

PALEONTOLOGY OF THE ALEXANDER ARCHIPELAGO

Alaska, USA

Program Information

PROGRAM SPECIFIC FIELD CONDITIONS

What are the average weather conditions during the time of the field school?

Alaska can have cool weather with rain on and off. Be prepared for changeable weather with appropriate clothing and footwear. We recommend bringing layers to maintain comfort, as it could be quite warm during the day and quite cool at night. Good footwear with grippy soles (textured rubber) to wear on the ship is very important, as the deck of the ship can get slippery. We will search for fossils in any weather. See the equipment section for recommendations. The ship will anchor in protected areas along the coast, though some rocking of the boat is to be expected at anchor and when underway.

Please describe the site(s) where the students will work.

Students will be working outside along pristine wilderness coastline within the Alexander Archipelago. The beaches are rocky and sandy, and rubber boots are essential to keep feet dry (see the equipment section for recommendations).

Are there special features of the program site?

This research program takes place online and aboard a research vessel. Personal space is limited, and participants will live collectively. A positive attitude, flexibility and openness to others are essential to a tight research crew. Students will share a bunk room on the ship and will have rotating duties, including meal preparation, cleaning and watch duties. There are spaces on the ship to study, eat, and relax, but students should be prepared for limited privacy.

We will have safety orientations onboard the ship, including how to move safely between the research vessel and shore boats, and from shore boats to land. We will be underway on the water for the majority of the in person portion of the program. Students must always act with the safety of everyone on board in mind. This team approach to exploration is very rewarding, and can lead to lasting friendships, but it is not for everyone. If you have concerns about life on the ship, please talk with your program director.

Will there be other people onsite with the field school or working in the same area?

It is unlikely that students will have any contact with people not associated with the expedition during the trip.

What does an average week look like ?

Field work will take place daily. Meals will take place on board Endeavour, and snacks will be available when working on shore. A typical day will consist of breakfast followed by fieldwork on shore, a break for lunch, more field work on shore, followed by dinner. Lectures and discussions will be held in the evenings and while the ship is underway.

What are the options for students to access money?

Cash will not be needed on board, but students should have some cash for arrival and departure.

ACTIVITY LEVEL & ACCESSIBILITY

Please provide information about the physical requirements of the program.

Students should expect to walk and hike along the coast as we explore, which can include uneven and slippery surfaces, crossing streams and marshes, and climbing over downed trees and rocks. There will be a moderate amount of such physical activity daily. Students will move from the research vessel to shore boats to land frequently. Students will also move around the ship, which involves climbing stairs, and participate in shared duties such as food preparation, cleaning, and watch duties.

Please comment how accessible your site is for people with mobility challenges. Due to the slippery, uneven terrain and the restricted spaces on board ship, this course is not suitable for someone with mobility challenges.

PROGRAM COUNTRY & CULTURAL INFORMATION

What do you love about the country and area you work in? What do you think students will be most excited to discover?

The field area consists of undeveloped wilderness with abundant wildlife and fossiliferous rocks. Doing field work in remote areas of Alaska while learning how to live aboard ship and support the Endeavour's crew are highlights that previous students have commented on.

How large is the community where students will be staying?

The students will only have contact with the members of the expedition.

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

Please describe student accommodations.

Everyone lives aboard the *Endeavor* during the field research component of the program. The ship is 72 feet long with bunk rooms and two heads, both with showers. The ship carries limited fresh water, therefore showers are available every two to three days and laundry is done once per trip. There is a salon and galley for food preparation, and an open-air deck for observing,

relaxing and group discussions. There is a small dog who shares the ship with us. You can learn more about the ship at: <https://www.alaskaendeavour.org/ship>.

Both wifi and cell phone connectivity is available on the ship, as well as radios for emergency communications.

Please describe how/how often students can do laundry.

Students will be able to do one load of laundry during the expedition.

How are room assignments made?

Cabins are fully remodeled two person cabins. Participants will have sufficient storage space in their cabins, but students are nevertheless encouraged to pack lightly (see the recommended packing list).

