

# Find Alaska Info!



## Dear Student:

Thank you for writing to request information about Alaska. This flyer contains some interesting information about our great state.

Alaska became the 49th state in 1959, right before Hawaii became the 50th state that same year. Many of Alaska's 670,000 people live in modern cities, and many live in small remote villages where their families have lived for thousands of years. The population of Anchorage, Alaska's largest city, is 285,000. Juneau (population 30,500) is the State Capital.

We also have a website where you can learn more about Alaska's history, cultures, geography, animals, and more: <http://www.state.ak.us/kids/>

Here are other helpful websites:

- For information about visiting Alaska, visit <http://www.travelalaska.com>
- Need Alaska photos for a school project? Go to <http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/apl/home.cfm>
- You can also visit the Alaska State Library on-line at <http://library.state.ak.us/>
- Looking for wildlife info? Go to <http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov>
- Want to know more about Alaska's Forest and Park lands? Go to <http://www.alaskacenters.gov/>

## Did you know?

▶ If you place Alaska, with all of its islands, on top of the "continental" United States, it spans from the Great Lakes to Texas, and from Florida to California.

▶ At 591,000 square miles, Alaska is larger than Texas, California, and Montana combined.

▶ The coastline of Alaska is longer than the coastline of the continental United States.

▶ Of Alaska's 3 million lakes, the largest (Lake Iliamna) is the size of Connecticut.

▶ Alaska's mainland is only 51 miles away from Russia.

▶ Alaska has 17 of the 20 highest mountains in North America (Mt. McKinley is the highest at 20,320 feet).

▶ Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867 for under 2 cents per acre.

▶ The name "Alaska" comes from an Aleut word meaning "A Great Country, or Continent."

▶ Astronauts say they can see the 800-mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline from outer space.

▶ Due to long summer days in Alaska, giant vegetables are common, such as a 98-pound cabbage recorded in 1990.

▶ Alaska has two of the three biggest islands in the U.S. - Kodiak and Prince of Wales.



# State Symbols...

## LAND MAMMAL

In 1998, the Governor of Alaska named the moose as the official state land mammal. Moose are abundant in the Interior, South-central, and Arctic slope of Alaska. They are found in second growth birch forests, on timberline plateaus, and along rivers, lakes, and streams. They are not found on the islands of Southeast Alaska, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, the Aleutians, or the Bering Sea.



## FISH

The giant king salmon, which weighs up to 100 pounds, is the state fish.



## MAMMAL

The Bowhead Whale is the state mammal. Bowheads spend their entire life in the arctic. They are an important subsistence animal, both culturally and nutritionally, for the northern Inupiaq and Yupik people of Alaska.

## BIRD



The pheasant-like willow ptarmigan is the state bird. This bird changes color from light brown in summer to snow white in winter.



## FLAG

"8 Stars of Gold on a Field of Blue". The blue field is for the sky. The North Star is for Alaska, the most northerly of the United States. The Big Dipper is for the Great Bear, symbolizing strength. The Alaska Flag was designed in 1926 by Benny Benson, a 13-year-old in an orphanage in Seward, Alaska.

## SPORT

Dog mushing is the state sport. It was once a primary form of transportation in many areas of Alaska.



## TREE



The tall stately Sitka Spruce is the state tree. It is found in Southeastern and Southcentral Alaska.



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## STATE SEAL

The state seal was designed in 1910 while Alaska was a territory and not a state. The rays above the mountains represent the Northern Lights. The smelter symbolizes mining. The train stands for Alaska's railroads, and ships denote transportation by sea. The trees symbolize Alaska's wealth of forests, and the farmer, his horse, and the three shocks of wheat represent Alaskan agriculture. The fish and the seals signify the importance of fishing and wildlife to Native subsistence and Alaska's economy.

# More State Symbols!

## STATE MOTTO

*"North to the Future"*

Our motto was chosen in 1967 during the Alaska Purchase centennial and was created by Juneau newsman Richard Peter. The motto is meant to represent Alaska as a land of promise.

## STATE CAPITAL

Juneau, located in the southeast region of Alaska, has a population of 30,500.

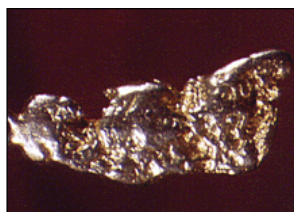


## FOSSIL

The Woolly Mammoth was designated as the state fossil by the Alaska Legislature in 1986.



## MINERAL



Gold is the state mineral. Gold has played a major role in Alaska's history.

## FLOWER



The Forget-Me-Not, which grows well throughout Alaska, is the state flower.

## INSECT

The dragonfly was named the state insect by the Legislature in 1995 at the request of elementary students!



## GEM

Alaska's state gem is jade. Alaska has large deposits of the gem, including an entire mountain of jade on the Seward Peninsula.

