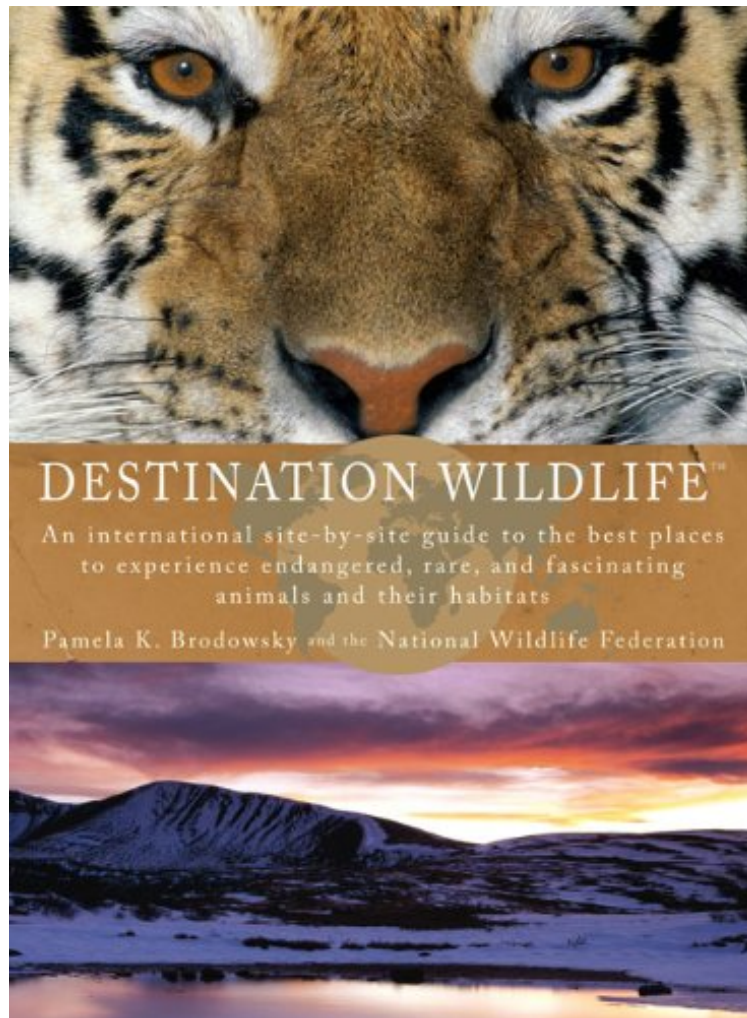


(Download) Destination Wildlife: An International Site-by-Site Guide to the Best Places to Experience Endangered, Rare, and Fascinating Animals and Their Habitats

Destination Wildlife: An International Site-by-Site Guide to the Best Places to Experience Endangered, Rare, and Fascinating Animals and Their Habitats

*Pamela K. Brodowsky, National Wildlife Federation
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Pamela K. Brodowsky, National Wildlife Federation : Destination Wildlife: An International Site-by-Site Guide to the Best Places to Experience Endangered, Rare, and Fascinating Animals and Their Habitats before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Destination Wildlife: An International Site-by-Site Guide to the Best Places to Experience Endangered, Rare, and Fascinating Animals and Their Habitats:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Great for planning your next trip - missing a few important places
By Arnold
I bought this book recently because I have some vacation and wanted to see some wildlife I had never seen before. This book is great for getting a sense of the wildlife opportunities on each continent. It lists several wildlife destinations for each continent and provides a brief description of the park and types of animals that people might get to see there. It also provides helpful information regarding the best times of year to visit, contacts, cost estimates, and a few field tips. It certainly helped me narrow my upcoming trip to Africa down to Kenya and Rwanda. I gave this book four instead of five stars because it is missing a few very important places. I understand Brodowsky had to make some judgment calls in deciding which locations to include. However, she doesn't even include the entire continent of Antarctica. I went to the Antarctic peninsula a few months ago and can attest that it is the greatest wildlife destination in the world - bar none. I saw thousands of penguins, seabirds, leopard seals, elephant seals, and kayaked 5 meters away from a Humpback! Furthermore, the book doesn't include Komodo or Rinca Islands, Indonesia, the only places in the world to see the amazing Komodo dragons. Without discussing these two locations alone, the book is simply incomplete, so I would warn readers not to rely on this book exclusively for choosing wildlife destinations. Fortunately, these can easily be added in a future updated volume. Another difficulty I had with the book is simply prioritization and organization. The book is organized by continent, which is great if you want to get an idea of locations in a certain region. However, I think many people planning a wildlife trip begin not with a geographic focus but rather intending to see some particular type of wildlife. For example, some people like birdwatching while others prefer snorkeling. It would have been helpful for the book either to organize the destinations by such activities, or to perhaps have a symbol on each destination for quick reference (for example, a bird next to the destination's title would quickly indicate that it is a top place for birdwatching). At the end of the day, the descriptions for each destination are short enough that readers can figure out pretty quickly whether or not they are interested in traveling there. However, some means of quick reference would have been helpful. Despite these issues, *Destination Wildlife* is a worthwhile investment for anybody planning their next wildlife adventure. It gives you a great sampling of the world's wildlife destinations (as long as you remember to consider Antarctica and Komodo).
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Good Starting Point for a Wildlife Vacation
By Deborah V
If you enjoy viewing and working with wildlife, this book will give you a good general overview of various places to visit and what you can see. Most of the entries are summarized on two brief pages, so doing additional research is a must! I thought the author missed a few really good parks in Africa (like Tsavo and some of the private parks in South Africa), skipped Mongolia, and did a disservice to the Pantanal's vast offerings, but all and all, I was able to put a dozen places on my "bucket list" to visit! Each entry includes a brief overview, specifics of the location, hours of operation, contact information, cost, amenities, best time to visit and field notes. The book is probably more value as an addition to an already planned trip rather than planning a trip around the entries as there isn't enough information about the locale to zero in on a spot for a long vacation (week or more).
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By leslie pearcenone

