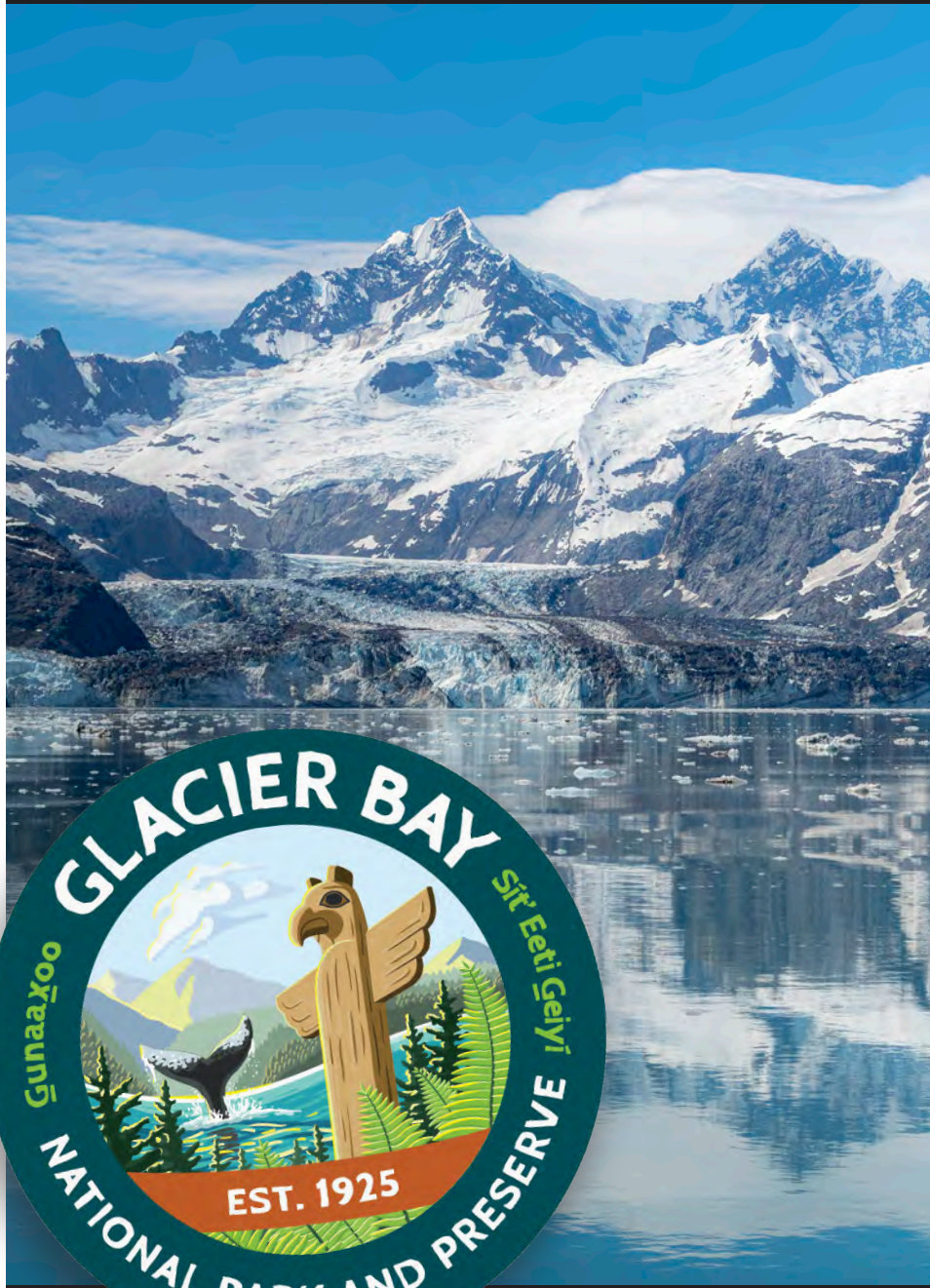




The FAIRWEATHER

VISITOR GUIDE



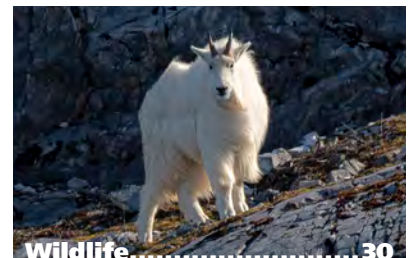
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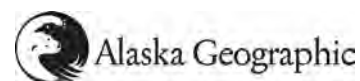


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The Fairweather

Produced with assistance from:



Designed by: National Park Service and Alaska Geographic

Park Coordinator, Editor, & Graphics: Sean Tevebaugh

Contributors: Laura Buchheit, Brian Buma, Matthew Cahill, Caitlin Daly, Sara Doyle, Sean Eagan, Chris Gabriele, Scott Gende, Alex Gulick, Margaret Hazen, Philip Hooe, Martin Hutten, Emma Johnson, Tania Lewis, Sandy Milner, Mary Beth Moss, Janet Neilson, Steven Schaller, Melissa Senac, Tom Schaff, Lewis Sharman, Darlene See, Rachel Serebryansky, Don Starbard, Jen Todd.

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Welcome to Glacier Bay



Welcome to Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve, Homeland of the Ḻingít since time immemorial.

Nestled in the pristine wilderness of Alaska, Glacier Bay National Park beckons with its awe-inspiring beauty and captivating wildlife. As you step foot into this dynamic landscape, prepare to be enchanted by towering glaciers, ancient fjords, and the rhythmic calving of tidewater glaciers. Whether you arrive by cruise ship, tour vessel, or your own private boat, Glacier Bay promises an unforgettable adventure.

Begin your exploration at the historic Glacier Bay Lodge, where you can rest and recharge amidst breathtaking views. The visitor center, perched on the second floor of the lodge in Bartlett Cove, is a treasure trove of knowledge. Here, friendly park rangers await, eager to share insights about the park's history, geology, and wildlife. Learn about the Huna



Visitors to Bartlett Cove experience the wild, glacial landscape of Glacier Bay.

Ḻingít, who have called this land home since time immemorial, and discover the wonders that await you.

Venture beyond the lodge to Bartlett Cove, where developed trails lead you through lush forests and along the rugged shoreline. Keep your eyes peeled for bald eagles soaring overhead and playful sea otters frolicking in the icy waters. As you explore the 2.7 million acres of designated wilderness, witness the grandeur of glaciers as they flow into the sea. Glacier Bay is a symphony of nature—a place where puffins dive, bears roam, and the ancient ice whispers its timeless secrets.

Whether you're a seasoned adventurer or a curious first-time visitor, Glacier Bay invites you to create lasting memories. So grab your binoculars, breathe in the crisp air, and embark on a journey that will forever connect you to this extraordinary corner of the world. Welcome to Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve!

Tom Schaff,
Superintendent



Glacier Bay rangers are excited and prepped to greet you!

Explore Bartlett Cove



The shores of Bartlett Cove offer opportunities to explore...

If you just have a few hours...

Stop by the Visitor Center: On the second floor of the Glacier Bay Lodge is the National Park Service (NPS) information desk and exhibits. Open daily when lodge is open. Educational materials and souvenirs available for purchase from Alaska Geographic.

Walk the Forest Trail: See trail details, page 5.

Go for a beach walk: See trail details, page 5.

Join a Ranger Program: See bulletin boards or park website for schedule of activities happening during your visit.

Visit the Whale Exhibit: See one of the largest humpback whale skeletons on display in the world. Located near the Visitor Information Station.

View the Tribal House and the Healing Totem Pole: Walk along the Lingít Trail to explore Huna Lingít connections to Glacier Bay. See pages 6–8.

If you have a half day...

Hike to the Bartlett River: See trail details, page 5.

Explore the intertidal zone at low tide: See map page 5.

If you have a full day...

Hike to Bartlett Lake: See trail details, page 5.

Go for a paddle: There are several options for kayaking around Bartlett Cove. Take a guided kayak trip, or rent your own from Glacier Bay Sea Kayaks.

Become a Junior Ranger: Kids can pick up their free Junior Ranger Activity Book from the NPS information desk at the Glacier Bay Lodge, or from the Visitor Information Station (VIS). See page 38.

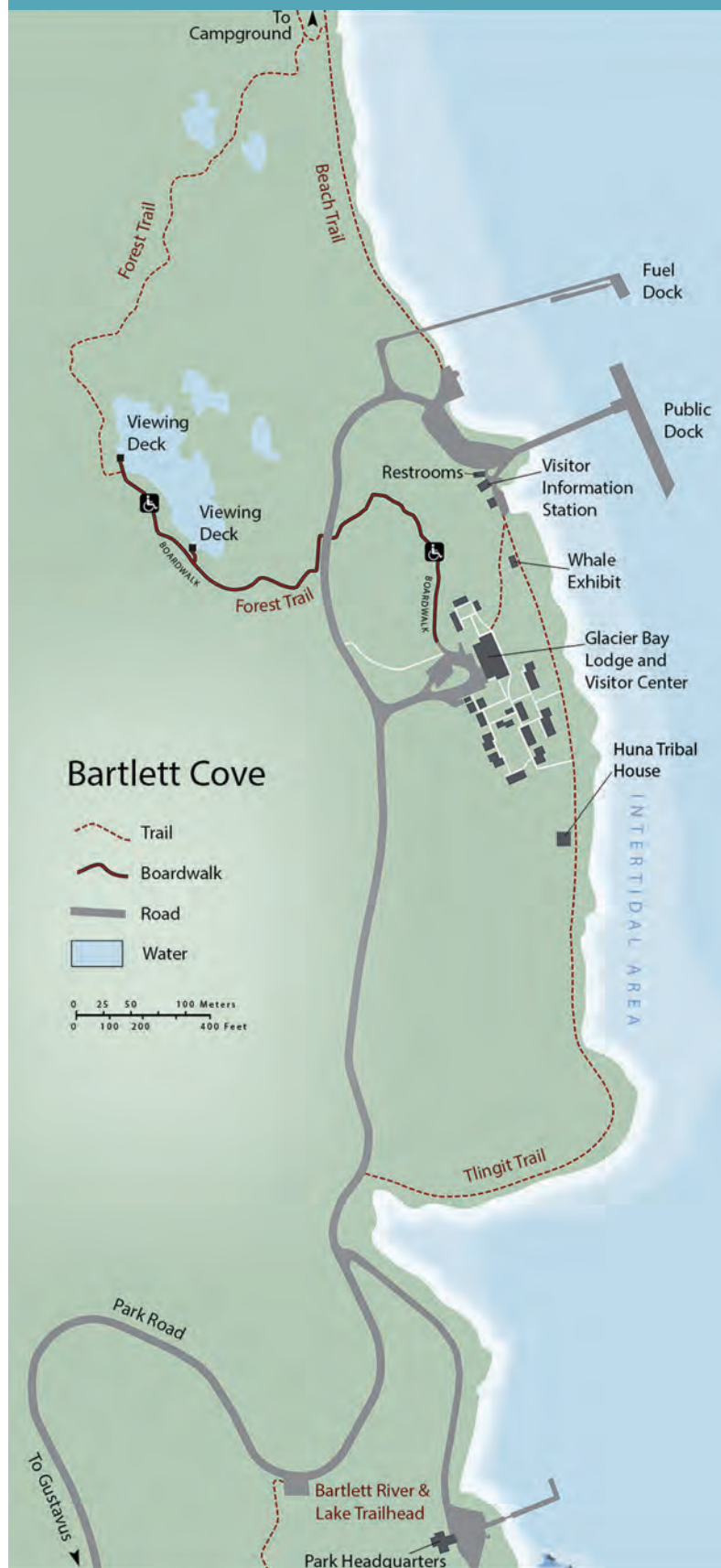
Explore Glacier Bay on the Dayboat: Spend the day exploring Glacier Bay to observe wildlife and tidewater glaciers. Stop by the lodge for availability.



