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Explore with Purpose



Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia

Trace Impacts of Climate Change on Hidden Wildlife & Shifting Ecosystems

Table of Contents

Trip Overview 3

Itinerary 5

Accommodations 9

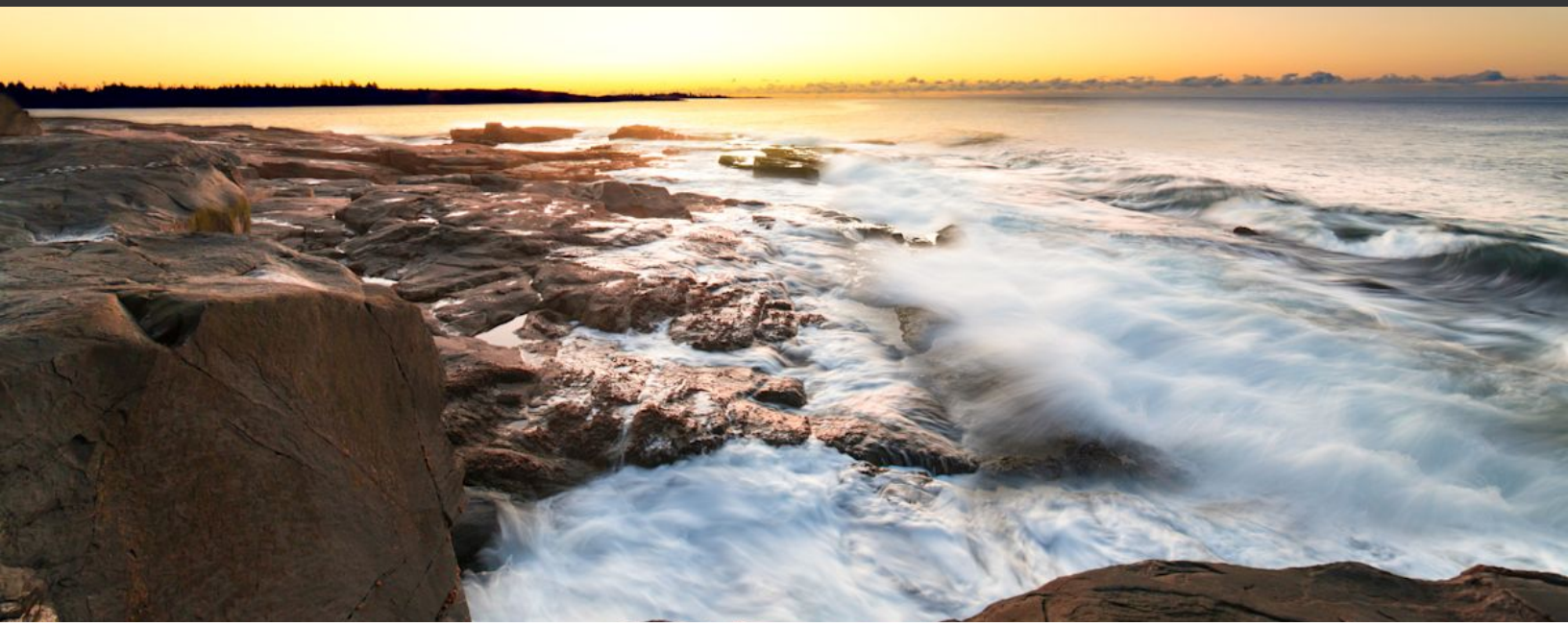
Meet the Scientists 10

Research & Impact 11

Discovery in the Field 13

Dates, Pricing & Info 15

Know Before You Go 17



Trip Details:

Days
7 Days / Jul–Aug

Price
From $6986

Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia

Trace Impacts of Climate Change on Hidden Wildlife & Shifting Ecosystems

Millions of visitors come to Acadia each year to see its dramatic granite coastline and enjoy the historic charm of Bar Harbor. But very few have access to this rare and deeply meaningful experience of the park. Join researchers at field sites on the Schoodic Peninsula and in protected habitats out of public view as we assess impacts of a changing climate on Acadia's ecosystems. Search spruce forests for lobster shells carried inland by foxes and mink. Examine wildlife camera images to see who moves through the woods after dark. Visit rare plant communities that may help species persist as temperatures rise, and explore rugged shorelines where sea, wind and salt sculpt classic coastal vistas. Between fieldwork forays, watch the sunrise from Cadillac Mountain, wander fog-shrouded headlands, and cruise the rocky coast in search of puffins and seabirds.

