

Herschel Island, Yukon, Canada

One of the most remote stops on any Northwest Passage expedition, Herschel Island (Qikiqtaruk) pairs crumbling 1890s whaling ruins with raw Arctic tundra, polar bears, and an unforgettable Zodiac wet landing at Pauline Cove.

- Zodiac wet landing (no pier)
- Typical call: 3-5 hrs
- Canadian Dollar (CAD) — cash only, rarely needed
- English / Inuvialuktun
- Expedition ships only

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____	Arrive: _____	All aboard: _____
Excursion: _____	Notes: _____	

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Zodiac wet landing at Pauline Cove — knee-high waterproof boots required

Best For: Arctic history, wildlife spotting, off-the-beaten-path adventure

Walk to historic site: < 100 m from beach to whaling settlement buildings

Don't Miss: The whale bone pile, Pioneer Cemetery, and guided tundra hike with bear guards

Getting around: Rideshare not available

TOP THINGS TO DO

- Pauline Cove Whaling Settlement Walk** — Explore the oldest surviving frame buildings in the Yukon — the 1890s Pacific Steam Whaling Company office, the Anglican Mission, Inuvialuit sod...
- Arctic Tundra Hike** — Guided walks of 1-5 km over spongy, uneven permafrost reveal wildflowers, lemmings, Arctic foxes, muskoxen, and nesting seabirds including Arctic...
- Marine Wildlife Watching** — Ringed seals, beluga whales, and the occasional polar bear in the water can be spotted from the spit or during the Zodiac transit.
- Polar Bear Plunge** — A rite of passage on Northwest Passage expeditions — a ship-supervised leap into the Beaufort Sea (0-3°C).
- Pioneer Cemetery & Ranger Station** — A short walk uphill from the cove leads to the cemetery where American whalers who perished here are buried, with panoramic views of Pauline Cove and...

BEST WALKS

- Pauline Cove Historic Loop** ~0.5 km · 30-45 min · Easy — From the Zodiac landing beach, follow the gravel spit past the whale bone pile to the former whaling company buildings, the ranger station, and the Inuvialuit sod house...
- Tundra Ridge Walk** 2-5 km · 1-2 hrs · Moderate — Guided hike inland across permafrost tundra to elevated ground, offering views of the entire island and the Beaufort Sea.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)			
Mon	High	Low	Rain
Apr	12°	0°	4d
Jun	45°	35°	8d
Aug	50°	40°	12d
Sep	40°	31°	9d
Oct	23°	13°	6d

DAYLIGHT & MONEY	
Apr 6:19AM–10:14PM · Jun Upallday—	Aug 5:14AM–11:27PM · Sep 7:25AM–8:57PM · Oct 9:22AM–6:41PM