1,001 animals to see before they die. From the world's only multi-species primate sanctuary in South Africa, to the wild ponies of Assateague Island, to the Blue-Footed Boobies of the Galapagos Islands, *Destination Wildlife* provides all the information the intrepid traveler looking for the best wildlife experiences could need and rarely finds in other travel guides. Written from a visitor's perspective and informed by the National Wildlife Federation and other naturalists, each site in *Destination Wildlife* has been evaluated by real eco-travelers who have provided insider tips and suggestions that give the what, when, where, how and most important, the why of every site to maximize each wildlife experience.

About the Author
Pamela K. Brodowsky is a successful literary agent and co-author of *Barbaro: A Nations Love Story*, and *Two Minutes to Glory: The Official History of the Kentucky Derby*. She is a keen adventurer and self-confessed wildlife junkie constantly discovering new and exciting places to visit.
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For generously sharing their experiences, wisdom, and love for all things wild, special thanks goes to Joe Beck, William Ramroth Jr., Bill Jackson, Amanda Fallon, Lorraine Williams, Sarah Brodowsky, Jonathan Munro, P. J. Dempsey, Thomas Snitch, and Linda Holody. A very special thank-you goes to our editor and publisher John Duff. His acute attention to detail, his keen eye, and his sheer love for the animal kingdom, have clearly made this book what it is today. For our countless conversations, for taking time out of his own life . . . well beyond business hours, for all he has done and contributed, to him, our sincere gratitude. The writer is only the first in a series of many people who are involved in the making of a book. It takes the minds and hands of many to create, improve, and mold ones thoughts into what eventually grows from the labor of love of one person into the book you are reading today. With that said, the following behind the scenes people rightly deserve their due: Tiffany Estreicher, interior design; Benjamin Gibson, cover design; and Candace B. Levy, our copyeditor, to whom we are forever indebted. INTRODUCTION Destination Wildlife is a book for every eco-explorer, wildlife enthusiast, or armchair adventure traveler an international site-by-site guide to the best places to experience endangered, rare, and fascinating animals and their habitats on land, in the sea, and sometimes in the air. By necessity this collection is subjective and selective because there are simply too many animals (even of the rare and endangered sort) and too many places worthy of inclusion to fit into a single volume. But the criteria we used are clear: places that are wild and wonderful and that offer something truly distinctive and memorable. From trekking in search of gorillas in Parc National des Volcans (Volcanoes National Park) in Rwanda or camping among the wild pony herds of Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland to kayaking alongside the orcas off Alaskas Kenai Peninsula or listening to the howler monkeys in the Costa Rican rain forests, many of the experiences in this book will be familiar to readers but there are many that will be unknown because the opportunities for eco-travel are expanding constantly, even as many fragile places on earth are continuing to be threatened. This book is intended as a modest introduction to the world of eco-travel and as a guide to bring us face-to-face with the last of many species. But it is also intended to show how wildlife adventures can be respectful of the environment and the animals because many people view eco-travel with mixed feelings. Although tourists may draw attention to problem areas and contribute resources that directly or indirectly help underwrite conservation efforts, they may also be disturbing the natural settings that conservationists are trying so hard to preserve. This book pays particular attention to those sites that promote the least environmental impact while providing a thrilling educational and emotional experience. In fact, many of the sites featured in this book have been specifically established to study and to reintroduce species that have been threatened and to restore their decimated habitats. The earths animals are in a critical state due to encroachment by humans, poaching, the illegal pet trade, and habitat destruction. While heroic efforts are being taken on a global scale to save and preserve these animals and their environments for future generations, it is our hope that this book will contribute to the general awareness of such conditions everywhere and to encourage people to contribute by word and deed to the many conservation efforts already under way. Destination Wildlife has been very much a collaborative effort with contributions from fellow travelers, naturalists from the National Wildlife Federation, and a host of others who have committed their time and talent to creating opportunities for anyone to experience the wild in a way never before possible and perhaps never possible again. The natural world has an undeniable appeal beyond the thrill of adventure. There is an indefinable something that touches ones soul. Its unpredictability and its grandeur have captured our collective imaginations, inspiring great works of art through the ages. Even for the amateur, to photograph a pride of lions on the African savanna, to try to capture the essence of a scarlet macaw in flight with the flick of a paintbrush, or to record ones deepest responses to encounters with nature in a travel journal all come from the same place: our innate and enduring bond with wild things. THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW Destination Wildlife is arranged generally by continent. In some instances for example, South America we have included territories that, while

not technically part of that continent, fit quite naturally into the geography. The listings for each continent are then arranged alphabetically by site name or, as in larger territories such as the United States, arranged first alphabetically by state and second by site name. In addition to the description and highlights of the site, each listing contains information on location, hours of operation, contact information, cost, on-site amenities, best times, and field notes.

