

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION AND MOTOR LICENCES

All motorists entering the park must register and secure transient motor licences. Licences for motor vehicles not used for commercial purposes are issued on the following basis:—

(1) Single trip licence, good for a period not exceeding 30 days, provided the automobile is not taken out of the park during such period: Automobile, 25c; auto with trailer attached, 50c.

(2) Licence good for the entire season, which also will be honoured in Waterton Lakes, Prince Albert, Riding Mountain, and Point Pelee National Parks: Automobile, \$1; auto with trailer attached, \$2.

(3) Special licence good for the entire season, which also will be honoured in all national parks where a transient motor licence is required: Automobile, \$2; auto with trailer attached, \$3.

Special licences may be obtained for motor vehicles used for commercial purposes.

ACCOMMODATION

There are no hotels or bungalow camps in the park, although provision has been made for camping. Excellent hotel accommodation is available in Edmonton, 36 miles distant, and limited accommodation may also be secured at Lamont.

Visitors bringing their own camping equipment will find a well-equipped camp-ground on the eastern side of Astotin Lake, within a short distance of Sandy Beach. Kitchen shelters, equipped with camp-stoves, tables, benches, fire-wood, and other conveniences, are provided. Space is also available for automobile trailers. A refreshment booth situated at Sandy Beach serves both campers and picnickers. Two large parking areas are also provided in the vicinity.

For each period of two weeks or less camping fees are \$1 for an ordinary tent. For automobile trailers the rate is 50c for one day, \$1 for two days, and \$2 for any period over two days up to two weeks. Permits may be obtained from the camp-ground attendant.

RECREATION

Many forms of recreation are available in the park, including bathing, boating, tennis, and golf. A large area in the vicinity of Sandy Beach on the eastern side of Astotin Lake has been laid out as a recreational area where baseball, softball, horseshoes, and other sports may be enjoyed. Amusements for children, including swings and seesaws, have been provided. Another area near the lake has been developed as a picnic ground, and contains more than 100 tables as well as other conveniences. A large community building situated nearby on Scout Hill is used for sing-songs and informal entertainments.

BATHING—Excellent bathing may be enjoyed at Sandy Beach on Astotin Lake, where three modern dressing-rooms have been provided for public use.

BOATING—Boating is a popular recreation at Astotin Lake. Boats may be rented locally from private owners.

GOLF—A fine nine-hole golf course in the vicinity of Sandy Beach is open to park visitors. The course is laid out over the rolling terrain southeast of Astotin Lake, and is convenient to the main park highway. The fairways are flanked by beautiful growths of trees, and the greens and fairways are maintained in excellent condition. An attractive club-house overlooking Astotin Lake is at the disposal of visitors making use of the golf course.

HIKING—The roads in the park and several short trails offer fine opportunities for hiking. Rustic bridges connect several of the larger islands in Astotin Lake with the mainland.

FAUNA AND FLORA

Elk Island National Park will always occupy a prominent place in the annals of wildlife conservation in Canada, particularly in the story of the "saving of the buffalo". To this park were brought the remnants of the once vast herd that roamed the western plains before the incoming tide of white settlement resulted in their almost complete extinction.

To the early settler and trader the buffalo supply must have appeared as almost inexhaustible. But the picture rapidly changed. Individual hunters are reputed to have killed from 1,000 to 3,000 head in a season. There is reason to believe that at the beginning of this century not a single buffalo was left roaming the plains of Canada in a wild state. Fortunately, through the foresight of the Canadian Government, the greater part of what was believed to be the only remaining large herd of plains buffalo in North America was purchased from a Montana rancher. Between 1907 and 1912 more than 700 of these animals were shipped north to Elk Island National Park. Later this herd was transferred to Buffalo National Park at Wainwright. About 48 of these animals were too wild to be captured, however, and they formed the nucleus of the healthy vigorous herd which now numbers more than 1,000 and which is regarded as the finest herd of plains buffalo on this continent.

These splendid animals are a feature attraction of Elk Island National Park and may be observed feeding and roaming over their native habitat from points along the main highway which crosses the park from north to south. Parties of school children from the surrounding country frequently visit the park to observe and study the former "Monarch of the Plains" in his natural surroundings. Herds of elk, deer, and moose also provide a great attraction to those interested in wild animal life. The park is also a sanctuary for smaller animals including weasel, muskrat, porcupine, rabbit, squirrel, and gopher.

