

Hike Glacier National Park with a Naturalist (Trip #2250) August 13-20, 2022



Going to the Sun Rd, credit E Bloom 1

JOIN US for a week of hiking in spectacular Glacier National Park, Montana. We will stay just inside the park entrance and explore different areas of this national gem. Joining us on our hikes will be a local naturalist from the Glacier Institute, providing us the opportunity to learn about the area while enjoying moderate to strenuous hikes and spectacular scenery. Hikes are typically 7-12 miles (occasionally a shorter or longer option may be offered). There will be two separate hiking groups each day. Glacier National Park, part of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, is a hiker's paradise. With over 1 million acres, 730 miles of trails, soaring peaks, awe-inspiring glaciers, and frequent wildlife encounters, Glacier is the perfect place to get out of the car and explore the backcountry on foot. For this trip, we collaborate with the Glacier Institute (GI), a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting people with the natural and cultural wonders of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, the heart of which is Montana's Glacier National Park. We have some days of hiking where we explore a specific topic with an educator as we hike. Wildflowers, fire ecology, and geology have been some past topics. Other days we will have a general staff naturalist along for questions. We may also have evening educational programs available. This is an active hiking trip with a chance to learn interesting things along the way!

This trip is designed for experienced hikers who appreciate moderate to strenuous hikes, with the added bonus of learning while enjoying incredible hiking. Participants in the past had the following to say:

- *"Thank you for putting together such a great trip. Not only for making it happen, but for using the Glacier Institute to add a dimension to the trip that made it truly unique. Many, many thanks!"*
- *"Just wanted to thank you for making the trip to Glacier so wonderful. The trip in total was great. I'm glad my first experience with AMC was so gratifying. It made me want to join more trips in the future."*
- *"More than just a nice hike, this trip was a creative and unique blend of vigorous hiking and an educational experience".*
- *"I loved the way the educational element was woven into what we were seeing and doing-this made it very meaningful"*

TRIP DIFFICULTY

This trip is rated 4-5, Moderate to Vigorous, based on distances hiked, elevation gain, and altitude where we will be hiking (but each day will vary, with the option to take a rest day in camp). The AMC Trip Rating system is explained at this link: [Ratings](#)

ITINERARY

All topics/trails are tentative and subject to change due to Glacier Institute leader conflicts, illness, trail conditions (bear closures), etc. Total group size will be up to 22 AMCers (including 2 leaders), split into two hiking groups per day on different trails. Each hiking group will have a Glacier Institute Staff Naturalist and an AMC leader. Due to the Park's geography and road conditions, some hikes have significant driving time to the trailhead, but that gives you time to enjoy great views from your seat and perhaps spot wildlife. GI staff drives our minibuses/vans, so you can sit back and relax, but we will be prepared for long days. We hope to have one day where we hike in the remote Many Glacier Valley on the East side of the park (this is the longest drive day). We may drive straight to Many Glacier Valley and hike, or perhaps take the closer trailhead to Piegan Pass and then hike over the pass and down into Many Glacier Valley.

Saturday, August 13, 2022

Arrive Kalispell/Glacier Park International Airport with afternoon group transfer from the airport to Field Camp. GI staff will pick us up in their vans. Drive to Glacier Park Field Camp with a stop at a grocery store on the way for happy hour beverages. GI staff will provide orientation to the Park, Field Camp, bear/mountain lion/general safety issues. All meals included (breakfast, trail lunch, dinner) starting with Saturday dinner.

Sunday-Friday

Daily itinerary of hikes and educational topics will be provided before the trip. Below is a list of some of the hikes and topics from past years. This is an example only, and not a schedule of what will be offered on this trip. Various factors influence the final itinerary, including trail closures, bear activity, and instructor availability. Please note drive times can be longer depending on traffic and road construction. However, there is great sightseeing along the way. Each day will start with breakfast in camp; you will then prepare your own trail lunch from a lunch buffet. After hiking, there will be time for happy hour in camp and discussing the next day's plan. Each day ends with delicious dinner in camp. We may have an educational program one or two evenings in camp.

Saturday, August 20, 2022

Morning departure from Field camp, drive to airport, departure. Breakfast is the last meal included.

Sample hikes and topics we may schedule:

Hike: Huckleberry Mountain Lookout (6,593'). Topic: Fire Lookouts/Fire Ecology

12 miles, 2,700' elevation gain. Hear about fire history/ecology as we hike to a fire lookout tower. Great mountain views. Drive time 15 minutes each way.