Expedition Highlights

Access Acadia National Park Beyond the Crowds

Venture well beyond popular overlooks to secluded shorelines, hidden spruce forests and active fieldwork sites where we conduct research, revealing less-visited sides of the park

Experience the Scenic Beauty of the Wild Maine Coast

Watch the sunrise from Cadillac Mountain, cruise past islands where puffins nest, and explore wave-battered granite headlands that epitomize coastal Maine

Uncover the Secret Links Between Ocean and Forest

Search for lobster shells, crab claws and sea urchin remains carried inland by foxes, mink and crows, revealing connections between ocean creatures and interior forest dwellers

Research at a Glance



The Research Focus

Investigate how climate change is transforming Acadia's connected coastal ecosystems, from the rocky shores of the Gulf of Maine to the spruce forests and mountaintop habitats beyond.



What You'll Do

Search for lobster shells, crab claws and other marine prey carried inland by wildlife, monitor rare northern plants, and document species living in forest and coastal habitats.



Why It Matters

The Gulf of Maine is warming faster than nearly every ocean region on Earth. Your observations help reveal which species are adapting, which are declining and where protection matters most.



Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia Itinerary

Trace Impacts of Climate Change on Hidden Wildlife & Shifting Ecosystems

Itinerary at a Glance

Day 1	Bangor / Bar Harbor
Day 2	Bar Harbor / Schoodic Institute
Day 3	Gulf of Maine
Day 4	Schoodic Peninsula
Day 5	Cadillac Mountain
Day 6	Acadia National Park
Day 7	Schoodic Peninsula / Bangor



Day 1

Bangor / Bar Harbor

Arrive on the Maine coast before your Acadia research expedition

- Travel “down east” past spruce-covered islands, lobster boats and granite shorelines
- Join fellow travelers for dinner overlooking Frenchman Bay
- Learn how scientists are studying environmental change across Acadia’s forests and coast

Arrive in Bangor this afternoon and travel "down east" along Maine's famous coast. As Frenchman Bay comes into view, pass spruce-covered islands, working lobster boats and granite shorelines en route to our waterfront accommodations overlooking the water. This evening, gather for a welcome dinner and introduction to the week ahead. While millions of visitors come to Acadia for its famous viewpoints and popular hiking trails, our journey focuses on a side of the park few experience. Through special access to the Schoodic Institute, Acadia National Park's primary science partner, you'll explore active research sites where scientists are studying how wildlife, forests and coastal ecosystems are interacting and responding to environmental change.

Day 2

Bar Harbor / Schoodic Institute

Search Acadia’s forests for clues carried inland from the sea

- Visit the Abbe Museum to learn about Wabanaki history, culture and connections to the region
- Settle into Schoodic Institute, Acadia National Park’s hub for scientific research
- Search forest plots for shells and crab remains transported inland by otters, mink, foxes and crows

This morning, explore Acadia through a cultural lens during a visit to Bar Harbor's Abbe Museum. On a private tour, learn about the history, culture and enduring connections of the Wabanaki Nations to these lands and waters. Understanding this human history provides important context for the conservation and stewardship taking place throughout the park today. Leaving Bar Harbor, we travel to the Schoodic Peninsula, a less-visited, wilder corner of the national park, where we stay for the duration of the expedition, with easy access to research sites, rugged coast and sweeping Atlantic views.

