



Ice Warrior Wildlife Expedition Notes

Beyond the bounds of tourism – worthwhile and life changing
High Arctic Canada – Bathurst Island



Aim

To experience Arctic wildlife, up-close and first-hand is thoroughly exciting and the only real way of doing this is to immerse yourself in their natural environment. We do just this, going way beyond the bounds of tourism.

Expectations

We will be venturing into extremely remote environments, where others simply don't go. Travel in the Polar Regions is often very difficult and sometimes impossible.

This means we may experience delays and alterations to our plans. Everyone has to adopt a flexible approach and positive attitude and whilst it is great to plan things in advance and on a day-by-day basis it is rare, in our experience, that the plan is not changed. We as your guides will keep you fully informed of our options and advise the team as to the best course of action.

Travelling in such remote areas brings associated risks and these will be explained to you fully and a written risk assessment sent to you before we depart. But the risks are more than worth it!

Our style of Guiding is consensual unless safety is at stake in which case our guides will take over and lead from the front.



Expedition: ICE WARRIOR ARCTIC WILDLIFE – Bathurst Island, High Arctic Canada

Location: Base Camp - Resolute Bay. Advanced Camp – Polar Bear Pass, Bathurst Island

Purpose: To investigate and capture the essence of arctic wildlife. To count polar bears on behalf of the Norwegian Polar Institute.

Description: We will fly to the Inuit community of Resolute Bay where we will spend a day of kit check and final preparation. As soon as we are fully prepared and weather allows we will fly by our own chartered Twin Otter aircraft to the edge of Bathurst Island. Here we will establish our Advanced Camp and explore the entire area on foot.

Number of Participants: A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12

Grade: Easy – no experience necessary

Dates: 8th May – 22nd May 2010

Duration: 14 days, Resolute to Resolute

Accommodation: South Camp Inn, Tented Camp

Mode of Transport: Air charter and/or snowmobile with kommatik (large trailer), foot.

Cost: £3995.00

Exclusions: Travel to and from Resolute Bay – typical cost from Ottawa is £1800 - insurance and personal clothing and other items.

Reference: IWAW14



Questions and Answers

When?

8th to 22nd May arriving and departing Resolute Bay. We then aim to spend as much time on the ice/land as possible bearing in mind that Arctic weather often dictates the timings of these events. For all participants this means an overnight stay in Ottawa. The flight north is at 0900 hrs the morning of 8th May and travels first to Iqaluit and then on to Nanisivik and finally to Resolute Bay, arriving at around 1800hrs. A full itinerary will be sent to you separately and a reservation number for you to book your flights.

Where?

We will assemble the team in Ottawa on the evening of the 8th at the Marriott Hotel, Kent Street. We will arrange accommodation here for you at our preferential rates but it is up to you to pay the bill.

We will escort you on the journey north to our base camp, South Camp Inn, in Resolute Bay - www.southcampinn.com

Having arrived in the evening our guides will settle you in at South Camp where we will discuss the details of preparation over supper.

The following day we will check everybody's kit and clothing and prepare for the journey to the edge of Bathurst Island - some 130 km northwest of Resolute. This may be by charter flight or snowmobile depending on sea ice conditions. Once we reach a suitable site we will set up camp.

There will be a chance to meet our Inuit friends and get a feeling for what it is like to live in Resolute.

What should you expect?

Weather – in the last few years, in particular, the weather has become very unpredictable which means we should prepare for the worst.

Minus 5 to minus 25 Celsius.

Camp – We use large base camp tents which accommodate 8 people for normal camping but we use them for 4/6 people – so there will be sharing but plenty of room.

There will be raised cots for you to sleep in and top specification arctic sleeping bags provided. You can of course purchase a new one from us if you wish.

We use our base layers to sleep in, including a fleece hat.

Ablutions will be primitive but effective and each person will be advised to bring along their own moist wipes to keep clean. We will not be able to shower or bathe whilst we are in the field but personal hygiene is very important indeed.

