



Winter in Acadia



Winter is a magical season at Acadia National Park. The slower pace provides opportunities for solitude and recreational activities in a spectacular coastal setting. Although many park facilities are closed during the winter, there is still plenty to see and do. Small portions of the Park Loop Road remain open for scenic driving, and in years with adequate snowfall, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling are popular activities.

Facilities

Information is available at the Winter Visitor Center on Route 233, three miles west of Bar Harbor, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, except Thanksgiving, December 24 and 25, and January 1.

Restrooms are available at the Winter Visitor Center and Fabbri parking area. The Parkman Mountain, Brown Mountain, Eagle Lake boat launch, and Sand Beach parking areas have vault toilets.

Things To Do

Scenic Driving

Although most of the Park Loop Road is closed in the winter, two short sections remain open:

- The scenic, one-way ocean section, accessible from Schooner Head Road one mile south of downtown Bar Harbor on Route 3, stretches for two miles along the coast. Stay in the right lane; snowmobiles are permitted to use the unplowed left lane. Exit via Otter Cliff Road to Route 3.
- The Jordan Pond area is accessed via Jordan Pond Road, just north of downtown Seal Harbor. This road joins the Park Loop Road, which is plowed to the south end of Jordan Pond. Exit by backtracking.

Sargent Drive to Northeast Harbor and Route 102A to the Bass Harbor Head Lighthouse also offer scenic views.

Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing

More than 40 miles of carriage roads offer cross-country skiing and snowshoeing; pick up a map at the Winter Visitor Center. When snowfall exceeds four inches, tracks may be set around the loops at Upper Hadlock Pond, the Amphitheater, Jordan Pond/Cobblestone Bridge, lower and upper Around Mountain, Aunt Betty Pond, and the west and south sides of Eagle Lake (for current conditions, visit www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/crosscountryskiing.htm). You may cross-country ski and snowshoe on unplowed park roads but be careful, as snowmobiles are permitted on most unplowed park roads. Please do not snowshoe or allow dogs to walk in cross-country ski tracks. Dogs must be on a leash six feet or shorter. Cross-country ski and snowshoe rentals are available in Bar Harbor.

Hiking

Winter hiking at Acadia can be dangerous due to changing weather and icy trail conditions. Snow and ice can cover trail-marking blazes on rocks, making trails difficult to follow. Carriage roads may be your best bet (please don't walk in ski tracks). If you are determined to hike on trails, walk slowly and carefully and watch for ice. Plan ahead; going up an icy spot is usually much easier than going down. Consider using crampons.

Camping

From December 1 to March 31, a limited number of campsites at Blackwoods Campground are available for primitive tent camping only. Campers must first obtain a free camping permit from the

dispatch office at park headquarters (open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily). Facilities are limited to a hand pump for water and a portable toilet. The campground entrance road is closed to cars during this time; campers must hike in on the unplowed road from the campground entrance on Route 3 (approximately ½ mile). Campers must pack out all trash.

Snowmobiling

Snowmobiles are permitted on the 27-mile Park Loop Road system (including the road up Cadillac Mountain), the east side of Eagle Lake, and most fire roads. Parking areas at Hulls Cove Visitor Center, Sand Beach, Fabbri, Jordan Pond north lot, Eagle Lake boat launch, Ikes Point (Echo Lake), and the east end of Seal Cove Road accommodate vehicles and trailers.

Snowmobile regulations include:

- All Maine state snowmobile laws are enforced in the park. Maine registration is required.
- Snowmobiles are not allowed on the carriage roads, except for the east side of Eagle Lake to make the connection to the Park Loop Road at Bubble Pond.
- Snowmobiles are not permitted off-road or on any hiking trails.
- Maximum speed is 35 mph on the Park Loop Road and 25 mph on all unpaved roads.
- Yield to anyone not on a snowmobile.
- Turn on white headlight and red taillight ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise and whenever visibility is less than 500 feet.
- Towing people on sleds or skis is prohibited.
- It is illegal to operate snowmobiles while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Drivers must be at least 14 years old to operate in the park; anyone under 18 years old must wear approved protective headgear.

Ice Fishing

State of Maine fishing licenses (available at town offices and local businesses) are required for Maine residents 16 years or older and non-residents 12 years or older. The ice fishing season generally lasts from January 1 to March 31. Check the *State of Maine Ice Fishing Regulations* handbook (available where licenses are sold) for exact dates and possession and size limits. Many of the park's larger ponds and lakes are popular locations for ice fishing. Please be cautious and ensure that ice thickness is sufficient to support your weight.

Safety

- For all emergencies call 911.
- Darkness comes early—at its earliest, the sun sets before 4 p.m. Plan to return with plenty of daylight left.
- Check the forecast before you head out. Conditions change quickly.
- Travel with others or notify someone about your plans.
- Hypothermia (a life-threatening condition caused by low body temperature) and frostbite are real concerns. Dress appropriately for your activity level and weather conditions.
- Roads and parking lots can be icy or snow-packed. Please drive carefully and wear your seatbelt at all times.

Sunrise/Sunset

| December | | January | | February | | March | | April | |
|----------|----------------|---------|----------------|----------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Day | Sunrise/Sunset | Day | Sunrise/Sunset | Day | Sunrise/Sunset | Day | Sunrise/Sunset | Day | Sunrise/Sunset |
| 1 | 6:49 / 3:55 | 1 | 7:09 / 4:04 | 1 | 6:51 / 4:43 | 1 | 6:10 / 5:21 | 1 | 6:14 / 7:00 |
| 14 | 7:02 / 3:54 | 14 | 7:06 / 4:18 | 14 | 6:34 / 5:01 | 14 | 6:47 / 6:38 | 14 | 5:51 / 7:16 |
| 28 | 7:08 / 4:01 | 28 | 6:55 / 4:37 | 28 | 6:12 / 5:20 | 28 | 6:21 / 6:55 | 28 | 5:28 / 7:34 |

Weather

The weather at Acadia can change rapidly. Although conditions in the park are generally milder than inland Maine due to the park's coastal location, ice and snow storms do occur. Annual snowfall averages 61" (155 cm), most of which occurs December through

March. Temperatures vary from below 0°F to the mid-40s F (-18°C to 7°C). It is best to arrive prepared for a variety of conditions; warm, layered clothing is recommended. For current local weather conditions, call 207-667-8910.

Winter Activity Map