On arrival, we get settled into Rockefeller Hall at Schoodic Institute, Acadia National Park's hub for science and field discovery. For the next several nights, we live and learn alongside the researchers, educators and conservation leaders working to conserve this special environment through understanding how the landscape is changing. Following lunch and a research orientation, head into the field for your first afternoon of scientific study as we survey coastal forest food webs. Working within long-term monitoring plots, search for signs of marine prey transported inland by river otters, mink, foxes and crows. Measure shells, crab remains and other materials while helping researchers investigate how wildlife links Acadia's coastal and forest ecosystems. Return to Schoodic Institute for dinner and debriefing this evening.

Day 3

Gulf of Maine

Explore the Gulf of Maine and identify wildlife on camera

- Cruise to puffin nesting islands in July or join a working lobster boat in August
- Return to shore for a dockside Maine lobster lunch
- Review camera images to identify animals carrying marine prey into the forest

Please note: July departures will take a private puffin cruise, while August departures will go on a lobster boat excursion.

Depending on your trip departure date, head offshore this morning on either a wildlife cruise to Maine's famous puffin colonies (July) or a working lobster boat operating in the Gulf of Maine (August). In July, get close to rocky islands where puffins, gulls and other seabirds nest during breeding season. August departures offer a firsthand look at Maine's lobster fishery, the roughly $1 billion cornerstone of the state's economy. Learn from a local lobster boat captain how generations of coastal communities have made their living from the sea. Return to the dock for a lunch of fresh Maine lobster, with vegan and gluten-free options available.

Then it's time to return to the research station for further fieldwork. Wildlife cameras placed throughout Acadia have captured thousands of images of foxes, mink, river otters, crows and other animals that move between shoreline and forest. Working alongside researchers, review photographs, identify species and search for evidence of marine prey, such as lobster and crabs, being carried inland. The images piece together a complex story of the interconnectedness of ocean and forests, as we seek to discover more about the ecological relationships of these intersecting habitats. This evening, gather for dinner at a local restaurant before returning to Schoodic Institute.

Day 4

Schoodic Peninsula

Follow scattered shells to uncover links between ocean and forest

- Search beneath spruce trees and moss for crab claws, mussel shells and sea urchin remains
- Measure specimens and record where they appear across coastal and forest habitats
- Work with researchers to determine how wildlife moves food and nutrients inland

Yesterday introduced the mystery. Today, you'll investigate it. Return to Schoodic's coastal forests to explore how marine prey ends up far from the shoreline. The clues are easy to miss: a crab claw beneath a spruce tree, fragments of mussel shell hidden in the moss, a sea urchin husk resting unexpectedly far from the water's edge. Yet each discovery raises the same question: How did it get here?

Working alongside the research team, survey long-term monitoring plots in search of such evidence left by foxes, mink, river otters, crows and other wildlife that move between the ocean's edge and the forest. Measure specimens, record locations and compare findings across habitats. By day's end, those scattered shell fragments begin to tell a larger story. Lobster shells carried inland by foxes and mink reveal surprising connections between Acadia's coast and forests. The data you collect helps researchers understand how animals move food and nutrients across the landscape.

This evening, meet with the research team to discuss the project's findings and how these observations are helping scientists better understand the links between ocean, wildlife and forest in Acadia National Park.

Day 5

Cadillac Mountain

Sunrise from the summit of Cadillac Mountain

- Enjoy a picnic breakfast atop Cadillac, where dawn breaks first in the U.S.
- Navigate to long-term plots where northern plants grow near the southern edge of their range
- Record plant cover, flowering and berry production within standardized survey areas

Rise before dawn for one of Acadia's signature experiences, sunrise over the Atlantic from the summit of Cadillac Mountain. Atop the granite dome, watch the horizon begin to glow over spruce-covered islands. As the sun ascends, it gleams on the open ocean as fishing boats begin the day on Frenchman Bay. This is where dawn breaks first in the U.S., the sun's rays spilling onto granite coastline and forested headlands below. After a picnic breakfast, we head to active monitoring sites where researchers study rare northern and arctic-alpine plants living near the southern edge of their range. Working in small teams, we navigate to long-term study plots, identifying plant species and measuring ground cover, flowering and berry production within standardized survey areas. The data we collect help scientists understand whether cooler coastal and alpine environments can provide refuge for climate-sensitive species in the decades ahead.