LOCATION: In most instances provides the distance from the nearest major city or common access point of the destination to the main entry point of the site. For some of the more obscure places, further details are provided or you will be referred to the best source for directions, which is often a website.

HOURS OF OPERATION: Provides information on when the site is open for visitation. Because times and dates are subject to change and in some cases, subject to conditions beyond anyone's control we suggest that you always verify by contacting the site before travel.

CONTACT: Gives direct or indirect contact information address, telephone numbers, website, and/or email addresses. Sometimes the best contact information is a commercial website, such as a tour company. Many sites can be visited only via an authorized tour company. This information is usually identified as such.

COST: Provides an approximate estimate of what it would cost to visit the site and, in some instances, attendant costs such as transportation and accommodation. The prices contained herein were converted and rounded to the nearest US dollar at press time. Prices and currency exchanges fluctuate, so it is important to verify before travel.

ON-SITE AMENITIES: Provides information on what the site has to offer to its visitors for example, tours, eateries, restrooms, lodging, and visitors centers. If the site offers or facilitates other activities, such as organized tours and guides, the information will be listed in this section.

BEST TIMES: Provides the best time of year to visit each site for optimal wildlife viewing. In some instances, there are times that you may want to stay away from the site for example, to avoid high-season crowds and inclement weather, such as excessive heat, monsoons, or heavy snowfalls.

FIELD NOTES: Provides insider tips from those who have already been to the site, things you will want to know as a first-time visitor: what to wear, what to carry, what to watch for, and what to watch out for! Also, this section includes any restrictions that the site may have, such as age limits and handicapped accessibility. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please visit our website at www.destinationwildlife.com.

A FEW NOTES FOR AMERICANS TRAVELING ABROAD

The US federal government encourages travelers to register with the Department of State. This is a precautionary measure taken in the event of an emergency in your homeland or in the country you are visiting so that you may be contacted should any such situation arise. Registration is a free service and is easily accomplished online at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. Many countries have restrictions on what may be imported. It is best to check with the embassies of your destination countries concerning their list of prohibited items. A listing of foreign embassies and consulates is available online at <http://state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl/32122.htm>. General guidance on required entrance vaccinations and other health-related precautions in regard to visiting foreign countries can be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website, www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx. All international travel now requires a passport. For information on applying for a US passport visit www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html, or pick up an application form at your local post office or library.

NORTH AMERICA United States, Canada, Mexico

ALASKA MARITIME NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ALASKA, USA

The Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge encompasses nearly 5 million acres of land in the Alaskan wilderness and is home to more than 40 million seabirds, whose nesting and mating habits are studied by scientists visiting from around the world. Visitors and scientists alike are often privy to the spectacular sight of bird cities, where entire colonies of birds congregate for a time. Among the many seabirds found in the refuge are horned and tufted puffins; fork-tailed storm petrels; and Aleutian cackling geese, a bird that is world famous because it was removed from the endangered species list only a few years ago. Migrating birds such as the yellow bittern, the Chinese egret, the Siberian blue robin, and the Eurasian siskin have been spotted in the refuges of the Aleutian Islands. The refuge actually comprises 12 distinct refuges with many dating back to some of the earliest conservation efforts in America. The diversity of landscapes covered by the immense refuge, from dormant volcanoes to forests of kelp, allow for an incredible array of wildlife that includes not only 55 species of birds but also an abundance of marine mammals such as sea lions, seals, walrus, and sea otters. Fur seals and Arctic foxes can be spotted on the Pribilof Islands and brown bears make their home on Unimak Island. Walrus can be observed on St. Matthew Island, though viewing is better in the area of Round Island, just off of the refuge grounds.

LOCATION: Headquarters: Homer, on the Kenai Peninsula.

HOURS OF OPERATION: Year-round, 24/7.

CONTACT: Headquarters: Tel: 907- 2356546; Web: <http://alaskamaritime.fws.gov>. Alaska Islands and Ocean visitors center: 95 Sterling Hwy, Homer, AK 99603; Tel: 9072356961; Web: www.islandsandocean.org; email: info@islandsandocean.org.

COST: Visitors center and refuge: Free. Other costs vary, depending on type of lodging and tours.

ON-SITE AMENITIES: Visitors center: Overlooks Kachemak Bay; teaches visitors about the areas wildlife with a particular focus on the refuges conservation efforts. National refuge: Numerous hiking trails; expert guides are available. Camping is permitted, although there are no specially designated campgrounds.

BEST TIMES: May through October.

FIELD NOTES: Everything that you would need to purchase can be found in the area, especially in the town of Homer. A first aid kit, water, and food supplies are recommended for those camping.