Are there options for single rooms?

No

Will the program provide meals?

Food is prepared in the ship's galley. Food will be purchased by the crew before departure. Students and crew will participate in food preparation on a pre-established rotation. Given the small size of the expedition, food can be purchased with student needs in mind. While we do our best to accommodate dietary restrictions, with limited space and access in the Alaskan wilderness, we cannot guarantee that every need can be met, but the crew is happy to work with participants to provide reasonable alternatives, solutions. There is a refrigerator on board for fresh foods, though we will also buy foods that are shelf-stable to last throughout the two weeks on the boat. Students will also participate in regular cleaning of common areas on the ship. We will live and study closely together, which requires cooperation and collaboration among all onboard.

TRAVEL (TO AND DURING THE PROGRAM)

If students will fly, what airport should they fly into?

Students should fly into Ketchikan, Alaska, arriving by 11:00 AM on May 15. Students will be met at the airport and brought to the research vessel *Endeavour*. Students will spend the next 10 days onboard the ship, transferring to shore boats to explore the coast. Students should plan to fly out of Juneau, Alaska, departing no earlier than mid-afternoon on May 26. Students will be transferred to the airport if desired.

If you missed your connection or your flight is delayed, please call, text or email your program director immediately. A local emergency mobile phone number will be provided to all enrolled students.

Where will you meet students? If not at a primary arrival point, like an airport, how should students get to the meeting point?

Students will need to take the short ferry ride from the Ketchikan airport on Gravina Island across to Ketchikan on Revillagigedo Island. From the ferry terminal, students can take a taxi or Uber to the marina. Prior to the travel date, we will notify students of the location of the *Endeavour* at the marina (once we know the marina and slip number where she will be docked).

PACKING LIST

Gear, Laundry, & Showers

- Storage on board is limited. Hard-sided suitcases are impractical on boats; please, **no hard suitcases**. Aim for one soft-sided pack or duffle bag plus a day pack. (Largest carry-on airlines accept is 22" x 14" x 9")
- Mark your rain gear, boots, water bottle, chargers, EarPods with your name.
- With limited water we do one load of laundry usually halfway through for essentials, and the truly dirty, and shower every third day. Showers need to be short, but the water is hot.

Gear Checklist:

- 1 pair 15" high rubber boots. Xtratuf, Grunden's Tidewe, are excellent, but less expensive alternatives are available. **Always pull-on, no laces. Don't bring shorter than 15" or your feet will be wet all day.**
- Rain jacket with hood (or a broad brimmed hat) and rain pants (Gore-Tex or similar waterproof material). (Ski jackets & pants are not waterproof and get soggy and don't dry quickly enough.
- 2 pairs of long pants of a quick-dry material. No cotton, including jeans.
- 3 long-sleeved shirts. Flannel, fleece, wool or any quick-dry material is great.
- 1 Merino wool or similar, for warmth layer and wicking.
- 6 pairs of underwear and socks. No cotton socks. Wool or wool blend is good.
- 1 pair tennis/running/boat shoes for wearing on the boat only
- Fleece vest, wool sweater, or similar. Avoid down, since once wet it's useless.
- Pajamas or fleece for sleeping or hanging out.
- Sunglasses (polarized is great for seeing below the water's surface).
- Plastic or stainless-steel water bottle. This will be your primary drinking glass on board
- A day pack, waterproof is great
- Toiletries
- Any prescriptions and medications you need, enough for the entire program duration.
- Dramamine or similar, if you are prone to seasickness. Non-drowsy is best. Ginger candy can help too.

Optional, but nice to have:

- Phone/tablet/laptop with chargers and cords.
- Gloves, or fingerless gloves
- Wool or other warm beanie
- Headlamp or LED flashlight
- Journal or sketchbook
- Noise-canceling headphones or earplugs (people snore)
- Alaska fishing license

Electronic games are specifically discouraged

We provide:

Bedding, linens and sleeping bags & pillow

Towels, soap, and shampoo.

Sunscreen

Fishing gear