Activities

Top 5 activities

1. Drive the Bison Loop – a 1-km loop that winds through open prairie and herds of bison.
2. Escape the city lights and gaze at the stars in this dark-sky preserve.
3. Hit the links or enjoy a tasty meal at the historic Elk Island Golf Course.
4. Rediscover the park in winter. Snowshoe, ski, view wildlife and have a picnic.
5. Bring your own canoe/kayak or rent one at the lake warming shelter.

Summer programs

Have FUN this July + August

• Bison backstage
• Geocaching
• Kids Xplorers program
• And so much more...

Join park staff this summer for some fun-filled programs and activities.

Check the website for details: www.pc.gc.ca/elkisland

Picnic

Choose from one of these scenic areas to enjoy your picnic:
• Astotin Lake
• Beaver Bay (long Shoreline Trail)
• Tawatay Lake
• Wasc Lake Trail

Too wet, cold or warm? We’ve got you covered:
• year-round: Picnic shelters
• Astotin Lake Pavilion (year-round)
• Astotin Lake Shelters (seasonal)
• Tawatay Lake

Wildlife

Escape the city lights & experience a star-studded sky in the Beaver Hills Dark Sky preserve at Elk Island National Park.

1. When traveling by foot or on a bike stay at least 30 metres (100 ft) away from elk, moose and bison. Bison can reach up to 50 km/h in a few strides.
2. If you encounter an elk, moose or bison on a trail make yourself known, walk slowly around them at a safe distance and return the way you came.
3. During mating season, bison (July/August) and elk (September/October) can be aggressive.
4. When driving the parkway and Bison Loop stay in your vehicle. Only pull over if it’s safe and you are not blocking traffic.
5. Wildlife have a greater rate of survival and are healthier when they feed on natural food. Please refrain from feeding them.

Wildlife viewing tips

• Dawn and dusk are the best times. During summer many animals escape the heat among the trees.
• Drive slowly on the parkway where bison and coyotes often travel. Better yet, go for a hike!
• Rainy day fun - moose and wapiti feel like wet weather.
• Be patient! Kick back and wait to see what will wander or waddle by.

Geocache

Geocaching is a fun high-tech adventure where participants use a GPS (Global Positioning System) to hunt for containers called caches.

Find the 8 geocaches in Elk Island Caches range from quick grabs to challenging 1-2 day finds. Locate all 8, crack the code and receive a collector coin. Don’t have a GPS? Borrow one from Astotin Theatre.

Visit www.geocaching.com to find the Elk Island cache clues.

Paddle

Your canoe or kayak is the best seat in the house! It provides you with a unique vantage point - the perfect spot to watch wildlife from a respectful & safe distance. It is a great low-impact way to discover the natural wonders of the park.

Bring your own canoe/kayak or rent one at the Astotin Lake from Edmonton Canoe. For details visit www.edmontoncanoe.com

Winter

Play in the snow! There’s so much to see and do:
• Snowshoe to different geocache locations.
• Cross-country ski on favourite summer trails.
• Prepare for powder as trails are not groomed or track set.
• View wildlife. With no leaves on the trees they’re much easier to see.
• Picnic and cozy up to a fire at the Tawatay Lake warming shelter.

Contact information

Visitor Centre & Gift Shop
elk.island@pc.gc.ca
National Information Service
1-888-773-8888
Sandy Beach Campground (summer)
780-992-0017
Parks Canada Campground (winter)
1-877-373-2873
Reservation Service
1-877-RESERVE
elk.island@pc.gc.ca
24-hour Emergency
1-877-852-3100
RCMP / Fire / Ambulance
9-1-1
Elk Island National Park
24404 R.R. 1
Fort Saskatchewan, AB
T0G 2S0
1-800-642-3800
1-800-642-3800
1-877-591-8550
1-888-773-8888
1-877-373-2873
1-877-RESERVE
1-877-RESERVE
**Trails**

**Hike**

1. **Hayburger Trail** (3-4h) 12.2 km, flat terrain
   - Loop loop, aspen forest and meadows. Be mindful of hazards in areas off-trail (see trailhead sign for details). Good for viewing bison and moose.

2. **Simmons Trail** (1-2h) 5.5 km, moderate terrain
   - Aspen forest, meadows and beaver ponds. A quiet loop of the Shirley Lake Trail. Good for viewing bison, moose and elk.

3. **Shirley Lake Trail** (3-4h) 12.5 km, moderate terrain
   - Picnic tables and firepits. Mixed wood forest. Great for viewing beaver, waterfowl, elk and bison.

4. **Moss Lake Trail** (3.5-4.5h) 13 km, moderate terrain
   - Picnic tables and firepits. Mixed wood forest. Great for viewing bison, moose and elk.

5. **Amisk Wuche Trail** (1-1.5h) 2.5 km, moderate to steep terrain
   - Boardwalks through marsh and forest. Rich in aquatic and bird life.

6. **Lakeview Trail** (1-2h) 3.5 km, gentle terrain
   - Poplar and spruce forest, great views of Astotin Lake, islands, beaver and waterfowl.

7. **Beaver Pond Trail** (1-2h) 3.5 km, gentle terrain
   - Aspen forest and sedge meadows. Good for viewing bison, moose, beaver and waterfowl.

8. **Living Waters Boardwalk** (.5-1h) 500 m boardwalk, gentle terrain
   - Floating boardwalk and exhibits. Great view of Astotin Lake, islands, beaver, waterfowl, and aquatic life.

9. **Tawayik Lake Trail** (4-5h) 18.5 km, moderate terrain
   - Picnic tables, warming shelter and firepits at trailhead. Aspen forest and meadows; great for viewing elk, bison and waterfowl. A portion of trail is shared with Shirley Lake Trail.

10. **Shoreline Trail** (2-3h) 5 km return, gentle terrain (pavement)
    - Parking lot across from golf course. Mixed wood forest, good view of islands, beaver and waterfowl. Beavers Bay picnic area; picnic tables and firepits.

**Biking**

- **Wood Bison Trail** (4-5h) 10 km, moderate terrain
  - Aspen forest, great for viewing wood bison, moose, elk and birds.

- **Tawayik Lake Trail** (4-5h) 15 km, moderate terrain
  - Picnic tables, warming shelter and firepits at trailhead. Aspen forest and meadows; great for viewing elk, bison and waterfowl. A portion of trail is shared with Shirley Lake Trail.

**Pet Tips**

- **Pack Elk Island on Your Back**
  - These family day-packs come with brochures, an animal identification guide, a pond dipping kit, trail maps and information about other attractions in the area.
- **Tip**
  - Pick up a pack at the Astotin Theatre and spend a fun-filled day with your family! (Offered June-August)

**Trail Safety**

- **Stop** at the Visitor Centre for trail information.
- **Bring** a map and watch for trail markers.
- **Ensure** you are self-reliant; trails are not patrolled.
- **Watch** for slippery or broken boardwalk. Respect area and trail closures.
- **Use caution**, wildlife encounters are possible.

- **For up-to-date trail conditions visit the website:**
  - [www.pc.gc.ca/elkisland](http://www.pc.gc.ca/elkisland)

- **Leave it for others to enjoy**
  - Take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints.

- **Pet Owners**
  - Join other dog owners in protecting pets and wildlife by keeping your dog on leash.
  - Dog waste bags are provided throughout the park.