

# Acadia National Park

A Reading A-Z Level O Leveled Book  
Word Count: 684

LEVELED BOOK • O

## Connections

### Writing

The author says, "If you ever get the chance to visit, do!" Use details from the book to write about three things you would like to see during a visit to Acadia.

### Science and Art

Choose one animal that lives in Acadia National Park. Find five facts about it. Make a trading card about the animal using the information you learned.

# ACADIA *National Park*

Reading A-Z

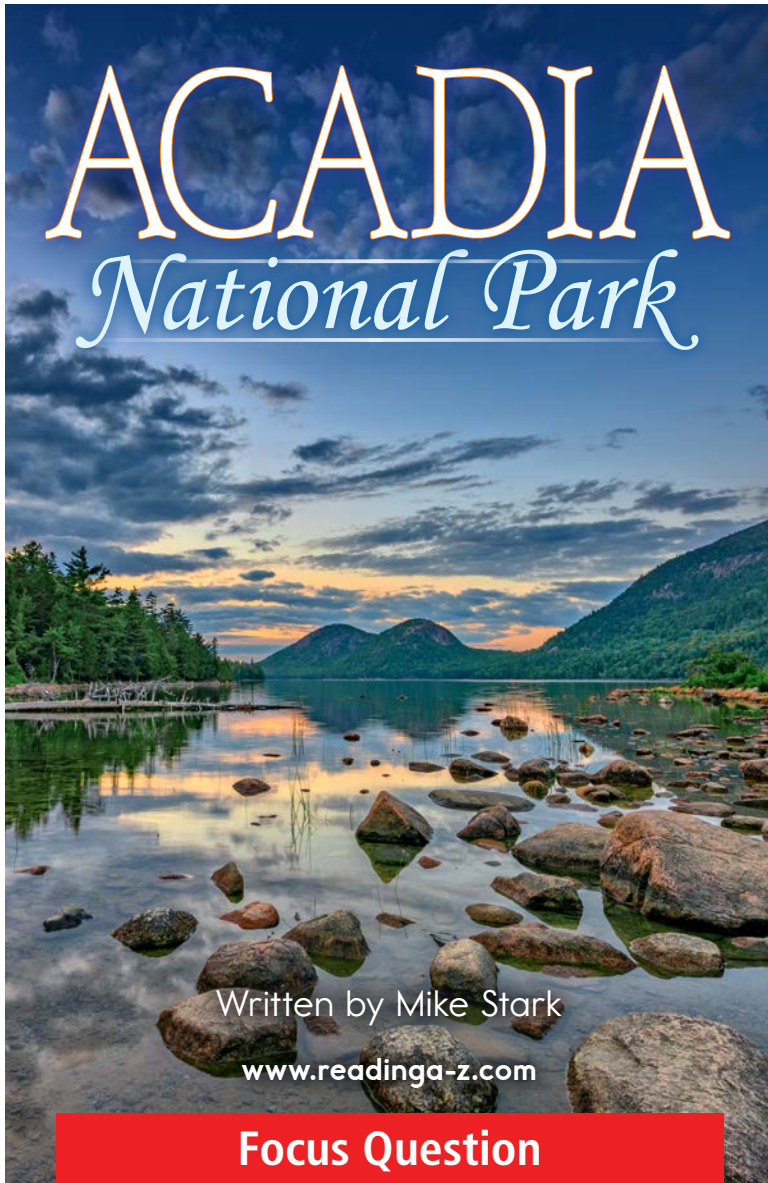
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**Multi  
level  
1•L•0**





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### Focus Question

Where is Acadia National Park,  
 and what can you see there?

### Words to Know

donate	preserve
limits	raptors
mammals	tides
migrate	variety
national park	

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#### Correlation

##### LEVEL O

Fountas & Pinnell	M
Reading Recovery	20
DRA	28



### First to See the Sun

Acadia **National Park** is one of the first places in the United States to see the Sun rise. Look on a map and you'll understand why.

Maine stretches farther east than any of the other forty-nine states. Acadia sits on Maine's eastern edge, facing out into the Atlantic Ocean.

The park is less than 50,000 acres (202 sq km). Compared to many national parks, that's small. Still, the bits and pieces that make up Acadia make for a beautiful park.

### Table of Contents

First to See the Sun . . . . .	4
Land That Meets the Sea . . . . .	5
Wildlife . . . . .	9
A Park Made Piece by Piece . . . . .	12
Conclusion . . . . .	15
Glossary . . . . .	16



## Land That Meets the Sea

Today, Acadia is one of the most popular national parks in the United States. More than two million people visit each year. The park includes beautiful coastline, islands, forests, lakes, mountains, and rocks. It packs a lot of **variety** into a small space.



