



Polar bear, northern Manitoba



Beluga whales



Bald eagle



Polar bears at Churchill



Musk oxen, Bathurst Inlet

CALL OF THE WILD

Grizzly Bears

Hallo Bay, Katmai National Park, Alaska

Grizzly bears can be seen in many parts of Canada, but Hallo Bay in Alaska offers a wonderful opportunity to get close to these magnificent creatures at any time of the summer season. Reached by a thrilling light aircraft flight from Homer, Hallo Bay is located on the volcanic wild and remote Pacific Coast of the Alaska Peninsula. There are no roads within 300 miles of Hallo Bay which is surrounded by 6,400 square miles of the pristine wilderness of Katmai National Park. The beaches here are stunning but it is the high density of grizzly bears for which the area is renowned (the highest concentration in Alaska). Hallo Bay offers a diversity of food habitats, keeping the bears in the same vicinity. From May to early July they are engaged in complex and fascinating mating behaviour, digging clams in the inter-tidal areas and grazing on the coastal sedges. In mid July the first of the salmon arrive, providing a feast and change in diet. Bear viewing takes place on foot in groups of four or five guests, with expert naturalist guides making the experience highly personal and informative as well as safe. Accommodation (which comprises cabins within a camp) is simple, but hot showers are available and plenty of hearty nutritious food is included.

Beluga Whales

Hudson Bay, Canada

For a few weeks during the short northern summer, beluga whales arrive in Hudson Bay to calve. The bay has the largest population of belugas in the world and up to 57,000 congregate there every year. These small whales, born grey, become white with maturity and are both curious and friendly, allowing people to swim amongst them. A stay at Seal River Heritage Lodge near Churchill with Mike and Jeanne Reimer offers you a wonderful opportunity to experience these delightful whales from 12 person zodiacs. Belugas, the most vocal of whales, are also known as sea canaries so hydrophones have been fitted to each vessel to enable guests to listen to the whale songs. You can expect to see hundreds of whales per outing, often in huge pods. Beluga whales are very sociable and will investigate zodiacs with a bold courage expressed by few other creatures. The Seal River estuary is a favourite summer spot for polar bears that are often sighted swimming here or trying to hunt the whales. In addition, seals, caribou and thousands of birds and wild flowers are seen during the summer months. Seal River Heritage Lodge offers comfortable accommodation, superb meals and warm hospitality. There is no better way to finish your stay here than watching the night skies for the magical *Aurora Borealis*.

Musk Oxen

Bathurst Inlet, Arctic Circle

Natives of Arctic Canada, Greenland and Alaska, musk oxen are noted for their thick shaggy coats, long curved horns and for the strong odour emitted by the males. Their thick coats enable them to survive bitterly cold winter temperatures. These sociable animals usually live in herds of between ten and twenty animals but sometimes the herd can number several hundred. The musk ox, or its ancestor, is believed to have migrated to North America between 200,000 and 900,000 years ago making it a contemporary of the woolly mammoth. Bathurst Inlet Lodge is a wonderful base for viewing these strange prehistoric beasts. This land is beyond the reach of all roads and throbs with life during the brief northern summer. As your aircraft circles the airstrip 30 miles north of the Arctic Circle at Bathurst Inlet, the immensity of the landscape becomes reality. In the midst of alien beauty, there is a warm welcome from the Warner family and the Inuit of the Inlet who are co-owners of Bathurst Inlet Lodge, a former Hudson's Bay trading post and now a haven for naturalists. Here you can experience the beauty of the Arctic tundra and a wonderful array of wild flowers, birdlife, caribou, seals and bears along with arctic history, Inuit culture and the stunning scenery and geology of this special wilderness.



Grizzly bear fishing

FACT FILE

A two week trip to Alaska including two nights at Hallo Bay costs from £2,725 per person including return flights. Please contact Catherine or Jane for details of this or other travel to the region on 01993 838 700.



WEB PLUS

www.audley.co.uk/features/caawildlife
View an interactive wildlife map plus listen to a beluga whale song

James Butler, our Canada, Alaska and Arctic Programme Manager, highlights some of the amazing wildlife encounters you can experience in this vast region.