Day 6

Acadia National Park

Study rare alpine plants in Acadia National Park

- Hike to permanent plots in cool coastal and high-elevation environments
- Identify rare northern and arctic-alpine species and record changes in their growth
- Gather for a farewell Maine lobster dinner after the final fieldwork session

After breakfast at Schoodic Institute, return to the field for our final full day of research in Acadia National Park. Today's work centers on a question with implications far beyond Maine: Where can climate-sensitive species persist as temperatures rise? Working in small teams, hike to permanent monitoring plots in some of Acadia's coolest coastal and high-elevation habitats. Here, researchers track rare northern and arctic-alpine plants living near the southern edge of their range. Kneel beside long-term study plots to identify species, measure plant cover and record flowering and berry production within standardized survey quadrants. The work is meticulous, and the stakes are significant. The data you collect helps scientists determine whether these cooler pockets of habitat can serve as refuges for species that may struggle elsewhere in a warming climate.

This evening, return to Schoodic Institute for a celebratory farewell dinner. Gather over a traditional Maine lobster feast, share stories from the week's studies, and reflect on the settings, wildlife and research that revealed a side of Acadia few visitors will ever experience.

Day 7

Schoodic Peninsula / Bangor

Depart with a firsthand understanding of climate research in Acadia

- Share a final breakfast at Schoodic Institute
- Return to Bangor for homeward flights

Enjoy a final breakfast at the research station before departing Schoodic Institute. As we travel back to Bangor, reflect on a deeply meaningful week in Acadia, engaged in participatory science that few travelers have the privilege to do.

Once we reach the airport in Bangor, it's time to depart on homeward flights.



Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia Accommodations

Trace Impacts of Climate Change on Hidden Wildlife & Shifting Ecosystems



Atlantic Oceanside Hotel

Waterfront accommodations on Frenchman Bay near Bar Harbor, with private balconies or patios in every room, shoreline lawns, pebble beach access and easy access to Acadia National Park.



Rockefeller Hall Accommodations

A historic former naval radio station on Acadia's Schoodic Peninsula, reimagined as a conservation campus with apartment-style accommodations amid spruce forest and rugged coastline.

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/earthwatch-expeditions/acadia-national-park-climate-science-trip/accommodations.

Meet the Scientists

Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia



Hannah Webber, Ph.D.

Marine Ecology Director, Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park

Hannah Webber is the marine ecology director at Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park, where she studies how coastal ecosystems respond to environmental change. A Maine native, she earned her Ph.D. in Ecology and Environmental Sciences from the University of Maine, where her research focused on the resilience of intertidal ecosystems following seaweed harvest.

Dr. Webber's work centers on understanding how species interact within dynamic coastal systems and how those relationships shift under pressure from climate change and human impact. By studying intertidal habitats, she examines how organisms—from seaweeds to invertebrates—respond to disturbance and what that means for ecosystem function along the coast.

Her research supports sustainable coastal management, helping to balance human use with the protection of ecological systems. By identifying how resilient these ecosystems are to change, her work helps inform how coastal environments can be used sustainably without compromising their long-term health. Through this work, she helps to build a deeper understanding of how coastal ecosystems function, providing the knowledge needed to protect these environments in a changing world.

Education

Ph.D. in Ecology and Environmental Sciences, University of Maine
M.S. in Zoology, University of Maine
B.A. in Biological Sciences, Mount Holyoke College

Supporting Scientists



Abraham Miller-Rushing, Ph.D.

National Park Service, Acadia National Park
Climate Change Ecology, Acadia

Research & Impact

Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia

For more than a century, Acadia National Park has provided scientists with a valuable window into ecological change. Researchers here are contributing to decades of accumulated data as they investigate how climate change is altering connections between the Gulf of Maine, coastal forests and vulnerable plant communities. Through long-term monitoring, wildlife surveys and habitat assessments, this research is helping scientists understand how ecosystems respond to climate change while identifying habitats that may help protect biodiversity in the future.