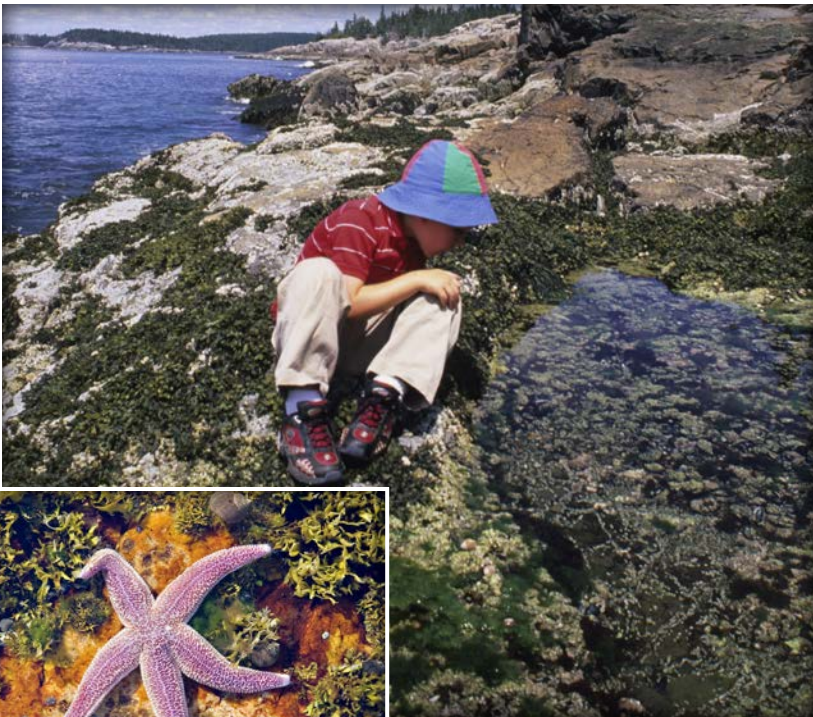
Acadia's water, rocks, and vibrant fall colors make for a lovely combination.

The largest part of Acadia National Park is on Mount Desert Island. More than twenty mountains rise from the sea here. At 1,530 feet (466 m), Cadillac Mountain is the tallest. Because of its early sunrise and amazing view, it's also the most crowded.



From the summit of Cadillac Mountain, people watch cloud cover roll over Bar Island.





A boy examines an Acadia tide pool (main). A starfish, or sea star, rests in a tide pool (inset).

Acadia has more than 40 miles (64 km) of coastline. Because Acadia's coast is young, sandy shores are rare. Waves shift around what sand there is, along with rocks and other material.

During low **tides**, the ocean leaves behind pools of water. Inside these pools live sea stars, sea cucumbers, hot pink seaweed, and other living things.

Tide pools come and go—after all, they are created by tides, which also come and go. Acadia's tide can rise and fall 12 feet (4 m) during a day. It's best to visit tide pools when the tide is going out. You'll have more time to explore them.



When the tide is in, some beaches disappear completely! Tide pools return when the tide goes out.





The American kestrel is the smallest falcon in North America—and in Acadia.

## Wildlife

Acadia is one of the best bird-watching spots in the country—338 kinds of birds have been sighted there. Each autumn, strong winds push thousands of **raptors** south as they **migrate** from Canada to warmer areas for the winter. Cadillac Mountain offers a close look as these hawks and kestrels fly overhead.



This peregrine chick has just been banded by a park wildlife biologist. Leg bands mark birds so that biologists can study what they do and where they go. Birds banded at Acadia have been seen in several states and Canada.

## Return of the Falcon

Peregrine falcons are one of the fastest animals on Earth. Long ago, they nested on Acadia's Mount Desert Island. Their speed didn't save them from humans, though, whose activities killed many of them. By the 1960s, peregrine falcons had disappeared from Acadia.

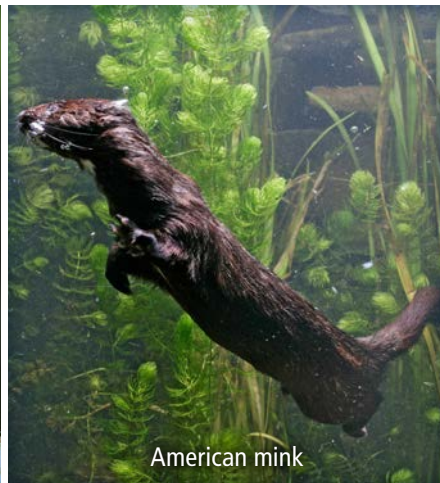
In 1973, the park began efforts to bring the falcons back. Since 1991, falcon chicks have been born in the park every year.



baby foxes



porcupine



American mink

Other parts of Maine have lots of black bears and moose. Acadia has a few of these, but it mostly has smaller **mammals**, such as foxes, mink, and porcupine. Why small? Because Acadia is not a big park, and that **limits** the size of animals found there.

## A Park Made Piece by Piece

The most amazing fact about Acadia may be that it became a national park at all.

