

# Maine Northwoods Retreat

## with Naturalist Journeys



**July 11 – 17, 2022**

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Join Naturalist Journeys on this exciting and NEW! Maine Northwoods nature tour. The trip starts with time in Bar Harbor and a pelagic for seabirds and marine mammals, followed by five nights at the New England Outdoor Center.

Explore Baxter State Park and Katahdin Woods & Water National Monument looking for warblers, woodpeckers, Boreal Chickadee, Canada Jay, Spruce Grouse, and possibly even Bicknell's Thrush.

### **Tour Highlights**

- Enjoy a cruise off Bar Harbor—we keep our eyes peeled for puffins and whales
- Explore Baxter State Park for warblers, flycatchers, and more
- Relax at the lovely New England Outdoor Center and indulge at the Center's River Drivers Restaurant, the perfect home base for our explorations
- Visit Katahdin Woods and Water National Monument looking for American Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers, as well as Moose

### **Tour Summary**

7-Day / 6-Night Maine Northwoods Birding Tour

\$3490, from Bangor

Airport is Bangor International (BGR)

## **Day-to-Day Itinerary**

### **Mon., July 11 Arrivals in Bangor, Maine**

Please plan to arrive at Bangor International Airport (BGR) no later than 1:00 PM today. Your guide meets you at the airport; we plan to do some birding en route to Bar Harbor, so be sure your binoculars are handy and your shoes are good for short walks. Once the group is assembled, we head south to Mount Desert Island, home of Acadia National Park. The only national park in Maine, Acadia is surrounded by quaint coastal New England communities with strong ties to the ocean. The largest island in an archipelago of 4600 islands is home to around 330 species of birds throughout the year.

We stop along the way to Bar Harbor looking for warblers and flycatchers and other common local birds. Dinner tonight is at McKays Public House, a quaint and beautiful restaurant with indoor and outdoor dining and a

delicious, locally sourced menu.

*Accommodations at the Bar Harbor Inn (B,L,D)*

## **Tues., July 12 Gulf of Maine & Outer Islands Pelagic | Birding en Route to the New England Outdoor Center**

Today we board the *Friendship V*, a double hulled catamaran built to smoothly maneuver through the Gulf of Maine waters. We travel 20 to 30 miles offshore in search of Arctic and Common Tern, Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, and Common Murre rounding out the list of alcids that nest along the rocky shores of Maine's small islands. We hope to encounter Humpback, Finback, and Minke Whales, and possibly encounter White-sided Dolphin, too.

Foraging among the whales, it's possible to find swarms of Wilson's and a few Leaches Storm-Petrels, Northern Gannet, Greater and Sooty Shearwaters, Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers, and other members of the ocean dwelling tubenose species.

Then, we are off to Maine's Northwoods; we try to include a stop at the Bangor Forest and Orono Bog if time permits, an hour and a half northwest of Bar Harbor. This three-mile walk meanders through forested wetlands that surround the bog to the peat bog and a one-mile boardwalk, offer opportunities for some northern specialty birds like Lincoln's Sparrow, Palm Warbler, Northern Harrier, and a host of breeding birds known to frequent the bog ecosystem and the edge habitat. Bogs form "boreal islands" with a high percentage of species of northern affinities and are regarded as relicts of former conditions associated with the Wisconsin glaciation. This prepare us for our Northwoods birding adventure where this habitat is plentiful. There is the possibility of Black Bear, White-tailed Deer, and Moose when we leave the coast and while driving into the northern forest. Our destination is the recreational lakeside retreat called the New England Outdoor Center (NEOC), which has award winning views of Mount Katahdin, Maine's highest mountain at 5,269 feet. Named Katahdin by the Penobscot Indian Nation, it means "The Greatest Mountain," and features many northern specialty birds. The on-site River Drivers Restaurant is delicious, and hosts the remainder of our dinners.

*Accommodations at the New England Outdoor Center (B,L,D)*

## **Wed., July 13 Baxter State Park**

We enjoy a Maine breakfast at NEOC and gather our bag lunches for the day's exploration. This morning we visit Baxter State Park, where we search for Black-backed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, Bay-breasted Warbler, Canada Jay, and Spruce Grouse as we drive the famous loop road through the park. If the group wants a longer hike, we can make an attempt for Bicknell's Thrush. Taking the Hunt Trail there is a possibility for Bay-breasted Warbler, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher as we climb to around 2800 feet where we should encounter the endangered Bicknell's Thrush. This is optional.

