



Lighthouse at Dalvay in Cavendish, on the north side of Prince Edward Island

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

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ESTABLISHED 1937

22 sq km/5,440 acres

Prince Edward Island National Park spans a spectacular stretch of land encompassing sand dunes, salt marshes, remnants of an Acadian forest, coastal headlands, beaches, and sandstone cliffs. This is the land that inspired Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* and prompted an oil tycoon to build an elegant Victorian home. Both Green Gables and Dalvay-by-the Sea are national treasures and showcased within the park.

Approximately 285 million years ago, a mountain chain existed in this region. Over time, its rivers deposited gravel, silt, and sand into a low-lying basin forming sandstone bedrock. As the glaciers retreated, Prince Edward Island gradually took shape.

Situated on the central north shore of Prince Edward Island, the park faces the Gulf of St. Lawrence,

where sunsets are storybook perfect. Although one of the smallest parks in Canada, it's a popular destination, with famous beaches and outstanding coastal landscapes. The other attraction is the lure of Lucy Maud Montgomery through her beloved 1908 novel, *Anne of Green Gables*.

The park's ecosystems support a variety of animal species and 400

different species of plants. Although there are no deer or moose on the island, coyotes, red foxes, raccoons, beavers, mink, and weasels are common. With more than 300 species of birds, including the endangered piping plover, the park plays a significant role in shorebird migration in spring and fall.

In 1998, the park expanded to include 4 sq km (990 acres) on the Greenwich Peninsula where rare, U-shaped dunes known as parabolic dunes are located. This is also the region where archaeological digs revealed that Paleo-Indians lived here 10,000 years ago. Evidence indicates that Mi'kmaq, French, Acadian, Scottish, Irish, and English were also early settlers here.

The park is bordered by a number of traditional farming and fishing communities, which adds to the cultural fabric of the island and enhances the visitor's experience.

### How to Get There

A number of airlines fly into Charlottetown, the island's capital. Direct service is available from Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa with seasonal direct service from Boston, Detroit, and New York. Connecting service is available every day from Halifax International Airport.

If you are driving, there are two ways to approach the island. One is to take the 12.9-km-long (8 mi) bridge—the longest bridge over ice-covered water in the world—from Cape Jourimain in New Brunswick to Borden-Carleton on Prince Edward Island. The other is to board Northumberland Ferries ([www.peiferry.com](http://www.peiferry.com)) for a 75-minute sail from Caribou, Nova Scotia, over to Wood Islands.

### When to Go

Beach lovers and families will want to visit during July and August, when

daytime temperatures range from 18° to 24°C (64°–75°F) and nights are warm. Park activities run full tilt during the operational season (late June–Sept.).

If you prefer solitude, spring and fall are the best seasons for hiking, kayaking, cycling, and bird-watching. Average daytime temperatures in both spring and fall range from 9° to 18°C (48°–64°F) during the day and 5° to 10°C (41°–50°F) at night. The fall tends to be balmy and quite warm until mid-October.

Birders have lots to observe in the park year-round; highlights include migration and nesting seasons. Seasonal dates determined by the migratory habits of most birds are: mid-March to late May (northerly migration), early June to mid-August (nesting season), and mid-August to mid-December (southerly migration).

If you are interested in adding culinary travel to your park experience, the island hops with a special food festival called **Fall Flavours** during the month of September. The annual **Fall Frolic** hosted by the Parks and People Association features pumpkin carving and is fun for all ages.

During the winter, many trails are kept open and maintained. A pair of skis or snowshoes is all you will need to disappear into a unique wonderland. Access to facilities such as washrooms and visitor services may be limited outside the summer season.

### How to Visit

There are three distinct segments of the park: **Cavendish**, **Brackley-Dalvay**, and **Greenwich**, each with its own unique characteristics. You'll need a vehicle to get from one to another. Once you have arrived, however, the best way to enjoy the park is by foot or bike.