Research Focus

Climate change affects more than individual species. It can alter the relationships that connect entire ecosystems, changing how wildlife moves across the landscape, where species are able to survive, and how nutrients flow through natural communities. This project has two complementary focus areas. Together, these projects help scientists identify which ecological connections remain strong, which habitats may become increasingly important for conservation, and how Acadia's ecosystems are responding to a changing climate:

- One focus concentrates on the connections between the ocean and Acadia's coastal forests, looking at how marine prey in the Gulf of Maine—including mussels, crabs, sea urchins, lobsters and many other species of sealife—are transported inland by wild animals such as red foxes, mink, river otters and corvids. By documenting these movements, researchers can better understand how ocean resources influence forest ecosystems and how those relationships may change in the future.
- The other focus investigates climate refugia—areas that remain cooler than the surrounding landscape and may help vulnerable species persist as temperatures rise. Researchers monitor rare northern and arctic-alpine plants in permanent plots throughout Acadia to evaluate whether these habitats provide meaningful protection from climate-related change.

Conservation Impact

Acadia's ocean coast, forests and mountain habitats are deeply interconnected. This research program is helping scientists understand how those connections are changing in a warmer world, and which species and habitats may be most vulnerable—or most resilient—in the future.

Research has already revealed:

- Evidence that marine prey such as mussels, crabs, sea urchins and lobsters are transported far inland by wildlife, creating links with the Gulf of Maine with Acadia's coastal forests
- Hundreds of wildlife-camera observations that help identify species moving marine resources across the landscape
- New data on rare northern and arctic-alpine plants that may depend on cooler habitats for long-term survival
- Long-term records that help scientists evaluate whether climate refugia can protect vulnerable species as temperatures rise

Research findings are being used to:

- Understand how marine and terrestrial ecosystems are connected
- Design similar climate refugia monitoring strategies across the U.S. National Park System

- Monitor biodiversity across changing coastal habitats
- Identify and evaluate potential climate refugia
- Test predictive models used in conservation planning
- Inform restoration efforts on mountain summits and other sensitive landscapes
- Support biodiversity monitoring before and after habitat restoration projects
- Guide climate adaptation and resource-management decisions throughout Acadia National Park

Taken together, this work is helping scientists understand how climate change is affecting Acadia from sea to summit and providing information that supports future conservation and management decisions.

Your Role in the Research

As a participant scientist, you become part of an ongoing research effort to understand how climate change is influencing Acadia National Park. The observations you collect contribute to long-term monitoring projects that extend far beyond a single field season. Whether documenting marine prey in coastal forests, helping to identify wildlife captured on camera, or monitoring rare plant populations, your work helps build datasets that scientists use to track ecological change over time. In 2024 alone, Earthwatch travelers contributed more than 6,200 hours of research and training, helping scientists collect data that would otherwise be difficult to gather at this scale.

Life in the Field

Research takes place in coastal forests, rocky shorelines, mountain summits and coastal barrens. Approximately half our mornings focus on Earthwatch research activities, while the remainder start with recreational excursions to experience Acadia's landscapes, wildlife and local history. Lunch is often enjoyed outdoors near research sites before an afternoon of continued fieldwork, data collection or presentations from scientists involved in the project. Evenings alternate between meals at Schoodic Institute and visits to local restaurants. After dinner, guests can relax on the institute campus, explore the shoreline, or take advantage of the Schoodic Peninsula's exceptional dark skies for stargazing.

Field Conditions

Research takes place across a remarkable range of coastal habitats, from spruce-fir forests and rocky shorelines to windswept mountaintops and coastal barrens. Depending on the day's project, participants may work in permanent forest monitoring plots, survey vegetation on exposed summits, or visit remote coastal sites along the Schoodic Peninsula. Terrain is often uneven and can include roots, rocks, dense vegetation, wet ground and exposed bedrock. Along the coast, conditions are influenced by tides, wind and weather, while mountain and shoreline environments can feel significantly cooler than inland areas. Summer weather in Maine is highly variable. Participants should be prepared for sunshine, fog, wind, rain and rapidly changing conditions, sometimes all within the same day.