ALASKA PENINSULA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ALASKA, USA

The Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge provides for the conservation of many animals by protecting the areas

water resources and offering a safe environment for shorebirds, raptors, and fish. On a visit you may observe brown bears, moose, caribou, wolves, wolverines, foxes, river otters, and beavers, all of which are refuge residents. The refuge is also home to five species of salmon; the Arctic grayling; Dolly Varden char, rainbow, and lake trout; northern pike; and burbot. More than 200 species of birds have been recorded in the refuge, including bald eagles, owls, falcons, ravens, ducks, geese, and swans plus many other seabirds, shorebirds, and passerines. Marine mammals such as sea lions, harbor seals, sea otters, and migratory whales use the shores and offshore waters. The best way to start your trip to the Peninsula Refuge is to stop at the King Salmon visitors center. The center, located at the King Salmon Airport, is open all year. Staff at the center's information and trip planning desk will help you get the most out of your trip to the Alaska Peninsula. While at the visitors center, be sure to see the exhibits, engage in the interactive programs, and see the wildlife films. Because the center also hosts an adjunct of the Alaska Geographic store, it's a great place to find guidebooks, maps, and even souvenirs. Information on locating guides and charter services for flights, fishing, hunting, and more is also available.

LOCATION: Refuge: Alaska Peninsula. Visitors center: King Salmon Airport. **HOURS OF OPERATION:** Refuge: Year-round, 24/7. Visitors center: Daily, May-Sept, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Oct-Apr, closed Sun. **CONTACT:** Main office: Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge, PO Box 277, MS 545, King Salmon, AK 99613; Tel: 9072463339; Web: <http://alaskapeninsula.fws.gov>; email: akpeninsula@fws.gov. **COST:** Visitors center: Free. Other costs vary, depending on type of lodging, tours, and other amenities. **ON-SITE AMENITIES:** Expert guides, boating, numerous hiking trails, backpacking, flightseeing, camping, fishing, swimming, birding, wildlife photography. **BEST TIMES:** May through September. **FIELD NOTES:** A first aid kit, water, and food supplies are recommended for those camping. Binoculars, field books, comfortable walking shoes, and seasonal clothing are recommended. Refuge lands are remote and accessible only by small aircraft, boat, or rugged cross-country hiking. There are no roads or maintained trails.

ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ALASKA, USA

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) supports a greater variety of animal and plant life than any other refuge in the Arctic Circle. Because it encompasses distinctly different habitats within its borders, visitors traveling from one part of the refuge to the other have the opportunity to see a great variety of landscapes and animals. The northern section of the refuge includes barrier islands, coastal lagoons, and river deltas, where migratory waterfowl, such as sea ducks, geese, swans, and shorebirds can be found as well as fish such as the Arctic cisco and the Dolly Varden. In summer, the coastal lands are used by caribou that come to the ice fields to escape the stinging bites of insects. In winter, polar bears use the areas snow dens to give birth. Stretching southward from the coast is the Arctic coastal plain. The rolling hills, rivers, and small lakes are covered in tundra vegetation shrubs, sedges, and mosses where caribou give birth to and raise their young during the early summer months. Migratory birds make their way here during the same time. In September, snow geese by the tens of thousands pass through before they migrate south. To the south of the coastal plain, the peaks of the Brooks Range rise to almost 10,000 feet. This is the northern terminus of the Rocky Mountains, and elevation here creates its own unique habitat. Gyrfalcons, golden eagles, and peregrine falcons nest in the mountain regions, and the rivers here are temporary homes for harlequin ducks and red-breasted mergansers. Throughout the year, wolves, sheep, grizzly bears, and Arctic ground squirrels are found here. The boreal forest of interior Alaska makes up the southern part of the refuge. The area starts with sporadic islands of spruce trees that meld into a progressively more dense forest. Migratory birds use the area for breeding in the spring and summer. Caribou travel here from the north and spend their summers in the forests. Animals that make their permanent home in the area include moose, lynx, martens, wolverines, and bears. The ANWR is famous for the controversy surrounding land-use issues because the area is known for being rich in oil. Constant vigilance is required by local conservationists to ensure that human enterprise doesn't compromise the integrity of the refuge.

LOCATION: Arctic coast, Brooks Range, and Yukon Basin. Most of the refuge is accessible only by aircraft. Commercial air service from Fairbanks is available to Fort Yukon, Arctic Village, Dead-horse, or Kaktovik; from one of these towns, visitors can charter a bush plane into the refuge. **HOURS OF OPERATION:** Year-round, 24/7. **CONTACT:** Main office: Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, 101 12th Ave, Room 236, Fairbanks, AK 99701; Tel: 9074560250 or 8003624546 (toll-free); Web: <http://arctic.fws.gov>. Air taxi information: <http://arctic.fws.gov/airtaxi.htm>; email: arctic_refuge@fws.gov. **COST:** Depends on recreational guide and tour package. Permits are required only for commercial endeavors. **ON-SITE AMENITIES:** There are no amenities. Campsites are where you make them. **BEST TIMES:** May through September. **FIELD NOTES:** The best way to get to the refuge is by air taxi. The ANWR is one of the last undomesticated areas in the United States; thus guides and taking extreme caution are advised. In fact, guided tours could not be more highly recommended. (ANWR's website provides a list of authorized recreational guides.) Everything required for your trip must be purchased in advance. Remember that foot travel in the refuge is often slow-going over unstable terrain. Hiking a specific distance here may take two to four times as long as it would on groomed trails elsewhere. Plan to be completely self-sufficient. Cell phones do not have coverage across the refuge, and satellite phones may not work in mountainous terrain or in harsh weather conditions. Pack out all trash or burn it completely to powdery, white ash and pack out any remaining unburned pieces. Reduce the chances of dangerous animal encounters by not allowing food scraps or food odors to attract wildlife. Be prepared to handle any situation completely on your own. Topographic maps and emergency supplies are essential. **DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND**