Bird life is abundant, and in midsummer the marshy portions of Astotin and other lakes are crowded with many species of waterfowl. Among the most common are mallard, canvas-back, pintail, gadwall, buffle-head, shoveller, American golden-eye and ruddy ducks, blue-winged teal, lesser scaup, coot, black tern, American bittern, and Franklin's gull. Ruffed and sharp-tailed grouse and several species of owl and hawk are also found in the park, as well as a large variety of smaller birds. The latter include blue jay, Canada jay, magpie, English sparrow, crow, black-capped chickadee, Bohemian waxwing, pine and evening grosbeak, mountain bluebird, willow thrush, pileated woodpecker, and Baltimore oriole.

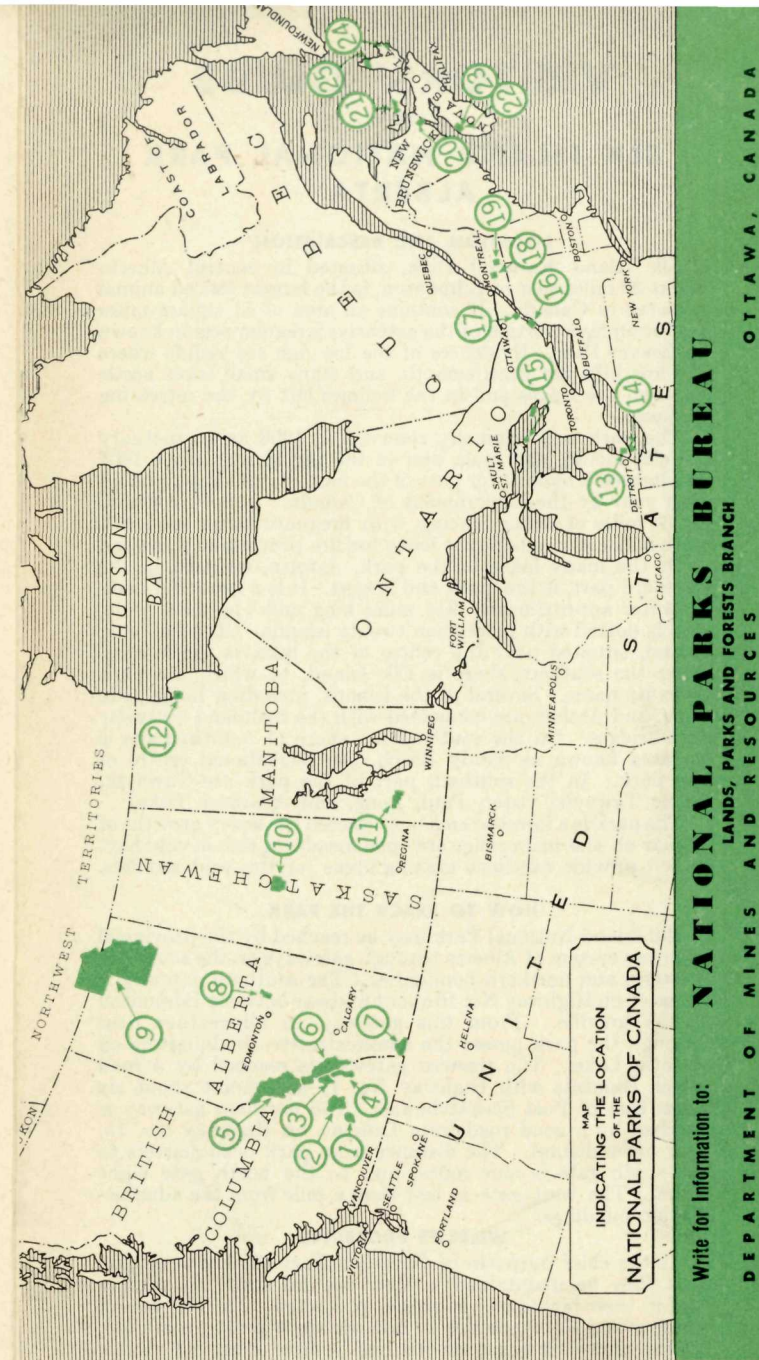
Tree species in the park include poplar, white spruce, tamarack, and birch. Shrubs including hazel, highbush cranberry, saskatoon, choke cherry, raspberry, and bird cherry are also indigenous to the area.

FIRE PREVENTION

Visitors are requested to co-operate with park officers in the prevention of fires. Smoking materials and camp-fires should be completely extinguished. Camp-fires may be kindled only at places provided for the purpose.

Persons visiting the park should acquaint themselves with the regulations and secure particulars concerning suitable camp-sites and other related information. Any fire observed by a park visitor should be extinguished if possible, or the nearest park officer notified promptly.

