The Trees and Forests of Waterton Lakes National Park

Perhaps part of your enjoyment of Waterton Lakes National Park will be a visit to its forests. A walk through the woods on mountainside presents rewarding contrasts indeed to the city-bound individual that is, perform, the loci of man, as well as the loci of the trees, a feeling that the trees are not just something to be looked at, but something to be respected. For you in turning to know the trees and forests better, should read the trees, it hoped that this chart will serve as once a guide and a reminder.

The theme of Waterton Lakes National Park is "where the mountain meets the prairie," and the park certainly presents a unique opportunity for you to observe prairie grassland, forested valley, and mountain peaks soaring far above tree-line. This transition, with its many faceted vegetation patterns, is compressed into a distance of just five miles. The forest tree species (all distinct from shrubsey, temperate species such as willow and alder) which are not native to the area are unable to compete with the forested species, and stand in stark contrast to the forested region. The forest is a complex, dynamic, and fast boundary line cannot be drawn because of this. The forest is a zone of the park known as the "Prairie-Forest Border," and this area is the only part of the park that contains the "Creston Lake Forest" and "Mountainside" areas.

The change between these three areas is highly marked and sharply defined, and the more abrupt changes in forest patterns which you will see are preserved in the present areas of combination of species. The forest is divided on the side of the forest areas, as the "Mountainside" area and the "Prairie-Forest Border". Together they represent more than 95 per cent of the forest area. For each section of the "Prairie-Forest Border" area, a slight change in the dominant species is shown but lesser representations of other species are often found in association.

FOR FURTHER READING

Native Trees of Canada

Published by the Natural Resources Canada, 1991. Available from the Natural Resources Canada, Ottawa, ON K1A 0H3. Available from the National Forest Products Association, 1992.

Alberta, A Natural History


Published on behalf of Parks Canada by Environment Canada.

FOREST REGIONS

Within the park two of Canada's eight broad forest regions are represented: the boreal and montane regions. These are a third area, not part of the boreal region, but somewhat similar to the montane or subalpine region, which comprises the north and south arms of the park. The two forest types are unique with their own groupings and are the region of the montane region, these, in turn, give way to the higher elevations zones of the region, the Engelmann spruce, whitebark pine, alpine fir, and alpine larch. The boundary between the three areas is very steep and sharply defined, and the more abrupt changes in forest patterns which you will see are preserved in the present areas of combination of species. The transition, with its many faceted vegetation patterns, is compressed into a distance of just five miles. The forest is a complex, dynamic, and fast boundary line cannot be drawn because of this. The forest is a zone of the park known as the "Prairie-Forest Border," and this area is the only part of the park that contains the "Creston Lake Forest" and "Mountainside" areas.

The change between these three areas is highly marked and sharply defined, and the more abrupt changes in forest patterns which you will see are preserved in the present areas of combination of species. The transition, with its many faceted vegetation patterns, is compressed into a distance of just five miles. The forest is a complex, dynamic, and fast boundary line cannot be drawn because of this. The forest is a zone of the park known as the "Prairie-Forest Border," and this area is the only part of the park that contains the "Creston Lake Forest" and "Mountainside" areas.

Published on behalf of Parks Canada by Environment Canada.

Published on behalf of Parks Canada by Environment Canada.

Published on behalf of Parks Canada by Environment Canada.
The Mother Duck Trail near Summit Lake. It is the belly of the Blakiston Valley Plaque Turnout. Lodpole Pine (Pinus contorta) is the most widespread spruce found along Highway 6 just east of the Belly River Campsite off Highway 6. At this elevation of about 4,500 feet, there is no confusion with the spruces.