



Wapusk National Park

So much more than polar bears

Polar bear mothers and cubs wrestle on snowy tundra just metres from your big-wheeled Tundra Buggy - remote **Wapusk National Park** on Hudson's Bay is one of the world's biggest polar bear denning sites. Scientists, too, are watching the bears as well as the effects of climate change on the environment.

The north-eastern corner of Manitoba also offers glimpses of the Cape Churchill caribou herd, remnants of 3,000 years of Inuit, Dene and Cree culture, and two unique outposts from the drama-filled 18th Century Hudson's Bay Company fur-trading days.



Photo: Thorsten Milse

Wapusk is remote with limited access, but at the Heritage Railway Station in the colourful gateway community of Churchill is Parks Canada's fact and experience-filled visitor centre. Check in for special presentations like lecture series showcasing park research and insightful talks and workshops by visiting scientific researchers who bring the area to life.

Although the bears famously gather en masse in the fall, they also show up throughout the short northern summer when there are so many other things to do in the region:

- A grand white building eerily alone near the Hudson Bay coast, **York Factory National Historic Site** was the epicentre of fur-trade to Europe for 250 years. Archaeologists are unearthing secrets from the permafrost beside scientists researching how to halt riverbank erosion.





- Massive, star-shaped 18th Century stone fortification perched at the mouth of the Churchill River, **Prince of Wales Fort National Historic Site** is an impressive peek into French/English rivalry in a far-flung land, a place filled with stories of hardships, fortitude and early expeditions of exploration.
- Etched in elegant 18th Century script into lichen-covered bedrock are the names of HBC men including Samuel Hearne, at **Sloop Cove**, a sheltering spot and natural dry dock for wooden trading vessels.
- Trek amid the craggy remains of a cannon battery and powder magazine, the backdrop for world-class bird watching at **Cape Merry Battery**, a harsh arctic landscape alive with an abundance of berries and flowers.

