Visitor Guide and Map



Hiking 🦒

Parks Parcs
Canada Canada



Explore the park at your own pace

garbage facilities.

back of this guide.

Cycling 🌉

Enjoy the fresh air while pedaling through nature.

Bring a bike and breathe in the fresh air while cycling along trails or roadways in the park.

ON TRAILS

Watch for wildlife as you cycle through forest and across open grasslands on more than 80 km of trails.

ON ROAD

With ample wildlife viewing opportunities, paved roads in Elk Island National Park are a great option for road cyclists. Travel the parkway (20 km one-



CYCLING SAFETY

- Fast, quiet travel increases the chance of sudden wildlife encounters.
- Do not get between bison gathered on the
- Ride single file to allow motor vehicles to
- Wear a helmet and high-visibility clothing.

A true wilderness experience 35 minutes east of Edmonton

Elk Island National Park is 35 minutes from Edmonton but a world away. Come experience a place where the bison still roam as stars twinkle overhead. See the plants and animals that call the park home on one of more than 80 km of trails or paddle in the pristine lakes. Or, learn about how Elk Island contributes to global bison conservation. There's something for everyone at Elk Island.

To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience, plan your visit and pack appropriate equipment:

- Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/elkisland for the latest info on park activities, events and conditions.
- · Select a trip that best fits the group's abilities, experiences, interests, equipment and time available.
- · Share a trip plan with friends or family.
- · Check weather and road conditions.
- · Learn what to do if encountering wildlife.
- · Stop at the Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre for park updates and to purchase your entry pass.
- · Check the time to make sure you can complete your trip before the sun sets or be prepared to travel in the dark.
- Help reduce the spread of non-native plants by removing dirt and seeds from your footwear or equipment before arriving at the park.

PACK

All national parks have risks. Come prepared and help keep yourself safe. Pack the basics:

- ✓ Visitor guide and map ☐ Weather appropriate
- clothing
- □ Insect repellent
- □ Fully-charged phone*

□ Flashlight

- - □ Activity specific gear
- *Cell coverage varies and may not be avalable in all areas of the park.

□ First aid kit

□ Sun protection

☐ Food, water and equipment

to be self-sufficient

Visit adventuresmart.ca for more safety tips and trip planning resources.

Enjoy FREE drop-in programs with paid park entry

Programs include:

- Bison Backstage tours Campfire programs
- · Astotin Theater
- Indigenous cultures
- · Archaeology of Elk Island · Grassland restoration

Stop by the Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre or visit parkscanada.gc.ca/elkisland for seasonal program schedules.

PRIVATE PROGRAMS

Parks Canada interpreters are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Private programs are available for school groups, organizations and families.



Sleep under the stars

Share stories around the campfire as the stars in the night sky twinkle above. Reserve your campsite today for camping dates between May 19 and October 9, 2023:

reservation.parkscanada.gc.ca 1-877-737-3783

ASTOTIN LAKE CAMPGROUND

This campground is within walking distance of the beach, playground and theatre.

Astotin Lake Campground offers:

- · Drinking water
- Hot showers (for purchase) RV dump station
- Flush toilets
- · Picnic shelter

oTENTiks

For an easy and relaxing camping experience try an oTENTik. This A-frame tent and cabin in one can sleep up to six people in comfort. Sleeping bags and extra blankets are recommended in cas of colder nights.



Bundled Firewood

OSTER LAKE BACKCOUNTRY CAMPGROUND

This **hike-in only** (4 km) campground provides a truly unique camping experience on the west shore of Oster Lake. Fire permits can be purchased at the Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre. Firewood is available at the campground.

WINTER CAMPING

Feeling adventurous? Create winter camping memories at Astotin Lake Campground or Oster Lake Backcountry Campground. Contact the Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre at 780-922-5790 for more information.

Mule Deer

Lace up your boots or strap on a pair of snowshoes and enjoy one of the park's many trails. Exploring Elk Island National Park in the winter is an excellent way to see the park and some of its inhabitants.



SNOWSHOE RENTALS

Listen to the crunch of snow underfoot and watch for resident wildlife while roaming more than 80 km of trails. Pick up a pair of snowshoes from the Astotin Lake Campground Kiosk

Adult sizes: \$14.00; Child sizes: Free. Rentals are subject to availability.

Plan Ahead and Be Prepared

or emergencies.

You are responsible for your own safety. Planning ahead will help keep you safe.

- Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/elkisland for up-to-date information on activities, conditions, important bulletins and closures
- according to the road conditions. Check the weather and be prepared for changes

Visit 511.alberta.ca for provincial reports and drive

- Thin ice may exist anywhere at any time in the park in the winter season. Parks Canada does not monitor natural ice surfaces.
- · Warm up in a pavilion, picnic shelter or by a fire in a designated fire pit.
- Be prepared for shorter daylight hours.

Emergency 911 - Police, fire and ambulance

1-877-852-3100 – Missing persons, first aid, poaching, wildfires, wildlife mortality,

Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre & Gift Shop:

Parks Canada Campground Reservation Service:

> pnelkisland-elkislandnp@pc.gc.ca parkscanada.gc.ca/elkisland Parks Canada Campground **Reservation Service:**

DRIVING DIRECTIONS FROM EDMONTON

Travel east on Highway 16. The park entrance is located on the north side of Highway 16 approximately 35 minutes east of Edmonton.

The first large Elk Island National Park sign on 7 km further east to reach the main park gate.

Come prepared with a full tank of gas as there is no gas station in the park.



Follow us on Twitter @ElkIslandNP



Bison conservation

Millions of bison once roamed across the continent from

The Canadian government purchased one of the last herds of bison and between 1907 and 1912, over 400 wild

- Today, there are more bison in Elk Island National Park than there were in the whole of North America in 1890.
- Elk Island National Park is the only national park that maintains herds of both subspecies of North American Bison; Wood Bison on the south side of Highway 16 and Plains Bison on the north side.
- Elk Island National Park provides bison for conservation initiatives around the world.



Join an interpretive park program or stop at the Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre for more

Alaska to Mexico. However, within a single human lifetime, bison populations in North America were reduced to less than a thousand.

bison were shipped by train to Elk Island National Park.



information on bison conservation.

Paddling 🚣

With over 80 km of trails to explore, memories await! Watch a busy beaver construct its dam, listen to songbirds or enjoy a sunset over Astotin Lake. Most trails have parking, viewpoints, washrooms and

Trail descriptions and locations are listed on the

way) or the administration road (5 km one-way).



Slow down, stay alert and make noise.

pass safely.

A canoe or kayak is the best seat in the house

Paddling is a low-impact way to discover the natural wonders of the park.

Bring a canoe, kayak or paddleboard to the Astotin Lake Recreation Area or boat launch. Gas and electric motors are not permitted.



PADDLING SAFETY

- Wear a Canadian-approved personal flotation device (PFD).
- Check the weather forecast and be prepared for conditions to change.
- Carry essential safety equipment on board, as required by Transport Canada.

Wildlife viewing 🖀



Be alert as females and their young travel at these times. Slow down. Bison and coyotes often travel on the parkway. Get wet. Moose and waterfowl are most active in rainy













Bring your binoculars: over 250 species of birds can be spotted in Elk Island throughout the year!

STAY SAFE AND PROTECT WILDLIFE

- Keep a distance of at least 100m from all wildlife.
- Stay in the vehicle when driving by wildlife. Wildlife can quickly become comfortable around humans and vehicles if they are viewed off roadsides, which puts the safety of visitors, neighbouring communities and the animal at risk. Allow wildlife to cross the road safely, enjoy the viewing opportunity quickly and continue on your way.
- Do not feed wildlife. Store all food, garbage and scented items when not in use.
- a trail make noise to alert animals. Wait for them to move on or slowly back away as safe to do so
- times. Off-leash dogs cause wildlife stress which defensive behaviour.



Parks Canada Dispatch park violations and off-leash pets.

780-922-5790

1-877-737-3783

Highway 16 marks the park boundary. Continue

Like us on Facebook **f**



Xplorer Program

Elk Island National Park is a great place to have fun with your family, explore nature, and watch bison, moose, and beavers. Become an explorer and learn about Elk Island National Park by completing Xplorer challenges around the park. Start your adventure by picking up

your Xplorer booklet from the Wahkotowin Visitor Centre, the Astotin Theatre or the campground kiosk. The Xplorer program is free

of charge.



Geocaching 🔀

Hide and seek

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

Caches in the park range from easy finds with vehicle

access to challenging half-day finds on longer trails. Try

to locate them all! Visit geocaching.com or pick up the Elk Island Guide to Geocaching brochure at the Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre.



Black Bear

- Avoid startling wildlife. Be aware of your surroundings and travel in groups.
- · Give wildlife the right of way. If you see wildlife on
- Keep dogs on leash and under control at all
- can put you, your dog and other visitors at risk of

