

Glacier Bay

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
Alaska

2023 Fact Sheet

Superintendent *Philip N. Hooge*

Black bears frequent the forests of Bartlett Cove. Glacier Bay is also home to a rare color phase of black bears found in Southeast Alaska called the glacier bear, where the bears take on a blue/gray coloration.

Established

Feb 26, 1925 Designated National Monument
Dec 2, 1980 Designated National Park & Preserve
1986 Designated World Biosphere Reserve
1992 Designated World Heritage Site



Glacier Bay represents the most dramatic documented large-scale glacial retreat in the world and provides unparalleled opportunities for scientific study of tidewater glaciers and ecosystem development.

Size

National Park:	3,226,800 acres	5,130 square miles
National Preserve:	+ 57,700 acres	+ 90 square miles
	= 3,284,500 acres	= 5220 square miles

(roughly the size of the state of Connecticut)

Park Designated Wilderness: 2,656,200 acres
Biosphere Reserve: 3,455,300 acres
This consists of both Glacier Bay and Admiralty Island, including a marine corridor connecting the two.
World Heritage Site: 24,313,000 acres
This also includes Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, Kluane National Park (Canada), and Tatshenshini-Alsek Park (Canada), one of the world's largest protected areas.

Base Budget

\$ 5,538,000 (Fiscal Year 2022)

Staffing

Permanent · 57
Seasonal & Term · 46

Access

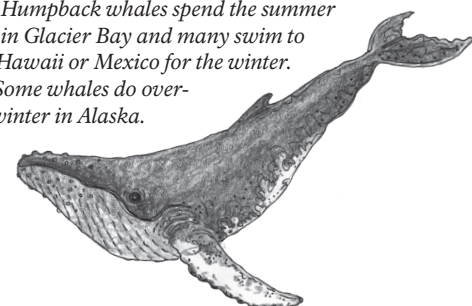
Most visitors arrive on cruise ships and tour boats. The only road is 10 miles from the small community of Gustavus. Gustavus has an airport and is served by Alaska Airlines in summer and small planes all year round. The Alaska Marine Highway provides scheduled ferry service from Juneau to Gustavus.

Visitation

The number of vessels per day is limited in the summer months. Maximum number of vessels allowed each day include two cruise ships, three tour vessels, six charter vessels, and 25 private vessels.

2022: 508,912 Cruise Ship Passengers
11,551 Tour Vessel Passengers
3,741 Backcountry Visitors

Humpback whales spend the summer in Glacier Bay and many swim to Hawaii or Mexico for the winter. Some whales do over-winter in Alaska.



Trails

Three hiking trails: 10 miles
Over 700 miles of shoreline to kayak, camp, and explore

Lodging

Glacier Bay Lodge · 48 rooms (15,554 guests in 2022)
Bartlett Cove Campground · 33 campsites
Dry Bay, Glacier Bay National Preserve · 1 public use cabin

There are many lodging options in the community of Gustavus, AK. In the National Preserve at Dry Bay, there are 3 commercial lodges in operation.

Prehistory

Glacier Bay has been the homeland of the Huna Tlingit people since time immemorial.

Climate

Southeast Alaska is within a cool, wet, coastal temperate rainforest. Summer: 50° to 60°; Winter 20° to 30°, with extremes of -10° F. Some form of precipitation occurs on average 228 days per year. Annual precipitation is 70-80 inches (including an annual snowfall of 14 feet). A warming climate has increased precipitation over the past decade.

High in the Fairweather Mountains, over 100 feet of snow may fall annually- making it one of the world's snowiest places. Recently, evidence of a receding snow line along the range has become apparent.

Marine Waters & Coastlines

Total Marine Waters: 607,100 acres (largest marine area managed by NPS)

Coastline (including the outside coast) 1180 statute miles (approx.)

Coastline of Glacier Bay proper, excluding all islands: 560 statute miles

Coastline of Glacier Bay proper, including all islands: 760 statute miles

Oceans & Tides

Deepest Point in Glacier Bay: 1,427 feet below sea level

Tides are mixed semi-diurnal: Different high and low tides, twice daily (*two high/two low every day of differing heights*). Tidal fluctuation: Maximum tidal change will be about 22 feet from high to low (1/22/2023: 18.8 foot high, -3.4 foot low).

Glaciers

About 250 years ago a single, large tidewater glacier covered all of Glacier Bay. By 1750 the glacier began to retreat and has now retreated 60 miles to the head of the bay.

Currently glaciers cover 2,055 square miles or 27 percent of the park. At last count there were 1,045 glaciers in the park. There are over 50 named glaciers, seven of which are active tidewater glaciers that calve icebergs into the sea. Most park glaciers originate between elevations from 8,000 to 15,000 feet.

The Grand Pacific, Brady, and Carroll glaciers cover areas in excess of 200 square miles each.

In general, tidewater and terrestrial glaciers in the park have been thinning and receding over the last several decades.

Selected Glacier Statistics	Height <i>above water</i>	Width	Length	Observation Status
Grand Pacific Glacier	65-165 feet	1.35 miles	21.7 miles	receding
Johns Hopkins Glacier	225-300 feet	1 mile	16.4 miles	thinning
Margerie Glacier	200 feet	0.85 miles	21 miles	receding
Lamplugh Glacier	165 feet	.9 miles	20 miles	thinning

Landmarks & Elevations

Mount Fairweather	15,308 feet	Mount Watson	12,407 feet
Mount Quincy Adams	13,566 feet	Mount La Perouse	10,713 feet
Mount Crillon	12,674 feet	Mount Bertha	10,158 feet

Earthquakes

Major earthquakes in the last 150 years (Date/Richter scale reading):
1899 / 8.2, 1927 / 7.3, 1958 / 7.8, 2014 / 6.0, 2017 / 6.3

Xunaa Shuká Hit (Huna Ancestor's House) is the first permanent Tlingit clan house in Glacier Bay, dedicated in 2016.

Wildlife & Flora

Fish	329 species
Birds	247 species
Mammals	12 marine, 34 terrestrial species
Amphibians	1 species (Boreal toad)
Reptiles	1 species (Leatherback sea turtle)
Vascular Plants	594 individual taxa documented

