

VISITING KATANNILIK BY WATER

The Soper River lends itself to a wide range of water activities. You can canoe, kayak or raft downriver from the Mt. Joy area. The best way to travel the river is to make frequent stops to explore the surrounding countryside. Take a hike up a side valley to see wildflowers which bloom in abundance in late July and early August. Examine the amazing growth of willow bushes along the valley bottom and side creeks. This scenic valley is a perfect place to pitch a tent and stay a few days.

The river is friendly and not suited to whitewater rafting. But water levels do fluctuate so be prepared for some portages. The length of your trip depends on your skill and the water levels.

There are many attractions around Soper Lake that can be reached in day trips from Kimmirut. One you won't want to miss is the Soper River Falls which funnel water from the river into Soper Lake, and the reversing falls.

More information is available at the Katannilik Park Office in Kimmirut, and online at www.nunavutparks.com

VISITING KATANNILIK BY LAND

The entire park is also ideal for hiking, the terrain is not all suitable for beginners. The length and difficulty of hikes vary greatly. You should be able to find a hike in Katannilik suitable for your skill level.

Hiking in the Soper River valley is gentle and friendly. Relatively easy two or three-day trips can be taken in the south end of Katannilik from Kimmirut to Shoog Lake or Mt. Flemming. You can reach Soper Falls from Kimmirut in an easy one-day hike. A popular trek is to fly into Mt. Joy from Iqaluit and hike the southern section of the Itijjagiq Trail to Kimmirut.

The Soper River, which can be dangerous to cross because of high water levels, water

temperatures, and a soft riverbed, is the only significant limitation to hiking. Crossings can only be attempted with safety in the upper reaches of the river beyond Mt. Joy.

A more ambitious route, geared to the experienced hiker, starts in the northern corridor on the south shore of Frobisher Bay and follows the 120 km Itijjagiq Trail to Kimmirut. A guide can be hired to take you to the trailhead by boat from Iqaluit. Expect a difficult climb on the north end of the trail. If you are not hiking all the way to Kimmirut, you must make arrangements for a boat trip back to Iqaluit.

If you are hiking the Itijjagiq, be sure to get a copy of the Guidemap from the Katannilik Park Office in Kimmirut, or through Nunavut Parks.

In spring or fall, you can arrange a snowmobile trip along the Itijjagiq Trail which has long been a winter travel route between Iqaluit and Kimmirut. Cross-country skiing and dogsledding trips are also possibilities. Visit www.nunavutparks.com to find a local guides or outfitters.

KIMMIRUT

While in the area, it's worth spending at least a day in Kimmirut. This picturesque Inuit settlement of 400 has a thriving arts and crafts community and many artists are internationally known for their detailed carvings. Visit the Soper House Gallery, next to the Katannilik Park Centre in Kimmirut to view and buy local arts and crafts.

A wide variety of geology, flora and fauna can be seen within a short distance of Kimmirut. Or take a trip to the nearby flow edge in sprint to watch sea mammals and birds and look for icebergs. There are many small bays and coves to explore.

During summer, boat trips can be arranged to see archaeological sites on the small islands around Kimmirut. Some of these



sites date back to 2500 BC. Remember, it is against the law to disturb or take artifacts from these sites.

Contact the Katannilik Park Centre for information about Kimmirut's attractions.

SAFE TRAVEL

Nunavut's Territorial Parks offer some of the most breathtaking scenery and magnificent wildlife imaginable, but there are risks when travelling in a remote area. You must be self-reliant and responsible for your own safety. The extreme environment can change quickly, challenge your survival skills and face you with an emergency. Also remember, when you travel in Nunavut you are in polar bear country. Polar bears are strong, fast and agile on ice, land and in water.

For more information on Safe and Sustainable Travel and Polar Bear Safety in Nunavut, please visit our website at www.nunavutparks.com

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Careful planning – starting before you leave home – is the key to a successful and enjoyable naturalist adventure in Katannilik Territorial Park.

For detailed information on planning your trip, the ‘Travelling’ Section of each park page on www.nunavutparks.com includes a list of guides and outfitters operating in Katannilik Territorial Park, accommodations in Iqaluit and Kimmirut, airline information and other trip planning information. You can also contact the Katannilik Park Centre in Kimmirut, or Nunavut Parks staff in Iqaluit.

Before planning your trip, we recommend you read the Nunavut Handbook, and the Itijjagiat or Soper River Guidemaps. These publications are available from the Katannilik Park Centre in Kimmirut, from Nunavut Tourism and the Unikkaarvik Centre in Iqaluit or by contacting Nunavut Parks & Special Places.

If you have any doubts about your skill level and experience, consider hiring a local guide or outfitter. For information, visit www.nunavutparks.com or contact the Katannilik Park Centre in Kimmirut.

REGISTRATION AND PERMITS

The registration and de-registration process has been established to help park visitors have a safe and enjoyable experience. It is mandatory for all visitors to the Soper Heritage River and Katannilik Territorial Park. Contact Nunavut Parks & Special Places, or the Katannilik Park Centre for information on registration and permits for carrying firearms in the park.

We require that you carry a satellite phone and a GPS with you through the park to allow us to provide you with updates on park conditions, polar bear sightings; and to allow you to relay information to us – especially in the case of an emergency where you will also need to pass on accurate location coordinates from your GPS. If you do not have a satellite phone, you can rent one from Nunavut Parks & Special Places. Be aware that local topography and weather conditions can limit reception.

Fishing is permitted anywhere in the park, but a license is required for non-Inuit. For information about fishing and hunting contact the Department of Environment Wildlife offices in Iqaluit or Kimmirut.

INUIT OWNED LANDS

There are several areas of Inuit Owned Lands (IOL) within and adjacent to Katannilik Territorial Park. It is expected that the extent and location of IOLs may change in keeping with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Please check with Nunavut Parks, or the Katannilik Park Centre to confirm IOL boundaries and any related access requirements.

In the Baffin region, access to Inuit Owned Lands is under the jurisdiction of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA). The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement permits travel across IOL for personal or casual travel to or from a place of recreation, for emergency purposes, and for water travel, to a 100-foot strip of IOL bordering the river. For further information regarding IOL in the Baffin, contact QIA.

CLIMATE

Arctic weather is unpredictable. Generally July is the warmest month, with clear blue skies and brief rain storms. By mid-August temperatures are cooler, the skies more overcast, and all-day drizzles are common. In September you can expect frost at night and a few snow flurries as well. Wind is a BIG factor in the Arctic. Light winds are a blessing that keep away mosquitoes. Strong winds of 50 to 70 kph can tear tents, tumble canoes and whip up white caps. The wind chill factor can have serious consequences for the unprepared. With a 52 kph wind, at 0 C, the wind is equal to 20! You can expect tail winds in the morning as the cool air from the highlands drops down the valley. By afternoon you will have headwinds to contend with as the sun-warmed valley air rises.



WATER LEVELS

By the end of May, the snow has melted off the land in the lower valley and south-facing slopes, overflowing the ice-choked river. In June, the ice on the Soper River breaks up and by the end of the month (sometimes as late as the first week of July), the ice on Soper Lake goes out. Throughout the summer, run off from snow melting in the highlands feeds the Soper River. Still, water levels can drop 30 cm (1ft.) a day; and can also rise quickly after a rain storm. This is important for river travelers to remember. The combination of the Soper River’s large drainage basin and the permafrost, which does not allow rain to soak into the ground, causes rain water to run off quickly. The water levels have been known to rise 1 ½ m (5ft.) after 4 days of rain!

WHEN TO VISIT

Generally, the hiking season starts when the snow melts in late May or early June and ends with the first snowfall in early September. However, don’t plan to hike the Itijjagiat Trail from the Frobisher Bay trailhead before mid-July. You can only get to the trailhead by boat from Iqaluit, and the ice doesn’t usually leave the bay until the first week in July.

FLOWERS AND BERRIES

If you want to see carpets of Arctic wildflowers, come in mid-July. You can still find the early June bloomers in “snowpatch communities” and the fall flowers are just starting to blossom. If you love berries, come in the middle-end of August. There are no poisonous berries, so taste them all: blueberries, crowberries, cranberries, and bearberries.

BUGS AND WILDLIFE

The good news is that there are no black flies, deer flies, sand flies, yellow jackets,