We also operate a light-footed approach to nature making as little impact as possible and shipping out all our refuse.

There will be a small generator available for battery re-charging as well as solar chargers.

Food – We use super freeze dried food supplemented with fresh produce. A typical days menu would be porridge or pancakes for breakfast, fresh fruit, bread, tea or coffee – lunches– cheese and cold meat sandwiches with snack bars and biscuits and hot apple drinks from a thermos – dinners – a staple such as potatoes, rice or pasta with re-hydrated protein-based “sauce” such as chillied or casseroled beef, lamb or chicken.

PLEASE ADVISE US OF ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS.

Wildlife – the wildlife listing for the area is not extensive but being so remote the chances of getting close is extremely good. A BBC wildlife expert once said to me “there may not be many different species but I’ve seen almost all of them and up close!” We will give everyone a very clear briefing with respect to wildlife safety.

Featured Bird Species

Fifty-four species of birds, including 30 breeding species, have been recorded in the Area. This is unusual for this latitude in Canada. They include the Red-throated Loon, called Qagsauq by the Inuit, Greater Snow Goose (Kanguq), Brant (Nirlirnaq), King Eider (Qingalik), and Oldsquaw (Aa'aangiq). The Snowy Owl (Ukpik), and the Rough-legged Hawk (Kaajuuq) are relatively common breeders in the pass and so are waders such as the Red Phalarope (Siggaq), White-rumped Sandpiper (Sigjariarjuk) and Baird's Sandpiper (Livilivilaaq). Sixteen species of shorebirds have been recorded in total. Three species of jaegers - Pomarine, Parasitic and Long-tailed - have nested in the Area and five species of gulls have been recorded: Glaucous Gull, Thayer's Gull, Sabine's Gull, Ivory Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake. The Snow Bunting (Amauligjuaq) and Lapland Longspur (Qirniqtaa) are two songbirds that often nest locally. Birds banded at Polar Bear Pass have turned up in far distant areas: Brant in Ireland, King Eider in Greenland, Red-throated Loon in Chesapeake Bay, USA, Black-bellied Plover in Florida, USA, and Red Knot and other shorebirds in Great Britain and France. Some bird species that occur on Bathurst Island are known to winter in South America or Africa.

Mammals

Eleven resident species of mammals occur in the Area: Arctic hare, Arctic wolf and fox, Ermine, Collared Lemming, Peary Caribou, Muskox, Polar Bear, Ringed and Bearded seals, and Walrus. The largest concentration of Bathurst Island's Muskox population - 10 to 30% - occurs in the National Wildlife Area. Up to 120 adults may be present during the rutting season. They are in the pass from early February to late November. Calving occurs between April and June. The Muskox is called Umingmak by the Inuit.

What is included in that cost?

All expedition costs from Resolute including: air charter flights, camping equipment, safety equipment - satellite phone, EPIRB, hand-held radios, shelters, shotgun, pen flares, pistol flares, bear spray, float rope, snow shovel, etc.

What is not included?

Flights to and from our base camp in Resolute Bay, accommodation and expenses in Ottawa, personal clothing and equipment.

What clothing and personal kit will I need?

It is impossible to predict the weather these days and so we need to be prepared for full Arctic weather.

We will send you a separate clothing and personal kit check list where you can also place an order for purchase or hire of items.

What about insurance?

Due to the extremely remote nature of our expeditions Jim McNeill writes a specific proposal for underwriters.

For those living in the UK this is normally arranged through the British Mountaineering Council. The slight disadvantage with this is that you have to be a member of the BMC in order to qualify for the insurance which currently costs £14.97. Typical cost of the insurance is around £250.

If you live elsewhere you will have to get insurance from your own country. Please contact us if you have any problems.

Do we have to be fit?

Just normally fit for life. We will be walking each day with light to medium weight back packs with our lunch and some team equipment in. You will need to be able to put up with normal camp life.

