



Located 175 km south of Calgary, or 18 km north and west of Fort Macleod on secondary Highway 785.  
 GPS: 49°42.323'N 113°39.198'W

## INQUIRIES AND BOOKINGS

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump  
 Box 1977  
 Fort Macleod, Alberta  
 Canada T0L 0Z0

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 Toll free in Alberta first dial 310-0000  
 Fax: 403-553-3141  
 Website: [headsmashedin.org](http://headsmashedin.org)



# Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump World Heritage Site



Open year-round  
 See website for hours  
 of operation

Closed: December 24-25,  
 January 1 and Easter Sunday

*Please share this souvenir of  
 Head-Smashed-In with a friend.*







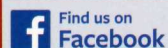
## UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1981, Head-Smashed-In is possibly the oldest, largest and best preserved of the many buffalo jump sites across the Western Plains.

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump World Heritage Site preserves and interprets the significance of this place as an ancient communal hunting ground that was used by the Plains People for nearly 6,000 years.

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

at [headsmashedin.org](http://headsmashedin.org) for hours of operation, admission fees, and additional information.



## HOW HEAD-SMASHED-IN GOT ITS NAME

According to one of the Blackfoot oral traditions, a young boy wanted to witness the plunge of countless buffalo as his people drove them over the sandstone cliff. Standing under the shelter of a ledge, he watched the great beasts fall past. The hunt was unusually good that day. As the bodies mounted, he became trapped between the animals and the cliff. When his people came to do the butchering, they found him with his skull crushed by the weight of the buffalo carcasses. This is why they named this buffalo jump "Head-Smashed-In."

## EDUCATION PROGRAMS

We offer a variety of one-hour programs for schools and special groups of 15 or more. A program fee is charged. Visit our website for program descriptions and other details. Program slots fill up quickly so please book well in advance of your visit.

## GROUP TOURS

Call us for information about special rates and tours for your group of 15 or more.

Local Blackfoot guides help bring the past to life with guided tours and special events.



## ANATOMY OF THE JUMP

### *Iitaohkanipiaiksi* Gathering Basin

The Olsen Creek Basin served as a feeding and gathering area, from which buffalo herds were gradually lured toward the cliff by the buffalo runners.

### *Aakii'ksi* Drive Lanes

Two rows of stone cairns mark the edges of the drive lane. Extending up to 8 kilometres from the jump, they were used to direct buffalo toward specific parts of the cliff.

### *Iitai'nikkio'pi* Kill Site

Archaeological evidence confirms the jump was first used about 5,700 years ago. Originally the cliff was twenty metres high above the kill site, but after thousands of years, the buffalo bone deposits reached 10 metres in depth. This left only the 10 metres of exposed cliff you see here today.

### *Iitaok'ki'kao'pi Ki Iiatayiitsiittsimao'pi* Camp Site and Processing Area

Butchering and processing of the buffalo meat was performed on the rolling prairie below the jump. Tipi camps were located nearby.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

### FEBRUARY

#### Family Day

Fun activities include Elders' Storytelling and kids crafts

### MAY THRU OCTOBER

#### Hike to the Drive Lanes

First Saturday of the month. Explore back and beyond the cliff to see how the plains people hunted buffalo before the gun and horse.

### JUNE

#### National Aboriginal Day

Drumming, dancing, traditional games and storytelling of the traditional culture are part of this special day.