In the western United States, most national parks were created from public land. That's land that belongs to the government—and, in a sense, to every American. For example, when the government decided to create its first national park—Yellowstone, in 1872—it already owned the land. By the early 1900s, the West already had a number of national parks.

Acadia is the first national park east of the Mississippi River, though, and in the East, things were different. Settlers had been there longer. Much of the East was divided into little pieces and owned by separate people. The coast of Maine was no exception.



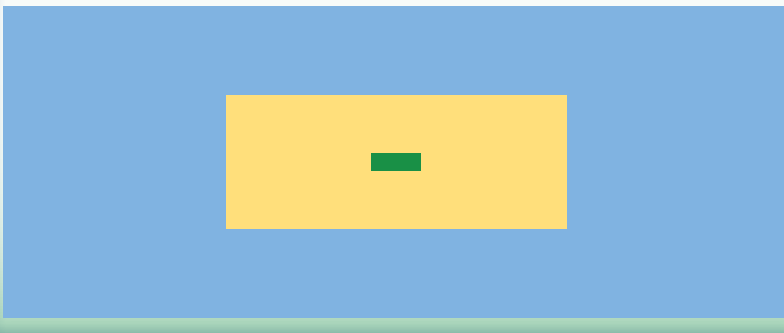
After Maine became a state in 1820, more and more people discovered the beauty of its rocky coastline. First, farmers and fishermen came, then painters. By the 1880s, rich people from big, Eastern cities began showing up, wanting to breathe fresh summer air. They bought up land and built fancy summer homes.

### Big Park, Little Park

Wrangell-St. Elias in Alaska is the biggest national park in the United States. Yellowstone is the oldest. Unlike Acadia, neither of these areas had many property owners before they became national parks. It's easier to set aside land when nobody owns it.

Compare the sizes of these three national parks. Think how many Acadias would fit inside of Wrangell-St. Elias!

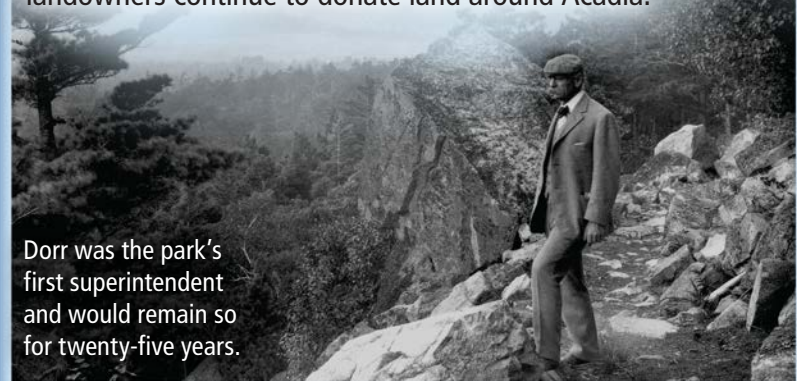
 <b>Wrangell-St. Elias:</b>	 <b>Yellowstone:</b>	 <b>Acadia:</b>
13,005 square miles (33,683 sq km)	3,468 square miles (8,983 sq km)	65 square miles (168 sq km)



By the early 1900s, a few rich landowners had the idea of buying land in order to *protect* it. One of these was George Dorr. He and others began to **donate** their bits of land to create a park that would **preserve** the area's beauty. By 1913 they had acquired 5,000 acres (20 sq km), which they gave to the government. Dorr continued to acquire property, and in 1919 all that land became a national park.

### The Story of Dorr

George Dorr lived alone in a grand house on Mount Desert Island. By the time he died in 1944, he had spent all his money buying land, then turning around and donating it. But Dorr had made his dream come true: Acadia had become a national park. After his death it kept growing, piece by piece, like a patchwork quilt. Even today, landowners continue to donate land around Acadia.



Dorr was the park's first superintendent and would remain so for twenty-five years.





Two young visitors walk on Sand Beach after a hike in Acadia.

## Conclusion

Acadia National Park is a place where sea and mountain meet. People come to see them meet, to breathe the salty air, and, of course, to watch the Sun rise. After greeting the new day, there is plenty more to see and do in Acadia. Visitors can hike, climb, fish, or ride a bicycle.

If you ever get the chance to visit, do!

## Glossary

- donate** (*v.*) to give as a gift to a fund or cause; to contribute (p. 14)
- limits** (*v.*) keeps within a certain area or amount (p. 11)
- mammals** (*n.*) warm-blooded animals with a backbone and hair or fur that nurse their young and have babies that are born live (p. 11)
- migrate** (*v.*) to move from one habitat or region to another at a certain time each year (p. 9)
- national park** (*n.*) an area of government-owned land protected for its historic or natural importance (p. 4)
- preserve** (*v.*) to protect for the future (p. 14)
- raptors** (*n.*) birds that hunt and feed on small animals (p. 9)
- tides** (*n.*) the continual rise and fall of the ocean produced by the gravity of the Moon and Sun (p. 6)
- variety** (*n.*) an assortment of different things (p. 5)