A fire in a national park may cause damage which cannot be replaced in a century. It is virtually impossible to protect these playgrounds without the close and constant co-operation of all who frequent them.

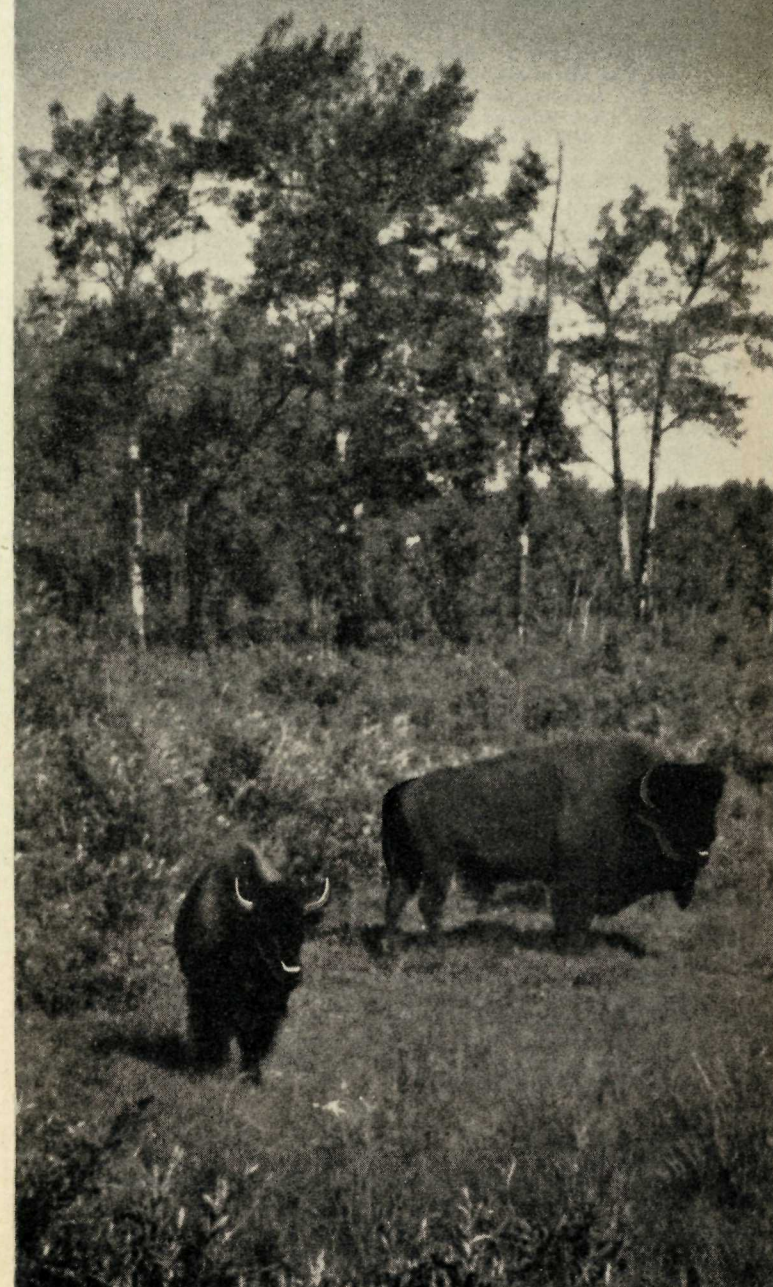


Key to Map of National Parks

1. Mount Revelstoke
2. Glacier
3. Yoho
4. Kootenay
5. Jasper
6. Banff
7. Waterton Lakes
8. Elk Island
9. Wood Buffalo
10. Prince Albert
11. Riding Mountain
12. Fort Prince of Wales
13. Fort Malden
14. Point Pelee
15. Georgian Bay Islands
16. St. Lawrence Islands
17. Fort Wellington
18. Fort Chambly
19. Fort Lennox
20. Fort Beauséjour
21. Prince Edward Island
22. Fort Royal
23. Fort Anne
24. Fortress of Louisbourg
25. Cape Breton Highlands

ELK ISLAND

NATIONAL PARK





Foreword

The National Parks of Canada are areas of natural beauty and special interest which have been "dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education, and enjoyment". Established primarily for the preservation of the unspoiled natural landscape and for the protection of the native wildlife, they are to be "maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations".

The discovery of hot mineral springs bubbling from the slopes of Sulphur Mountain by engineers exploring the route for Canada's first transcontinental railway led to the establishment of Canada's first national park. From this small area of ten square miles at Banff, Alberta, set apart in 1885, the national parks system has been extended until it embraces 25 separate areas totalling 29,660 square miles.