PRESERVE ALASKA, USA If you visit Denali thinking that your trip is all about Mt. McKinley, the highest and possibly the most impressive mountain in North America, you won't be disappointed. For the intrepid traveler, the view from Mt. McKinley is stunning, and the experience itself is amazing. Everything from learning about the mountain to taking gentle hikes to engaging in serious mountain climbing will make your trip worthwhile. What you may not anticipate is that Mt. McKinley is just one facet of Denali National Park and Preserve. The bird-watching is superb, and you are likely to see both caribou and grizzlies in one afternoon's drive. Denali National Park and Preserve is Alaska's premier national park and offers visitors an array of activities and services. Wildlife enthusiasts will enjoy the opportunity to see the region's diverse indigenous animals. Sporting enthusiasts look forward to the outdoor activities available year-round at the park. Whether it is hiking, climbing, or dogsledding, there is enough to do at Denali to keep you busy every day of your visit and still leave you eager to return. Many visitors to Denali are there to view what has become known as the park's Big Five: Dall sheep, moose, caribou, grizzlies, and wolves, which are common to the area and are seen regularly. Collared pikas, wolverines, red foxes, black bears, hoary marmots, Arctic ground squirrels, and snowshoe hares all take residence here as well. With proper care and forbearance, visitors can have unprecedented access to animals that would otherwise never be seen in their natural habitats by humans. Aside from the wildlife, the very landscape of Denali is an attraction for visitors. From the famed Mt. McKinley (also locally known as Denali, which means the high one in the Athabaskan language and which is the name officially recognized by the state of Alaska), there are 6 million acres of beautiful wilderness that is almost begging to be explored. There are three shuttles that will take you to different points in the park and then there are three bus tours led by expert guides that go through the park itself. Once you are seriously in the park (after the 15-mile mark), the only way to continue to travel is by bus, bicycle, dog-sled, or foot.

LOCATION: 240 miles north of Anchorage on Alaska Rte 3. **HOURS OF OPERATION:** Visitors centers: May 15-Sept 18, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Park: Year-round. Tours leave at various times. Main office: Denali National Park, PO Box 9, Denali Park, AK 99755; Tel: 907-683-2294; Web: www.nps.gov/dena. **COST:** Entrance (7-day pass): Individual, US\$10; private vehicle US\$20. Camping: US\$12-\$20. **ON-SITE AMENITIES:** Visitor and wilderness centers, six campgrounds, guided tours, hiking excursions, nature walks, ranger programs, field seminars. Facilities for nature walks, mountaineering, backpacking, cycling, fishing, skiing, snowshoeing, and dogsledding. The park also has four remote wilderness lodges, located at mile 90 on the Denali Park Road, in the Kantishna area. For further information contact the park directly. **BEST TIMES:** Mid May through mid September. **FIELD NOTES:** Vehicle use in the park is limited. Reservations for campgrounds are recommended. Climbing equipment should be brought with you. Binoculars, cameras, comfortable walking shoes, and seasonal clothing are recommended. Denali is a true wilderness area. Before venturing into the park, read the safety information in the Denali Alpenglöck, the park newspaper. Grizzly bears and moose are dangerous, and visitors are advised to keep their distance at all times. Crossing glacial rivers is treacherous, and the potential for hypothermia is always a factor in the subarctic. Pets must be leashed at all times when visiting Denali National Park and Preserve and are not allowed on trails, river bars, or in the backcountry.

GLACIER BAY NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE ALASKA, USA It has been said that people spoke about the magical, rugged beauty of this area long ago. The elders of the Tlingit Indians talked about an ice-covered ancestral homeland. Later, explorers to the region wrote about this astounding landscape. As recently as 1750, a single glacier, thousands of feet thick, filled what is now a 65-mile-long fjord. Today, visitors to Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve are still humbled beyond words at first sight of this majestic park. The park comprises many ecosystems, from tidewater glaciers to snowcapped mountain ranges, ocean coastlines, deep fjords, and freshwater rivers and lakes. Although it is sometimes inhospitable, the area supports a vast array of marine and animal life. Each summer humpback whales return to the bay from their wintering grounds near Hawaii to feed on the abundant small schooling fish. Minke and killer whales along with harbor and Dall porpoises feed in the park's productive near-shore waters, and Steller sea lions congregate on rocky islands to mate and rest. Thousands of harbor seals breed and nurture their pups on the floating ice in Johns Hopkins Inlet and among the rocky reefs of the Beardslee Islands. Sea otters are rapidly populating Glacier Bay, Icy Strait, and Cross Sound. Visitors can also observe many kinds of land mammals. The mountain goat and brown bear were quick to repopulate after the last glaciers retreat. Other animals have followed. The coyote, moose, and wolf have moved in more recently but are now established in the park. The big boys of the park—the black bears—prowl the forested portions of the lower bay, and glacier bears, a rare silvery color phase of the black bear, are occasionally spotted. River otters are widespread as are marten, mink, and weasels; wolverines are scarcer and rarely sighted. The Alsek River Delta, in the preserve, is home to lynx, snowshoe hares, and beavers. Many land animals take advantage of water for foraging and travel. Moose and bear, for example, are accomplished long-distance swimmers and are frequently seen dog-paddling their way across the bay. Bears work the beaches when the tide is low, turning over rocks looking for tasty barnacles, clams, and other food. Wolves and coyotes find the traveling easier along the edge of tall beach grasses than through the tangles of alder thickets. At times, even the most upland of animals, like marmots and mountain goats, are drawn to the water's edge to nibble seaweed or to lick salt spray. One thing is for certain, the ocean is truly the common element that bonds the wildlife of the park.

