



Icelandic Horse by Andreas Tille

# COLLEGE OF DUPAGE

Iceland: Ecosystems and Wildlife

June 23 – July 1, 2019



*Volcanoes, lava fields, waterfalls, lakes, geysers, ice-blue glaciers, mountainous terrain contrast sharply with green meadows and oceanic coastlines creating habitats demanding survival of the best fit organisms such as, Atlantic Puffin, Great Cormorants, Gyrfalcon (Iceland's national bird), and the Icelandic horse. Explorations of plate tectonics, varying environmental conditions, and alternative energy production will be explained as we visit iconic areas like the Gunnhver mud pools, Reykjanes Peninsula of volcanic rock and lava, Golden Circle, Skógafoss Waterfall, Vatnajökull Glacier, Thorsmörk Nature Reserve, and the Blue Lagoon. Viking heritage, the Icelandic language along with the folkloric sagas will weave together the natural history and human endeavors of this land of fire and ice.*

**Please note:** Participants must be able to walk for 1-3 miles over uneven terrain & transfer from dock to a boat.

**Class:** April 10, May 8, June 4, July 10 (7-8:50 p.m.).

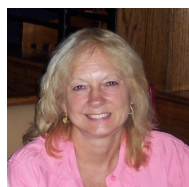
**Field Study:** June 23 - July 1, 2019. These are part of the two mandatory semester biology credits. The trip/course may be taken for a grade or pass/fail. The credit fees (\$141/credit) are considered at the in-district rate, no matter where in the world one lives, and over 60 years of age earns a 50% discount of the tuition. Registration ends **January 15, 2019** or when course is full.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the home of half of the world's population of Atlantic Puffin.
- Discover how Iceland's avifauna has adapted to environments including volcanic systems, freshwater systems, and marine environments.
- Observe the habitats and behaviors of Great Cormorants, European Shags, and migrating whales.
- Explore geological wonders Iceland's dramatic and varied geology including towering waterfalls, bursting geysers, massive glaciers, and volcanoes.
- Examine the relationships between Iceland's diverse terrain, natural disasters, and society.
- Get a taste of Iceland's unique cultural history while listening to folk stories and sagas
- Witness Goðafoss waterfall, the spouting hot springs and bubbling mudpools of Geysir, Vík's black sand beaches, and the jagged coastline of the East Fjords.
- Visit local power plants to gain an understanding of thermal energy production.

## ABOUT YOUR LEADER

KATHLEEN LUCZYNSKI



Kathleen Luczynski has a passion for educational travel with a focus on tours that expose secrets in nature. Animal watching and an interest in plant natural histories led her to develop soft-adventure trip courses for the College of DuPage. In addition to field-based courses she is currently developing four teacher education courses for Benedictine University, tutors local high school students, and supports a non-profit organization called SCARCE (School and Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education). A high school biology teacher for 34 years, Luczynski has shared teaching strategies at various science teacher conventions and has helped write programs such as The Leopold Project, Project Aquatic, and a reading strategy book. She has received a number of awards and grants from her high school district in Downers Grove, IL and now creates travel journals for her College of DuPage course trips.

# ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

## SUN. JUNE 23 (DAY 1) - IN FLIGHT

Depart the US on your overnight flight to Iceland. (2019 rates are subject to change. Rates are dependent on Icelandic tourist taxes staying the same from 2018 or the government adding an additional 11% VAT tax in 2019.)

## MON. JUNE 24 (DAY 2) - HVOLSVÖLLUR

Upon arrival into Reykjavik your guide will meet you at the airport. After breakfast, drive to the Reykjanes light tower and Gunnuhver mud pools before continuing to the bridge between two continents. The Reykjanes Peninsula is an area of volcanic rock and lava, with numerous clefts and gorges. It lies on the margin of the Eurasian and North American plates and is directly connected to the Mid-Atlantic ridge. A variety of bird species inhabit the peninsula, including Rock Ptarmigan, Northern Wheatear, Snow Bunting, Whimbrel, various shorebirds and ducks, and birds of prey such as Merlin and Gyrfalcon. Three mammal species thrive here: Arctic fox, mink escaped from fur farms in the 1930s, and a small field mouse which probably came with settlers in the 9-10th centuries. Along the shore, low cliffs alternate with sandy beaches where ocean waves sweep unhindered onto the coast. Stop for lunch en route; throughout the trip lunches will be ala carte to allow for more affordable choices. *Overnight at Hotel Hvolsvöllur. (D)*

## TUES. JUNE 25 (DAY 3) - HVOLSVÖLLUR

Today you'll explore the area known as the Golden Circle, starting with a visit to Gullfoss. Named the Golden Waterfall—it's one of the most impressive waterfalls in Europe—pouring thousands of tons of water into a majestic, deep canyon at its base. Next visit the Geysir Area, home to numerous hot springs, fumaroles and geysers. Complete your Golden Circle exploration with a stop at Þingvellir, the site of the world's oldest democratic parliament and the dividing fault line between two of the Earth's tectonic plates. *Overnight at Hotel Hvolsvöllur. (BD)*