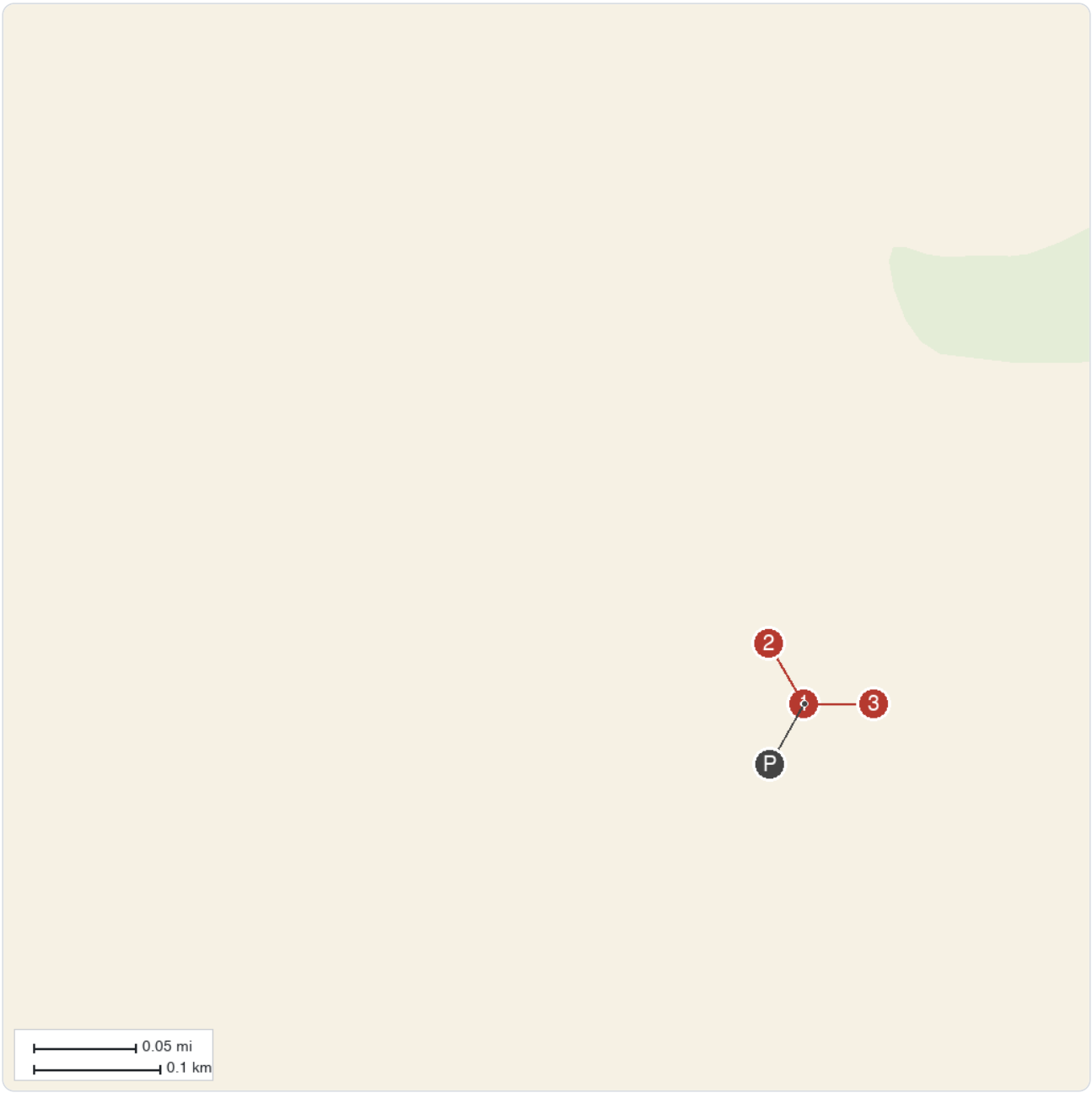
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Waterproof boots are non-negotiable. Most expedition lines provide knee-high Muck Boots or Xtratufs — confirm before packing. No boots = no landing.
- Bring a mosquito head net. July and early August bring fierce Arctic mosquitoes. DEET repellent plus a head net makes the difference between enjoying the visit and misery.
- Layer aggressively. Even in summer, wind off the pack ice can drop the feel to near-freezing. A thermal base layer, fleece, and windproof outer shell are the minimum.
- Leave absolutely nothing, take nothing. Removing any item — rocks, bones, wildflowers, driftwood, historic nails — is illegal. This is an archaeologically sensitive park.
- Rarely any need for cash. There is no gift shop or food vendor. Occasionally rangers sell conservation patches (CAD cash only). Your dining and shopping happen aboard ship.
- Never wander alone.

Herschel Island, Yukon, Canada — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



- 1

Qikiqtaruk Territorial Park

Yukon's only territorial park on an Arctic island, protecting tundra wildlife and one of the region's most significant historic sites.
- 2

Pauline Cove Historic Buildings

Preserved 19th-century whaling station structures including the Community House, still standing from the island's commercial whaling era.
- 3

Thrasher Bend Cemetery

Small historic graveyard near Pauline Cove marking the graves of whalers and Inuvialuit residents from the whaling boom era.
- P

Cruise port / terminal