Discovery in the Field

Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia

1 **Encounter a Diverse Array of Wildlife**
Few places pack so much wildlife into such a compact landscape. Scan offshore waters for whales, porpoises, puffins and seabirds, look for seals along the rocky coast, and explore forests traveled by river otters, mink and foxes. Set along a major migratory corridor, Acadia also hosts an impressive variety of songbirds, including 23 species of warblers recorded within the park.

2 **Wake Up Inside Acadia's Living Laboratory**
Stay at Schoodic Institute, located in a secluded, less-traveled part of Acadia National Park, where you'll feel like you have the entire shoreline to yourself. Here, daily life includes field briefings, conversations with researchers and access unavailable to ordinary visitors.

3 **Add Your Observations to 120 Years of Discovery**
Help build on more than a century of ecological records, contributing observations that allow scientists to track how Acadia's forests, wildlife and coastlines are changing over time.

4 **Learn About Coastal Maine's Rich History**
Look beyond Acadia's scenery to understand the human stories woven into the landscape. Learn the history of the Wabanaki, the "People of the Dawnland," at the Abbe Museum, gain insight into Maine's fishing heritage on a working lobster boat or puffin cruise, and discover the hardy communities that thrive along this storied coast.

5 **Balance Research With Adventure**
The science is only part of the story. In addition to fieldwork, we spend time exploring nature, too. Watch the nation's first sunrise from Cadillac Mountain, cruise among islands where puffins nest, explore the dramatic granite coast of the Schoodic Peninsula, and spend evenings under star-filled skies after days of discovery in the field.

6 **Investigate Acadia's Living Shoreline**
Explore the rocky intertidal zone, where changing tides reveal a world of seaweeds, invertebrates and wildlife that scientists monitor for signs of environmental change.

7 **Gain Insight From Our Expert Field Guides**
Travel with experienced naturalist guides who bring a deep knowledge of Maine's natural history, helping you connect your daily fieldwork experiences to the larger picture of climate change impacting the region.

8 **Travel With an Intentionally Small Group**
Because we limit the group size on our expeditions, each participant is ensured closer interaction with scientists and a more active role in daily research activities.

9

Explore with Purpose

Learn how scientists and park managers use the research in which you're participating to identify invasive species, monitor biodiversity and make decisions about protecting Acadia's ecosystems for the future.



Dates & Pricing Summary:

Price
From $6986

Group Size
Limited to 12 Travelers

Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia Dates, Pricing & Info

Trace Impacts of Climate Change on Hidden Wildlife & Shifting Ecosystems

2027 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Jul 11 - Jul 17, 2027	$6986	
Jul 25 - Jul 31, 2027	$6986	
Aug 15 - Aug 21, 2027	$6986	
Aug 29 - Sep 4, 2027	$6986	

2028 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Jul 11 - Jul 17, 2028	From $7995	
Jul 25 - Jul 31, 2028	From $7995	
Aug 15 - Aug 21, 2028	From $7995	
Aug 29 - Sep 4, 2028	From $7995	

See https://www.nathab.com/earthwatch-expeditions/acadia-national-park-climate-science-trip/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

Included

Trip price includes: Accommodations, services of our research team, institute staff, Lead Scientist, professional local Field Guides and additional local guides; all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day; some alcoholic beverages; some gratuities; private transfers throughout the itinerary (including 1 private boat trip); airport transfers on Day 1 and final day; all activities and entrance fees; all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

Important Information About This Trip

Conditions & Environment

- Be comfortable outdoors for extended periods in heat, sun, wind or rain. Research activities will take place rain or shine
- Expect the potential presence of insects and other wild animals during outdoor research and recreational activities.
- Be prepared for limited access to restrooms while in the field

Additional Considerations

- Basic comfort with remote travel conditions and a flexible mindset are important
- Ability to follow safety instructions and communicate clearly with staff is essential
- Guests should be comfortable engaging with different cultures and working closely in a small group setting

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins and ends in Bangor, Maine. **You must arrive in Bangor by 4:30pm on Day 1** in order to make it to the hotel in time for a 7pm welcome dinner. For guests who come in early, recommended hotels will be included in your pre-departure materials.