## WED. JUNE 26 (DAY 4) - VIK

After breakfast, head east and start the day with a visit to the Lava Centre in Hvolsvöllur, where you'll investigate an interactive high-tech exhibit demonstrating volcanic activity—the largest of its kind in Europe. Next stop is at Skógafoss Waterfall, one of the country's largest waterfalls. Afterward, experience a glacier walk on the Sólheimajökull Glacier, accompanied by professional guides. During this easy to moderate glacier walk, you'll observe the wonderland of ice sculptures, water cauldrons, ridges and deep crevasses. Next, visit the Dyrhólaey Reserve for a hike and the opportunity to see puffins. The area is a nesting sight for eider ducks, puffins, and other iconic Icelandic birds that are endangered. If time permits, the group will stop at Reynisdrangar Beach to see basalt needles, as well as Reynishverfi Beach to see hexagonal basalt columns. Here you may see Arctic terns, fulmars and seagulls. If time is short, this excursion may be incorporated later in the program. *Overnight at Dyrhólaey Hotel. (BD)*

## THURS. JUNE 27 (DAY 5) - HOF

Travel further east this morning, passing through Kirkjubæjarklaustur and the rivers of Skaftá, (which are nearly dried out from the glacial river flood of Vatnajökull Glacier in 2015, Skaftárhlaup). Upon arrival, visit Skaftafell National Park, one of Iceland's most outstanding areas of natural beauty, dominated by the glacier Vatnajökull, Europe's largest ice cap. Several flowering plants distinctive to East Iceland are common here: the harebell, yellow saxifrage, and pyramidal saxifrage. Possible birds are the Merlin, Wheatear, and Snow Bunting. The sole wild mammals are the Arctic fox, mink and field mouse. *Overnight at Hotel TBD. (BD)*

## FRI. JUNE 28 (DAY 6) - HOF

Today, keep traveling east to Jokulsarlón Glacial Lagoon for a boat ride, which will allow for close encounters with floating icebergs. The lagoon is located at the edge of the Breiðamerkurjökull glacier. It formed when the glacier began receding from the edge of the Atlantic Ocean and has since been increasing in size, at rates dependent on the speed of glacial melting. Recently, the lagoon became the deepest lake in Iceland, at over 248 meters

## FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL:

Contact Kathleen Luczynski at [luczynsk@cod.edu](mailto:luczynsk@cod.edu) or call COD voicemail at 630-942-2800 x54937 or cell #: 630-508-1204

(814 ft.). Continue along the beautiful scenery of Vatnajökull Glacier, stopping at one of the glacier tongues, before descending into the town of Hof and returning to the hotel. This afternoon, optional Ingólfshöfði Puffin Tour available at additional cost of \$95 per person. *Overnight at Hotel TBD. (BD)*

## SAT. JUNE 29 (DAY 7) - HELLA

Today, begin the journey west, back to Reykjavik, stopping en route for some adventure. After a visit to Seljalandsfoss Waterfall, explore Thorsmörk Nature Reserve via a rugged track drive that passes through several rivers. Thorsmörk is a deep valley consisting of glacial tongues flowing down mountain sides. This area is surrounded by the glaciers Eyjafjallajökull, Mýrdalsjökull and Tindfjallajökull. The region is an oasis with pristine of beautiful landscapes, kept untouched due to limited access. During this off-the-beaten-path excursion, you'll have time to walk around in the Stakkholtsgjá gorge and the young landscape, formed by the glacial flood following the Eyjafjallajökull eruption in 2010. Later this afternoon, you can choose to participate in an optional Whale Watching Tour (\$130 pp for a minimum of 10 people). *Overnight at Stracta Hotel Hella. (BD)*

## SUN. JUNE 30 (DAY 8) - REYKJAVIK

Today, drive from Hella to the Blue Lagoon, with time to enjoy the thermal springs, experience the wonders of geothermal waters and learn about how the lagoon was formed. Before, or after the Blue Lagoon, take the route to Krýsuvík and Kleifarvatn, as it fits perfectly to the day. Upon arrival at the Krýsuvík Geothermal Area stop to witness raw natural power in a moonscape of bubbling sulphuric mud pools and steam vents. Drive along the shores of Lake Kleifarvatn, which is reputedly home to the centuries-old monster recorded in folk tales. In the afternoon you have free time to explore on own. *Overnight at Hotel Cabin. (BD)*

## MON. JULY 1 (DAY 9) - FAREWELL!

This morning is at leisure to explore Reykjavik; Iceland's capital city is the nucleus of the country's rich culture and arts scene, made perfect by the backdrop of snow-topped mountains, churning seas and crystal-clear air. This afternoon, travel to the to the airport for your flight home. *(B)*



Photo by Hefgt Guðmundsson

## PROGRAM PRICING

**\$7,000** (10 - 15 participants)

*Pricing is based on double occupancy; single room supplement for duration of the trip is \$640.*

Price includes international flights from Chicago, ground transportation in Iceland, lodging, most meals, class excursions, guides, park/museum fees, gratuities for guides, drivers, and meal servers during included meals.

## THE FINE PRINT

*Registration ends January 15, 2019 or when the course is full. To register call the COD Field Studies/Study Abroad Office 630-942-2356 or 630-942-3763 where registration questions can be answered, payments may be made or to set up a trip payment plan. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit [travelinsured.com](http://travelinsured.com). Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.*