Visitors to the Cavendish and Brackley-Dalvay sectors of the park

will find supervised beaches, campgrounds, and a number of trails of easy to moderate difficulty adapted to both hiking and cycling.

Both Cavendish and Stanhope have full-service campgrounds; organized groups can contact the park to arrange for group camping at a unique campsite and day-use area. There is no camping offered at Greenwich, but private accommodations are located close by and it's only a 30- to 40-minute drive to Stanhope or Brackley. Natural and cultural history really come alive at evening campfire activities held at **Cavendish** and **Stanhope Campgrounds**, where interpreters present the park's heritage through storytelling and skits with the aid of costumes and music.

Along with your camp gear, consider bringing a kite. With all the wide-open spaces and gentle breezes, kite flying is a snap. Field glasses are also a good thing to have along as there's always something that you'll want to see up close and personal. Tracking animals is especially fun.

In-park interpretive activities such as guided walks, geocaching programs, and evening campfire presentations are listed in the visitor guide and posted throughout the park during the summer peak season. All activities are presented in both French and English and are delivered by experienced and engaging interpreters. Programs and activities change on a daily basis.

The key is to talk with park personnel. Find one of the many uniformed staff persons and ask for suggestions of things to do and places to go. They always have great ideas. Don't be surprised if one of the staff invites you to come along and see a hidden treasure or shares with you a favourite place. Known to be friendly, islanders are also a good source of information.

Guided walks along trails in Cavendish and Greenwich are always a big hit. The focus is usually on wildlife, ecology, and other natural features of protected coastal areas,

as well as the rich cultural history of Prince Edward Island's north shore.

Interpretive signage throughout the park enhances self-guided hikes and provides insights into the natural and cultural significance of each area.

## CAVENDISH

*a full day*

If you are approaching from Confederation Bridge, head to Cavendish to experience **Green Gables Heritage Place** (separate fee applies). Kids love the puppet show and old-fashioned games and races. You'll also want to visit the home of Lucy Maud Montgomery (1874–1942). The bucolic setting has not changed since the author lived here.

Top up your day with a stroll or swim at the beach, famous worldwide for its sweeping shores and endless vistas. Golfers can enjoy a round at **Green Gables Golf Course**, designed in 1939 by Stanley Thompson, one of the world's most celebrated golf

course architects. Or, if you like to run, walk, hike, or bike, select one of six unique trails to explore, such as the 8.8-km (5.5 mi) **Homestead Trail** and the wooded trail network at **Cavendish Grove**.

## BRACKLEY TO DALVAY

*a full day*

Bird-watchers will want to start the day at **Brackley**, where **Covehead Wharf** offers the best place for shorebird-watching, especially at low tide, when exposed mudflats become popular feeding and resting grounds for dozens of species.

This is also one of the nesting grounds of the endangered piping plover, which is monitored and protected by Parks Canada resource conservation staff in closed-off sections. These sections offer excellent vantage points to observe the bird without posing a threat; if they are not present, many other species will equally delight. Check with park staff about





Greenwich Dunes Trail

weekly bird-watching activities led by experienced interpreters. Checklists are available at visitor centres, campgrounds, and entrance kiosks.

**Covehead Lighthouse** and the surrounding shoreline make for an interesting stop between Stanhope and Dalvay-by-the-Sea. Look for the plaque on the lighthouse commemorating the infamous Yankee Gale storm of 1851, which wrecked close to one hundred ships and claimed the lives of more than 150 sailors. On the **Bubbling Springs** and **Farmlands Trails**, look for the unmarked gravestones that mark the resting place of the sailors who perished in that storm.

In the afternoon, picnic or swim at **Ross Lane Beach**. Or drive over to **Dalvay-by-the-Sea** for high tea. Enjoy the famous sticky date pudding at this national historic site while admiring the building's exquisite late Victorian-style architecture.