LOCATION: West of Juneau, Alaska. Can be reached only by plane or boat; the only road runs 10 miles from the small town of Gustavus and its airfield to park headquarters at

Bartlett Cove. In the summer, Alaska Airlines has daily flights from Juneau to Gustavus; private air taxis and charters provide year-round service. Glacier Bay is also accessible via the water; visitors travel to the park on cruise ships, tour and charter boats, and privately owned vessels. HOURS OF OPERATION: Daily, 24/7, late May-early Sept. Exhibits: 24/7. Information desk and Alaska Geographic bookstore: Daily, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. CONTACT: Glacier Bay National Park, PO Box 140, Gustavus, AK 99826-0140; Tel: 9076972230 (general information) or 9076972627 (permits); Web: www.nps.gov/glba. COST: Entrance: Free. Reservations, and sometimes fees, are required for boating, camping, rafting, and many other services. ON-SITE AMENITIES: Glacier Bay Lodge and Tours: Provide accommodations; call 8667616634, for reservations. Camping: A walk-in campground is located in the park at Bartlett Cove; maximum stay is 14 days. For backcountry camping there are unlimited opportunities; camping is free and no reservations are needed, but permits are required (available directly from the park). BEST TIMES: Late April to late September. FIELD NOTES: Foul-weather gear is important. Layers of clothing along with gloves, hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen are recommended; some activities require specific equipment or clothing. Be sure to check the park's website for all the gear you'll need for your trip.

KACHEMAK BAY STATE PARK AND STATE WILDERNESS PARK, ALASKA, USA Kachemak Bay State Park occupies most of the southwestern part of Alaska's Kenai Peninsula. The park comprises three distinct topographies: glaciers, lagoons and lakes, and forests, each with its own unique appeal. The 13-mile-long glacial area is physically arresting, with almost limitless opportunities for hiking, climbing, and wildlife viewing. It's a photographers' paradise. The lagoons and lakes in the area are home to an array of aquatic life that is seldom found elsewhere. The diversity, quality, and quantity of fish available mean visitors can expect world-class fishing. Sea otters, seals, porpoises, and whales all frequent the area and make ideal subjects for both amateur and professional wildlife photographers. The forests in Kachemak provide a habitat for wolves, black bears, coyotes, mountain goats, moose, and a variety of other wildlife. Inaccessible by car and with more than 80 miles of hiking routes throughout its 400,000 acres, the park is a serious enthusiasts' dream. Here you can experience nature in a pristine environment with well-protected wildlife. LOCATION: Southwest Kenai Peninsula, Alaska. HOURS OF OPERATION: 24/7, allowing for camping and extensive guided tours. CONTACT: Main office: Kachemak Bay State Park, PO Box 1247, Soldotna, AK 99669; Tel: 9072625581; Web: www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/units/kbay/kbay.htm. COST: Cabin rentals: US\$50-\$65, depending on season. Fishing and hunting permits: Can be purchased in Homer. Tours: Vary in price, depending on duration and style. Contact the park directly for specific information. ON-SITE AMENITIES: 80 miles of hiking trails. Cabins in Halibut Cove Lagoon, Leisure Lake, Moose Valley, and Tutka Bay. Camping permitted in most areas; a number of sites contain fireplaces, tent platforms, picnic tables, and outhouses. Facilities for fishing and boating. BEST TIMES: Late spring to early fall. FIELD NOTES: Visitors arrive at the park via boat or airplane; there are no access roads. There are very few amenities available in the park. Homer, a nearby town, offers support to visitors of the area. Permits and transportation (air, water taxi, or boat rentals) can be obtained there. Reservations for cabins should be made as early as possible, as they book quickly. The cabins are charming, yet rustic in style. Visitors should be prepared for severe and unpredictable weather and should dress for cool, wet, and windy conditions. Extra clothing, rain gear, and waterproof packaging for your photographic equipment are all needed. Firewood can be brought in or collected on-site; however, only dead, downed wood can be used and is not always readily available. Carry some backup wood with you in any event.