Get the Latest Schedule of Events

Please see the NPS Visitor Center information desk in the Glacier Bay Lodge, the bulletin board in front of the lodge, or the Visitor Information Station (VIS) near the public dock for updates and information on available services. The schedule is also available on the “Calendar” page on [NPS.gov/GLBA](https://www.nps.gov/GLBA)

Trails



Bartlett Cove is the only developed area within the wilds of Glacier Bay. The forests and shorelines offer great opportunities for hiking. Maps are available online and at the Glacier Bay Lodge and Visitor Information Station (VIS).

Forest Trail

Distance: 0.7 miles (1.1 km) one way

Time: 30 minutes–1.5 hours

This leisurely stroll meanders through a lush forest that grows atop a glacial moraine. A wheelchair accessible boardwalk takes you part of the way, leading to two viewing decks that overlook a serene pond. Return along the shore for an easy one-mile loop.

Lingít Trail

Distance: 0.5 mile (800 m) one way

Time: 30 minutes–1 hour

Enjoy this easy stroll along a forested shoreline. View the Healing Totem Pole and a traditional Lingít dugout canoe, admire a complete whale skeleton, learn about common native plants, and take in the Raven and Eagle totems, as well as the exterior of the Tribal House.

Bartlett River Trail

Distance: 4 miles (6.4 km) round trip

Time: 4–5 hours

Explore a dense spruce-hemlock rainforest. The trail through the forest ends at an estuary near the mouth of the river. Each summer, spawning salmon attract otters, eagles, seals, and bears.

Bartlett Lake Trail

Distance: 8 miles (16 km) round trip

Time: 7–8 hours

About $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile down the Bartlett River Trail you will find the lake trail, a branch trail that climbs the moraine. This primitive trail is a rugged day-hike, with rewards of solitude and a tranquil lake. Bring water, food, and rain gear.

Explore the Shore

Distance: varies

The shoreline beyond the docks continues for miles past the campground. You may observe land and marine wildlife. Look for birds, listen for whales, and watch for sea otters feeding near shore. This is not a maintained trail.

Xunaa Shuká Hít



Xunaa Shuká Hít stands proudly on the shores of Bartlett Cove.

Dressed in a traditional beaded vest, Lingít elder, Wakéesh Don Starbard, shares with visitors: “There’s a good balance now. Yes, our young people are going off to college to become successful. But our language is strong. Our dance is strong. Our canoe culture is strong, and, most importantly, our connection to Homeland remains strong.” All summer long, visitors gather at the Tribal House. They listen to traditional stories and explore the intricately carved and painted building. Tribal interpreters working for the National Park Service (NPS) and the Hoonah Indian Association (HIA), the tribal government, share deeply of their traditions, history, enduring connection to Glacier Bay Homeland, and the collaborative efforts that led to the completion of this magnificent building.

For countless generations, the Huna Lingít sustained themselves on the abundant resources found

throughout Glacier Bay prior to the Little Ice Age. Although villages inside the bay were overrun by glacial advances in the 1700s, the Huna Lingít re-established fish camps and seasonal villages soon after glacial retreat. Establishment of Glacier Bay National Monument in 1925 (and later National Park) and implementation of laws and park regulations led to a period of alienation and strained relationships between tribal members and the NPS. Time and new understandings have brought much healing. In recent years, the NPS and HIA worked cooperatively to reinvigorate traditional activities, develop cultural programs for youth and adults, amend regulations to allow for a broader range of traditional harvests in park boundaries, and preserve oral histories.

The most symbolic cooperative venture—*Xunaa Shuká Hít* (roughly translated as Huna Ancestors’ House)—



HIA tribal interpreter leads a group down the Lingít Trail to Xunaa Shuká Hít.



Hoonah youth welcome traditional dugout canoes on Bartlett Cove's shoreline during the 2018 Healing Totem Pole Dedication.



Tribal members dance and sing during the August 2016 Tribal House Dedication.

now stands proudly on the shoreline of Bartlett Cove. Dedicated in August 2016 and opened to the public in summer 2017, it now draws thousands of visitors from around the world.

A team of clan leaders, craftsmen, planners, architects, and cultural resource specialists designed *Xunaa Shuká Hít* to reflect a traditional architectural style reminiscent of ancestral clan houses with modern touches suitable for the needs of the community today. Inside the Tribal House are four richly detailed cedar interior house posts and an interior house screen which depicts the stories of the four primary Huna Lingít clans and their tie to Glacier Bay Homeland. These cultural elements impart spiritual value to the Tribal House, and, as importantly, their design and completion expand the circle of tribal members who hold traditional skills and share in cultural knowledge.

The 2,500 square foot Tribal House is not only a place for visitors to learn about Lingít traditions, but is also a venue for tribal members to reconnect with their traditional homeland, life-ways, and ancestral knowledge. Within months of its dedication, the Tribal House inspired native high school students to spend their winter school break at the Tribal House learning traditional crafts from elders and culture bearers. Months later, hundreds of tribal members gathered to raise the Eagle and Raven totem poles that grace the sides of *Xunaa Shuká Hít*. In August 2018, these poles were joined by *Yaa Naa Néx Kootéeyaa* (Healing Totem



NPS tribal interpreter shares messages represented within the Raven and Eagle totems.

Pole). This totem, collaboratively designed by NPS and HIA, reveals the story of the journey through a painful past to a healthier, more meaningful partnership. *Xunaa Shuká Hít* is a place of learning, growth, inspiration, and continued healing for generations to come.

Images of the Huna Tribal House dedication and carving projects are available on the park's website under the Tribal House Media Gallery. To learn more about special events and opportunities to experience the Tribal House, check the posted activity schedules in Bartlett Cove or ask a ranger.



Visit [NPS.gov](https://www.nps.gov) to learn more:



Traditional songs inspire the strength and stamina to carry the Raven and Eagle totems at the May 2017 Totem Raising.

Yaa Naa Néx Kootéeyaa

"I believe we are on a path - that our people will be remembered..."

- Frank Wright Jr, President of Hoonah Indian Association

Our pole...is a story pole. It is, essentially, the recorded history, not only of the Huna Lingít, not only of Glacier Bay National Park, but of our long, sometimes painful, sometimes joyous, journey together.

- Philip Hooge

Glacier Bay Superintendent, 2014 - 2020



Philip Hooge (left) and Frank Wright, Jr. (right) at the Healing Totem Pole Dedication.

Journey of Healing

Raised on August 25, 2018, *Yaa Naa Néx Kootéeyaa* (Healing Totem Pole) tells the story of the long journey for both Huna Lingít and the National Park Service (NPS) to heal years of misunderstandings and hurt.

Designed collaboratively by tribal elders, carvers, and NPS staff, the pole contains a mix of traditional formline design and modern representations of symbols—differentiating it from other poles in Southeast Alaska.



Glacier Bay is the traditional home and “breadbasket” of the Huna Lingít—sustaining them physically and spiritually until a rapidly advancing glacier pushed them out in the late 1700s.



The Huna Lingít felt that the federal government—a faceless, soulless being with too many hands—barred them from many traditional practices upon their return after the glacier receded.



Traditional dugout canoes support healing journeys cooperatively planned by NPS and the Hoonah Indian Association—connecting tribal members with Glacier Bay Homeland.

Visit the Healing Totem Pole next to the Visitor Information Station, and read the complete story from bottom to top at our website: [go.NPS.gov/HealingTotem](https://www.nps.gov/HealingTotem)



Glaciers



A glacier flows from the Fairweather Mountains. Glaciers continue to change in response to their environment.

Rivers of Ice

Tall, coastal mountains and an abundance of snow make Glacier Bay a comfortable home for hundreds of glaciers. Storms from the Pacific Ocean collide with the towering Fairweather Mountains, often producing rain at sea level and snow at higher elevations. The snow compacts, forming ice. With the influence of gravity, the ice slides down the mountainside. Basically, ice in motion is a glacier.

As a glacier flows down the mountainside, it reaches warmer elevations. When the air above a glacier is above freezing or if it is raining, then ice melts. The balance between the amount of ice forming and ice melting determines whether a glacier advances (grows) or retreats (shrinks), though it always flows forward.



Glaciers shrink in size when more ice is lost from melting than gained from snowfall.

“Words and dry figures can give one little idea of the grandeur of this glacial torrent flowing steadily and solidly into the sea, and the beauty of the fantastic ice front, shimmering with all the prismatic hues, beyond imagery or description.”

-Eliza Scidmore, 1883

A few glaciers, called tidewater glaciers, reach all the way to the ocean and are strong enough to survive with their ice touching warm ocean water. Tidewater glaciers have a naturally occurring cycle of advance and retreat that has shaped Glacier Bay for millennia. A few hundred years ago, a glacier that sat mid-way down the bay for centuries advanced rapidly until it came to the waters of Icy Strait. The salty ocean water caused the glacial ice to melt and dramatically break away in a process called calving. Snowfall couldn't keep up with the amount of melting and calving, so the glacier retreated quickly. All of the glaciers visitors see in the park today are remnants of that once large glacier.

Changes to glacial ice continue in Glacier Bay. While tidewater glaciers are still influenced by ocean water, all glaciers are now impacted by a rapidly warming planet. Glacier Bay National Park will continue to study glaciers as the climate warms. As a living laboratory, Glacier Bay provides outstanding opportunities to explore the intricate dynamics of glaciers.

Timeline of Glacier Bay

Since time immemorial, Lingít clans live in the area that is now Glacier Bay. Advancing glaciers in the 1700s during the Little Ice Age force the Lingít out of their Homeland. After the Little Ice Age, the glacier melts back and the ocean fills the valley quickly, creating Glacier Bay.



1794 Captain George Vancouver of the H.M.S. *Discovery* and Lt. Joseph Whidbey describe Glacier Bay as “a compact sheet of ice as far as the eye could distinguish.” The “bay” is a mere five-mile indentation in the coastline.



1883 James Carroll and other commercial steamship captains make Muir Glacier a popular tourist destination.



1925 Ecologist William S. Cooper, studying plant succession in Glacier Bay, and the Ecological Society of America persuade President Coolidge to establish Glacier Bay National Monument.



