

Acadia

Official Map and Guide

The park keeps public precious samples of Maine's impressive rock-bound coast.

Bubble Pond's outlet exemplifies Acadia's inland wooded character.

Nature arranges cast off shells and bones by wave action on Seawall Beach.

Intertidal areas abound with life forms of this nether world, neither sea nor land.

A decoy painter's dream, a wood duck sits quietly for its portrait.

Misty or foggy, muted weather plays a mood-making role at Acadia.

If you have never tried—really tried—doing nothing, Acadia is a good place to begin. First you need a rocky ledge or stony beach, perhaps at Schoodic Point, along Ocean Drive, or near Seawall. Sit down and relax and wait for things to happen. A gull may sail up over the ledge with a sea urchin in its beak. The gull drops the urchin onto the rocks below to smash its shell-like, spiny armor. The gull dives right behind the creature and then devours it. Besides watching the activity, listen for the chuckle of pebbles moving in the surf and smell the salt air as the sun warms your skin. Doing nothing on the shore is an art, a pleasure, and a long-standing tradition.

Little of New England's rockbound coast remains in public ownership, undeveloped and natural. Acadia National Park preserves the natural beauty of part of Maine's coast, its coastal mountains, and its offshore islands. Weather permitting, you can drive to the top of Cadillac Mountain, the highest point here, for a

spectacular view of this coast. Or better yet, park your car and walk into the nature and history of the park on its many trails.

Acadia, as the name suggests, was French before it was English and then American. French frigates hid from English men-of-war in Frenchman Bay, screened from detection by the Porcupine Islands. The French and English battled for possession of North America from 1613 until 1760. French explorer Samuel Champlain sailed into the Bay in 1604 and named this Mount Desert Island because of its landmark bare top.

The sea encircles the island, thrusts inland, and often generates sea smoke and fog. In the midday sun its bright-blue surface is studded with lobster buoys. In fog all is gray and muted. Somewhere out at sea engines may mutter, but the lobster boat is blurred or lost in a formless world. Seen at sundown from Cadillac Mountain, the sea glows in soft pinks, mauve, and

gold. Gulls wing silently home to distant islands, and, like fireflies, navigational aids flash warnings from reefs, islands, and headland. Between the sea and the forested mountains is the small, fascinating, almost nether world of the tidal zone. Twice daily exposed to air and drowned by sea water, it is a world of specially adapted organisms. Tidepools, pockets of seawater stranded in rock basins, are microhabitats brimming with life and exposed to view. In these natural aquariums you can watch marine animals going about their business. This zone of life occurs between low and high tides that average 11 to 12 feet. It is the primeval meeting place of earth and water.

Behind the sea lie Acadia's forests and mountains, made easy for exploring by an extensive system of carriage roads. These broad, smooth, graveled byways encircle Jordan Pond and Eagle Lake and wind around the flanks of Sargent and Penobscot Mountains. They offer stunning views of Somes Sound and French-

man Bay; and they lead you along beaver-dammed brooks. The grades are gentle, but the vistas are long.

The story of the people who lived on this island when Champlain first saw it is told in the Abbe Museum at Sieur de Monts Spring with Indian artifacts and exhibits. Take the ferry to Little Cranberry Island to see the Islesford Museum, whose ship models, tools, and pictures reveal island life in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Villages near the park present the variety of life-styles on the island today. Northeast Harbor shelters sailboats, large and small, and a summer colony. Bar Harbor offers many accommodations and amusements. Bass Harbor and Southwest Harbor, and Winter Harbor at Schoodic, retain more of the traditional flavor of Maine coastal villages. Those who earn livings from the sea—whether lobstering, fishing, building boats, or guarding the coast—tie up here. And lobster pounds and boatyards have

not yet been replaced by summer homes and hotels.

Join a National Park Service ranger to explore Acadia's natural and cultural history. On cruises you may see porpoises, seals, eagles, and nesting colonies of sea birds. Follow a ranger on a mountain hike and learn about the forces that once shaped this landscape—and continue to do so. Explore an offshore island and reflect on the lonely life of a lighthouse keeper's family. These are just some of the ways to discover the diversity of the scenic, natural, and historic wonders that comprise Acadia National Park.

Who built the carriage roads? Who had the vision of a national park on this popular vacation coastland? This national park is unusual because it was neither carved out of public lands nor bought with public funds. It was envisioned and donated through the efforts of private citizens. Many people loved Mount Desert Island, Schoodic Peninsula, and the nearby

islands. Maine residents and summer visitors alike donated their time and resources to preserve Acadia's beauty. George B. Orr and Charles W. Eliot, a former president of Harvard University, saw the dangers of development and acted to avoid them. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., also played a critical role. He built the carriage roads and gave more than 11,000 acres, about one-third of the park's area, to what became known as Acadia National Park.