KATMAI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE, ALASKA, USA Katmai National Park and Preserve began in 1918 as a national monument, formed to preserve and protect the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes. The current national park includes this 40-square-mile, 100- to 700-foot-deep ash flow, deposited by Novarupta Volcano. Katmai is still known for its volcanoes, remote wilderness, incredible salmon runs, and potpourri of marine life and land animals, but it is no doubt most famous for its bear population. There are two main types of bears in Katmai: grizzlies and brown bear. The brown bear is usually bigger, but because the size difference isn't great and their territories overlap, it is hard for most people to distinguish between the two. One of the many spectacular sights that attracts much attention is the bear fights, when males clash for mating rights and dominance. But all bear behavior is taken very seriously inside and outside of the park. Because each bear is an individual, no one can predict with 100% accuracy how a given bear will act in a given situation. Katmai's website provides a downloadable copy of Bear Safety in Alaska's National Parklands, for visitors to use any time of the year. While bears are the stars of Katmai, there are some wonderful bit players at the park as well. Land animals include moose, caribou, red fox, wolf, lynx, wolverine, river otter, mink, marten, weasel, porcupine, snowshoe hare, red squirrel, and beaver. Park visitors can also see a variety of marine mammals, such as the sea lion, sea otter, and hair seal. Killer and gray whales can also be seen swimming along the rugged coast of the park. LOCATION: On the Alaska Peninsula, across from Kodiak Island. Headquarters is in King Salmon, southwest of Anchorage by about 290 air miles. One popular site is Brooks Camp, along the Brooks River, which can be reached only by small float plane or boat. HOURS OF OPERATION: Year-round, 24/7. Brooks Camp: Park concessioner services available June 1-Sept 17. CONTACT: Katmai National Park and Preserve, 1 King Salmon Mall, PO Box 7, King Salmon, AK 99613; Tel: 9072463305; Web: www.nps.gov/katm. COST: Entrance: Free. Brooks Camp Campground (per person, per night): US\$8, June 1-Sept 17; visit www.recreation.gov for reservations. ON-SITE AMENITIES: Visitors center, guided tours, and hiking trails.

Facilities in the campground include a food cache, gear cache, fuel storage locker, potable water, cooking shelters, outhouse, and electric fence. The campground facilities are available from June 1 to September 17; outside these dates, plan on providing all of your own equipment. **BESTTIMES:** Prime bear viewing months at Brooks Camp are July and September, although a few bears may be in the area at any time between late May and December. Bear viewing along the coastal areas is possible from June through August. Backcountry activities are best during June through September. **FIELD NOTES:** All food, beverages, garbage, and any other odorous items must be attended at all times and stored in a bear-resistant container (BRC), sometimes called a bear barrel. A limited number of BRCs are available for temporary checkout, free of charge at Brooks Camp and at the King Salmon visitors center. The minimum recommended safe distance from any bear is 50 yards. Avoid actions that interfere with bear movement or foraging activities. If you are camping in the backcountry you may want to consider bringing an electric fence. Electric fences have been adapted for use in bear country and have been effective at minimizing intrusions into campsites. Visitors planning to use electric fences must bring their own equipment; the park does not provide electric fencing material. **KENAI FJORDS NATIONAL PARK ALASKA, USA** In a testament to the conservation efforts of the inhabitants in the area, the same biodiversity found in the Kenai Peninsula before the arrival of Europeans can still be found in the Kenai Fjords National Park today. You'll be the privileged spectator to an array of wildlife that includes moose, mountain goat, and both the brown and black bear. Caribou, wolverines, coyotes, and wolves, all make their home in Kenai. The bald eagle is plentiful and easily spotted. The park's aquatic animals are just as varied; beavers, otters, orcas, beluga whales, porpoises, and sea lions can be observed. Exit Glacier is the only part of the park that is accessible by car, and only during the summer season. In the winter, access is by snowmobile, sled dog, and cross-country skis. Exit Glacier offers some of the most beautiful scenic hiking trails in the world. Park rangers provide walks and tours that allow you close access to the glacier and expert lectures. While hiking the trails is your best bet for sighting the many land mammals, boat tours provide optimal viewing of the park's aquatic life. Full- and half-day tours are available from numerous private companies. Most tours have a park ranger onboard, who will provide expert insight into all aspects of the area. **LOCATION:** Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, approximately 126 miles from Anchorage, just outside of the town of Seward. **HOURS OF OPERATION:** Visitors center: Daily; May 3-May 16, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; May 17-Sept 1, 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sept 2-Sept 27, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Exit Glacier Nature Center: Daily; May 17-Sept 1, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sept 2-Sept 27, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. **CONTACT:** Main office: Kenai Fjords National Park, PO Box 1727, Seward, AK 99664; Tel: 9072247500; Web: www.nps.gov/kefj. **COST:** Entrance and camping: Free. Public-use cabins (per night): US\$35- \$50. **ON-SITE AMENITIES:** Amenities are few but include a visitors center, park ranger programs/services, and public-use cabins. Privately run activities, park-hosted events, and ranger-led programs include wildlife watching, boat tours, hiking, flightseeing, kayaking, fishing, and mountaineering. For a list of current tour operators, visit the Seward Chamber of Commerce's website (www.sewardak.org). Convenient and comfortable lodging can be found in the town of Seward; cabins directly on the shores of Resurrection Bay are available, allowing easy access to the boat tours of both the bay and the glaciers. **BEST TIMES:** May through September. **FIELD NOTES:** Warm clothing (in layers) is a must, even in the summer months. Reservations for cabins, boating tours, and other amenities are highly recommended in the high tourist season. Cautionary notes: This is the wilderness, so when visiting the park you might want to carry emergency supplies, like extra food and water, at all times whether traveling independently or on a group tour. Remember, nature happens! Radical shifts in the weather, falling ice, avalanches, and earthquakes can occur in this territory. Always be on the lookout for bear (read up on precautions and ask the ranger/guides for advice); and should you encounter a moose along your travels, the key to safety is distance. Cow moose are very protective of their young; extreme caution should be taken not to come between the cow and the calf. **KODIAK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ALASKA, USA** In 1899, the writer and naturalist John Burroughs explored Alaska's Kodiak Island along with fellow naturalist John Muir and adventurer and soon-to-be president, Theodore Roosevelt. Burroughs was so stirred by the island's pristine natural beauty that he later wrote, Bewitching Kodiak! The spell of thy summer freshness and placidity is still upon me. Today, Kodiak Island, part of Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, is known as Alaska's Emerald Isle because of its spectacular Norwegian-like fjords and Irish-like lush green mountains. Kodiak Island is home of the famous Kodiak bear. Isolated from the Alaskan mainland since the last ice age, some 10,000 years ago, the Kodiak bear is considered a subspecies of the Alaskan brown bear. The males equal the size of polar bears, weighing as much as 1,100 pounds, and standing 10-11 feet tall on their hind legs. To protect the bear as well as the habitat of the island's other inhabitants, the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1941. Today, approximately 2,300 Kodiaks live in the refuge, which covers the southern two-thirds of the island as well as a portion of neighboring Afognak Island and the islands of Uganik and Bana total area of 3,000 square miles. In addition to the Kodiak bear, only five other species of land mammals are native to the refuge: red fox, river otter, ermine, tundra vole, and the little brown bat. A variety of nonnative mammal species were introduced during the mid 20th century to increase recreational hunting opportunities. Some of these managed to flourish, including the black-tailed deer, mountain goat, Roosevelt elk, and snowshoe hare. The refuge is also home for marine mammals, such as sea lions and five species of salmon. Bird-watchers will find more than 200 species of birds, including at least 600 nesting pairs of bald eagles. Among the recreational activities available at the refuge are hiking,