1980 Congress, under the leadership of President Jimmy Carter, signs the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act into law. Glacier Bay becomes a national park and preserve encompassing 3.3 million acres.



1995 The National Park Service and Hoonah Indian Association sign a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a working partnership.



2024 Glacier Bay welcomed an estimated 736,282 visitors to the park, breaking our visitation record from 2023! More than 90% visited via cruise ship.



1750

1800

1850

1900

1950

2000



1770s–1790s

European explorers arrive. Excursions led by Captains Malaspina, La Perouse, Cook, Vancouver, and many others provide the first western descriptions of the area and its people. Cartographers create the first maps of the area and non-Native names are given to landforms.



1879 John Muir, guided by Lingít men, paddles into Glacier Bay. They find the glacial ice has retreated 40 miles since 1794. Muir returns three times over the next 15 years. He constructs a cabin, makes extensive observations of glaciers, and explains interglacial tree stumps. The eloquent writings of enthusiasts like Muir and Eliza Scidmore begin attracting new visitors to the bay.



1916 U.S. Congress passes the Organic Act, creating the National Park Service.



1966 Glacier Bay Lodge opens as part of the “Mission 66” initiative that brought facility improvements to national parks nationwide during the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service.



1992 UNESCO designates Glacier Bay, along with Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (Alaska), Kluane National Park Reserve (Canada) and Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park (Canada), as a 24-million-acre World Heritage Site, one of the world’s largest internationally protected areas.



2016 The National Park Service celebrates its centennial: 100 years of “America’s Best Idea.” Glacier Bay celebrates with the opening of the Huna Tribal House, a collaborative venture with the Hoonah Indian Association. The building serves as a cultural anchor and a place of learning.



2025 Glacier Bay reaches its Centennial year!

Park Science

Visitors and researchers alike from around the world explore and admire Glacier Bay. The dramatic retreat of glaciers created a premiere scientific laboratory. Explorer John Muir initiated the park's remarkable legacy of scientific inquiry in the late 1800s. Botanist William Cooper secured protected status for Glacier Bay following his research about how plant life follows glacial retreat. In fact, the initial proclamation protecting Glacier Bay National Park states research as a reason for national preservation. From whales and plankton to climate and otters, research is a common occurrence in the protected laboratory of Glacier Bay. This scientific study provides a greater understanding and appreciation for the wilderness we explore. Learn more by reading the following pages and make your own discoveries in Glacier Bay.

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science."

- Albert Einstein



Alex conducting underwater field research at Buck Island Reef National Monument, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Meet a researcher

Alex Gulick, Marine Ecologist

Alexandra (Alex) Gulick is Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve's new Supervisory Marine Ecologist. Hailing from Eastern Oregon, Alex found an interest in marine biology at a young age. After attending a middle-school marine science summer camp on the Oregon Coast, she discovered a love for the ocean and the marine life that thrives in the Pacific Northwest.

Alex pursued her passion for the ocean as a marine ecologist and research scientist. She studied Biology (Marine Emphasis) at Oregon State University, where she completed a Bachelor of Science, then earned a PhD in Zoology at the University of Florida. She has studied a variety of ocean ecosystems, addressing research questions related to flora and fauna relationships, benthic ecology, population dynamics of marine

megafauna and fisheries, and more. One study looked at the grazing dynamics of recovering green sea turtle populations in seagrass meadows. Alex's work helped scientists and resource managers better understand the sustainability of increasing grazing pressure and the roles large herbivores fulfill in coastal ecosystems. Alex conducted this research in collaboration with the National Park Service, where she became interested in the role the NPS plays in guiding essential management efforts to protect ecosystems and wildlife.

Helping establish marine research programs and striving for positive change led Alex to Glacier Bay today. Here, she will oversee the study and management of the exciting and complex dynamics of Glacier Bay's vast marine environment. Alex is thrilled to be living in Alaska, joining several family members in the Southeast Alaska region. Growing up in a rural small town, she's excited to join Gustavus, Glacier Bay's neighboring gateway community, allowing for opportunities to spend time in nature and enjoy this wild, remote Southeast Alaska environment. In her off time, Alex is excited about kayaking trips, fishing, diving, and starting a garden in a new home.

Alex has a passion for learning about marine ecosystems and developing ecosystem-based management strategies. What drives change in any given ecosystem? How should park managers monitor and manage these ecosystems and mitigate human impacts? Alex hopes to contribute to answering some of these questions, so that Glacier Bay remains one of the world's wildest marine environments.



William S. Cooper recognized Glacier Bay as a living laboratory. He studied the process of pioneer plants colonizing land recently revealed by retreating glaciers.

A Vision of Preservation

People visit Glacier Bay to view amazing scenery, dramatic glaciers, and spectacular wildlife. Yet a century ago one man saw something else of great value here: incredible opportunities for science.

Botanist William Skinner Cooper (1884–1978) came to Glacier Bay in 1916 to study how plants colonize newly-exposed ground following glacial retreat. He recognized Glacier Bay as the best place on earth to witness the process of “plant succession,” a fascinating interplay of plants, nutrients, soil, and time. In this process the bare ground emerging from beneath a glacier goes through various stages to become a rich, thick, mossy evergreen forest of towering spruces and hemlocks.

Dr. Cooper saw a natural laboratory in Glacier Bay where scientific principles could be discovered as well as tested; a place where completely new scientific questions could be asked. As a prominent member of the Ecological Society of America, Dr. Cooper successfully led a committee of colleagues in a vigorous campaign to lobby President Calvin Coolidge for protection of the Glacier Bay area in 1925 as a national

monument. One of the monument’s fundamental mandates was to preserve the opportunity to conduct scientific studies, making Glacier Bay a true “park for science.”

Dr. Cooper returned to his beloved Glacier Bay many times to document the successional development in the study areas and plots he established on his first visit. Dr. Cooper’s students and other scientists continue his work on how ecosystems respond to glacial recession and, more broadly, global climate change. This ongoing research makes Glacier Bay the oldest continuously researched post-glacial landscape in the world.

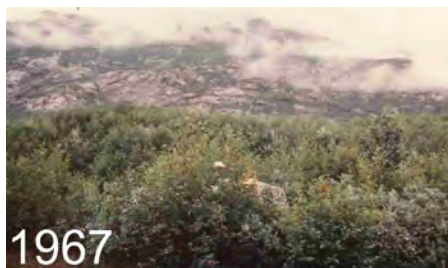
Glacier Bay is preserved as public land for many reasons: protection of wildlife habitat, scenery, value to the world, enjoyment by present and future generations, and as a living laboratory. Glacier Bay still inspires new discoveries today.



Ecologist Brian Buma continues the legacy of research on Dr. Cooper’s original plots.



1941



1967



2017

From rock to rainforest—in just 75 years! Images taken at the same location document the landscape changes.



Ninety-five percent of Alaska's glaciers are thinning, stagnating, or retreating.

The Ice Is Melting

The Earth's climate is changing—and fast! In Glacier Bay, glaciers are rapidly shrinking and the ocean temperature is rising. Scientists who study the Earth's climate have documented warming temperatures in Alaska due to increased carbon dioxide levels. Warming temperatures lead to changes in fire cycles, tree growth, animal migrations, and rapidly melting glaciers. Ninety-five percent of Alaska's glaciers are currently retreating, thinning, or stagnating. Importantly, the rate of thinning is increasing. Glacier Bay's glaciers follow this trend. Recent research determined that the area covered by ice in Glacier Bay has shrunk 15% from 1950 to now. Nevertheless, heavy snowfall in the towering Fairweather Mountains means that a few glaciers might remain stable in Glacier Bay, a rarity in today's world. Take a good look at the glaciers you see in Glacier Bay today. The next time you see these glaciers, they will be different.

Alaska and other polar regions experience the effects of climate change more strongly than other places. Decades of data from NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies show that Alaska and the polar regions have warmed more than twice as much as the rest of the earth. Climate change is a reality for Alaskans, threatening villages with coastal erosion, changing subsistence practices, and altering weather patterns. Ask park rangers about what changes they have noticed in Glacier Bay.

There is good news. Humans are inventive, resourceful, and capable of overcoming great challenges. Although climate change is a global concern, we each hold a part of the answer to minimizing its impact.

The Earth's climate is changing and Glacier Bay is warming. How will these changes affect you? One fact is certain: the choices we make today will make a difference in the future.



For more information about climate change in national parks, visit www.nps.gov/climatechange



Aerial photography is used by National Park Service scientists to monitor harbor seal populations.

Seals as Sentinels of Ice Dynamics

In tidewater glacier fjords, harbor seals' lives are tied to readily available glacial ice.

Tidewater glaciers are the source of vital habitat for harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina richardii*). Icebergs calved from glaciers serve as pupping, molting, and resting habitat for some of the largest seasonal gatherings of harbor seals in the world. Glacier Bay, specifically Johns Hopkins Inlet, hosts one of the largest aggregations of harbor seals in southeastern Alaska. Johns Hopkins Inlet is an expansive tidewater glacier fjord in the upper West Arm where over 75% of seals in Glacier Bay occur. Icebergs provide benefits to seals such as reducing the risk of predation from orca and providing a stable platform for nursing young seal pups during the brief lactation period. Harbor seals show strong site fidelity to Johns Hopkins Inlet from May to August during the pupping and molting seasons; however, they may travel extensively outside of Glacier Bay during non-breeding season.

The National Park Service (NPS) conducts annual aerial photographic surveys to monitor the number and trend of harbor seals in Johns Hopkins Inlet. Since the early 1990s, the number of seals has declined from over 6,000 to approximately 2,000 in more recent years. To better understand how changes in ice habitat may influence harbor seals, glaciologists from University of Alaska Southeast and the National Park Service are collaborating with NPS biologists to quantify how the

calving dynamics of tidewater glaciers may influence ice availability in Johns Hopkins Inlet.

Tidewater glaciers are dynamic, advancing and retreating in response to local climatic and fjord conditions. Today, the majority of tidewater glaciers around the world are thinning and retreating. While the ice front of Johns Hopkins Glacier has slowly advanced by 2 km (1.2 mi) since the 1920s, it has begun thinning. If the thinning continues, the glacier may start to retreat in the near future. Climate change models predict continued loss of ice which will have many consequences to wildlife, such as harbor seals. The physical processes that influence calving dynamics of tidewater glaciers and ultimately the availability of icebergs can influence seal distribution, abundance, and behavior. Given that harbor seals rely on glacier ice as habitat for critical life history events, such as pupping (May-June) and molting (August), seals may ultimately serve as sentinels of ice dynamics in these rapidly changing tidewater glacier fjord ecosystems.



Harbor seals rely on ice calved by glaciers for pupping and molting.



Glacier Bay scientists and cruise ship pilots are working together to study and protect humpback whales.