Do we have to help the expedition; putting up tents, washing up, cooking, etc?

No, there is no need to help with the chores although our guides will encourage it as it does constitute part of the overall expedition experience.

How is this different from normal adventure or wildlife holidays?

We will access areas that are far more remote and wild than any normal "holiday" of this type would do. These are areas where Jim McNeill has guided the BBC to make wildlife films and where the occasional scientist will be met.

What happens about booking flights?

So as to avoid any possible repayments and cancellations we accumulate the minimum number of expedition team members and then arrange the flights for you, passing on our preferential rates wherever applicable (and we do get very good rates north of Ottawa!). We then inform you of how and who to pay and ask you to let us know when you have received confirmation of your bookings. We will either have an IWG on the same flight or meet your incoming flight and guide you through to our hotel in Ottawa.

What are the risks involved?

There are inherent risks involved when really immersing yourself in a highly remote environment alongside wildlife. We have a continual briefing and practice system with comprehensive plans to evacuate individuals or the whole team if necessary. A full Safety Strategy will be sent to you before departure.

How do we communicate with civilisation?

We have a special method and protocol for communications with home and a Communications Strategy will be sent to you before departure.

What to do right now. –

1. Provisionally book your place on the expedition – the enrolment form is below.
2. We will acknowledge your provisional booking, once we have received your deposit.
3. We will then send you the Joining Pack – with information, kit list, clothing list and plan of action.
4. We will keep you informed of all matters regarding the expedition and will be available to answer any questions that arise.
5. We will issue your final invoice and upon receipt confirm your place on the expedition.

ICE WARRIOR EXPEDITIONS LIMITED, hereinafter known as "The Company"

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By signing The Company's Enrolment Form you agree to comply with and be bound by the following Terms and Conditions. Once a completed Enrolment Form has been accepted by The Company the participants named on the Enrolment Form will have entered into a binding contract on the basis of the following Terms & Conditions. These Terms & conditions are subject to variation without prior consent in writing from The Company. Expeditions are known as activities.

Pricing

Unless otherwise indicated, the cost of The Company's activities are inclusive of all accommodation, meals, some beverages, licenses (where applicable), taxes and necessary transportation (except flights – see later). Costs do not include flights, travel insurance, visa fees, vaccinations, passports, excess baggage charges, meals and drinks taken in place of those provided.

We reserve the right to alter costs in response to a variety of conditions beyond our control. We will absorb the first 2% of any increase but thereafter will pass further increases on to you. Extreme environment travel costs can fluctuate dramatically so please be aware of this. All such surcharges have to be paid before embarkation.

Travel Delays

Travel in extreme environments is not easy and delays due to weather are frequently experienced. Extra costs incurred as a result of delays will be met by expedition members.

Payment

Full payment is required 8 weeks prior to commencement of activities. A deposit of £1,500 per person is required to secure a place before this time.

Insurance

All participants must ensure that they have taken out full and appropriate insurance for their particular activity and we require that copies of such insurance be sent to us as soon as possible after enrolment. We are able to advise on insurance for those who wish. All participants must be insured for search & rescue, medical costs and repatriation in an emergency. Baggage and personal effects are at the risk of the participant at all times.

Participant Conduct

Participants are expected to comply with the reasonable instructions and leadership of The Company's staff and conduct themselves in a reasonable manner at all times. The Company reserves the right to remove any participant from the activity at the staff's discretion and will not be liable to any losses as a result and is also entitled to any reasonable costs arising, payable upon demand.

Medical conditions and fitness

Participants must complete and sign a consent form prior to commencement. Medical information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence. The Company cannot be held responsible for illness occurring as a result of an ongoing medical condition or poor fitness level. If you have a medical condition The Company advises you to seek your own doctor's advice.

