Elk Island National Park

Elk Island National Park is surrounded by grassy fields, pastureland, ruderal areas, and forests, but it's defined by its boundaries as a trace of what was once natural to the Beaver Hills and surrounding prairie. The area was a sanctuary for the elk. In 1906, the park was set aside to preserve a herd of 20 native elk that roamed the north and south and Highway 15 from the north. The park is located off the parkway, 2.6 km north of Highway 16. We hope that you will enjoy and respect this natural heritage.

Facilities:

Camping:
- Sandy Beach Campground in the Astotin Recreation Area.
- Picnic facilities are located at Sandy Beach, the Shoreline Trail, the information centre, the administration building, the Tawayik Lake. Group picnic facilities are located in the campground.
- There are playgrounds in the Astotin Recreation Area near the ball diamonds, the group recreation area, and in the campground.
- There is a boat launch during late autumn, winter, and early spring.

Swimming:
- Swimming is recommended. It is natural for lakes such as Astotin to have algae and leech populations which can make swimming unpleasant. A veterinarian feels that it is better for dogs to be left behind.

Boating:
- Motorized boats (including electric motors) are prohibited in the park. Only minnows and sticklebacks, fishing is not permitted.
- Because the park's lakes and ponds support large beaver populations, the park has a variety of brails allowing you to explore the lakes.

Activities:

Elk Island National Park's dominant tree is the maple. About 15% of species have been identified in the park; this includes many trees, shrubs, and flowers. The park has a variety of brails allowing you to explore the lakes.

Elk Island National Park is one of a handful of prairie parks that preserve the remaining 20% of natural aspen parkland in Canada.

Elk Island was Canada's first federal wildlife sanctuary for the elk. The park was set aside to preserve a herd of 20 native elk that roamed the north and south boundaries of what was once natural to the Beaver Hills and surrounding prairie. The area was a sanctuary for the elk.

Visiting Elk Island National Park:

Visitors may be seen north of the highway. In the summer, a display of bird identification is located at the visitor centre.

For more information and reservations call Visitor Services at 922-5833 during the summer and 992-6392 during the winter. For information, contact park staff.

Swimming:
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Boating:
- Motorized boats (including electric motors) are prohibited in the park. Only minnows and sticklebacks, fishing is not permitted.
- Because the park's lakes and ponds support large beaver populations, the park has a variety of brails allowing you to explore the lakes. Remember — You Are In Bison Country. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear and to stay on the trails at Elk Island National Park. The trails at Elk Island National Park may be wet and muddy because of beaver activity or seasonal flooding. Trails suitable for bail bicycles.

Winter Activities:
- For more information contact park staff.
- Fishing: Because the park's lakes and ponds support large beaver populations, the park has a variety of brails allowing you to explore the lakes. Remember — You Are In Bison Country. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear and to stay on the trails at Elk Island National Park. The trails at Elk Island National Park may be wet and muddy because of beaver activity or seasonal flooding. Trails suitable for bail bicycles.
Elk Island National Park is in the northern section of Alberta's Beaver Hills, which rise 30 to 60 metres above the surrounding plains. The landscape, known as dead-ice moraine, was created at the end of the last ice-age. While the main glacier retreated to the northeast, ice in the Beaver Hills melted in place. The deposits of glacial debris that were left behind formed a landscape characterized by hills, hollows, and poorly-developed drainage patterns.

The concern of the remaining local residents was aroused by the near-extinction of the animals in the area. The Beaver Hills region was first settled by the Sarcee (Mountain Blackfoot), who lived in the Beaver Hills and used the area as a hunting ground. Later, the plains bison, elk, and mountain caribou were important to the Cree and Plains Cree Indians. These natives trapped beaver and hunted bison and elk, as did the European settlers who followed. By the late 1800s the animals were trapped and hunted, and as wildlife populations grew, the settlers became concerned. In 1899, five local conservationists, named Lees, Walker, Carscadden, Cooper, and Simmons, then petitioned the federal government to set aside an elk preserve in the area. In 1906, their efforts were rewarded with the establishment of Elk Park. Those animals became the nucleus of today's park.

In 1913 and a national park in 1930. It dominion park in 1913 and a national park in 1930. It is home to Canada's largest herd of plains bison, and a small herd of wild woodland elk. Elk Island's forested areas of spruce and mixed-wood forests, meadows, swamps, wetlands, and waterfalls. The park is also home to 44 kinds of mammals, including elk, bison, deer, bears, wolves, coyotes, owls, hawks, woodpeckers, warblers, and swallows.

Elk Island National Park operates a low-power radio station at 1540 AM. The station presents taped messages featuring park information and highlights of seasonal activities.

In 1907, the federal government purchased 716 head of plains bison from the Pablo and Allard herd on the Flathead Reservation in Montana. The government planned to establish the animals on a national range in Wainwright, but instead the bison were shipped to Elk Park, a 41 square kilometre preserve containing at least 20 elk. In 1908, the federal government acquired the adjacent land and two years later the park was renamed Elk Island. Elk Island is one of the few remaining intact areas of the tall-grass prairies, and the information centre (0.8 km north of Highway 16) and at the south and north entrance gates.

Know the park's rules and regulations. Elk Island National Park is best known for its bison and elk. In the spring and summer, the bison can be found in the open meadows and the elk in the wooded hills. The park is home to a large herd of plains bison, and a small herd of woodland elk. Elk Island's forested areas of spruce and mixed-wood forests, meadows, swamps, wetlands, and waterfalls. The park is also home to 44 kinds of mammals, including elk, bison, deer, bears, wolves, coyotes, owls, hawks, woodpeckers, warblers, and swallows.

Remember — You Are In Bison Country

Bisons are wild animals. Although they may look docile, they are dangerous, unpredictable, and may charge without warning. In addition, they are not easily frightened. Park management is aware of the dangers that bison can pose, and they are making every effort to ensure the safety of park visitors.

• Keep in your vehicle and do not approach bison from the side or rear.
• Keep at least 50 to 75 metres away from bison at all times.
• Never enter a herd of bison or get between two animals, especially a cow and its calf.
• Stay in your vehicle and do not approach bison on foot.
• Keep both doors locked while in the park.
• Do not feed bison or elk.
• Avoid approaching bison in the open meadows or clearings.
• Keep a safe distance from elk and do not approach them.
• Keep a safe distance from water when hiking or skiing the trails.
• If you see a wounded or sick bison, do not approach it.
• Do not get too close to bison or elk.
• Do not approach bison or elk on foot.
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Guide to ELK ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

TRAILS OF ELK ISLAND NATIONAL PARK
- Hayburger (12.1 km)
- Simmon’s Loop (4.6 km)
- Shirley Lake (12.6 km)
- Moss Lake (13 km)
- Lakeview (3.3 km)
- Beaver Pond (0.5 km)
- Point of Good Hope (9.7 km)

EXHIBITS
- Astotin Interpretive Centre/Theatre

ACTIVITIES
- Cross Country Ski Trail
- Snowshoe Trail
- Playgrounds

Camping
- Group Tenting
- Winter Camping
- Accommodation
- Sani-station

Points of Interest
- Moss Lake Trailhead and Picnic Area
- Point of Good Hope/Living Waters Boardwalk/Lake Shore (1.4 km)
-距Highway 16
-距North Gate

LEGEND
- Stopped
- Shaded
- with a shuttle

Points of Interest

This guide will help you explore and enjoy Elk Island National Park.