Jasper National Park
Alberta

Location
Jasper National Park lies along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains with its townsite 233 miles west of the City of Edmonton.

Its southern boundary crosses the vast Columbia Icefield and the total Park area of 4,200 square miles makes it the second largest of the National Parks in Canada.

The detailed map in this folder has been prepared especially to assist visitors to identify readily the various features of the Park.

Purpose
Jasper was established as a National Park because of its magnificent mountainous area was worthy of being preserved in its native state for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Unique natural wonders such as the great glaciers, the valleys carved by the Ice Age, the primitive and beautiful Maligne Lake, the puzzling Maligne Canyon, and alpine meadows are here for you to see in their native, unspoiled state.

The park is administered on your behalf by the National and Historic Parks Branch.

NATURAL FEATURES

Geological
The great movements within the earth's crust which have formed the mountains of Jasper National Park have exposed rocks ranging in age from the most ancient to the most recent. Some of the rocks were laid down in the earliest defined period of the earth's history.

At this time in earth's history the lands were naked of vegetation and in the seas there lived only a very few primitive invertebrates and algae.

The latest chapter in earth's history, the Cenozoic, appeared as the rugged, precipitous cliffs and castellated peaks of the Jacques and De Smet Ranges.

(3) Mesozoic—
Some of these younger rocks are softer and have been stripped off the higher mountains by the processes of erosion. They tend to be preserved only in the valleys between the great Paleozoic mountains.

The great Columbia Icefield (150 square miles) is shared by Jasper and Banff National Parks. Much of it is above 8,500 feet in elevation and some above 10,000 feet. It is the largest sheet of glacial ice on this continent outside of the Arctic Circle.

From this icefield many valley glaciers reach down to about 6,000 feet. One of the most spectacular of these, Athabasca Glacier, is easily accessible from the Banff-Jasper Highway near the southern entry to the Park. Here there are crevasses, cascades of meltwater, interesting water channels in the ice, rock tables, and moraines of several kinds. These and other interesting glacial features may also be seen at Angel Glacier, on the flank of Mount Edith Cavell.

The great masses of rock debris or moraines at both these places give a startling impression of the power of erosion of glaciers.

A prime example of water erosion is Maligne Canyon. This great gash, almost 200 feet deep with nearly vertical walls less than 10 feet apart in some places, has been cut through Paleozoic limestones by centuries of ceaseless wear by a small stream of running water.

Plantlife
The Park is in the montane plant zone, making it botanically one of the most interesting areas of the country. Plants characteristic of both the prairies and the mountains grow in projection throughout the Park, with a few arctics in the higher altitudes to intrigue the botanist.

There are fleabanes, vetches, oxytropes, violets, the western wild lily, wild blue flax, large-flowered gaillardia, shooting star and the pasque flower, better known as the crocus amnemone, which is also found on the prairies. Other wildflowers are Macoun's gentian, bunchberry, twinflower, wintergreens, aasters, arnicas, water willow-herb and its cousin, the great willow-herb or fireweed, Indian paint brush, elephant's head, penstemon, larkspur, columbine and several interesting orchids such as the calypso, hooved ladies'-tresses, small white lady's-slipper and the round-leaved orchid.

A young cow mouse in sanctuary.
Most of the trees in the Park are evergreen. At the lower altitudes Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, black and western white spruce are common. At the higher altitudes Engelmann spruce, western white pine and alpine fir can be found. In some valleys, and creeping up to the lower benches of the mountains may be found aspen poplar and birch which turn a brilliant gold in the autumn and make a striking contrast to the dark evergreens, while above, on the north-eastern slopes may be seen coppery-hued shrubs. Club-mosses, miniature forms of the giants of the coal age, are to be found at Sunwapta Falls and other localities in the Park. Small ferns are quite rare.

Wildlife
The Park is a wildlife sanctuary in which wild animals are protected from hunting and trapping; consequently, many have become accustomed to close association with humans and have lost their fear of man. This permits observation of them at close range, but they are still wild animals and should be viewed with the respect and caution. The larger mammals native to the Park are black bear, grizzly bear, cougar, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, and mountain caribou.

Some of the smaller mammals characteristic of the Park are coyote, foxes, marten, short-tailed weasel, lynx, wolverine, skunk, bobcat, pika, snowshoe hare, hoary marmot, several types of weasel, lynx, wolverine, skunk, bobcat, pika, snowshoe hare, hoary marmot, several types of squirrel, pocket gopher, beaver, and muskrat.

Birdlife
A Provisional Check-List of Birds to be found in Jasper National Park names almost 200 varieties and is available free upon request. These range from the rarely seen, grotesque, stilt-legged great blue heron to the impudent whiskey jack (grey jay) which congregate around picnic areas and campgrounds.

Golden eagles and bald eagles are year round residents. The bald eagle is not commonly sighted but the golden eagle can often be seen utilizing updrafts along the mountain slopes to soar effortlessly beyond the range of most birds. Hawks, woodpeckers, piipian, warblers and grouse are but a few of the many other birds which are frequently seen.

Fish
Modern methods of fish management are followed to improve the angling in lakes and streams in the Park. A regular stocking program is carried out from the fish hatchery under the guidance of the Canadian Wildlife Service. Rainbow, Eastern Brook, lake trout and spleake (which is a cross between lake and Eastern Brook trout) are distributed in Park waters. These are distributed according to fishing pressure and productivity of water stocked. The fish hatchery is situated beside the Maligne River, a half mile above its confluence with the Athabasca River just five miles east of the townsite. Visitors are welcome to inspect the hatchery during working hours.