New Tools for Avoiding Whale-Ship Collisions

Glacier Bay National Park is the same size as the state of Connecticut, 3.3 million acres, though they are certainly very different! For example, while Connecticut has more than 20,000 miles of public roadways, Glacier Bay has only six miles. Yet thousands of people travel through Glacier Bay on another “highway”: Glacier Bay’s extensive waterway.

Navigating a ship has some similar hazards as driving a car, such as wildlife avoidance. While drivers in other national parks watch out for squirrels and deer jumping into the road, cruise ship pilots in Glacier Bay are alert for humpback whales suddenly appearing in front of their vessels. In fact, research has documented that over 75% of ships in Glacier Bay experience whales surfacing within 3,280 feet (1,000 meters) of the ship’s bow.

Seeing a whale close to a ship is exciting, yet can also be perilous to whales. Whales are often focused on feeding, so they are not always aware of a ship’s presence nearby. In order to keep people and whales safe in Southeast Alaska, Glacier Bay is collaborating with several organizations to develop best practices to minimize the chance of a whale-ship collision.

Since 2012, Glacier Bay scientists have worked with experienced marine pilots to test and implement techniques for avoiding whales. A new training currently under joint production will provide marine

pilots the opportunity to “practice” whale avoidance techniques in a simulator. This training curriculum is the first of its kind to couple the science of whale behavior with the professional discipline of ship maneuvering.

Another collaborative tool is Whale Alert. Throughout Southeast Alaska, cruise ship pilots and biologists are working to produce near real-time whale sighting maps through a smart phone or tablet application. Ships can then avoid current locations where whales are congregating, thereby reducing the risk of a collision.

Visitors keeping a watchful eye on the water have a great chance of seeing a humpback whale while traveling on the Glacier Bay waterway. New tools are helping “drivers” in Glacier Bay avoid whale-ship collisions.



*For more information
on Whale Alert and for
the free app, visit
www.whalealert.org*



Icebergs calved from Grand Plateau Glacier in Grand Plateau Lake.

Cataclysmic Landscape Change

Within Glacier Bay's dramatic landscape, significant changes continue due to the earth's warming climate. Recently, monumental landslides have occurred due to glaciers shrinking and exposing unstable mountainsides. Many extreme changes from glacial retreat happen in remote mountains, far from people. However, a recent study describes the potentially catastrophic consequences of glacier retreat in Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve that may cause major ecological and socioeconomic disturbance to human traditional, commercial, and recreational activities.

The recently published study describes the impacts of glacier retreat on an internationally renowned river, the Alsek River, that has been central to human activities, such as fishing and travel, for centuries. The Alsek River lies within Glacier Bay National Preserve,

public land that protects traditional subsistence uses, and commercial fishing opportunities, as well as recreational uses like river rafting, sport hunting, and sport fishing.

A team of researchers from the National Park Service, University of Alaska Fairbanks, and University of Arizona used remote sensing data collected from NASA satellites and aircraft. They concluded that rates of glacier retreat and thinning are accelerating. If these accelerated rates continue as expected, the Alsek River is likely to find a new pathway to the ocean, redirecting the flow away from Dry Bay within decades.

If the Alsek River abandons its course to Dry Bay, the ecological repercussions will include the ruin of habitat for anadromous fish, such as salmon, in the abandoned

river channel. Meanwhile, well-established human activity and developments along the Alsek River would become impossible or impractical to maintain.

As the world changes, researchers will continue to study local changes and the connections between local, regional, and global systems. Interactions between cultural, physical, and ecological systems will shift, with repercussions to ecosystems and public lands.

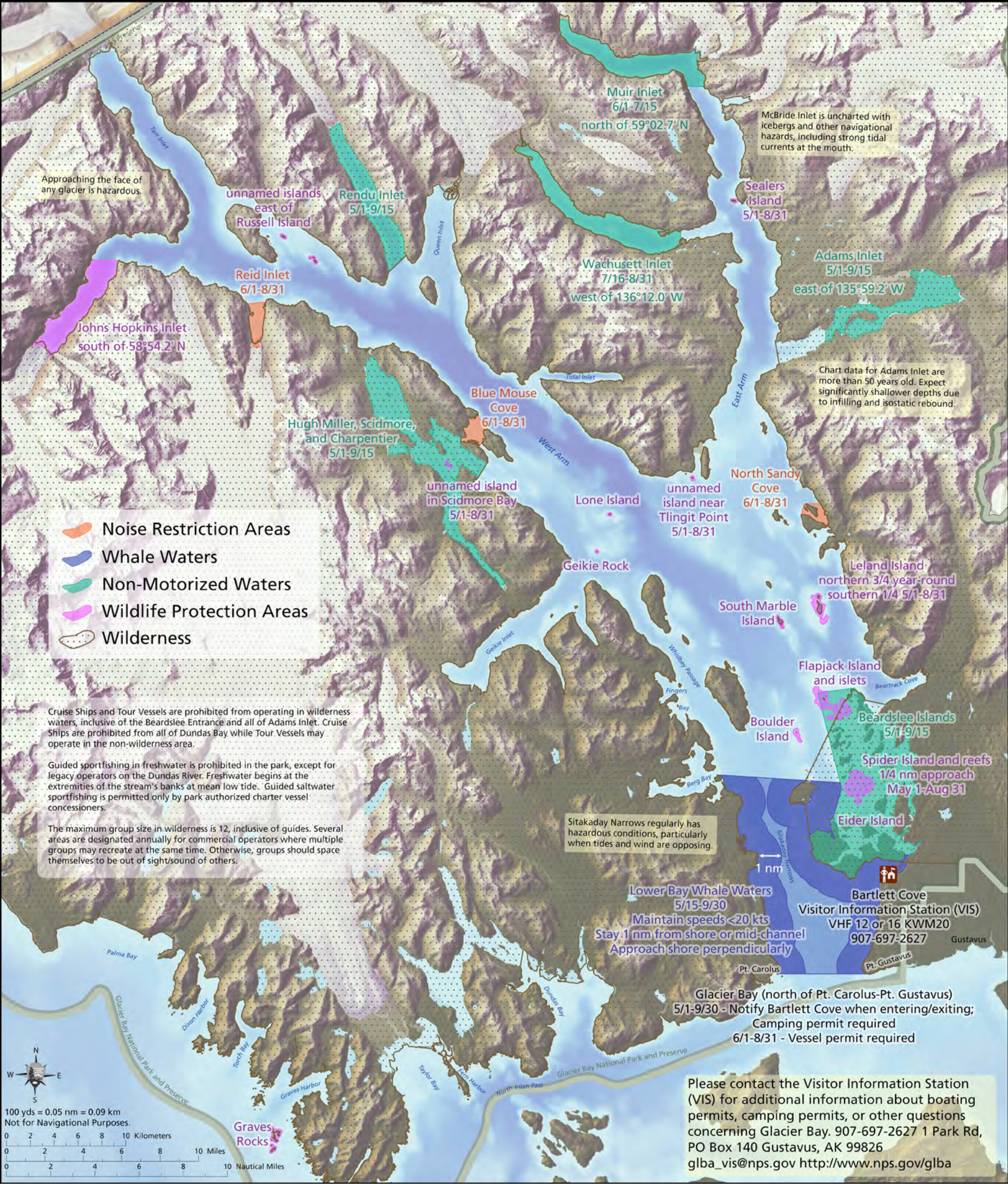
Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve was established to study a changing landscape. Research concludes accelerating change due to a warming climate will change the route of a renowned river. The Alsek River currently flows west from Alsek Lake but the new route, once Grand Plateau Glacier (GPG) retreats, will follow the yellow line to the south.



Glacier Bay Guide

For Boaters, Kayakers, and Campers

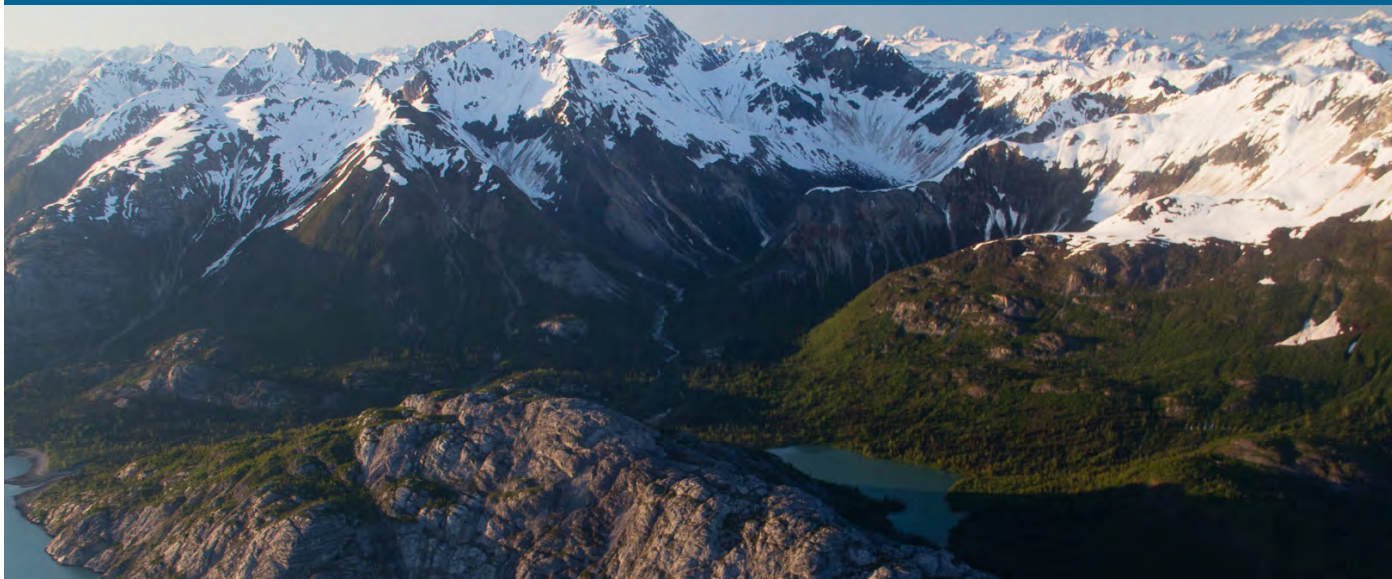
Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Select Glacier Bay Regulations through the Year