Hikers will find eight trails in this part of the park including **Gulf Shore Way**, which spans 10 km (6 mi) from Brackley to Dalvay-by-the-Sea and is also suitable for in-line skating. Walking or biking even part of this trail

provides excellent views of the park's coastal ecosystems, and there are several stopping points and observation posts along the way. Bike rentals are available at Dalvay-by-the-Sea.

The **Reeds & Rushes Trail** is also hugely popular. Hike the trail early in the morning or around dusk and you may see some beavers. Just about any time of day you'll see hundreds of dragonflies including sedge sprites, wandering gliders, and ruby meadowhawks.

## GREENWICH

*a full day*

If you enter the island from Nova Scotia and have only one day to spend in the park, head for Greenwich. Although Greenwich is part of the park system, it is one of the island's best kept secrets, and it can be far less crowded than Cavendish or Brackley-Dalvay. Nevertheless, it has a full range of services including beach supervision, washrooms, change rooms, and showers as well as an indoor resting and picnic area.

Increasingly, outdoor-activity lovers are including the Greenwich portion of the park into their itinerary. Start your visit at the **Greenwich Interpretation Centre**, where you'll find a variety of interactive exhibits geared toward all ages—such as the **Salt Water Touch Tank**, with walk-over three-dimensional floor map and coastal environmental exhibit—that showcase the natural features and ecology of the park. Moreover, these exhibits highlight the rich cultural history of the Greenwich area, which has been inhabited by different cultural groups over the past 10,000 years. Along with the exhibit there's a Mi'kmaq People interpretive program and an informative 12-minute multimedia presentation that will catapult you back in time. Kids can also sign up for the new Parks Canada Xplorer Program.

Your visit to Greenwich won't be complete until you go for a hike on the **Greenwich Dunes Trail**. The longest and most popular of the three trails in this part of the park, the Greenwich Dunes Trail is a 4.5-km (3 mi) return trail of moderate difficulty that features an interesting floating

boardwalk. Along the trail you'll discover different ecosystems including field, forest, wetlands, and coastal systems while enjoying breathtaking views of Greenwich's parabolic dune system and associated counter ridges, or *Gegenwalle*—all rare dune formations.

The Greenwich Dunes Trail also leads to one of Prince Edward Island's most spectacular beaches. While unsupervised and not recommended for swimming, it boasts breathtaking views of the parabolic dune system. Upon your return, you will still have time for a stroll or swim on the supervised main beach at **Greenwich**.

The short, 1.25-km (0.8 mi) **Havre St. Pierre Trail** leads you to interpretive signage on an observation deck that explains the history of St. Peter's Bay and the rope-cultured mussel harvest that is part of the economic fabric of the island. The trail is wheelchair accessible.

The third trail, **Tlaqatik**, runs an easy 4.5 km (2.8 mi) through the dunes with terrific views of the bay.



A summer sunset on the island's beach





Great blue herons, Tracadie Bay

## KAYAKING

One of the more interesting ways to take in the natural beauty of Prince Edward Island National Park is to kayak segments of the coastline. Consider paddling between **Tracadie Bay** and **Blooming Point**. **Covehead Bay** and **Brackley Bay** are also great spots, as is **New London Harbour**. Although not as well-known, **St. Peter's Bay** and the rivers that flow into the bay, such as the **Morell**, **St. Mary's**, and **St. Peter's**, offer many kayaking pleasures.

Park staff can advise you about where to launch your boat and can also make suggestions on how to navigate the waters safely. Although you can't rent a kayak in the park, there are reputable outfitters in the nearby communities who have excellent gear for rent; some even offer day trips.

## LONGER STAYS

### 3 days

For an extended visit, consider any combination of the above scenarios. For example, you may want to spend one full day in the Cavendish area, checking out Green Gables Heritage

Place, relaxing on the beach, and hiking or cycling along the Homestead or Gulf Shore Way. Finish the day by taking part in an interpretive walk or enjoying an evening campfire.