Since 1986, the park has purchased small tracks of land and easements to define its permanent boundary and to preserve scenic values. Many landowners today continue in the tradition of the park's founders by placing easements on their property that limit development.

Trails and Paths

The more than 120 miles of trails in the park range from short, level surf walks, to the steep Precipice Trail. Connecting trails enable hikers to scale several Acadia peaks in one trip. Between 1915 and 1933 John D. Rockefeller, Jr., financed and directed the building of 57 miles of carriage roads, a network of woodland roads free of motor vehicles, for hikers, bicyclists, horseback riders, and carriages. Activities on some of the 45 miles of carriage roads that are within the park today include crosscountry skiing and limited snowmobiling.



Seventeen stone bridges connect the carriage roads. The first hand-cut granite bridge was built in 1917, the last in 1933.

Each was individually designed for its setting. Two boast three arches in winter carriage roads

make great crosscountry ski trails.

History

After 1604, Mount Desert Island figured in French, English, and Native American history. French ships hid in Frenchman Bay in the French and Indian War between France and England. The French met with Indians who canoed down the rivers to trade. English colonists settled here, after almost 150 years of warfare, following the British victory in Canada in 1760.



Farming and lumbering by Mount Desert Island's hardy settlers soon gave way to shipbuilding and fishing as major industries. At times here, great fishing fleets would whiten the horizon with their sails. Regular steamboat runs in the 1850s began to transform the island into a summer colony for artists, philosophers, and the wealthy. Yacht racing was popular, as were garden parties and even New York City branch stores.

European explorers found Abnaki Indians occupying the Maine coast. Their permanent villages were on the

mainland, but they fished and gathered shellfish on "Pemetec," as they knew Mount Desert Island.

Glaciers and the Landscape

Mount Desert Island was carved by a continental glacier. Mount Desert Island's major valleys run north and south and each holds one or two lakes scooped out by glaciers. Erratic boulders sit where the mammoth ice sheet, 2 miles thick in places, stranded them. Many rocks were polished or scratched by the glaciers. Somes Sound, the only fjord on the east coast of the United States, is a glacial river valley drowned by the sea.



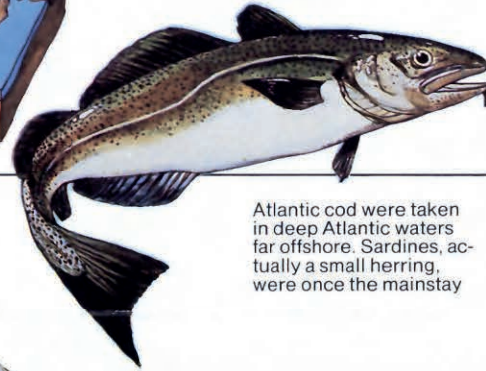
Before glaciation, the Acadian highland was an east-west running granite ridge.

Huge ice tongues invaded the valleys on the north slopes, cut through the passes, and engulfed the mountains.

The ice sheet swept seaward, finally extending 300 miles out to the continental shelf.

As the ice melted, the ocean level rose and flooded the foothills, creating today's indented shoreline.

Acadia's shape was changed. U-shaped valleys now run north and south. Its mountaintops are rounded.



Atlantic cod were taken in deep Atlantic waters far offshore. Sardines, actually a small herring, were once the mainstay

of the commercial fishing industry. Today, many commercial fisheries, including cod and herring, are severely depleted.

Boats of all descriptions and functions are part of the salty scenery of Acadia.



Commercial Fishing

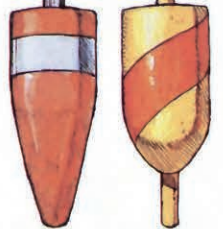
Commercial fishing remains an important Maine industry. Most prized is the lobster, but scallops, crabs, and several fish are caught commercially. At low tide, worms and clam diggers work the flats with their short rakes. Boat building continues on the island and on Schoodic Peninsula.



Lobsters feed on snails, clams, mussels, dead fish, and other organisms. Their large claw cracks shellfish and the

other claw tears prey apart for eating. They dart backwards powered by abdomen and tail, but they also clamber over

rocks on their four pairs of legs. They periodically shed and re-grow the tough outer skeleton "shell."



Brightly-colored buoys mark the lobster traps. Their individual colors are registered with the state.

Lobsters caught today usually weigh 1.5 pounds, but deeper water specimens can exceed 40 pounds.

The Living Shores

Land and sea meet at Acadia, and the Northern and Temperate Zones meet and overlap. The result is an abundance of life. Birdwatchers rise to the challenge of 300 species of birds, 122 of them breeding species. You might also, on a trip to Baker Island, see seals basking on the rocky islands. The tidepool world is awash with the shapes and colors of shells, pebbles, and sea plants. And the sea itself offers the symmetry of northern starfish and green sea urchins.



Barnacles crowd for space on seashore rocks. They define the upper limits of high tide because they must be covered by water twice a day to survive.



