



SEA OTTER BY G. FRANK PETERSON

# ALASKA

## THE MARITIME AQUARIUM & CONNECTICUT'S BEARDSLEY ZOO

Cordova: Alaska's Hidden Treasure

July 28 – August 6, 2018



For travelers ages 13-16 years old

*Glaciers, mountains, and the Copper River Delta combine in Alaska to create the country's most picturesque classroom. Explore Cordova, home of the Eyak People and Prince William Sound, surrounded by Chugach National Forest, the second largest national forest in the United States. Join educators from The Maritime Aquarium and Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo on this exciting 9-day program to discover the natural wonders of "The Last Frontier" through engaging activities, including hiking trails, observing bird colonies, and assisting biologists in collecting data for research.*

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Observe and learn about the world's largest population of sea otters at Orca Inlet.
- Search for orcas, humpback whales, sea lions, and other marine mammals commonly seen in the area.
- Observe a nesting kittiwake colony.
- Assist researchers at the Prince William Sound Science Center by helping to collect data on glacial melt rates and movement.
- Gain an up-close perspective on glaciology when crossing the Copper River Delta to Childs Glacier.
- Hike through three complete ecosystems at Heney Ridge Trail.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Naturalist guide
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Entrance fees
- Airfare and ground transportation
- Meals & beverages
- Gratuities



CHILDS GLACIER BY LEAF PETERSEN

# ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

## JULY 28 - NEW YORK

Meet in the late afternoon at the aquarium for transport to a hotel adjacent to JFK airport. Get to know the members of your group over dinner. Early bedtime in preparation for tomorrow's early morning flight. *Overnight at airport hotel. (D)*

## JULY 29 - CORDOVA

Depart JFK on an early morning flight. Upon arrival at the Cordova airport, meet your guide and transfer to the lodge, enjoying some initial sights along the way, including swan nests on the delta and the Cordova town center. Attend an orientation before dinner this evening. *Overnight at Orca Adventure Lodge. (D)*

## JULY 30 - CORDOVA

After breakfast, travel to the Power Creek drainage area and take a walk on a trail above town for a panoramic view of the area. Explore the rich diversity of the flora and fauna of the area as well as view abundant wildlife. Possible themes for investigation here include geology of the area, plate tectonics, glaciology, marine biology, and avian biology. After lunch, visit the museum and Eyak cultural center in Cordova. *Overnight at Orca Adventure Lodge. (BLD)*

## JULY 31 - CORDOVA

Today enjoy a hike through the Heney Ridge Trail to explore the rainforest. You will hike through three complete ecosystems in the trail's seven-mile route. As this activity is the most strenuous of your program, there will be additional guides to accommodate the group's different levels of hikers. *Overnight at Orca Adventure Lodge. (BLD)*

## AUGUST 1 - CORDOVA

Today visit Prince William Sound to explore the world's largest concentration of sea otters and marine mammals. Boarding your comfortable catamaran vessel, begin your journey in Orca Inlet. These shallow waters are an ideal habitat for sea otters, and special attention will be paid to females and their pups. Learn the story of these fascinating creatures that have been brought back from near extinction. Next head farther afield to the ocean entrances to look for marine mammals of other varieties. Depending on conditions, numerous other species can be sighted. The environmentally threatened Steller sea lion is regularly seen, as well as Dall's porpoise. Appearing near the bow of the boat, these playful creatures are often mistaken for small orcas with their black and white coloring. As you near the open waters, all eyes will be scanning for larger marine mammals, as both orcas and a variety of other whales frequent the area. Humpbacks are the largest in this near-shore environment, while gray and occasionally even beaked whales are spotted. Numerous species of sea ducks can be viewed as well, as this is a major nesting area. Learn about these vulnerable birds and how they have been affected by recent variations in sea temperature. Kittiwakes, murrelets, and even puffins also inhabit this rugged coast. *Overnight at Orca Adventure Lodge. (BLD)*

## AUGUST 2 - CORDOVA

After breakfast depart for a full day tour of the Copper River Delta. The highlight of the day is the massive Childs Glacier. Travel by bus to the 27-mile point of the Copper River Delta Highway and cross the river. Then take a van to the park across from the towering Childs Glacier to the famous Million Dollar Bridge. This now-inaccessible bridge is a great backdrop to the Wrangell St. Elias Park and the Miles Glacier. Near the bridge visit the sonar station, manned by three researchers who spend their entire field season living completely cut off from the outside world. The researchers will explain and demonstrate the sonar and its use in fishery management. Afterward

head to the viewing area of the Childs Glacier. Enjoy lunch by the glacier while listening to the deafening sounds of huge ice chunks crashing into the river less than 1/4 mile away. Tonight enjoy a salmon barbecue for dinner. *Overnight at Orca Adventure Lodge. (BLD)*

## AUGUST 3 - CORDOVA

After breakfast take a second boat trip to Orca Inlet (heading in the opposite direction), where you will continue to observe sea otters and their interactions within the pod. Your guide for the day has been involved in sea otter studies for 15 years. Afterward, stop at a remote beach and explore the tidal pools with laminated ID charts, plastic aquariums, and dip nets in hand. Next head to Hinchinbrook Island, where you will enjoy your lunch at another remote beach. After lunch, visit a kittiwake colony, where you can observe these nesting sea birds. Return to the lodge in the early afternoon for kayaking, followed by a discussion of the life cycle of salmon. *Overnight at Orca Adventure Lodge. (BLD)*

## AUGUST 4 - CORDOVA

After breakfast your guide will talk about plate tectonics and the dramatic changes this area has undergone in recent decades. Look at specific unique geologic formations and rock samples, then participate in a discussion on global warming and head to the Sheridan Glacier for an ice trekking excursion. Assist the Prince William Sound Science Center by placing monitoring stations on the ice to help collect data on glacial melt rates and movement. *Overnight at Orca Adventure Lodge. (BLD)*

## AUGUST 5 - ANCHORAGE/DEPARTURE

Enjoy the morning at leisure before transferring to the airport for your flight to Anchorage and your afternoon flight home. *(BLD)*

## AUGUST 6 - ARRIVE HOME

Arrive home following your overnight flight.

## PROGRAM PRICING

**\$3,995** per person (based on a minimum of 14)

Cost includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees and activities as listed in itinerary, private vehicle transportation, full-time guide, gratuities, round-trip air from JFK to Cordova, round-trip transportation from the aquarium to JFK, hotel at JFK airport, post-departure travel protection purchased on behalf of participants such as limited emergency and medical evacuation, and carbon offset.

Cost does not include items of a personal nature.

## THE FINE PRINT

Price is based on triple/quadruple occupancy with individual beds. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are due by April 25, 2018 to secure your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a \$100 cancellation fee until May 15, 2018, at which time final non-refundable payment is due. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information, contact Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit [travelinsured.com](http://travelinsured.com). Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.



This program includes carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at [holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe](http://holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL:

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