	Apr. 1 - Apr. 30	May 1 - May 14	May 15 - May 30	Jun. 1 - Jun. 30	Jul. 1 - Jul. 15	Jul. 16 - Aug. 31	Sep. 1 - Sep. 15	Sep. 16 - Sep. 30	Oct. 1 - Oct. 31	Nov. 1 - Mar. 31
Wildlife Protection Areas	Stay at least 100 yds from from all hauled out sea lions and nesting bird colonies year-round, unless otherwise noted. Stay 1/4 nm from humpback whales. Approach other marine mammals no closer than 100 yds. The feeding, touching, teasing, frightening or intentional disturbing of wildlife nesting, breeding, or other activities is prohibited anywhere in the park.									
	Nesting Bird and Sea Lion Closures (100 yds from shore) - Geikie Rock, Graves Rocks, Lone Island, unnamed islands northeast of Russell Island, Cape Fairweather area, Cormorant Rock area, Leland Island (northern 3/4 of island), Flapjack Island complex, Boulder Island, Eider Island, South Marble Island (50 yds on southern end when sea lions absent)									
	Nesting Bird Closures (100 yds from shore) - Sealers Island, unnamed island near Tlingit Point, unnamed island in Scidmore Bay, Leland Island (southern 1/4 of island)									
	Harbor Seal Closures - Spider Island Complex (1/4 nm from shore)									
	Harbor Seal Closures Johns Hopkins Inlet closed to everyone				Harbor Seal Closures - Johns Hopkins Inlet 10 kts restricted speed and no approaching seals on ice closer than 1/4 nm; cruise ships not permitted					
Non-Motorized Waters	Adams Inlet, Rendu Inlet, Hugh Miller Inlet, Beardslee Islands - no motor vessels or seaplanes									
	Muir Inlet - no motor vessels or seaplanes				Wachusett Inlet - no motor vessels or seaplanes					
Whale Waters	Lower Bay: maximum 20 kt speed, stay 1 nm from shore or mid-channel (does not include vessels <18' length, those engaged in fishing, or those operating solely under sail), and only approach shore perpendicularly. Additional temporary restrictions on speed or other areas may be in place.									
Noise Restrictions				No use of generators or other non-propulsive motors, except while in transit or using a windlass (10pm-6am) - Reid Inlet, Blue Mouse Cove, North Sandy Cove						
Other	Camping permits and orientation required for Glacier Bay & Vessels must notify Bartlett Cove upon entry/exit									
	Private vessels must have permit and orientation									
	Bartlett Cove temporary moorings with permit allowed									
	Bartlett Cove Dock restrictions variable throughout year - please see Bartlett Cove VIS									

Plan Your Trip



Glacier Bay's vast landscape invites exploration.

Amazing Adventures Await

Glacier Bay provides incredible opportunities for wilderness discovery. Wilderness is full of surprises, so planning ahead and preparing for your adventure helps ensure a fulfilling and safe trip. The following pages give a wealth of information about camping and boating in Glacier Bay.

If you plan to camp or boat during your visit, your first stop should be at the Visitor Information Station (VIS) near the public use dock. During the summer, a free permit is required for all motorized boating and overnight camping. Orientations are required annually for all campers and boat captains. These orientations

will help you to make the most of your time in Glacier Bay, safely and with minimum impact to the park. Orientations cover current backcountry conditions, regulations, safety issues, resource situations, tides, and weather. Backcountry campers can check out bear-resistant food containers to use free of charge during their visit.

It is your responsibility to know and follow the regulations of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. We can help. If you have any questions, please contact the park or ask a park ranger at the VIS, the visitor center, or at park headquarters.

Help Keep Glacier Bay Clean

Glacier Bay is remarkably pristine and free of litter. You can help keep the park clean and efficient. Please separate your waste into the appropriate bins in the parking lot near the public dock. Your efforts to separate recyclables make it possible for the park to reach milestones for recycling or reusing waste in its day-to-day operations.

Recycling is a serious endeavor in Glacier Bay. The park collaborates with the neighboring city of Gustavus to send shipments of aluminum, paper

products, steel, tin, and plastics to recycling centers. Park staff do a final hand-sorting of trash to ensure that all recyclable items are in recycling shipments. Locally, food waste from the park and the lodge is composted into soil for use in the community.

With your help, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve will continue to achieve one of the best recycling rates in the National Park Service. We can all work together to keep Glacier Bay's environment clean and healthy.



Park rangers help protect park resources and keep visitors safe.

Park Regulations

The following is a partial listing of laws and regulations designed to help you have a safe, enjoyable visit while protecting park resources. For further information or questions on additional regulations, please ask a park ranger.

Feeding Wildlife is prohibited. All food, fish, garbage, and equipment used to cook or store food must be cached inside of a motor vehicle (not in open pickup), vessel (excluding kayaks), building, approved bear-resistant food containers, designated trash receptacle, or designated food cache.

Camping in Bartlett Cove is allowed only in the campground or one mile away from the Bartlett Cove developed area (roads, buildings, or trails.).

Firearms are prohibited in federal facilities. Special regulations apply when carrying firearms within Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Please contact the Visitor Information Station at Bartlett Cove at 907-697-2627 for further guidance.

Hunting is only permitted on the preserve lands in the Dry Bay area. All persons 16 years and older are required to hold a valid Alaska State Hunting License.

Harvesting the following for personal use and consumption is allowed: unoccupied seashells, edible berries and fruits, edible mushrooms, clams, and mollusks. State regulations apply.

NOTE: Eating clams and mussels from Glacier Bay is not recommended because of the presence of a naturally occurring neurotoxin that causes paralytic shellfish poisoning in humans and can lead to sudden death.

Pets are allowed on land in only a few select areas, may not be left unattended, and must be leashed at all times. Pets are not allowed on trails or in the backcountry. Pets are allowed on vessels on the water, on the Bartlett Cove public use dock, on the beach between the Bartlett Cove public use dock and the park headquarters dock, and within 100 feet of Bartlett Cove roads or parking areas unless otherwise posted. Clean up after pets.

Sport Fishing by all nonresidents 16 years and older and Alaskan residents 18–59 requires a valid Alaska State Fishing License, available online at www.adfg.alaska.gov. Licenses are not sold locally. Consult Alaska State Fishing regulations when purchasing a license.

FOR YOUR SAFETY

You are in a remote, isolated area. The closest hospital or trauma facility is in Juneau, 30 minutes by air. Weather conditions can delay medical evacuations or other emergency transport, sometimes for days. Plan and prepare for your trips carefully! Even for short excursions, always let someone know where you are going and what time you plan to be back.

Boating

Motorized Vessels

Permits

- Are required for private motor vessels to enter and exit Glacier Bay from June 1–August 31.
- Are free and valid for up to seven consecutive days and six nights.
- Must be confirmed 48 hours before scheduled entry date or permit will be cancelled.
- Are only valid for operation of one vessel at a time.

To confirm permits or to see if permits are available, call the Visitor Information Station “KWM20 Bartlett Cove” on marine band 16 or phone 907-697-2627. Permit applications are accepted 60 days before the intended entry date and are available at www.nps.gov/glba. From May 1 to September 30, all vessels must call in to KWM20 prior to entering and also when exiting the park.

Docks

Bartlett Cove Dock:

- Vessels may dock for a maximum of 3 hours in a 24-hour period. After that, anchor out beyond the white “no wake” buoys.
- Dinghies 10 feet or less may dock in the designated area for up to 24 hours.
- Do not leave vehicles or personal property unattended on docks.
- Use only slips designated for your use. See dock bulletin board.
- Potable water is available on the dock.

Fuel Dock:

- For hours, call Glacier Bay Lodge on marine band 16 or phone 907-697-4000.
- Fuel is available during the Glacier Bay Lodge operating season.
- Access to shore via the fuel dock is not permitted.
- Do not leave vessels unattended at the fuel dock.

Anchorage

- Boat operators should carefully consult their charts when choosing an anchorage.
- Anchor in water deep enough to remain afloat at low tide.
- Safety depends on ice, wind, and tide conditions.
- Please do not raft or anchor next to the South Sandy Cove Ranger Raft.
- Boats at North Sandy Cove, Reid Inlet, and Blue Mouse Cove may not run generators or any other non-propulsive engines between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. except when using a windlass.



Be Careful on the Water

Closures

Areas designated as Critical Wildlife Areas are off limits to entry and landings for all or part of the year. In summer, some areas are off limits to motorized vessels—including sailing vessels with auxiliary motorized propulsion, even if not in use. Know and obey all closures. See Guide to Park Waters, pages 20–21.

Cruise Ships

No more than two cruise ships are permitted in the park per day. These large vessels cannot turn quickly and may take miles to stop. Do not approach them when they are stationary in front of the glaciers. Do not get in their path and do not assume they see you. Watch for large wakes from ships. These waves can reach the beach over 10 minutes after the ship has passed.

Currents & Winds

The forces of tides, currents, and wind can combine in certain places to create dangerous conditions. Areas that may require extra caution include the entrance to Glacier Bay, Sitakaday Narrows, Beardslee Entrance, McBride Entrance, Berg Bay, and the north shore of Adams Inlet. Plan crossings of wide channels carefully. Be prepared to change your route or wait for dangerous conditions to subside.

Glaciers & Icebergs

Approaching tidewater glaciers closer than ¼ mile is not recommended. Glaciers can calve from above and below the waterline. Underwater tongues of ice can also break off and shoot to the surface.



Kayaking gives visitors a unique perspective of Glacier Bay.

Tides

Beware of extreme high tides. Secure boats, kayaks, and gear well above the high tide line. Some waterways are tide dependent and may only be passable at high tide.

Landslide Potential

Many of Glacier Bay's steep mountainsides are unstable. Landslides may occur at any time, potentially resulting in large waves in narrow inlets and along shorelines.

Weather

May through September, weather forecasts are posted daily on the VIS bulletin board. Rangers broadcast the marine forecast and important notices over VHF channel 09 at approximately 8:45 am and 4:45 pm daily (May and September) and 8:45 am and 4:45 pm daily (June–August).

Maps and Charts

Topographic Maps:

Trails Illustrated Map by Nat. Geo. 1:100,000

USGS Quadrangles 1:25,000

Nautical Charts:

17300 Stephens Passage to Cross Sound

17318 Glacier Bay

17302 Icy Strait and Cross Sound

17301 Cape Spencer to Icy Point

16762 Lituya Bay

In the Case of an Emergency

Call by phone (907-697-2651) or by radio on marine band 16 (state “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday”).

NOTE: Radio coverage in the bay is spotty, and cell phone coverage is nonexistent. If needed, hail another boat nearby to relay messages.

If you have no radio, wave a large brightly colored item toward a passing boat. Tie this item to a stick, oar, or kayak paddle for greater visibility.

Weather & Tides

Glacier-Making Weather

Glacier Bay has a maritime climate, heavily influenced by ocean currents. The result is mild winter temperatures and cool summer temperatures near sea level. Summer visitors can expect highs between 50° and 60° degrees Fahrenheit (10–15 degrees Celsius). Winter temperatures rarely drop into the single digits, with average nighttime lows in the mid 20s and highs in the upper 30s.

Bartlett Cove receives about 70–75 inches of precipitation annually. You may find yourself thinking it's all coming down during your visit. April, May, and June are usually the driest months of the year, while September and October tend to be the wettest. All this moisture helps to create the lush temperate rainforests of the lower bay.

Keep in mind, these are weather conditions at sea level. Conditions are more severe up in the mountains, with colder temperatures and more precipitation that takes the form of snow. All that snow falling year after year goes into creating the glaciers we love to see.

What to Wear?

