MAINE

THE PINE TREE STATE *Became a state March 15, 1820 (23rd)*

Maine is the northeastern corner of the United States, with a rocky coast, thousands of islands and deep forests. A bigger share of its land is covered by trees than in any other state.



Why the Pine Tree State?

Maine's white pines grew tall and straight, just right for the masts of sailing ships. In 1691 England's king and queen claimed most pines two feet wide or more for the navy. Their men marked the trees with three ax cuts called the King's Broad Arrow. Colonists who cut one faced a heavy fine, and many grew angry at the king.



The Lobster Rules

Maine's lobster crews follow rules that keep the sea full of lobsters. A lobster that is too small goes back to grow. So does a very large one, since big lobsters lay the most eggs. Since 1948, a mother carrying eggs has had a small V cut in her tail flipper. Anyone who catches her later must let her go.



A Park Given as a Gift

Most early national parks were made from land the government already owned. Acadia was different. George Dorr and other people who loved Mount Desert Island gathered up mountains, lakes and shoreline, then gave them to the country. The land became a national monument in 1916 and a national park in 1919, the first one east of the Mississippi River.



The Greatest Mountain

The Penobscot people named Katahdin, which means "greatest mountain." In 1930 a former governor, Percival Baxter, bought the mountain with his own money. He gave it to the people of Maine on the promise that it would stay wild forever. Katahdin is also the northern end of the Appalachian Trail, which runs about 2,200 miles from Georgia.



Bringing the Puffins Back

By 1885, hunters had wiped out the puffins on Eastern Egg Rock, a small island off Maine. In 1973 scientists began carrying puffin chicks there from Canada. They also set out decoys, or fake puffins, so the island would look like a safe home. In 1981, a few pairs came back to nest. More than 100 pairs nest there now.



Berries Nobody Planted

Maine's wild blueberries are not planted. The low bushes spread on their own through underground stems across open fields called barrens, which were shaped by glaciers. Native people burned the fields to help the bushes grow, and growers still burn or mow them. Machines pick most berries now, but some are still gathered with a hand rake.

BY THE NUMBERS

Population	About 1.4 million (9th fewest)
Size	About 35,400 square miles (39th largest)
Highest point	Mount Katahdin, 5,268 feet
Counties	16
Neighbors	New Hampshire, and Canada to the northwest, north and east

DID YOU KNOW?

- Maine was part of Massachusetts until it became its own state in 1820.
- Chester Greenwood of Farmington invented earmuffs in 1873, when he was 15 years old.
- West Quoddy Head is the easternmost point of the 48 connected states. Its lighthouse has red and white stripes.
- Maine has more moose than any other of the 48 connected states.

FIND IT ON THE MAP

1. Which city is the capital?
2. Which city is closest to Portland Head Light?
3. Which lake does the Kennebec River flow from?

Answers: 1. Augusta 2. Portland 3. Moosehead Lake