Complaints

Complaints will only be accepted during the activity period and should be brought to the attention of a member of staff who will endeavour to rectify any situation causing dissatisfaction. Should the cause of a complaint persist please notify us in writing within 28 days and we will endeavour to deal with the matter fairly and swiftly.

Cancellation of your Expedition – by you

If for any reason you wish to cancel your participation we must be notified in writing, on receipt of which, we will acknowledge your cancellation. The charges made by us, based on the date we received your written confirmation of cancellation are as follows: More than 56 days notice – deposit only
52-28 days notice – 60% of total cost
27-14 days notice – 80% of total cost
Less than 14 days notice – 100% of total cost

Proven exceptional circumstances will be considered, however, we advise you to have cancellation insurance.

Cancellation or Alterations – by us

The Company will not be responsible for any delays or alternations to the intended plan caused by illness, weather, strikes, war or threat of war, natural disaster, refusal of visas, riots, terrorism, political events or civil action affecting air or ground transport, or other events amounting to force majeure. We will send you details of alterations as soon as we are aware of them. Should we have to cancel the activities for reasons beyond our control (as above) then we will inform you without delay and shall offer a prompt refund of monies paid. We accept no liability for compensation beyond this refund. No refund will be made for any costs incurred by The Company up to this point. However, we will endeavour to obtain a refund ourselves for those costs and should we be successful then we will pass this on to you, less any administrative charges. Whilst safety will always be The Company's first concern, it is understood and acknowledged by the participants that The Company's activities are potentially hazardous as they may involve adventurous travel in remote and extreme environments. The Company reserves the right to cancel all and any activities without reason or notice. In this unlikely event The Company agrees to refund all monies in full.

Liability

The Company's activities are by nature never completely free from hazard. Whilst all reasonable precautions are taken to minimise the risks, participants accept that accidents, including serious injury and death can occur without The Company being at fault. Participants also recognise that The Company is not responsible for any loss or damage to the personal property of the participant, including money, clothing or equipment. The Company will only accept liability for physical injury to a client that is shown to result from negligence on the part of The Company and takes no responsibility for any loss or injury occurring as a result of the participant's failure to follow instruction and also takes no responsibility for any mishap during an activity from any instruction or information not given by The Company's staff. The participant also recognises that attendance on The Company's activities in no way qualifies him or her to teach the course content. The Company therefore accepts no responsibility for any mishap occurring to third parties taught by attendees of any Company course.

Equipment

Where clients are entrusted with the use and care of specialist equipment they may be made liable for payment arising from any loss or damage made as a result of misuse or negligence.

Miscellaneous

Participants must accept and abide by the decisions of The Company's staff and by signing the Enrolment Form agree to do so. All participants should be fit and in sufficiently good health to enjoy their chosen activities. If you have doubts about your health, please discuss this with us and we can advise. It is your responsibility to ensure that your passports and visas are valid and that you carry with you any vaccination certificates required for your journey. All contracts and matters arising from them shall be subject to English Law and the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts. Participants are required to sign the Enrolment Form acknowledging that they have read and fully understand and accept The Company's Terms & Conditions.



Enrolment Form

Please use BLOCK CAPITALS throughout

Contact Details

Title		Contact Tel.	
First Name		Email Address	
Surname		Date of Birth	
Address		Nationality	
		Passport No.	
Postcode		Expiry Date	
Country			

Payment

Expedition Ref:	Ice Warrior High Arctic Wildlife	IWA14	Please select
	I enclose a deposit of	£500.00	
	Or I enclose full payment of	£3995.00	
	Please make cheques payable to Ice Warrior Expeditions Ltd.		
	or transfer monies to: HSBC Bank Sort Code:40-43-50 Account number: 91418343 Contact us for IBAN & BIC codes for overseas payments		

Declaration

I have read and accepted the Terms and Conditions. I will be arranging adequate insurance and will forward copies to Ice Warrior Expeditions Ltd prior to commencement of activities.

Signed:

Date:

Print Name: