

EXPEDITION TEAM PREVIEW:

High Arctic Explorer 2023

Meet some of our experienced expedition team members below. Please keep in mind that this is just a small glimpse of our team. You will have the opportunity to be accompanied by numerous other guides and experts as well.



Garry Donaldson
Ornithologist

Garry is a Canadian Wildlife Service biologist managing programs for migratory birds and the twenty-six Migratory Bird Sanctuaries and National Wildlife Areas in Atlantic Canada.

Garry grew up as an Air Force brat living in a diversity of military communities across Canada. Perhaps influenced by time spent in places like Moose Jaw and Goose Bay, an eventual path towards wildlife biology seemed logical. Most military bases contain wild areas, where Garry first explored woods and streams—influencing who he is today.

Whether car camping with family as a boy, or guiding Arctic white-water canoe and hiking journeys, experiencing nature has remained a theme through Garry's life. It was his guiding skills that lead to a short contract working on ropes at a Nunavut seabird cliff, where the first glimpse of the chaos and racket of 20,000 swarming seabirds sealed the deal. He has pursued education and a career in wildlife ever since.

Garry's current job with the Canadian Wildlife Service is mostly carried out from behind a desk in Sackville, New Brunswick—but he enthusiastically grabs every chance he can to escape on bird surveys or visits to National Wildlife Areas. He dabbles in photography and enjoys exploring wild places in his spare time. Each summer, Garry looks forward to travelling to the Arctic to share his passion for birds and conservation with others on Adventure Canada and Students on Ice expeditions.



Looee Okalik

Inuit Cultural Educator

Looee is an Inuit Cultural Educator from Panniqtuuq, Nunavut.

Ms. Looee Okalik is originally from Panniqtuuq, Nunavut. A trained educator and Inuit rights advocate, Looee has dedicated her life to the positive advancement of her fellow Inuit.

In recent years, Looee has been pivotal in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry as well as the Federal Day School Class Action processes. Throughout her life, Looee has celebrated Inuit excellence, promoted cross-circumpolar regional affairs of Inuit, and promoted Inuit culture, language and traditions.

In her spare time, Looee enjoys Inuit crafts, travelling, and spending time with her children and grandchildren.



James Raffan

Host

James is a writer, geographer, teacher, and seasoned adventurer with a particular passion for silent craft and the North.

James is a prolific writer, speaker, cultural geographer, and tireless advocate for the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough, Ontario. He has produced twenty books and written for film, radio, and media outlets including *Canadian Geographic*, *National Geographic*, *Explore*, *The Globe and Mail*, as well as for CBC and The Discovery Channel.

James is a Fellow International of the Explorers Club, a Past Chair of the Arctic Institute of North America, as well as a Fellow and Past Governor of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, for which he was awarded the Camsell Medal and the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals.

In 2017, he was awarded Canada's Sesquicentennial Medal and the Meritorious Service Medal from Governor General Julie Payette for continued commitment to the building of Canada through national service.

As an inveterate all-season adventurer and experiential educator, James has led expeditions throughout Canada and around the world by snowshoe, dogsled, bicycle, ski, snowmobile, kayak, Peterhead, nuclear-powered icebreaker (to the North Pole) and by canoe—most recently as the instigator of *Connected by Canoe*, an expedition to demonstrate the canoe as a vessel of reconciliation.

James is an interdisciplinarian and storyteller through and through and knows a little bit about a lot of things. If he's not driving a Zodiac, circling the midnight sun, giving presentations at sea or workshops on the land, serving as a bear guard, or stalking the wild Arctic asparagus, he's likely to be singing his heart out and wailing away on his guitar with any other musicians who happen to be near the bar.



Kaylee Baxter

Archaeologist

Kaylee is an Arctic archaeologist specializing in the Paleo-Inuit and Norse histories of the eastern Canadian Arctic and Greenland.

Kaylee completed her bachelor's degree in Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Toronto before completing her Master of Arctic Archaeology at the University of Calgary. During her three archaeology field seasons in South Greenland, Kaylee fell in love with the Arctic and its deep cultural history.

Kaylee's main research interests are the Dorset and Thule Paleo-Inuit cultures of the eastern Canadian Arctic and Greenland, as well as the history of the Norse settlements in Greenland. She also researches the impact of climate change on archaeological sites and the different ways we can mitigate the destruction of important cultural landscapes in the Arctic. In South Greenland, Kaylee has excavated at numerous Norse sites, surveyed for Thule and historic Inuit archaeological features, and assisted in coring sediments from various lake bottoms in a palaeobotany project that sought to better understand the palaeo-environment of the Norse Greenlanders.

When not doing archaeology in Greenland, Kaylee works as an archaeologist in British Columbia. In between her fieldwork in the Arctic and British Columbia, Kaylee spends her free time alpine skiing, hiking, and enjoying all the adventures the Rocky Mountains have to offer.



Sherman Boates

Naturalist

Passionate biodiversity champion, conservation scientist and keen life-long student of nature.

As a government scientist and professor, Boates has worked as a conservation biologist for more than 30 years doing research, inventory and monitoring, management and policy, and law development for endangered species and biodiversity conservation.

Leading the biodiversity program for the Nova Scotia Government, he played a focal role in the development and implementation of the Nova Scotia Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy, and many other initiatives.

At Acadia University, Boates taught conservation biology and ecology courses and has had research projects and students working on birds, invertebrates, and plants.

Boates has been an active (paid or volunteer) contributor to many provincial, national, and international conservation projects, committees, and organizations, including COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada – 25 years) and Wildlife Conservation Society Canada (– 11 years).

Boates and his partner live in the woods near Wolfville, Nova Scotia, eat local food, and work at having a small ecological footprint.