Baxter State Park was established in 1931 by 28 donations of land, in trust, from park donor Governor Percival P. Baxter between 1931 and 1962, eventually creating a park of over 200,000 acres (809 km<sup>2</sup>).

We spend the day hitting hotspots and making small walks to a variety of habitats while looking for some of Maine's toughest and unique boreal species, including American Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers. Spruce Grouse and Boreal Chickadee also haunt this locale, and we should witness Fox and Lincoln's Sparrows singing on their territories. While we're in Baxter, we have a great chance to witness some of the tougher

warblers, such as Blackpoll, Bay-breasted, Tennessee and Mourning, and northern forest flycatchers such as Alder, Least, Yellow-bellied, and Olive-sided.

Then it's back to the New England Outdoor Center, looking for Moose along the way before some down time ahead of dinner.

*Accommodations at the New England Outdoor Center (B,L,D)*

## **Thurs., July 14 Katahdin Woods & Water National Monument**

We get an early start this morning with a hearty Maine breakfast before heading out to 87,563 acres of mountains and forestland in northern Penobscot County, Maine, including a section of the East Branch Penobscot River. The monument is located on the eastern border of Maine's Baxter State Park.

The views from KWWNM of Mt. Katahdin are spectacular. Nearby, the West Branch of the Penobscot River flows south out of the North Maine Woods.

Katahdin Woods and Water National Monument is our newest federal park in Maine, which came together from a donation during the Obama administration. We continue to search for American Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers, Spruce Grouse, and Boreal Chickadee. This is a great location for warblers and flycatchers, too, as well as Moose.

*Accommodations at the New England Outdoor Center (B,L,D)*

## **Fri., July 15 Birding at the NEOC & The Golden Road**

We spend our day looking for Moose and boreal specialty birds, rising with the sun and heading up the west side of Baxter State Park, enjoying the abundance of warblers, thrushes, flycatchers, and finches that breed in the northern Maine forest. White-winged and Red Crossbills are a key species we look for while also visiting known hotspots for Black-backed Woodpecker. This is also be a chance to search for any key species missed during previous outings.

The Golden Road is privately owned and mostly unpaved, extending from Millinocket west over 100 miles to the Quebec border. It was established in the 1970s as a transportation conduit for raw wood to feed the hungry Great Northern Paper Company mills in Millinocket and East Millinocket. We travel parts of this road seeking boreal species in the woods and around many lakes and rivers of northern Maine. From Millinocket The Road skirts the southern boundary of Baxter State Park, then crosses Abol Bridge and travels along the south bank of the West Branch of the Penobscot River.

It's back to the lodge again for dinner and relaxation this evening.

*Accommodations at the New England Outdoor Center (B,L,D)*

## **Sat., July 16 Relaxation | Birding NEOC & Surrounds**

This is a guide choice day. We might return to Baxter or simply bird in areas around the lodge and local parks.

*Accommodations at the New England Outdoor Center (B,L,D)*

## **Sun., July 17 Departures from Bangor**

Our journey comes to an end today as we travel south to Bangor International Airport. Today we say good-bye to the North Woods and our truly unique experience. It is an hour and a half drive from our lodge to the airport, so please plan flights out after NOON. (B)

## Tour Details

### Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with [Allianz Travel Insurance](#). As of January 2017, Naturalist Journeys pays 100% of your flight carbon offset.

### Cost of the Journey

Cost of the journey is \$3490 DBL / \$4150 SGL with private bath or \$3890 SGL with shared bath, based on double occupancy, from Bangor, Maine. Cost includes six nights' accommodations, all meals as noted in the itinerary, airport transfers, ground transportation, professional guide services, park and other entrance fees, and miscellaneous program expenses. Not included is round-trip airfare to and from Bangor, personal expenses such as laundry, telephone, drinks from the bar, and gratuities for luggage handling or other services. Guide gratuities are at your discretion.

### Travel Information

Please plan to arrive at Bangor International Airport (BGR) no later than 1:00 PM on July 11. Please plan departure flights after 12:00 PM (noon) on July 17.

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