While a few parks have been devoted chiefly to the conservation of certain species of big game animals once threatened with extinction, others mark national historic sites important in the portrayal of Canada's colourful history. Still others have been developed for the greater convenience of park visitors to view the magnificent scenery and to relax in their enjoyment of such an inspirational and peaceful environment. From the sea-girt hills on the Atlantic Coast across the rivers and lakes of Central Canada to the alpine vistas of the Rockies and Selkirks, these national playgrounds provide ideal areas for nature study and for recreation.

It is the responsibility of the National Parks Bureau to administer these natural areas for the enjoyment of Canada's present and future generations. By progressive stages the parks have been made more easily accessible, wildlife scientifically managed, public services provided, and accommodation and recreational facilities expanded. A staff of experienced wardens keeps constant vigilance throughout these park areas to ensure the protection of the flora and fauna, as well as the safety and convenience of park visitors. Conservation of the forests, the flowers, and the natural wildlife, is their chief concern, and the co-operation of all visitors in this important work is greatly appreciated.

In marking, preserving, and restoring sites of national and historic importance the National Parks Bureau is advised by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, an honorary body of recognized historians representing various parts of the country. From Port Royal in Nova Scotia, to Fort Prince of Wales on Hudson Bay, nine such sites are administered as National Historic Parks, and many other locations, rich in historical importance, are marked by cairns or bronze tablets.

Also of historical significance was the act of linking two great national parks in Alberta and Montana to be known as Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. Commemorating the peace which has existed for over 130 years between adjoining nations, this unspoiled area of natural beauty is symbolic of the goodwill engendered by these two peoples.

The National Parks of Canada are part of a great national heritage, and under careful administration will continue as a perpetual asset—undiminished by use—for all future generations.

VISITORS' GUIDE TO ELK ISLAND NATIONAL PARK ALBERTA

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Elk Island National Park, situated in central Alberta about 30 miles east of Edmonton, is the largest fenced animal preserve in Canada. It contains an area of 51 square miles and occupies a portion of the extensive irregular region known as Beaver Hills. Evidences of the Ice Age are visible where the low hills are worn smooth, and many small lakes nestle between the ridges and in the hollows left by the retreating glaciers.

The park was originally reserved in 1906 as a sanctuary for elk, moose, and mule deer in the region, and since 1907 has formed a habitat for part of the herd of buffalo purchased that year by the Government of Canada. It is surrounded by 34 miles of strong fencing, with fireguard strips ploughed both inside and outside the fence for fire prevention purposes.

Of the many lakes in the park, Astotin, situated in the northern part, is the finest and largest. It is a beautiful body of water approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide, and is dotted with more than twenty islands. Of these, Long Island, situated near the centre of the lake, is the largest. Near the southern shore is Elk Island, to which the park owes its name. Several of the islands, including Long, Elk, Pine, and Archer, are connected with the mainland by rustic foot-bridges. On the southeastern shore of Astotin Lake is an area known as Sandy Beach, the recreational centre of the park. In the southern part of the park are Tawayik, Little Tawayik, Oster, Paul, Long, and Adamson Lakes.

The park is a forested area but between the heavy growths of poplar on the main range are open meadows, rich in wild hay, which provide excellent grazing areas for the wild animals.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

Elk Island National Park may be reached by the provincial highway system of Alberta through gateways on the southern, western, and northern boundaries. The southern gateway is situated on Highway No. 16 about midway between Edmonton and Vegreville. From this gateway an all-weather road through the park passes the administrative headquarters on Astotin Lake. The western gateway is reached by a road which connects with Highway No. 15 at a point about six miles east of Fort Saskatchewan. The northern gateway is reached by a good road from Lamont, on Highway No. 15, four miles distant. The distance from park headquarters to the south gate is nine miles, and to the north gate eight miles. The west gate is less than a mile from the administration buildings.

WILDLIFE PROTECTED

As the chief purposes of Canada's National Parks require that they be maintained in their natural state, all wildlife within their boundaries is rigidly protected. For this reason hunting and the possession of firearms are strictly prohibited. As the parks are game sanctuaries, visitors must not molest any wild animals or birds or their nests. Dogs or cats are not allowed in any national park except under special permission.

PARK ADMINISTRATION

A resident Superintendent, whose office is located on the western side of Astotin Lake, supervises the local administration of Elk Island Park. The office of the Park Superintendent is open daily, and information concerning the wild animals, roads, and recreational facilities in the park may be obtained, together with literature and maps. The park regulations are enforced by the Park Warden Service, assisted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