fishing, hunting, boating, canoeing, rafting, camping, wildlife observation, photography, and flightseeing. The refuge's headquarters and visitors center, located 5 miles south of downtown Kodiak, offers staff-led interpretive programs and outdoor classroom experiences, nature displays, video programs, trip planning information, and a bookstore. The refuge has seven public-use cabins, which are available on a reservation/lottery basis. Additional lodging is available outside the refuge. Authorized concessioners offer half-day and full-day flightseeing trips; this is a spectacular way to view the refuge and possibly the best way to see and photograph Kodiak bears.

LOCATION: Kodiak, Alaska.
HOURS OF OPERATION: Refuge: Year-round, 24/7. Visitors center: Winter, weekdays, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Memorial Day-Labor Day, weekdays, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., weekends, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.
CONTACT: Headquarters: Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, 1390 Buskin River Rd, Kodiak, AK 99615; Tel: 9074872600 or 8884083514 (toll-free); Web: <http://kodiak.fws.gov>; email: kodiak@fws.gov.
COST: Permits: Required for crossing Native American-owned land and other areas of the refuge; most are free, but inquire at the visitors center for further information. Public-use cabins (per night): US\$30; reservations available by lottery (download application from the refuge's website).
ON-SITE AMENITIES: Visitors center with bookstore and seven public-use cabins.
BEST TIMES: Memorial Day through Labor Day.
FIELD NOTES: The refuge is accessible only by boat or plane. Fly a commercial airline from Anchorage to Kodiak, where you can book an air charter to the refuge. Ferries are available through the Alaska Marine Highway System; for more information and reservations visit www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs.

YUKON DELTA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, ALASKA, USA

The preservation of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge is of critical importance because the area supports one of the world's largest and most vital gathering spots for waterfowl. In addition to emperor geese and other birds that may live their entire lives in the refuge, millions of waterfowl descend on the refuge in the spring to nest. More than 1.5 million ducks and geese breed in the refuge every year. It is not uncommon to find as much as a third of all the northern pintails on the continent within the confines of the refuge. The refuge provides spring nesting grounds to 40,000 loons, 40,000 grebes, 100,000 swans, and 30,000 cranes. The number of shorebirds that use the refuge for staging and breeding is staggering. The species diversity and density of the shorebirds found in the refuge makes it the premier nesting area in the nation and on par with the best areas in the world, of which there are a select few. The refuge is also home to 19 recorded species of raptors. The Kisaralik River is one of the most important areas of the refuge for the nesting and conservation of golden eagles, bald eagles, and peregrine falcons. Huge numbers of caribou once roamed the area that is now the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. After peaking in the 1860s, the number of caribou in the area plummeted over the following century. Due in part to conservation efforts by refuge officials in concert with local activists, the caribou population is climbing again; there are now more than 40,000 living in the refuge. Numerous species of marine mammals are found in the region, including the threatened Steller sea lion. Visitors may also observe Pacific walrus, spotted seals, ringed seals, and Pacific bearded seals. The refuge's waters are home to roughly 40 species of fish. Salmon are found in the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers, and freshwater fish include whitefish, sheefish, Alaska blackfish, burbot, northern pike, rainbow trout, and grayling. Pacific herring, halibut, tomcod, and starry flounder can be found in the near-shore ocean habitats of the refuge. The refuge is accessible only by air. Commercial airlines fly into Bethel Airport, one of the most popular airports in the state and the perfect point of access for the refuge. The town offers visitors a warm welcome and numerous opportunities for lodging.

LOCATION: Bethel, Alaska.
HOURS OF OPERATION: Year-round, 24/7.
CONTACT: Headquarters: Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, State Hwy, Box 346, Bethel, AK 99559; Tel: 9075433151; Web: <http://yukondelta.fws.gov>.
COST: Entrance: Free. Guided tours: Fees determined by the provider.
Permits: Hunting, trapping, and fishing permits required by the state; fees vary.