A second day would give you a chance to explore the Brackley-Dalvay area and uncover its natural and cultural history, perhaps by taking in a popular bird-watching activity at Covehead Wharf or a guided pond walk in nearby Dalvay. Check the interpretive activity schedule, or visit these areas on your own if you've brought along binoculars and an appropriate bird or field guide.

Another full day can easily be spent exploring Greenwich, especially if the weather is fine.

## VISITING IN WINTER

During the winter season, ice along the north shore gives the impression that the beach extends forever into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Snowshoeing to the **Greenwich Dunes** is a breathtaking hike as is skiing on the groomed trails in Cavendish or Brackley-Dalvay. Skating on **Dalvay Lake** on a crisp winter day is also a great family activity.

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

(Parc national de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard)

### INFORMATION & ACTIVITIES

#### VISITOR & INFORMATION CENTRES

**Cavendish Destination Centre** Open May to September. **Greenwich Interpretation Centre** Open June to September.

#### SEASONS & ACCESSIBILITY

Park open year-round. Full services available in July and August.

#### HEADQUARTERS

2 Palmers Lane, Charlottetown, PE C1A 5V8. Phone (902) 672-6350. [www.parks.canada.gc.ca/pei](http://www.parks.canada.gc.ca/pei).

#### FRIENDS OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

**Parks & People Association** P.O. Box 1506, Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N3. Phone (902) 894-4246. [parksandpeople@pei.aibn.com](mailto:parksandpeople@pei.aibn.com); <http://parksandpeople.ca>.

#### ENTRANCE FEES

\$8 per person, \$20 per group per day; \$39 per person, \$98 per group per season.

#### PETS

Pets must be leashed and attended at all times. Dogs are not permitted on the beaches from April to mid-October.

#### ACCESSIBLE SERVICES

Brackley Beach is wheelchair accessible, and a beach wheelchair is available free of charge for wheelchair users who wish to explore the shoreline.

#### THINGS TO DO

Public interpretive activities are available throughout the park and **Green Gables Heritage Place** in the summer. Green Gables Heritage Tour (\$8 per person, \$20 per group per day; \$4 per person, \$10 per group Nov.-April).

The park also offers seven beaches for swimming; surfguards are on duty from late June to late August. Canoeing and kayaking are available on the ponds and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; motorized watercraft are not permitted.

In winter, cross-country skiing is available on the **Woodlands** and **Bubbling**

**Springs Trails** and on the **Cavendish Grove Ski Trail**; warm-up shelters and washrooms are located nearby. Skating is available on **Dalvay Lake**. Call (902) 672-6350 for snow and ice conditions.

The private 18-hole **Green Gables Golf Course** is located within the park boundaries. Call (902) 963-4653 or (888) 870-5454 or visit [www.andersonscreek.com](http://www.andersonscreek.com).

#### SPECIAL ADVISORIES

- When swimming, watch for heavy surf, deep channels, currents, rocks, shallow sandbars, and rip currents.
- Do not get too close to the edges of the cliffs, as the rocks are eroding quickly.
- Arctic red jellyfish in the Gulf of St. Lawrence may sting. If you are stung while swimming, rub wet sand over the irritated area.
- Watch for poison ivy in some parts of the park.

#### CAMPGROUNDS

Campgrounds open June to October. Maximum number of persons per site is six. For reservations call (877) 737-3783 or visit [www.pccamping.ca](http://www.pccamping.ca). \$35 for serviced campsites with electricity, water, and sewer; \$32 for serviced campsites with electricity and water; \$26 for unserviced campsites with washroom building (toilets and showers); and \$27 for unserviced high-occupancy sites at Stanhope and Cavendish campgrounds.

**Stanhope**, fire pits at some sites; showers; playground, laundry, and kitchen shelters. On-site interpretive programs in July and August. **Cavendish**, more than 200 sites, beach on-site, fire pits at some sites, showers, playground, and laundry. On-site interpretive programs in July and August. Group camping is available for organized groups. Contact the park for reservations and rates.

