

# Western Newfoundland Highlands

Represented by: Gros Morne National Park



Western Brook Pond, Gros Morne National Park

## IN THE LAND OF TUCKAMoor

The numberless waterfalls and cascades will cause surprise to those who ... believe Newfoundland to be a flat land of bogs and rocks.... People have not the slightest idea of what wonderful scenery is hidden away ... only waiting to be discovered.

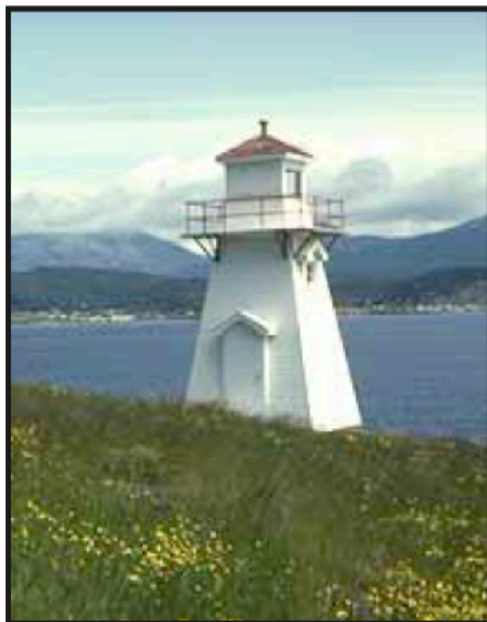
*A.A. Radclyffe Dugmore,  
1913 British Author  
and Sportsman*

## THE LAND:

Driving up the coast from the ferry terminal at Port Aux Basques, at the southern extremity of this natural region, the highway is squeezed between the clear green waters and white sand beaches of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the looming, blue-shadowed Long Range Mountains. Spectacular fiords slash inland. The Long Range Mountains form the backbone of this region, sloping gently toward the Atlantic to the east, and dropping precipitously toward the west into the Gulf.

## VEGETATION:

In the southern portion of the region, forests of balsam fir, with some black spruce and white spruce, are dominant. The trees are shrouded with lichens, giving the forest a frosted appearance. Beneath the trees a thick carpet of feather moss envelops fallen trees and rocks. In lowland areas, such



Bonne Bay, Gros Morne National Park



The Long Range Mountains, up to 800 metres tall, form the western margin of the island of Newfoundland. These lower peaks are clad with evergreen forest.







In southwestern Newfoundland, the highlands drop straight into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, giving a very rugged coastline. Farther north, a narrow strip of flat land separates the sea and mountains (below); this area has been labelled part of the St. Lawrence Lowlands.



## Natural Region 34

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as around Grand Lake (Newfoundland's largest lake), trees grow to a fair size, and the timber obtained is of excellent quality. Mountain maples are abundant here, with white birch growing on burned-over sites. On exposed ridges, tuckamoor - tangled twisted thickets of stunted spruce and fir - form an impenetrable barrier. Extensive bogs and fens occur in low-lying areas. The northern part of the region is a transition from boreal forest to forest-tundra. Much of the land is covered by lichen-encrusted exposed rock. Fire has reduced much of the forest cover to scrublands dominated by alder, dwarf birch and Labrador tea.



Caribou

respects throw out finer horns than any other form of the reindeer in existence.... Big bucks sometimes weigh as much as 500 pounds."

*J.G. Millais,  
British sportsman and naturalist, 1900.*

Introduced to Newfoundland in 1878 and subsequently in 1904, moose are abundant. Marten and wolves have been extirpated from the region, but martin have been reintroduced in Gros Morne National Park. The coastal strip lies along the Atlantic Flyway and provides important stopover sites for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as feeding areas for seabirds.

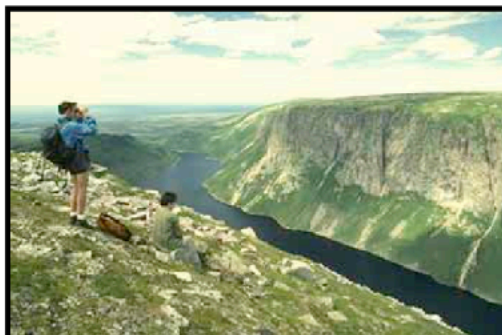
### WILDLIFE:

Great numbers of caribou thrive in this region. Caribou trails crisscross the high ridges and upland areas and provide erratic pathways through the tuckamoor. The extensive patches of lichens (caribou moss) provide important feeding areas, and the high rolling plateaux of the Long Range Mountains are nurseries where the caribou bear their young.

"Owing to the nutritive qualities of its super-excellent caribou moss, the deer [caribou] grow to a great size and in some

### STATUS OF NATIONAL PARKS:

This region is represented by Gros Morne National Park (1,805 km<sup>2</sup>). The Long Range



Ten Mile Pond, Gros Morne National Park

Mountains, rising abruptly from the narrow coastal plain, dominate the park. The coastal plain is characterized by large raised bogs dotted with pitcher plants. The shoreline is extremely picturesque, varying from rocky headlands to broad sand beaches. Atop the Long Range Mountains is



**Major Land Uses**

Fishing  
Tourism

**Main Communities**

Cornerbrook  
Port Aux Basques

**Aboriginal Peoples**

Beothuk people have all died.