National Parks fishing licences are available at the park information office. Information Centre concerning these changes.

How to See the Interesting Features
While roads lead to many of the interesting features, the best way to gain a full appreciation of nature in the Park is to use the trails. A large number of visitors gain considerable satisfaction from walking or riding over those more than 600 miles of trails. Many areas of exceptional natural interest and beauty are within a day's travel along the trails to the high lakes and alpine meadows. For those with the time and interest, Jasper is one of the centres for trail riding expeditions in the Canadian Rockies. Saddle and pack horses can be hired locally and guides are available if required.

For those visitors who must be satisfied with shorter trips, interesting trails radiate from the townsite. These trails (10 main ones in all) vary from three to 20 miles. Detailed descriptions of each are contained in the folder Trail Directions at Jasper which includes a large scale map of the area.

How You Can Learn More About the Park
To help you understand and obtain greater enjoyment from your park visit, a park naturalist conducts tours and campfire talks to explain the purpose and natural features of this National Park. Many of these nature talks are illustrated by colour slides and motion pictures. Interesting films of nature subjects are presented frequently in the evenings at the various campgrounds. Well maintained nature trails of self-guiding type are laid out in various areas. Detailed information about the park and the naturalist's program is available at the park information office.

GENERAL INFORMATION
Park Administration
A resident Superintendent is in charge of the Park. The protection of wildlife, game, forests, waters and natural features is in the hands of the Warden Service assisted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Visitors may obtain detailed information from the nearest Park Warden.

Season
The Park is open throughout the year, but it is only from May to September that all the facilities are in operation. During the winter season, visitors to the Park are most likely to enjoy the following features:

Mountains
Jasper is built on the eastern slope of the Continental Divide in the落基山脉. The Park is a wildlife sanctuary in which wild animals are protected from hunting and trapping; consequently, many have become accustomed to close association with humans and have lost their fear of man. This permits observation of them at close range, but they are still wild animals and should be viewed with the respect and caution. The larger mammals native to the Park are black bear, grizzly bear, cougar, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, and mountain caribou.

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All boats operating in the Park must carry proper safety equipment and conform with Federal Navigation Regulations.

How to Reach the Park

The Park is served by all usual methods of transportation—rail, air, bus, and motor car. As indicated on the accompanying map, a small airfield 6 miles north of Jasper townsite permits landings of light aircraft during daylight. The Banff-Jasper Highway is open certain hours during the winter.

Accommodation

A variety of accommodation is offered in the Park, details of which are available at all park information offices. Reservations are not made by park staff. Nearly all facilities of a modern town are found within the park boundaries, the majority being convenient to the main townsite.

Park Enjoyment

Because Jasper has a large area of wilderness, it is ideal for the visitor who wishes to backpack or ride into the back country seeing the land in its primitive state. The Tongue Valley with the Amethyst Lakes and the stolid Ramparts towering above them is one of many wilderness experiences awaiting the person who wishes to get away from highways. The Jasper-Banff Highway offers a splendid scenic drive. Maligne Lake is another impressive feature. Until the road is completed to the lake, visitors drive to the end of Medicine Lake and transfer to a concessionaire's bus for the final part of the trip. On Whistlers Mountain, a cable car tramway takes visitors to the 7,350-foot level in an enclosed 35-passenger car. In winter, there is skiing on Whistlers and at Marmot Basin, the latter accessible by commercially operated snowmobile. Accommodation and other commercial visitor services are available in the townsite.

A Brief History of the Park

Jasper was established as a National Park in 1907 and for the earlier history of the area we must turn to the diaries and reports of the early explorers and fur traders. Nearly 100 years before this, David Thompson the pioneer explorer of the western part of Canada discovered the Athabasca Pass and a practical route to the Pacific Coast. Over the years rivalry for the fur trade between the Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies stimulated the use of this route known as "La Grande Traverse" by great packtrains of trade goods and fur bales. Explorers, prospectors, engineers and missionaries came to know the broad valley of the Athabasca en route to Boat Encampment and, via the mighty Columbia River, to Astoria on the Oregon Coast. Among these was an employee of the Northwest Company, Jasper Hawes, who took charge of the first trading post at the outlet of Brûlé Lake. He soon moved the post upstream to the outlet of Jasper Lake where it became known as "Jasper's House". When in 1907 several names for this new Park were suggested "Jasper" finally won out over "Athabasca".

The present townsite, located on a boulder strewn flat, was originally named "Fitzhugh" and the first building was erected in 1911. In that year the first road—to Pyramid Lake—was constructed and in the winter of 1913-14 the first bridge in the Park—a log suspension type—was built by volunteers to cross the Athabasca River near Old Fort Point. On the shore of Lac Beauvert in 1915 Jack and Fred Brewster erected eight tent houses for summer use by park visitors. In 1921 these were purchased by the Canadian National Railways, which in the same year began construction of Jasper Park Lodge.

The first trip into the Park by automobile occurred in 1923 when Charles Grant and R. L. Greene journeyed from Edmonton on the abandoned railway grade of the Grand Trunk Pacific. In that year a scenic road was built to Mount Edith Cavell. In 1929 work commenced on the Jasper end of the Banff-Jasper Highway and this was officially opened in 1940. In the eastern section of the Park a road was built in 1938 to provide convenient access for visitors to Miette Hot Springs. One of these four springs gushes from the rocks at a temperature of 126°F.