day's end, when the setting sun suffuses the landscape with its warm light.

MOUNT DESERT ISLAND

To finish off your day in Acadia, spend your evening strolling among the shops and restaurants of one of **Mount Desert Island's** quaint communities. You can also take a sunset or moonlight sail on Frenchman Bay, named for French explorer Samuel de Champlain. Should you decide to stay the night, choose among the island's many inns, hotels and bed-and-breakfasts.



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GATEWAY CENTER OF INTEREST

- 1 Thompson Island Information Center (*Permanently Closed*)
- 2 Hulls Cove Visitor Center
- 3 Park Headquarters
- 4 Cadillac Mountain Entrance
- 5 Bar Harbor
- 6 Sieur de Monts Entrance
- 7 Bear Brook
- 8 Overlook
- 9 Sand Beach
- 10 Thunder Hole
- 11 Otter Point
- 12 Islesford Historical Museum
- 13 Stanley Brook Entrance
- 14 Wildwood Stables
- 15 Jordan Pond House
- 16 Bubble Rock
- 17 Northeast Harbor
- 18 Echo Lake
- 19 Southwest Harbor
- 20 Bass Harbor Head Lighthouse
- 21 Bass Harbor
- 22 Bernard
- 23 Pretty Marsh
- 24 Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park



ISLAND EXPLORER SHUTTLE BUS LEAVE ROUTES

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Gateway Center | 7 Southwest Harbor |
| 2 Eden Street | 8 Schoodic Peninsula |
| 3 Sand Beach | 9 Trenton |
| 4 Loop Road | 10 Blackwoods |
| 5 Jordan Pond | 11 Tremont |
| 6 Northeast Harbor | |

Acadia National Park

island explorer

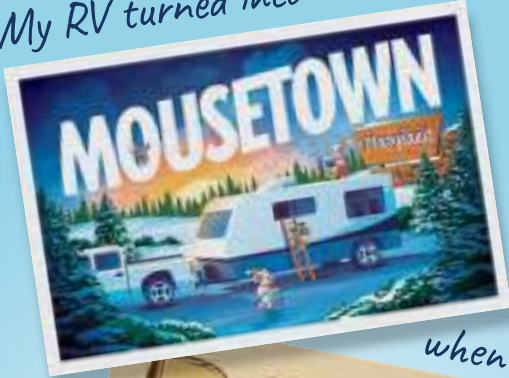


Let someone else do the driving for you! The Island Explorer bus service is a fare-free, environmentally conscientious way to see the park. The shuttle runs between June 23 to October 13, 2025. Routes link hotels, inns and campgrounds with destinations in the park and neighboring village centers. For more information, visit exploreacadia.com or scan the QR code.



Locations with this logo have the most impressive views of the park's landscape or are pristine wildlife habitat. You'll appreciate them even more with binoculars or a spotting scope.

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