**Parks and Natural Areas**

Gros Morne National Park

**Further Information**



Gary McFarlane

At the far north of Newfoundland, the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of St. Lawrence meet. Near that point, at St. Anthony's, this small piece of Arctic ice came ashore to be photographed. Larger icebergs are commonly seen off the east coast, especially in the early summer.



## Natural Region 34

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Gros Morne National Park, Serpentine Tableland

a vast alpine plateau of tundra, bogs and “tuckamoor”.

The park is internationally acclaimed for its unique geological features. In addition to boasting over 30 fossil sites, this is one of the few places on the globe where rocks from deep within the earth are exposed. The entire southwestern portion of the park contains rocks from the earth's mantle (the layer surrounding the earth's molten core)

and from the oceanic crust (the layer above the mantle). Much of the oceanic crustal material has eroded to expose the serpentine tableland, an unusual area of dark green rock which, because of its high magnesium content, stymies plant growth, creating a moonscape devoid of life. The geology of the park contributes greatly to the scientific community's knowledge and understanding of monumental earth-building and modifying forces called plate tectonics.

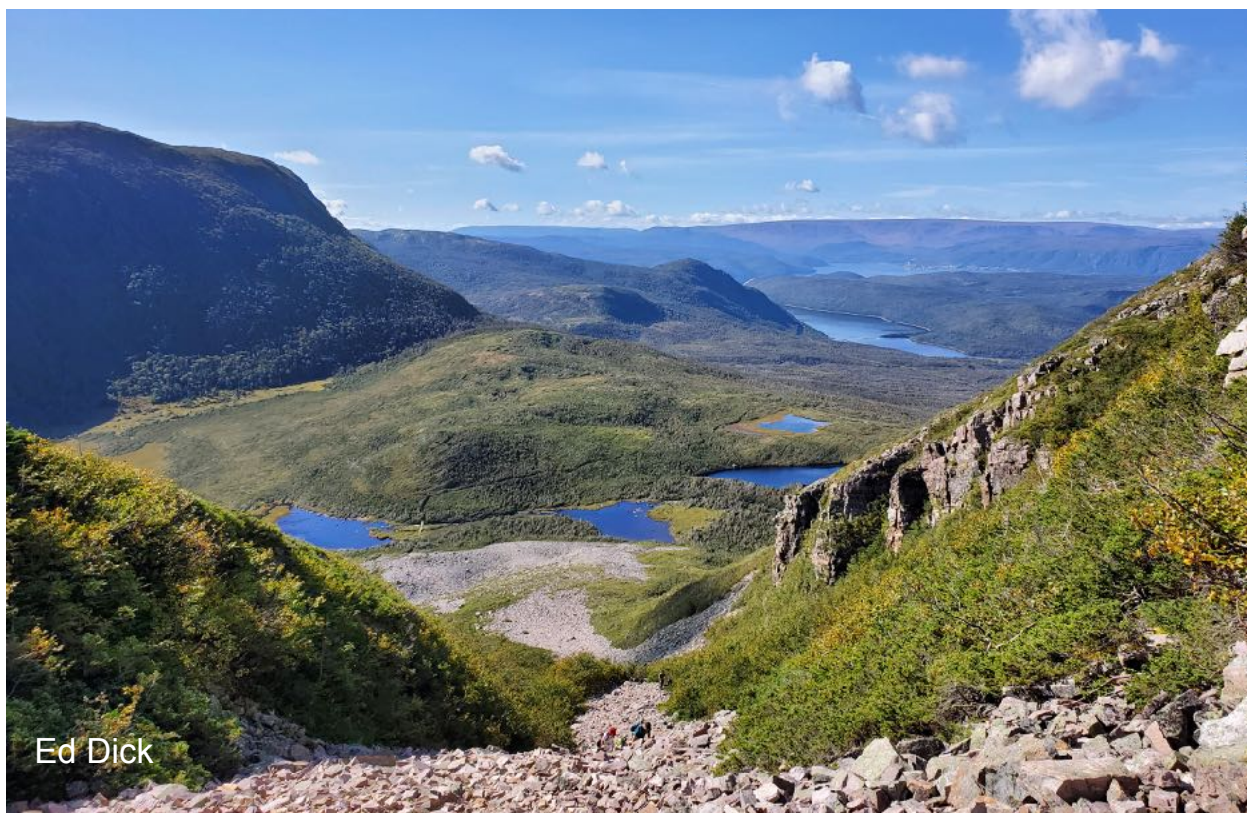


A 1973 federal-provincial agreement, amended in 1983, with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador provides for the establishment of the park. Gros Morne has been named to the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites in recognition of its outstanding example of major stages in the earth's evolutionary history, and its exceptional natural beauty.



Gros Morne National Park, Lomond River





The inland mountains have been rounded by extensive glaciation. Forest cover varies with the elevation, but would not be considered “lush”.







Rob Gardner

Tourists enjoy a cruise up the steep-sided Western Brook Pond, while a more adventurous person has climbed to the mountain tops for an alternate view.



Ed Dick





Rob Gardner

The Tablelands, included in Gros Morne National Park, are a deeply incised plateau, which is not obvious from this viewpoint. The weathered rusty rocks reveal a deep green interior when broken.



Rob Gardner



The mountains are naturally barren, with not enough nutrients to support most plants. The Sundew, shown at left, and Pitcher Plant are able to survive in this land of poisonous rocks. Being carnivorous, they get their nutrients from their insect food, not the soil.