You may depart Bangor, Maine any time after 12pm on the final day.

Our Earthwatch Expeditions Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-548-7555. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.

Know Before You Go

Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia

The Gulf of Maine is warming faster than nearly every ocean region on Earth, and this expedition gives you access to the secluded research areas that are helping scientists understand—and help mitigate—the impacts.

Prepare for your upcoming trip and learn more about Acadia National Park with these resources, which offer a deeper look at the wildlife, habitats and research that make this landscape so important to conservation research. Explore Acadia's coastal ecosystems, learn how climate change is affecting forests and shorelines and discover how scientists are working to protect biodiversity in a changing world.

Why Is Acadia One of the Best Places in the World to Study Climate Change in Coastal Ecosystems?

In Acadia National Park, fog drifts across spruce-covered headlands while Atlantic waves crash against granite shores. Here, along one of the fastest-warming marine regions on Earth, scientists are tracking how climate change is reshaping coastal forests, wildlife populations and the interconnected ecosystems that link ocean and land.

The Gulf of Maine is warming faster than nearly every ocean region on Earth, creating measurable changes throughout Acadia's forests, shorelines and mountain habitats. Researchers are investigating how wildlife moves resources between ecosystems, where climate-sensitive plants may find refuge and which habitats are most likely to support biodiversity in the future.

This combination of dramatic coastal landscapes, long-term ecological monitoring and active conservation research makes Acadia a meaningful place for participants to contribute to science while helping researchers understand how ecosystems respond to a changing climate.

Quick Facts: Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia

Location: Acadia National Park, Maine
Research partner: Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park
Key activity: Ecological monitoring and habitat surveys
Conservation focus: Climate adaptation, ecosystem resilience and biodiversity conservation

What Wildlife Will I See on a Climate Change Expedition in Acadia?

Acadia sits at the meeting point of ocean, forest and mountain ecosystems, creating habitat for a remarkable diversity of wildlife. While the expedition focuses on ecological monitoring and climate research, participants may encounter a variety of species that help tell the story of how Acadia's ecosystems are changing.

- **Whales** abound on the Maine coast, including humpbacks, minke and fin (though they are typically farther offshore)
- **Harbor porpoises** feeding the region's cold, nutrient-rich waters
- **Atlantic puffins** nesting on offshore islands during July departures
- **Harbor seals** hauled out along rocky coastlines and offshore ledges
- **Gulls, cormorants and other seabirds** that forage in the Gulf of Maine
- **Mussels, crabs, sea urchins and other intertidal species** found in Acadia's rocky shoreline habitats

- **Red foxes, mink and river otters** that move between coastal forests and the shoreline
- **Warblers and other migratory songbirds** that travel through Acadia along the Atlantic Flyway
- **Crows and other corvids** that transport marine prey inland and help connect ocean and forest ecosystems
- **Spruce-fir forest birds** such as chickadees, thrushes and vireos that inhabit Acadia's coastal woodlands

Acadia lies along a major migratory corridor and supports an exceptional diversity of wildlife within a relatively compact landscape. The connections between these species and their habitats are a central focus of the research conducted throughout the expedition.

What Is the Climate Like During This Expedition?

Summer in coastal Maine is generally mild, though conditions can change quickly due to the influence of the Atlantic Ocean. Participants should be prepared for sunshine, fog, wind, rain and rapidly changing weather throughout the week.

