




FRIENDS OF ACADIA

Volunteers Collect 514 Bags of Trash During FOA's 25th Earth Day Roadside Cleanup

Over 250 volunteers came together on Saturday, April 25 for Friends of Acadia's 25th annual Earth Day Roadside Cleanup, collecting 514 bags of trash from roadsides around Mount Desert Island and Trenton. "It was a beautiful day, and people really came together to care for our community," said Brian Sale, Friends of Acadia's stewardship manager.



Volunteers gathered at 11 locations across Mount Desert Island and Trenton before spreading out along 40 miles of state roads, wearing safety vests and carrying trash bags. On foot, they combed the roadsides for what winter had left behind, collecting plastic takeout containers, cans, hubcaps, bumpers, clothing, Styrofoam, and smaller pieces of debris.

[>>See more photos and learn more about this year's event](#)

Cultural Fusion Fest Tonight, May 14!

The third annual [Cultural Fusion Fest](#) will take place Thursday, May 14, 2026, from 4 to 7:30 p.m. at the YWCA MDI, 36 Mount Desert St. This free, family-friendly event is open to all and invites both seasonal workers and year-round residents to come together in celebration of culture, community, and connection. Friends of Acadia is proud to sponsor this event again this year.



MDI Wheelers – Call for Volunteers and Season Starting June 4

MDI Wheelers is a volunteer-led nonprofit organization that provides safe, comfortable, and free rides on special electric-assist trikes for people who would like a ride on Acadia's carriage roads but need assistance.

The 2026 season begins on June 4, and volunteers are needed to help make this year a success. If you'd like to volunteer, there will be a training session this Saturday, May 16 at 9:00 AM near the Eagle Lake boat ramp. [Learn more about volunteering here.](#)



If you or someone you love would like to schedule a ride with MDI Wheelers, [click here.](#)

Acadia Gateway Center Opening May 20 PLUS New Early-Season Bus Routes Into the Park

[Decades of planning and persistence came to fruition last September as the doors opened to visitors at the newly completed Acadia Gateway Center.](#) It reopens for the season on May 20.



Located along Route 3 in Trenton, this facility welcomes visitors to Downeast Maine and Acadia National Park. As an intermodal transportation center, it's the perfect place to park your car, purchase your park pass, learn about places to visit, and hop on the Island Explorer bus.

The design of the visitor center and transit hub went through several revisions over the years to improve efficiency, lower construction costs, and incorporate new technologies. The project was funded primarily by the Federal Transit Administration with additional support from the National Park Service, Friends of Acadia, Efficiency Maine, and the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT).

There will be even more opportunities to hop on the bus with [three routes beginning before Memorial Day](#), a first in the nearly 20 year history of the Island Explorer.

[>>See the route schedules on Downeast Transportation's website](#)

[>>Learn how new seasonal housing is helping the Island Explorer hire and expand](#)

Pints for a Purpose Begins May 21

Gather around the fireplace, sip a beer, and hear stories about the history and future of Acadia National Park and Mount Desert Island.

From May 21 to October 15, we gather in the main lodge at Terramor every Thursday at 5:30 p.m. for an informative talk and discussion, camaraderie, and delicious refreshments.



This free series is hosted by Friends of Acadia. All are welcome to attend and \$1 of every beer purchased benefits FOA!

Here are the first few events of the season ([click here](#) for the full schedule):

- **May 21: Becca Stanley**, FOA's Recreation Technician Manager - Learning More About Anemone Cave and the Acadia Gateway Center
 - **May 28: Rich MacDonald** - Conversation with an Ornithologist: Migration and the Movement of Birds
 - **June 4: Amanda Pollock**, Acadia National Park's Deputy Chief of Interpretation - The Frances Perkins National Monument
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Backyard Stewards Workshop Series

In Acadia National Park, scientists and resource managers work hard to slow the spread of invasive plants. But plants don't stop at park boundaries. These invasive species can be found all over Mount Desert Island, from roadsides to landscaped gardens.



Join Friends of Acadia and partners in this summer workshop series to learn how to identify and remove key invasive plants on Mount Desert Island and support local biodiversity. Whether you're a beginner botanist or ready to get your hands dirty, everyone is welcome to participate.

There will be three workshops at various MDI locations on June 6, July 25, and August 20. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Video: Cadillac Connector Trail Project Updates

Your patience has been greatly appreciated as work continues to complete the first phase of construction for the Cadillac East-West Connector Trail. Funded by FOA, the project will create a safe, accessible pedestrian connection between the summit's two parking lots and visitor areas while helping protect the mountain's fragile native vegetation.



[We were able to go behind the scenes of this project to give you a sneak peek of what we are working on.](#)

Team Acadia at National Park Foundation's Hill Day 2026

Eric Stiles, president and CEO of Friends of Acadia, joined leaders from Schoodic Institute, Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters, and Frances Perkins Center for the National Park Foundation's Hill Day 2026 on April 29.



More than 200 Friends Alliance members and other park supporters gathered in Washington, D.C., to share with legislators why national parks need continued congressional support and federal investment.

Thank you to the National Park Foundation for organizing this important day. We are proud to stand alongside other park friends groups to help ensure that our national parks are protected for generations to come.

Upcoming Events, Park Openings, and Save the Dates:

(Friends of Acadia events in **bold**)

- May 14: [Healthy Acadia's Cultural Fusion Fest](#)
- May 20: Vehicle reservations required for Cadillac Summit Road
- **May 21: [Pints for a Purpose speaker series begins](#)**
- May 24: Wildwood Stables opens - accessible carriage rides available
- **June 2: [Drop-In Stewardship Program begins](#)**
- **June 13: [Wild Gardens of Acadia Plant Sale](#)**
- June 14: Sieur de Monts Nature Center opens
- June 15: Islesford Museum opens
- **June 24: [Save Our Summits hikes begin](#)**
- **July 8: [FOA Annual Meeting & 40th Anniversary Celebration](#)**
- **Aug 8: [FOA's Annual Benefit & Auction](#)**



In Case You Missed It:

[>>FOA's Lisa Horsch Clark Receives 2026 Outstanding Development Professional Award](#)

[>>A study is underway to address the need for a coordinated network of snow monitoring stations in the region](#)

Until next month,



Header photo: The sun sets over Cadillac and Dorr Mountains, illuminating Huguenot Head as Caroline Walther of Friends of Acadia hikes the Beachcroft Trail on the backside of Champlain Mountain in Acadia National Park. (Rhiannon Johnston/Friends of Acadia)



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