Rockweed (above left) is floated by pairs of air bladders. Irish moss is at left.

Common eider, an oceanic duck, lives year round at Acadia. It feeds near the shore on barnacles, crabs, and sea urchins.



Herring gulls are constant companions. They often follow fishing boats, raising a real racket.

Rock crabs are often caught in lobster traps. They are common food for gulls.



Green sea urchins have spines for protection. They are found in tidepools and deep water.



Northern starfish have five rays and can regenerate lost body parts. They eat mollusks.

Illustrations by John Dawson

Acadia

Using the Maps

The map directly below shows all of Acadia National Park and how it relates to the Maine coast. It also shows highway access to the Schoodic Peninsula. The smaller maps show Isle au Haut and Schoodic Peninsula. The large map represents Mount Desert Island, which contains the greater part of the park. The Park Loop Road is emphasized for your convenience. Note that all three detail maps show private property. Please respect private property and the rights and privacy of its holders.

Call, write, or stop at the visitor center for information on accessibility.

Visiting Acadia

Maine 3 is the road to Mount Desert Island. Schoodic Peninsula can be reached by Maine 186.

Visitor Center Begin your visit at the Huls Cove Visitor Center on Maine 3. Information, a film, publications, and activity schedules are available. You can buy or rent self-guiding tape tours.

The Park by Car A 20-mile loop road connects Acadia's lakes, mountains, and seashore. Drive up Cadillac Mountain for panoramic views of the coast

and the island studded bays. At stops along Park Loop Road, see glacier-carved valleys and magnificent forests. FEES are collected one-half mile north of Sand Beach at the entrance station.

Accommodations Two park campgrounds are on Mount Desert. Blackwoods (reservations June-Sept.) is open all year. Camping at Seawall (open May-Sept.) is first-come, first-served. Private campgrounds are in nearby towns.

Trails Acadia's many foot trails, from lowland paths to mountain routes, suit the casual walker or the avid hiker.

Carriage Roads Park carriage roads are open to walkers, equestrians, and bicyclists. Some routes are closed to horses. Others extend onto private land, and these are closed to bicycles. Carriage tours are available at Wildwood Stables.

Ranger Programs Schedules are available at the visitor center, head-

quarters, and park campgrounds for ranger-led walks, children's programs, hikes, and boat cruises. In the evening, programs are held at the campgrounds.

Boat Trips Boat operators offer rentals, charters, cruises, and ferry service in nearby towns. Get information at the visitor center.

Fishing Fishing in fresh water requires a state license, available at town offices. None is required for saltwater fishing.

Swimming Lifeguards are on duty in summer at Echo Lake (fresh water) and Sand Beach (salt water). The ocean is cold! Many lakes supply public drinking water and are off limits to swimming.

Winter Activities Ice fishing, crosscountry skiing, snowmobiling, and winter hiking are popular. Blackwoods Campground is open in winter.

Acadia's Seasons Be prepared for changeable weather conditions. In summer, high tempera-

tures are usually 70-80°F. Fog is common. Spring and fall are cooler, with highs of 50 to 60°F. In winter, which lasts from November to April in Acadia, highs are about 30°F, night-time lows may be below zero. Annual snowfall averages 60 inches.

Accessibility Wheelchair accessible restrooms are located at Sieur de Monts Spring, Fabbri and Bear Brook picnic areas, the Thompson Island Information Center, Blackwoods Campground, Seawall

Campground and picnic area, and park headquarters.

Safety Information Rocks are often wet and slippery. In spring and fall, watch for storm waves. A large wave could knock you down and sweep you out to sea.

When hiking—Beware of loose stones and poison ivy, stay on trails, wear hiking shoes, and do not hike alone. Trails range in difficulty from easy to very strenuous. Don't take any chances on trails that are

possibly too steep or precarious for you.

When biking—Obey all biking regulations, wear a helmet, dismount from your bike when approaching horses, and signal when approaching a rider or walker from the rear. Bicycles are not permitted off-road or on hiking trails.

Refrain from smoking on trails and carriage roads to help prevent forest fires and unsightly litter.

Regulations Fires and camping are permitted only

in designated sites. Firearms are prohibited in the park, unless cased, broken down, or otherwise packed against use. Pets must always be attended and under physical restraint (maximum leash length 6 feet). Pets are not allowed on ladder trails, beaches, inside public buildings, or on ranger programs. **Federal law requires wearing seatbelts when driving in a national park.**

To protect the natural beauty and the historic, cultural, and scientific values of the park: visi-

tors are prohibited from collecting plants, animals, rocks, and other natural or historic features in the park. Observe wildlife at a distance. Feeding wildlife is prohibited.

Information Write: Acadia National Park, P.O. Box 177, Bar Harbor, ME 04609-0177; call voice/TDD 207-288-3338; or www.nps.gov/acad on the internet.

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Isle au Haut



Schoodic Peninsula



Mount Desert Island