Condition	What to Expect
Daytime Temperatures	60–80°F
Nighttime Temperatures	50–65°F
Rainfall	Periodic rain showers possible throughout the season
Fog	Common along the coast
Wind	Frequent near shorelines and exposed summits
Seasonal Notes	Conditions can vary significantly between coastal, forest and mountaintop habitats

Mountain summits and exposed shorelines often feel cooler than inland areas, particularly during windy or foggy conditions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need research experience?

No prior research experience is required. Scientists and field staff provide training and guidance in ecological monitoring, species identification and data collection methods used throughout the expedition.

What type of research will I assist with?

Participants assist scientists studying climate change impacts on Acadia's coastal ecosystems. Activities may include monitoring rare northern and arctic-alpine plants, documenting marine prey transported into forests by wildlife, reviewing wildlife-camera images and collecting habitat data used to identify potential climate refugia.

What is the conservation impact of this research?

This expedition supports long-term research investigating how climate change affects Acadia's interconnected ecosystems. Data collected by participants helps scientists identify climate refugia, monitor biodiversity and better understand how coastal forests, wildlife and marine ecosystems are responding to environmental change.

How physically demanding is the expedition?

Participants should be comfortable walking on uneven terrain that may include forest trails, rocky shorelines, exposed bedrock, roots and dense vegetation. Fieldwork may involve several hours outdoors in variable weather conditions while conducting surveys and monitoring activities.

Can weather affect research activities?

Yes. Weather conditions, tides and research priorities can affect daily schedules and fieldwork plans. Researchers regularly adapt activities to maximize safety and scientific opportunities.

What happens in case of an emergency?

Participant safety is a priority on all expeditions. Field staff follow established safety procedures and maintain communication during field activities. If medical care is required, staff coordinate transportation to the nearest appropriate medical facility.

What immunizations & travel vaccinations do I need?

Participants should consult a healthcare provider before travel and ensure routine vaccinations are up to date before visiting Maine. Participants should also prepare for extended outdoor activity in coastal environments.

What should I bring?

Participants receive a detailed packing list before departure outlining recommended clothing, field gear and personal supplies. Essential items include sturdy walking shoes, layered clothing, rain gear and gear appropriate for outdoor fieldwork in variable coastal weather.

What Should I Pack for a Climate Change Expedition in Acadia?

Participants should pack for changing coastal conditions, active days outdoors and fieldwork across forests, shorelines and mountain habitats. Layering is important, as temperatures can vary considerably throughout the day.

Recommended items include:

- Comfortable hiking shoes or trail shoes
- Lightweight field clothing
- Long pants
- Fleece or lightweight insulating layer
- Waterproof rain jacket
- Hat and sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Refillable water bottle
- Small daypack
- Binoculars
- Camera or smartphone
- Insect repellent

Because weather in Acadia can shift quickly, reliable rain gear and layered clothing are among the most important items to bring.

What Will I Experience on Exploring Wild Wonders of Maine's Acadia?

Participants assist scientists studying how climate change affects Acadia's forests, coastlines and wildlife. Fieldwork may include monitoring rare plant communities, documenting wildlife activity, reviewing camera-trap images and searching for evidence of marine prey transported inland by animals such as foxes, mink and river otters.

Beyond the research, participants experience some of Acadia's most memorable landscapes and cultural sites, including Cadillac Mountain, the Schoodic Peninsula, the Gulf of Maine and the Abbe Museum. Wildlife cruises, working waterfront experiences and time spent at Schoodic Institute help connect the science to the broader story of coastal Maine.

What Does Daily Fieldwork Look Like?

Fieldwork takes place across a variety of habitats, including coastal forests, rocky shorelines, mountain summits and long-term monitoring sites. Participants may help document plant communities, measure habitat conditions, identify wildlife captured on camera traps and record observations used in ongoing ecological studies.

Research activities vary from day to day and are shaped by weather, tides and scientific priorities. Some days focus on understanding how wildlife connects ocean and forest ecosystems, while others explore climate refugia that may help vulnerable species persist as temperatures continue to rise. Throughout the expedition, participants work alongside researchers to better understand how climate change is affecting Acadia from sea to summit.

earthwatch
expeditions
by Nat Hab

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