The weather in Glacier Bay can change quickly over the course of the day, especially if you are traveling into the bay. Dressing appropriately will enhance your trip by allowing you to stay out in the elements and make the most of wildlife and glacier viewing.

Wool and synthetic clothing such as fleece will keep you warm even if the clothes are damp. Cotton is not an ideal fabric choice. Always have rain gear with you. Remember, it's usually cooler on the water and near glaciers. Bring extra layers for warmth.

When you have clothes and gear to keep you dry and comfortable, you can appreciate the wonders of Glacier Bay no matter the weather!



Be prepared for wet and cold weather in Glacier Bay!

Hypothermia—Killer Cold

In the backcountry, good rain gear is a must. Staying dry will help you stay warm as wet clothing can wick away body heat and lead to hypothermia—the lowering of the body's core temperature. Hypothermia can kill if action is not taken to prevent further heat loss.

Prevention and early recognition are vital to safe camping. A victim of hypothermia may not realize his or her condition, and will often deny being cold or needing help.

Early Symptoms: Violent shivering, changes in mood or consciousness, irritability, cool, pale skin, slow or weak pulse, slow, shallow breathing.

Advanced Symptoms: Absence of shivering, unconsciousness.

Treatment: Provide shelter from cold, rain, wet ground, and wind. Replace wet clothing with dry synthetic clothing. Techniques to stay warm include:

- Wrap patient in space blanket, sleeping bag, or ground cloth.
- Wrap warm water bottles in cloth and place in the sleeping bag with patient.
- Provide close contact with another warm person.
- Build a fire.
- Feed patient sugars, carbohydrates, or sweet warm drinks.
- Keep patient awake.

DO NOT: Give alcohol, rub or massage the affected area, or expose to excessive heat.



Twice a day, an amazing world is exposed by the changing tides. The intertidal zone is full of life uniquely adapted to this area between high and low tide.

Tides

The tidal fluctuations in Glacier Bay can be as high as 25 feet. This means that one moment you may be standing on the beach looking at mud flats stretching out for 100 yards and hours later the water is lapping at your toes. Or worse: one minute you've pulled your kayak up on shore so you can enjoy lunch, but you wake up 30 minutes later from your post-lunch nap to see your kayak floating away.

You hardly need to spend more than six hours in Bartlett Cove to realize that there is something interesting going on with the tides.

Tides result from the gravitational pull between the sun and the moon, and their relationship to the Earth. As these three celestial bodies are constantly in motion, the amount of gravitational

pull varies, and the tide levels change. Since the moon is closer, it has the strongest influence on the tides. Its gravitational attraction causes the water surrounding the Earth to bulge. It bulges on the side closest to the moon due to gravitational pull.

There are usually two high and two low tides daily on the West Coast. The times for highs and lows shift about 50 minutes later on subsequent days. This means if high tide is at 9:00 a.m. one day, it will be high at about 9:50 a.m. the next day, around 10:40 a.m. the next, and so on.

Local conditions, such as topography, also influence the tides and the currents they generate. The entrance to Glacier Bay is narrow, yet a great deal of water must rush through that opening twice daily, creating currents in Sitakaday Narrows as strong as seven knots.

To see this incredible force in action, walk down to the water's edge about three hours after high or low tide. Fix your gaze on a shell or a piece of seaweed and watch how its proximity to the water's edge changes in just minutes. Be sure to keep that in mind when you decide to enjoy an after-lunch nap on your next paddling adventure.



This huge iceberg was stranded on the beach by the outgoing tide.

Camping



Beardslee Islands provide a beautiful backdrop for any campsite.

Take Care of Your Park

By practicing Leave No Trace Principles we help to ensure that future generations can enjoy Glacier Bay in the same condition as it is today.

Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Have the appropriate charts, maps, and navigation tools.
- Allow time for a thorough camper orientation prior to obtaining your permit.
- Be familiar with park regulations and unique concerns for the area.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Do not camp within 100 feet of a stream or lake.
- Leave your campsite as natural as you found it.
- A good campsite is FOUND and not MADE.

Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in—pack it out.
- Keep all trash in a bear canister.
- Deposit human waste either in a hole dug at least six inches deep in a location at least 100 feet from any freshwater source or in the intertidal zone (below high tide line), allowing the tide to remove the human waste.
- Toilet paper must be burned or carried out.

Leave What You Find

- Unoccupied shells and berries or fruits may be collected for personal use or consumption.
- Collection of rocks, flowers, bones, or other artifacts is not allowed.
- For lasting memories, take pictures or make sketches.

Minimize Your Campfire

- Avoid the need for a campfire. Use a cook stove.
- Campfires are permitted below the high tide line. Break up any campfire rings before leaving the site.
- Burn only dead and downed wood. Do not burn interglacial wood, which comes from the exposed remnants of ancient forests found on certain beaches within the bay. Ask a ranger for details.

Be Considerate of Others

- Avoid camping near other parties.
- Keep your camp and activities as inconspicuous as possible.
- Groups larger than 12 are not allowed.

Respect Wildlife

- Choose a campsite that shows few signs of wildlife.
- Watch carefully for and avoid ground nesting birds.
- Cook and eat in the intertidal zone at least 100 yards from your campsite.
- Never leave food unattended.
- Store all food and scented items in a bear canister in brush or behind rocks at least 100 yards from camp, not in your boat or kayak.

Don't Forget to Check In!

If you fail to check in at the VIS, rangers will begin a search the day after your scheduled return, starting with the areas indicated on your permit.



Backcountry camping allows visitors to discover the wilderness of Glacier Bay.

In the Backcountry

A free permit is required between May 1 and September 30. Certain parts of the bay are closed to campers, either permanently or temporarily, due to animal activity or resource protection. Ask a ranger at your camper orientation about any current advisories.

Park Campground

A free, walk-in tent campground is located at Bartlett Cove. You must register for a site at the VIS. Wheelbarrows are available to help haul gear between the VIS, dock, and campground. Drinking water is available near the VIS. Please observe the following:

- Store all food, trash, and scented items in the caches provided in the campground.
- Cook, prepare, and eat food only in the intertidal zone next to the campground. Never eat or cook in the campground or warming shelter.
- Dispose of trash and recyclables in appropriate bins near the VIS.
- Fires are permitted only in the designated campground beach fire ring.



Tent sites in the walk-in campground are located in the temperate rainforest.

Arriving on the Ferry

The Alaska Marine Highway ferry system provides service from Juneau intermittently through the year.

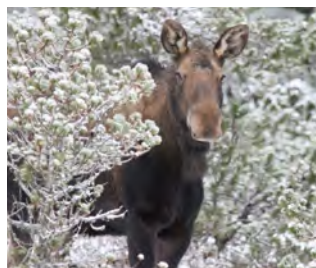
Although this option affords both visitors and residents many new opportunities to travel with a personal vehicle, you may not find all the services and amenities one might expect in other road-linked Alaska communities. If arriving with a vehicle be aware that:

- Glacier Bay National Park is essentially roadless. Bartlett Cove is accessible by vehicle from Gustavus, but all other areas may only be reached on foot, by boat, or by small aircraft.
- National Park facilities in Bartlett Cove were not designed to accommodate visitors with private vehicles, and parking may be limited.
- There is one primitive campground in the park. It is accessible on foot only.
- There are no RV facilities (sites/dump station/hookups/etc.) or vehicle camping areas within the park. Camping is not permitted in parking areas or along the park road. RV facilities may be available in the town of Gustavus.
- For the latest updates on park facilities call 907-697-2230 or visit www.nps.gov/glba
- There are various lodging and other services available in Gustavus. For more specific information please contact the Gustavus Visitors Association at www.gustavusak.com.

Wildlife

When the ice retreated in Glacier Bay, it left behind a scoured landscape of rocks and a deep valley filled with ocean water. In time, plants returned to the seemingly sterile land. Eventually, animals returned to the land and waters. Today, a wide diversity of life calls Glacier Bay home. As you explore Glacier Bay, keep your eye out for some of these more frequently seen members of the community. As you admire Glacier Bay's wildlife, be respectful of the animals' home.

By Land



Moose

Alces alces

The largest member of the deer family is a recent newcomer to Glacier Bay. The first moose was spotted here in the late 1960s.

Despite their tremendous size (bulls can weigh 1,600 pounds and cows 1,300 pounds), they can appear and disappear in thick brush with surprising stealth. Moose are usually solitary, except for cows with calves and during the fall rutting season. Their diet includes willow leaves, grasses, herbs, and aquatic vegetation. Only bulls grow antlers.

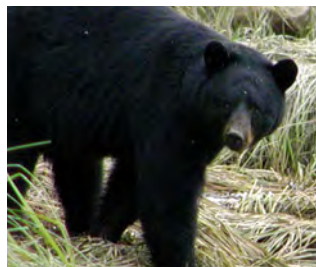


Mountain Goat

Oreamnos americanus

Mountain goats have thick white coats of hollow hairs that help to keep them warm in extreme weather. Goats may have been among the first land animals to

recolonize Glacier Bay after the ice retreated, coming over the mountains from Lynn Canal to the east. They are at home on the steep rocky cliffs in the mid-to-upper bay.



Black Bear

Ursus americanus

Black bears inhabit the forests of the lower bay and Bartlett Cove and can often be seen grazing in the beach meadows. They have a straight facial profile

and prominent ears. Black bears lack the distinctive shoulder hump of brown bears. Black bears stand about three feet high at the shoulder and weigh 125 to more than 300 pounds. Though they are often black, they may be brown, blonde, or even blue-gray.



Porcupine

Erethizon dorsatum

You may find this prickly member of the community high up in a cottonwood tree nibbling tasty tender leaves. Except for their footpads and nose,

porcupines are completely covered with yellowish fur and quills, which are actually modified hairs tipped with barbs. A threatened porcupine will turn its back-end toward the source of trouble to present an intimidating display of quills that firmly suggests the would-be predator reconsider its dinner plans.



Red Squirrel

Tamiasciurus hudsonicus

If you see a little red flash zipping up a tree trunk or leaping nimbly among the branches, chances are it is a red squirrel. These agile rodents spend their summer

preparing for winter by collecting and storing green spruce cones in their middens, mounds of cones at the base of a tree. A red squirrel can harvest 12,000 to 16,000 spruce cones a year.



Brown Bear

Ursus arctos

Brown bears are most often seen on the beaches or sparsely vegetated hillsides of the upper bay. Though they are present throughout the park. Brown bears,

also called grizzlies, have a prominent shoulder hump and a curved, "dish-shaped" facial profile. When on all four legs, brown bears stand about three and a half feet tall, but can tower more than nine feet when standing upright. They can weigh between 500–1,000 pounds and range in color from honey blonde to dark brown and black.

By Sea



Humpback Whale

Megaptera novaeangliae

Of all the whale species, humpbacks are the favorite of whale watchers, as they exhibit a variety of displays such as breaching (leaping out of the water) or slapping

the ocean surface with their pectoral flippers or their tails. Humpback whales are most easily spotted by their blow. This distinctive mist occurs when whales exhale warm air into colder air. Though they are extremely large animals, most observers of this whale see only the dorsal fin when they come to the surface to breathe air.



