

# Ukkusiksalik National Park of Canada Pronounced “ooooo koo sik sa lik” (emphasis on the “sik”)

## Location

Ukkusiksalik National Park is located just south of the community of Repulse Bay and the Arctic Circle. The park surrounds Wager Bay, a 100 km long saltwater inlet on the northwest coast of Hudson Bay in Nunavut. Declared a national park on August 23, 2003, Ukkusiksalik became Canada’s 41st national park. Named after the soapstone found within its boundaries, the park includes 20 500 km<sup>2</sup> of eskers, mudflats, cliffs, rolling tundra banks and unique coastal regions. While the Inuit do hunt in the region, the parkland is uninhabited. Inuit had lived in the area from 1000 AD through to the 1960s, and the Hudson’s Bay Company had a trading post there from 1925-1947. Over 500 archaeological sites have been identified in the park, including such features as fox traps, tent rings, and food caches. The park protects a representative sample of the Central Tundra Natural Region. Ukkusiksalik is located in the Northern Arctic Ecozone.

## Climate

The park’s marine arctic climate is characterized by low precipitation levels coupled with low temperatures and high winds. The most significant climatic factor is wind. The wind combined with the low temperatures produces some of the highest wind chill factors in North America and the most blowing snow. Hudson Bay influences the area’s climate by creating a heat sink in the summer. On shore winds create fog in the summer and snow storms in the fall. The ice remains on the Bay until late July.

The seasons include: November to May = short days, low temperatures, and high wind chills; May to September = long days, cool to warm temperatures; September to November = below freezing temperatures, storm tracks and increasing wind chills.



A park map is currently  
being produced.

## ◆ Geology

The park is comprised of tundra superimposed on the Canadian Shield - a characteristic that makes this region stand out. The landscape is remarkably uniform - an endless series of low ridges, broken by a myriad of jigsaw-puzzle lakes and broad rivers. Evidence of surging Pleistocene glaciers is found throughout the region. Eskers wind across the land. Old beaches and deposits of marine clay over 200 metres above present sea level show that the entire region must have been awash in gigantic lakes and rivers at the melting of the last great ice sheets. Wager Bay has distinct features which include 8 metre high tides and strong tidal action that produces a dramatic reversing waterfall. In addition, two areas of salt water remain open year-round, contributing to the rich marine life found in the park.

## 🌿 Vegetation

The entire region is characterized by an almost continuous cover of low tundra vegetation consisting of dwarf birch, willow, Labrador tea, mountain avens and other tundra flowers, and various species of the blueberry clan. A broken fringe of boreal forest clings to sheltered river valleys.



## 🐾 Wildlife

The wildlife of Ukkusiksalik National Park which has attracted hunters to this area since ancient times, still abounds. Here is the world of the Pleistocene, or as close as one can get to it today - a world where the wildlife remains in its primeval state. Polar bears congregate here in summer and can regularly be seen along the shore. Arctic wolves hunt among vast herds of caribou, barren-ground grizzlies patrol their riverbank domains, and polar bears cruise the coast of Hudson Bay hunting for seals. Inland from the Hudson Bay coast, muskox bulls can be seen. Along the Arctic coast, untold numbers of geese, snow geese, tundra swans and other waterfowl nest and moult. Overhead, golden eagles, bald eagles, gyrfalcons, peregrine falcons, rough-legged hawks and other birds of prey soar.

## 🚶 Important Information

The park is accessible by scheduled flights from either Winnipeg or Yellowknife via Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, and on to Repulse Bay. It is highly recommended that visitors hire a local outfitter to take them into the park due to the high polar bear population. There are great areas within the park for hiking and wildlife viewing. Contact the office below prior to planning a visit.

For more information, contact:  
Nunavut Field Unit Office of Parks Canada  
P.O. Box 278  
Iqaluit, Nunavut  
X0A 0H0  
Telephone: (867) 975-4673  
Fax: (867) 975-4674  
Web site: [www.pc.gc.ca](http://www.pc.gc.ca)