Hike: Piegan Pass to Many Glacier. Topic: Wildflowers and Alpine Ecology of Glacier

12.8 miles, 1,670' elevation gain, 2,640 feet elevation loss, maximum elevation 7,560'. Start at Siyeh Bend (just over the Logan Pass), hike up to Piegan Pass and down into the other side of the Park – the spectacular Many Glacier Valley. There is a long drive home, but the GI van will pick us up at the end and we may stop at a restaurant for supper on the way home. We see two sides of the Park in one day and have fantastic views, while learning about wildflowers and alpine ecology as we hike. Drive time one hour or more to starting trailhead, and 2+ hours from ending trailhead in the remote Many Glacier Valley (not including a stop for dinner on the way back).

Hike: Triple Divide Pass. Topic: Tracks, Scats and Signs. 14.4 miles, 2380' elevation gain. Awe-inspiring views and (hopefully) wildlife sightings on this hike, while learning about the signs animals leave behind. To break up the long drive, we may stop at a restaurant for supper on the way home. Drive time approx. 1-1.5 hours each way.

Hike: The Highline Trail/Garden Wall in-and-out hike to Haystack Butte. Topic: Geology of Glacier Park 5 miles, 830 feet of elevation gain and loss. A classic Glacier hike. Start at Logan Pass for an in-and-out hike (turning around at Haystack Butte). Fantastic views, with high chance of wildlife sightings. This hike is absolutely amazing, and you'll learn about the geology all around you as we go. Drive time 1 hour each way. Often done the same day as Hidden Lake Overlook.



Garden Wall, photo credit Erika Bloom 1

Hike: Hidden Lake Overlook. 3 miles, 480 feet of elevation gain. Start at Logan Pass for an in-and-out hike on a popular Glacier park trail. Drive time 1 hour each way. Often done the same day as the Highline Trail.

Hike: Piegan Pass, Siyeh Pass, or Firebrand Pass (in-and-out hikes) 9-10 miles, 1,700-2,400 feet of elevation gain. Drive time 1 hour each way.

Hike: Upper Two Medicine Lake (+/- boat ride) or Scenic Point. Drive time 1 ¼ hours each way

Hike: Iceberg Lake or Grinnell Glacier (Many Glacier valley) 10 miles, 1,400-1,700 feet of elevation gain. Drive time 2 hours each way since this is in the remote Many Glacier Valley (stop at restaurant for dinner on the way back)

Hike: Avalanche Lake 4.6 miles, 560 feet of elevation gain. Drive time 15 minutes each way

Hike: Rocky Point 1.5 miles, 200 feet of elevation gain. Drive time ½ hour each way

TRIP LEADERSHIP

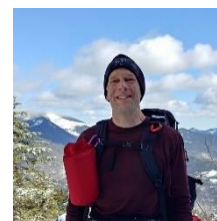


Leader - Erika Bloom

Erika leads for the Boston and Southeastern Massachusetts chapters, as well as AMC Adventure Travel. Erika originated and has led this popular annual Glacier National Park trip for AMC in the past and has lived in Montana. Erika has planned and led AMC Adventure Travel trips to Tanzania (Mount Kilimanjaro trekking and safaris), Glacier National Park, and Nepal's Everest region. Erika previously served on the Adventure Travel committee, and as SE Mass chapter hiking chair.

Associate Leader – John English

John English is a 3-season hike leader for AMC New Hampshire chapter. He has hiked the NH 48 and New England 67 and is working his way through the ADK 46 and the winter NH 48. John has led at AMC's August Camp and taught at the NH Cardigan Workshop weekends. As well as hiking, he enjoys biking, kayaking, and most other outdoor activities. John has hiked in over 30 of the US National Parks and Monuments and enjoys travelling both here and abroad.



ACCOMODATIONS AND MEALS



We will stay at Glacier Institute's Field Camp (GIFC). GIFC is located just inside Glacier National Park, ½ mile from West Glacier on a bluff overlooking the Middle Fork of the Flathead River. These are very rustic/simple small cabins, each with 5 single/twin beds. Depending on the makeup of our group, we may have to mix genders within cabins. There is a separate bathhouse with individual showers and individual toilets. The cabins are not heated. Overall, you should expect to be "roughing it" with simple accommodations in a beautiful location. Think of it as camping, indoors! Do not expect phones or television. Cell phone reception is spotty at best. There is no option for a single room/cabin. If you are a sensitive sleeper, are not able to tolerate a snoring roommate, etc., then this is not the trip for you.

GI Sleeping Cabin (5 single beds/cabin)

Photo credit: Glacier Institute

Glacier Institute provides our meals, served buffet style outdoors (there is a tarp over the picnic tables in case of rain). They provide breakfast buffet, make-your-own trail lunch buffet, and dinner buffet. There are regular and lacto-ovo vegetarian options (dairy and eggs included), but beyond that, GI is not guaranteed to accommodate special dietary needs due to limited cooking facilities and other logistical issues. If you have a restricted diet or ANY food allergies, please discuss with the leaders prior to registering.

GLACIER WEBSITES

Below are some useful websites if you would like to do more research on the area and the trip:

www.glacierinstitute.org

<https://www.nps.gov/glac/index.htm>

<https://www.nps.gov/glac/learn/photosmultimedia/webcams.htm>

PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND RISKS

Hiking with a pack up high mountain passes is physically demanding. We will be hiking mostly at elevations around 6-8,000 feet, and although the elevations are not generally high enough for contracting acute mountain sickness (AMS), the combination of physical exertion and lower oxygen levels require that we pace ourselves and pay close attention to proper nutrition and hydration. People wishing to participate in this trip must have previous hiking experience, at the intermediate level or higher. Although the hiking will be at a moderate pace, this is not a trip for beginners or people who have not hiked for several years. You should be in good physical condition at the time we depart as well.

We will be hiking in bear country. Many of us take for granted that we hike in bear country all the time if we hike in New England. However, we cannot be complacent in Glacier. Bears (both grizzly and black) are very much a reality. We will be discussing techniques recommended by bear experts for actions to take if we encounter a bear, but prevention is the number one technique! We will never feed any wildlife for any reason. We will follow the park's safety recommendations regarding bears. We will familiarize ourselves with how to behave if we encounter a bear. We will be hiking as a group; you will not be able to hike alone ahead of or behind the group. Every year there are bear encounters in Glacier causing serious injury or death to humans. Bears have also been relocated or killed because of human-bear incidents, in some cases due to human carelessness. We want to protect ourselves and protect these beautiful wild creatures. We will be making noise along the trail, to reduce the risk of surprise close encounters. Your leaders carry bear spray (pepper spray); if you wish to do so, you may purchase some locally and carry it on your waist-belt (approximate cost \$40-50 per canister). It cannot be taken onto the plane or checked in luggage.

To participate in this activity, you should be prepared (both physically and mentally) and equipped with the appropriate gear. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. We are not responsible for your safety – you are. Nonetheless, it may happen on any trip that a trip member is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of group or individual safety. Illness, injury or lack of proper gear or fitness for a particular activity are examples of some conditions that might result in a participant's being unable to perform one or more activity. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.

Prior to your being accepted as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. We may also request references to confirm your fitness level and suitability for participating in trip activities. Please do not be offended by our questions. We will do our best to put together a mutually compatible hiking group.

Safety

As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with volunteer leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental conditions, remote locations of our trips and camps, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, or by boat. When you apply for acceptance onto a trip, please carefully read and sign the Adventure Travel Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and call if you have any questions.

Being a team player

We will be more than just a group; we will be a team. You may be asked to help the group in some way. If a member of our group becomes injured, you may be asked to help carry that person's gear. If someone is injured or slower than the rest of the group, this may affect your experience. Leaders and GI staff will do their best to make sure there is the least impact on other group members possible. By nature, group travel is not as flexible as individual travel.

Participant Profile

You should enjoy traveling and be comfortable traveling in areas that are unfamiliar to you. You should recognize that you might find yourself in closer quarters or be less comfortable than you are used to at home. You should make it a priority to help others on the trip and contribute to their having a great time. If you do that, we guarantee that you will have a great time. This trip is rated four - vigorous, and is geared towards the outdoors adventurer, and experienced hiker. You must be able to hike 6 to 14 miles per day with elevation gains between 1000 feet and 3000 feet over the course of 6 to 8 hours, while carrying enough equipment to keep you safe in the event of bad weather or injury. We will hike at a moderate pace, which will permit time for photos and GI educational breaks. A detailed packing list will be provided to all participants well in advance of the trip.

COST, REGISTRATION AND CANCELLATION

The approximate cost for the trip is **\$1,975 (members) or \$2,075 (non-members) plus estimated \$600-900 airfare**. This is based on filling the trip (20 participants) and will cover the following items:

- Accommodations at the Glacier Park Field Camp (7 nights)
- All meals from dinner on arrival day through breakfast on departure day
- Transportation (in GI minibuses/vans)
- Park entrance fees
- AMC Adventure Travel program administration fee
- Fees for Glacier Institute instructors/staff

Not included: Airfare, tips for GI Field camp staff

Any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increase, will be passed on to the participants. Airfare into Kalispell/Glacier can be quite expensive and options quite limited during the peak season. Frequent flier

seats are almost impossible. Do not purchase flights until the leaders tell you the trip is a confirmed “go” with the minimum number of participants.

The price for this excursion is based on quotes or estimates obtained at the time the trip was planned. The final price of the trip will be adjusted in accordance with the best final arrangements we can make. Any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increases we incur, will be shared by trip participants. Our cost estimates are conservative, and so a refund is more likely than a price increase. All Adventure Travel trips are run on a non-profit basis. Refunds, if any, are issued after the financial accounting is complete.

In accordance with AMC policy, you are subsidizing the leaders' costs. Beyond this, the leaders are not allowed to realize any profit from this excursion. The trip price includes an AMC overhead fee to cover the administrative expenses of offering Adventure Travel excursions. The trip fee also includes emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage, which is required by the AMC. It does not include insurance for travel delay, interruption, or cancellation, or for baggage loss. If these possibilities concern you, individual travel insurance is recommended. More information about included emergency medical and evacuation insurance, as well as about optional and recommended travel insurance, will be provided to participants in their formal acceptance letters, which will be sent out when the trip has the required number of accepted applicants.

A registration deposit of \$750 is due with your application, and the balance of \$1,275 (\$1,375 for non-members) is due April 1, 2022. Please complete our online application by clicking on this link: [APPLICATION](#) You must also immediately send a deposit check payable to AMC, mailed to: AMC, c/o Erika Bloom, 5 Locust Street, Mattapoisett MA 02739.

AMC Adventure Travel program Terms, Conditions, General Information and cancellation

Please carefully read the [AMC Adventure Travel Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

Cancellations before January 1, 2022 will receive a full refund less a \$100 cancellation fee. Please review the cancellation policy in the Terms and Conditions.

AMC Mission

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run in a manner supportive of and consistent with the conservation, recreational and educational principles and mission of the Club. Trip leaders encourage participant conduct consistent with Leave No Trace environmental and conservation principles and local regulations.

GEAR LIST

Below is a list of the required gear for the trip. Because weather can change quickly in the mountains, and snow can occur in any month of the year, you will need to have rain gear, puffy or fleece jacket/sweater, hat and gloves, etc. with you on all hikes. If you prefer hiking in cotton shirts, please bring a synthetic top as a backup in case of getting wet and chilled. Please do not plan to hike in jeans. Weather may be hot during the day but can get cold quickly in the mountains. We recommend bringing an assortment of shorts, long pants, short and long sleeve shirts, and fleece jacket and/or sweater so you are ready for any temperature. We expect warm days and cool to cold nights, but it can rain or snow in the mountains any month of the year. So, be prepared for cold hiking and sleeping conditions “just in case”

Required and Essential Gear

- backpack, large enough to carry 2-3 quarts/liters of water, rain gear, lunch/snacks, hat & gloves, flashlight/headlamp, personal gear, etc. during hikes
- broken-in hiking boots (preferably water-proof and above-ankle, unless you routinely hike mountains in lower hiking shoes)
- waterproof wind/rain gear (hooded jacket and pants, no ponchos)
- 2-3 quart/liter water bottles or equivalent hydration system
- puffy jacket, or synthetic fleece jacket and/or thick wool sweater
- synthetic or wool warm hat and gloves/mittens (yes, you need these even in August!)

- short and long hiking pants - synthetic
- at least 2-3 pairs of hiking socks with liners
- Polypropylene, Coolmax, Bergelene or other synthetic hiking clothing (see Notes above)
- comfortable clothing for evenings
- a lightweight flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- pack cover for rain, as well as garbage or contractor bags to line pack
- toilet paper and extra zip lock bags to pack it out after use
- sleeping bag required; optional pillow, twin top sheet (beds have bottom sheets already)
- towel

Recommended and Optional Gear

- Tevas, sandals and/or sneakers (for evenings and for in the river)
- hiking poles
- pack cover
- personal first aid kit w/ moleskin, personal meds, etc. (leaders will have group first aid kits)
- waterproof matches or lighter
- whistle and knife
- compass
- binoculars or spotting scope
- sunscreen and insect repellent
- sunhat, bandanna
- sunglasses
- bathing suit (prior groups enjoyed swimming in the river near field camp)
- camera
- field guides (some may be available from leaders)
- field notebook and pencil (waterproof or in zip lock bag)

Bighorn Sheep, photo credit: John English