Harbor Seal

Phoca vitulina richardsi

Harbor seals have a dappled gray coat that can be highly variable between individuals. A thick layer of fat allows them to keep warm in icy fjords like

Glacier Bay. The majority of harbor seals in Glacier Bay occur in Johns Hopkins Inlet, a spectacular tidewater glacier fjord that supports up to 2,000 seals where the habitat supports pupping, molting, and resting.



Steller Sea Lion

Eumetopias jubatus

Like all members of the eared seal family *Otariidae*, Steller sea lions can support themselves while ashore using both front and rear flippers, allowing them to

get around with surprising speed. Mature males can weigh almost 2,000 pounds, though females average only 600 pounds. The number of sea lions is growing in Glacier Bay, but the population in Western Alaska has decreased by 80 percent since the late-1970s—leading that stock to being listing as endangered. Steller sea lions are opportunistic foragers.

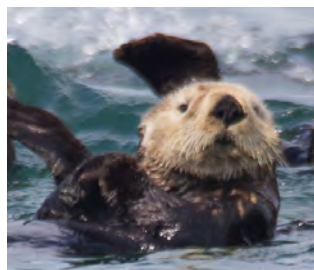


Killer Whale

Orcinus orca

Often called orcas, killer whales are the largest member of the dolphin family. With striking black and white coloration, killer whales are easy to

identify from other cetaceans. Male killer whales can attain lengths of 32 feet and weigh up to 9 tons. Females are much smaller, reaching 23 feet and weighing about 4 tons. Males have a tall, straight triangle dorsal fin, while female dorsal fins are curved and shorter. Orcas may be observed throughout Glacier Bay, alone or in pods.



Sea Otter

Enhydra lutris

Sea otters have expanded from just a few animals in the mid-1980s to around 8,000 in the last thirty plus years in Glacier Bay. Lacking a thick layer of blubber,

otters instead have the densest fur of any mammal with up to one million hairs per square inch. Sea otters are a keystone species that influence nearshore foodwebs and forage on a wide variety of prey.



Harbor Porpoise

Phocoena phocoena

At five feet long and about 120 pounds, harbor porpoise are the smallest cetaceans in Alaska waters. Often seen in groups of two to ten throughout the bay, they

announce themselves by offering a brief glimpse of their small triangular dorsal fin cutting slowly through the water's surface when they come up to catch a breath. Harbor porpoise are generally dark gray. They do not ride bow waves, like their relative the Dall's porpoise.

Wildlife

Be Bear Savvy

While walking, hiking, or camping in Glacier Bay, you may encounter a bear. The vast majority of these encounters do not result in human injury or property damage. You can help prevent injury to yourself or to the bear by taking a few basic precautions.

- Be alert.
- If you carry bear spray, know how to use it.
- Be aware of what goes on around your campsite.
- Make noise and travel in groups of two or more.
- Choose routes that offer good visibility.
- Keep your personal items and food within reach.
- Avoid streams with spawning fish.

Stay Moose Aware

Moose cause more injuries per year than bears. It's important to be aware of moose behavior to stay safe.

- Moose aren't inherently aggressive, but will defend themselves if they perceive a threat.
- Give moose ample room, speak to them calmly.
- Unlike bears, it is OK to run from a charging moose. Try to put an obstacle (tree, rock, etc.) between yourself and the charging moose.
- If a Moose's ears are laid back or hackles are up it might be agitated by your presence.



Fishing the Bartlett River

- Harvested fish must be kept within 6 ft.
- All harvested fish must be packed out whole, except for gills and entrails which should be disposed of in the deepest and fastest current of the stream.
- If a bear approaches while you have a fish on the line, cut the line.
- Never yield your catch or other food items to a bear or other wildlife.



Mother bears are protective of their cubs.

Be a Smart Camper

Both campers and bears frequent the beaches of Glacier Bay. Bears only have six to eight months to acquire the calories and fat reserves needed for the entire year, and the shoreline is essential for food and travel. The following guidelines will minimize your disruption of bears and help keep them wild.

Cooking and storing food

- Cook and eat in the intertidal zone at least 100 yards from your tent and food storage area.
- Wash cooking gear in marine waters.
- Be prepared to quickly stow all food should a bear suddenly approach.
- Keep all food, trash, and other scented items in a bear-resistant food container (BRFC).
- At night, store BRFCs and clean cooking gear in brush or behind rocks away from animal trails, 100 yards from camp, and not in your kayak.

Choosing a campsite

- Avoid areas with recent signs of bear activity, including an abundance of scat, animal trails, and chewed or clawed trees.
- Avoid active salmon streams.
- Store your kayak and pitch your tent clear of the beach.
- Select a site that would allow bears room to pass at high tide.

Control your gear

- Maintain a clear view of your gear. The more spread out your gear is, the more difficult it is to defend.
- To minimize potential bear damage to gear, consider breaking down your campsite daily.

When encountering humans, most bears will run away, approach curiously, appear to ignore the situation, or act defensively. By staying alert, calm, and tailoring your reaction to the bear's behavior and species, you increase the odds of a positive outcome for both you and the bear.



If You See a Bear

If the Bear	What You Can Do	
May or may not be aware of you	<p><i>What is your activity and degree of mobility?</i></p> <p><i>You are hiking or kayaking (mobile):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change your course to avoid bear. • Monitor bear's movement. • If bear is close, talk calmly to avoid surprising it. 	<p><i>You are camping or eating (not mobile):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep all gear under direct control. • Group together without blocking bear's route. • Talk calmly to make bear aware of you. • Stand your ground.
Moves toward you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor bear's movement. • Stand your ground and talk calmly. • Allow bear to pass peacefully. 	
Becomes focused on you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay together and stand your ground. • Be assertive and elevate your defense: clap your hands, wave your arms, use noisemakers such as air horns, or bang pots together. 	
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to stand your ground and look big. • Use bear spray if you have it. • Few charges end in contact. 	
Makes intentional contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is likely a predatory attack. • If a brown bear: play dead—lie flat and cover your head. If a black bear: fight back. 	
Enters your tent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fight back. 	

If You Surprise a Bear

The Bear	What You Can Do
May react defensively and may snort, huff, pop its jaw, or charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand your ground and talk calmly to the bear. • Attempt to back away slowly. • Do NOT run, this could trigger a predatory response.
Begins to follow you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand your ground.
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use bear spray.
Is a brown bear and makes contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play dead—lie flat, face down on the ground, and lace your fingers behind your head. Do not move.
Is a black bear and makes contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fight back vigorously. • This is likely a predatory attack.



Biologists recognize individual whales by photographing the black and white patterns on the underside of their tails. These patterns remain the same throughout the whale's lifetime.

Glacier Bay Is Home for Humpback Whales

Seeing a humpback whale in Glacier Bay is a highlight for many visitors. Humpbacks are huge: 40–50 feet (12–16 m) long—the size of an average school bus—and weigh over 35 tons (32,000 kg). Most Southeast Alaska humpbacks migrate to Hawaii each winter to mate and give birth, a 2,500-mile (4,000 km) journey that takes about a month. Throughout the winter, humpbacks do not eat. During the spring, summer, and fall, whales feed on high-calorie, small schooling fish such as capelin and sand lance. Biologists have identified over 800 individual humpbacks in Glacier Bay and nearby Icy Strait since the 1970s, including some with sighting histories spanning 49 years.

Humpback whale populations worldwide increased steadily after commercial whaling ceased in the 1960s. Whales thrived and, as a result, the Hawaii breeding population of humpback whales was removed from the Endangered Species List in 2016. However, unusually warm water in the Northeast Pacific Ocean in 2014–2016 (commonly referred to as a marine heatwave or “The Blob”) caused widespread disruption of the marine ecosystem, including declines in the humpback whale population. From 2013–2018, Glacier Bay’s whale monitoring program documented a 58% drop in whale numbers, along with very few calves and

many malnourished whales. Some whales that had returned to the area for decades either changed their summer migratory pattern or died. Scientists have since discovered that the heatwave caused significant changes in the quantity and quality of food available to marine predators like whales. The good news is that in 2019, whale counts and calving started to bounce back. However, as of 2022, the number of whales remains about 30% lower than before the heatwave. Glacier Bay’s whale researchers will continue to monitor the population and share information to protect these magnificent creatures.

Read annual humpback whale population study reports at https://www.nps.gov/glba/learn/nature/whale_acoustic_reports.htm.



Biologists have monitored humpback whales in Glacier Bay for over 35 years.

Whale Watching

To minimize disturbance to humpback whales, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve has developed some of the most protective boating rules visitors will find anywhere. Because the park's mission is to protect and preserve these magnificent creatures, we maintain strict operating and speed restrictions to reduce the risk of disturbance and collision.

Rules for All National Park Waters

All vessels, including kayaks, must not:

- Operate within $\frac{1}{4}$ nautical mile of a humpback whale.
- Pursue a humpback whale within $\frac{1}{2}$ nautical mile by altering course or speed in a manner that results in decreasing the distance between the whale and the vessel.

Whale Waters

These are special areas in Glacier Bay that require additional speed and operating restrictions. These critical areas change depending on current whale activity in the bay. See Guide to Park Waters on page 20 for areas and dates that regulations are in effect and check at the VIS for additional temporary restrictions before setting out.

Rules for Lower Glacier Bay Whale Waters (May 15–Sept 30)

All vessels must operate within speed restrictions. Motorized vessels over 18 feet in length must:

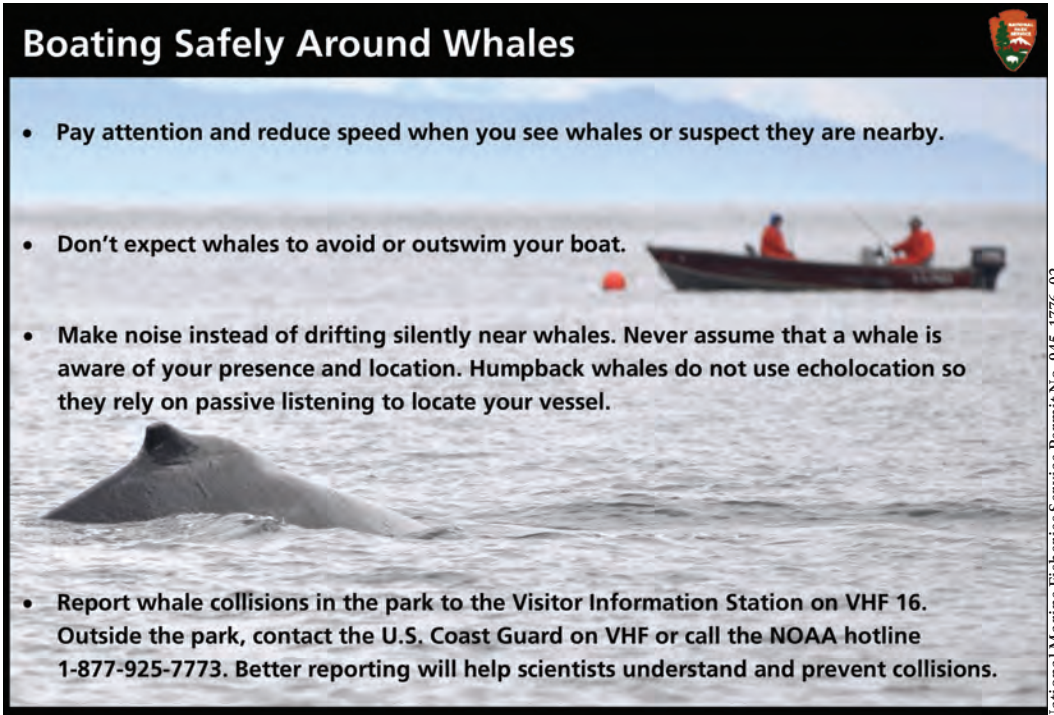
- Maintain a distance of at least one nautical mile from shore. In narrower areas, navigate a mid-channel course (unless fishing or operating solely under sail).
- Approach land or shore perpendicularly, taking the most direct line to and from shore.
- Watch for additional whale waters designations in other areas. Check at the VIS for current whale waters boundaries and regulations.