## HOTELS, MOTELS, & INNS

(unless otherwise noted, rates are for a 2-person double, high season, in Canadian dollars)

### Outside the park:

**Greenwich Gate Lodge** (877) 961-3496. [www.greenwichgate.com](http://www.greenwichgate.com). \$119–\$169. Weekly cottage rental \$1,180.

**Johnson Shore Inn** 9984 Rte. 16, Hermanville, PE C0A 2B0. (902) 687-1340 or (877) 510-9669. <http://johnsonshoreinn.com>. \$175–\$350 breakfast included.

**Rodd Crowbush Golf & Beach Resort**

632 Rte. 350, Morell, PE C0A 1S0. (902) 961-5600. [www.rodshotelsandresorts.com](http://www.rodshotelsandresorts.com). 49 hotel units, \$130–\$315; 32 cottages, \$195–\$590 for one to four occupants. Open mid-May to mid-October. **Shaw's Hotel** 99 Apple Tree Rd., Brackley Beach, PE C1E 1Z3. (902) 672-2022. [info@shawhotel.ca](mailto:info@shawhotel.ca); <http://shawhotel.ca>. \$145–\$350 for rooms, suites, and cottages.

### For additional visitor information:

**Prince Edward Island Tourism** (902) 368-4444 or (800) 463-4734, [www.tourismpei.com](http://www.tourismpei.com).

## EXCURSIONS

### ARDGOWAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

CHARLOTTETOWN, PE



This site was the home of William Henry Pope, one of the Fathers of Confederation. It was also the scene of lavish entertaining during the historic Charlottetown Conference. Pope was an avid gardener and the property reflects his passion. Visitors are encouraged to stroll around the grounds and have a picnic. Parks Canada administrative offices are located inside. (902) 566-7050.

### PORT-LA-JOYE—FORT AMHERST NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

ROCKY POINT, PE



Established in 1720, this site was originally a French outpost. Later it served as a British fort and also as the administrative capital of the island until 1768, when the capital was moved to Charlottetown. Located in Rocky Point on Rte. 19, the grassy ruins of the fort are still visible. Enjoy guided walks, interpretive events, animated theatre skits, and a great view of Charlottetown harbour. (902) 566-7626. 2.6 km (1.6 mi) south of Charlottetown via Capital Drive/Hwy. 1.

### DALVAY-BY-THE-SEA NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND NP, PE



Located on Rte. 6 in Prince Edward Island National Park, this Queen Anne Revival-style home was built in 1896 as a summer residence for Alexander McDonald, a Scottish-American oil tycoon. Dalvay-by-the-Sea now operates as a resort inn. Learn about the fascinating features of this home, how it was constructed, and the extravagant lifestyle of the original owner. (902) 566-7626. 35 km (21.9 mi) east of Cavendish via Hwy. 13.

### L. M. MONTGOMERY'S CAVENDISH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

CHARLOTTETOWN, PE



This site includes Lucy Maud Montgomery's Cavendish Home and Green Gables Heritage Place, where the world-renowned author drew the inspiration to write *Anne of Green Gables*—the first of 23 novels. View a film and exhibits at the visitor centre, enjoy guided activities, and stroll to Montgomery's gravesite. Close by are the Haunted Wood Trail and Lovers Lane, featured in her books. (902) 963-7874. Palmers Lane Cavendish.

### PROVINCE HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

CHARLOTTETOWN, PE



Although July 1, 1867, marks the birth of Canada, delegates met for the first time in Province House in September 1864 to discuss the future of the British colonies in North America. No formal records of the Charlottetown Conference exist—only letters. But, guided tours, displays, and an audiovisual presentation help visitors imagine the deliberations in the original library setting. (902) 566-7626. 2.5 km (1.5 mi) south park headquarters corner of Richmond & Great George.