### JULY - AUGUST

#### Drumming and Dancing

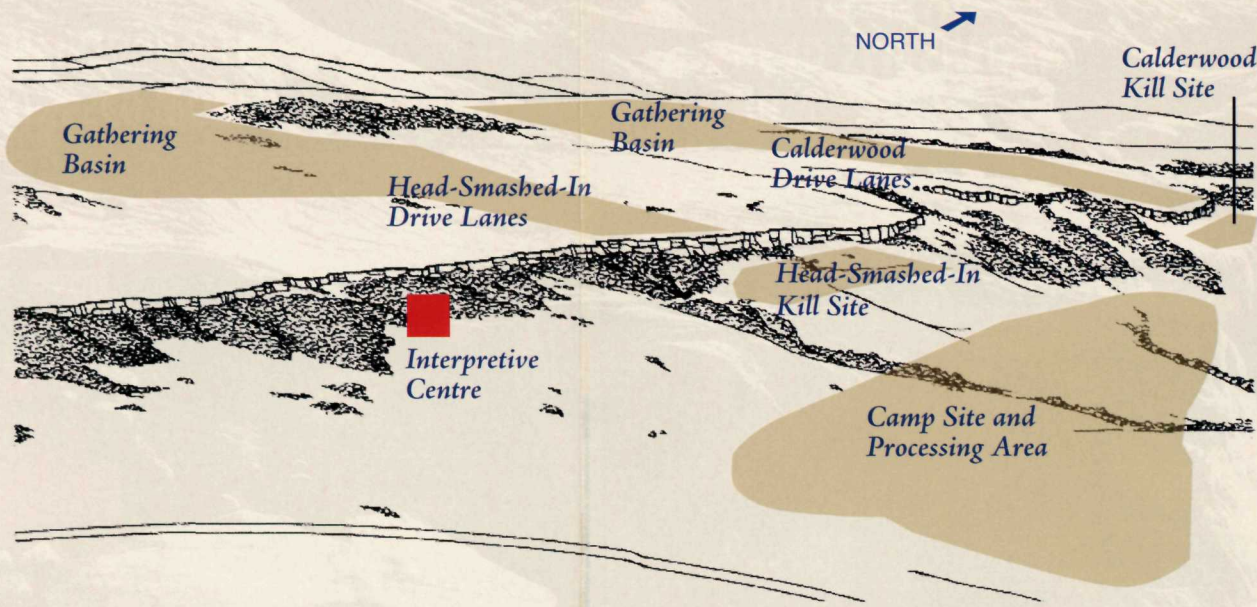
Blackfoot drumming, singing and dancing performances each Wednesday, at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER

#### Buffalo Harvest Days

Showcasing local arts, crafts and performers.

Visit our website for details about all of our special events.



This drawing illustrates the scope of the area involved in the buffalo hunt process. Most of this land is held in trust and is not accessible to the public. Due to the sensitive natural and cultural resources of the site, we must ask you to **remain on the trails at all times**.



## THE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE

Hear stories of the ancient buffalo hunting culture. Discover how the Plains Peoples survived for more than five thousand years before the arrival of the Europeans.

Allow 1.5 hours for a self-guided tour of the exhibits in the interpretive centre. Allow an additional hour for the outdoor interpretive trails. Guided tours are available. Exhibits occupy five levels of the award-winning interpretive centre to tell the following stories:

### *Naapiwa Otawahsini* Napi's World,

explores the delicate ecology of the Northwestern Plains. Learn about the geography, climate and vegetation of the region.

### *Okso'koaiksi* Napi's People,

reveals the lifestyle of the early Plains Peoples. Experience the rich culture of an ancient way of life, including food gathering, ceremonies, and family life.

### *Pis'kun*

#### The Buffalo Hunt,

presents the fascinating story of how a buffalo jump works. The displays include spiritual items used in pre-hunt ceremonies. See tools and weapons used in the hunt. Learn how the buffalo was processed into food, shelter, clothing and other useful items.

### *Otsito'tohpi Naapikoaisi* Cultures in Contact,

explains how traditional buffalo hunting declined with the introduction of the horse and the gun. Europeans brought disease, trade goods, and new economic forces that led to the near extinction of the buffalo.

### *Isskoohtsik*

#### Uncovering the Past,

explores the science of archaeology and shows how we use archaeology to study and learn about the past. A recreated archaeological dig and a mini-theatre presentation are included.



The Café seats 60 and offers a varied menu featuring Blackfoot inspired specialties. Check website for seasonal hours and menus.



The Theatre seats 80, with presentations of "Pis'kun –The Buffalo Jump", a 15-minute high definition film shown throughout the day.



The Gift Shop offers authentic First Nations arts and crafts plus a variety of books, gift items and souvenirs.



The Gallery hosts contemporary exhibits with a particular focus on Blackfoot culture and artists.



The Lower Trail beneath the Jump offers a self-guided interpretive walk.



The Centre and The Upper Trail are wheelchair accessible.



Visitor Information Centre.

*Note: No ATM on site*