What do you do if a whale suddenly appears in front of you?

If your vessel is accidentally positioned within $\frac{1}{4}$ nautical mile of a humpback whale, immediately slow your vessel to ten knots or less. Don't shift into reverse unless impact is likely. Then, carefully direct or maintain your course away from the whale until at least $\frac{1}{4}$ nautical mile separation exists.

Boating Safely Around Whales

- Pay attention and reduce speed when you see whales or suspect they are nearby.
- Don't expect whales to avoid or outswim your boat.
- Make noise instead of drifting silently near whales. Never assume that a whale is aware of your presence and location. Humpback whales do not use echolocation so they rely on passive listening to locate your vessel.
- Report whale collisions in the park to the Visitor Information Station on VHF 16. Outside the park, contact the U.S. Coast Guard on VHF or call the NOAA hotline 1-877-925-7773. Better reporting will help scientists understand and prevent collisions.



Protect Wildlife

Life's No Picnic

You are picnicking on an idyllic beach when a boat roars up out of nowhere. It stops just offshore from you. Its wake washes the beach, taking away your lunch. People on the boat laugh and talk loudly. Camera flashes explode. You drop your food and dash off into the bushes, anything to get away.

You have just experienced what happens to wildlife when thoughtlessly approached by humans. The effects can be devastating. Steller sea lions tumble over one another as they stampede into the water, female harbor seals lose their newborn pups among the ice floes when they become separated. Breeding birds flushed from nests leave eggs vulnerable to cooler temperatures and predators.

To reduce disturbance to wildlife and protect sensitive areas, the park has regulations that define the minimum distances you must keep from animals in Glacier Bay. Be aware of closures (see map on pages 20–21). In all situations, be aware and respectful. Remember that even if you maintain a legal distance, if an animal changes its behavior due to your presence, you are too close.

As you admire Glacier Bay's wildlife, keep in mind that every day they struggle to find what they need to eat, reproduce, protect their young, and prepare for winter as they avoid becoming food for others. Indeed, life is no picnic for the wildlife of Glacier Bay.

Harbor Seals

Harbor seal numbers have declined in Glacier Bay over the past 20 years. Help protect seals by travelling slowly and watching for them in the water and on icebergs. Seals can be disturbed by boats even at a

great distance. In Johns Hopkins Inlet you must stay at least $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away from seals on ice.

Steller Sea Lions

Although numbers have increased here over the past 20 years, some in Glacier Bay are from the endangered Western stock. Stay at least 100 yards away from sea lions on land, and keep your distance from those in the water, too.

Nesting Birds

Many birds nest on the ground and are extremely vulnerable to disturbance! If a bird dive-bombs or makes repeated alarm calls, you are close to a nest. Watch your step to avoid crushing eggs or chicks, and move away to avoid disturbing the parents guarding the nest. You must stay at least 100 yards away from nesting seabird colonies, and several islands are closed to foot traffic (see map on pages 20–21).

Humpback Whales

Whales can be startled by boats, even bumping or capsizing them. For your safety and to avoid disturbance, regulations require that you stay at least $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away from whales. Whales can move surprisingly fast, so if one surfaces near you, it is recommended to make some noise by knocking on your boat.

Black and Brown Bears

All of Glacier Bay is bear country! Bears may appear anywhere at any time. Enjoy bear viewing from a safe and respectful distance. Even in your kayak, don't approach swimming bears or bears on shore.



Black oystercatchers nest on rocky beaches. Keep your distance!

For Teachers



Utilizing video connectivity, park rangers bring Glacier Bay to classrooms worldwide!

Take Your Class on a Trip to Glacier Bay

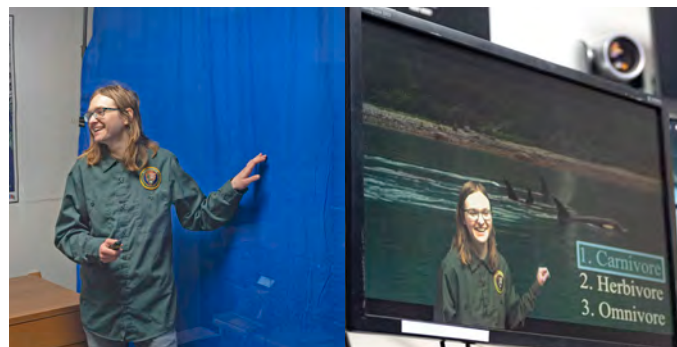
Last year, hundreds of students and teachers visited Glacier Bay National Park in the heart of winter without ever leaving their schools. Kindergartners spotted bears and sea otters, fourth graders catalogued humpback whale behaviors, and high school students explored the wide range of careers with the National Park Service. These students all visited Glacier Bay virtually, using videoconferencing equipment to connect Glacier Bay rangers to classrooms across the country.

Glacier Bay offers a variety of interactive, curriculum-based distance learning programs. Programs cover a variety of Glacier Bay topics and are grade appropriate. All programs encourage students to ask questions and interact with a park ranger. Sometimes students even earn a Junior Ranger sticker!

Distance learning programs are offered in the winter months. Programs are free and registration starts on October 1 each year. To register for a program or receive more information, email the Glacier Bay Education Team at glba_education@nps.gov. You

can also visit the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) website at www.cilc.org. Search for programs offered by Glacier Bay and click “Request this Program Now.” Additionally, teachers may register for programs by phone at 907-697-2573.

For a list of programs and ranger contact information, visit www.nps.gov/glba and look at the “For Teachers” section and then click the “Distance Learning” tab. We look forward to connecting to your class!



Ranger Dana connects with students virtually.


For Kids




Ask a ranger about family-friendly activities in Bartlett Cove and check the schedule for our summer activities.

Kids Love Glacier Bay

Are you ready to begin your Junior Ranger adventure? If you are between the ages of two and 200, you may want to become a Junior Ranger during your visit. There are two ways to pick up your Junior Ranger Activity Booklet.

 If you came by plane or boat to Bartlett Cove, stop by the NPS Visitor Center on the second floor of the Glacier Bay Lodge or the VIS.

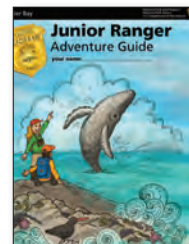
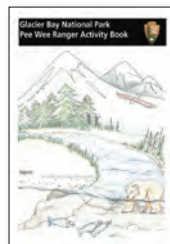
 If you are on a tour boat or cruise ship, meet with the ranger on board.



The National Park Service extends a special invitation for 4th graders to visit a National Park. Thank you for visiting Glacier Bay!

everykidoutdoors.gov

Glacier Bay offers two different booklets, depending on your age:



For children between the ages of 2–6, we have the *PeeWee Ranger Adventure Guide*.

For children between the ages of 6–12, pick up the *Junior Ranger Adventure Guide*.

Final Steps

When you have completed the activities, bring your booklet to a ranger, and you will be awarded a special badge that makes you a Glacier Bay National Park Junior Ranger.



Stay Connected

As Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve's official nonprofit education and fundraising partner, Alaska Geographic connects people with Alaska's public lands through the creation and delivery of exceptional educational products and programs. Alaska Geographic supports youth camps and expeditions, mentorship, stewardship projects, and adult field courses. Together with public land partners, Alaska Geographic is dedicated to sharing Alaska's rich natural and cultural heritage.

Alaska Geographic operates stores across the state, including several locations in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. A portion of every purchase made at an Alaska Geographic store stays in this park to fund educational and interpretive programs and projects, such as the printing of this visitor guide. In 2025, we've granted over \$120,000 to Glacier Bay!

Since 1959, Alaska Geographic has donated more than \$24 million to Alaska's public lands. Your purchases, donations, and membership directly support education, science, and research and help protect these special places. Learn more about supporting our mission at:

akgeo.org



Pins, patches, hats, and other products featuring this unique Glacier Bay design are available exclusively from Alaska Geographic.

To Learn More

Visit the Alaska Geographic Park Store at the park Visitor Center and Information Station in Bartlett Cove to find the best books, maps, films, and gifts related to the natural and cultural history of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve.



Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve

Meet the bold explorers who trekked glacier and waterways, scientists who study incredible landscapes, and the Huna Lingít who have lived in Glacier Bay since time immemorial. 60 pages.



Glacier Bay Folding Guide

Glacier Bay, a top wilderness area, features vast intact ecosystems shaped by nature. This laminated, pocket-sized guide - made with Alaska Geographic - highlights 140+ local species and includes a regional map. Durable and lightweight, it's perfect for field use. *Made in the USA.*



Glacier Bay Logo T-Shirt

Remember your time in Glacier Bay for years to come! This short sleeve t-shirt is made from recycled materials and features the park logo. Sizes available range from S - 3XL. *Pricing varies by size.*



Glacier Bay Flash Drive

Over 300 photos

Create your own wildlife, glacier, and wilderness scrapbook by downloading exquisite, high-resolution photos taken in the park by local photographers. Informative captions accompany each photo.




Scan to visit the Alaska Geographic web store!





For More Information

Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
PO Box 140
Gustavus, AK 99826
907-697-2230
glba_administration@nps.gov

 facebook.com/GlacierBayNationalPark
 twitter.com/GlacierBayNPS
 instagram.com/GlacierBayNPS

www.nps.gov/glba
scan me!



Emergency & Medical

Emergency Inside the Park

907-697-2651
Radio on marine band 16.
There is no cell service in Glacier Bay.
Local-use phone available at Visitor
Information Station.

Emergency Outside the Park

Gustavus Emergency Response
Dial 911 *Note your location to operator

Other Medical Assistance

Gustavus Community Clinic
28 Dock Street, Gustavus, AK 99826
907-697-3008