



**Grasslands
National Park**
parkscanada.gc.ca

EXPERIENCE GRASSLANDS NATIONAL PARK

VISITOR GUIDE



Parks
Canada

Parcs
Canada

Canada



CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.pc.gc.ca/grasslands
Email: grasslands.info@pc.gc.ca

VISITOR CENTRE

West Block 1-306-298-2257
East Block 1-306-476-2018 (May–October)

Grasslands National Park
P.O. Box 150
Val Marie, Sask. S0N 2T0

EMERGENCY SERVICES

9-1-1: Police, Fire, Ambulance
(Limited cell coverage)

Parks Canada Dispatch: 1-877-852-3100

RCMP – West Block 1-306-625-6400 Ponteix 24 hrs.
RCMP – East Block 1-306-642-7110 Assiniboia 24 hrs.

Experience the solitude of the wide-open plain as the prairie wind ripples a sea of grasses beneath the clearblue sky.

EXPLORE TWO UNIQUE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS:

West Block – Connect with national treasures and see some of the rarest wildlife in Canada as you explore the West Block’s Frenchman River Valley. Catch a glimpse of a Short-horned Lizard or Plains Bison and spy on the comical Black-tailed Prairie Dogs.

East Block – Hike the breathtaking badlands, discover the astonishing dinosaur bones exposed in the eroding layers of earth.

DIVERSE

The grasslands that surround you are situated at the northern tip of North America’s mixed-grass prairie. It is unique in Canada bringing with it many uncommon plants and animals.

RESILIENT

Once the grassland is broken by the plough, it takes many years and a nearby seed source for the native plants to return. If the protective grass, moss and lichen ground cover is removed, the fertile soil is soon blown away by the strong prairie wind.

EVOLVING

Less than one quarter of Canada’s original mixed-grass prairie remains in its natural state. The park and area is one of the largest and least disturbed remaining pockets of native prairie in North America.

Grasslands National Park is the only park in Canada to represent the Prairie Grasslands Natural Region.



YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS HERE...

Check out the top 5 must do's

3) Hike the self-guided trail to one of the highest and most striking viewpoints in the park – 70 Mile Butte.



1) Go on an adventure and take the Ecotour Scenic Drive – and view some of the rarest wildlife in Canada.



2) Watch the night sky come alive from the best seats in the house – your tent in the backcountry or the deck of your oTENTik. Simply breathtaking.



4) Join a guided interpretive program and experience the stories that capture the character of this amazing land.



5) Explore the Badlands in the Valley of 1000 devils or check out the Borderlands Lookout on the Back country loop.

HOW TO HAVE A SAFE ADVENTURE!



Grasslands National Park is a prairie wilderness environment with few services. Be prepared! Your safety depends on awareness of the lack of water and shade, wild animals such as Bison and rattlesnakes, prairie wildfires and storms, and being able to find your way.

PRIOR TO ENTERING THE PARK, OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING FOR AN ENJOYABLE VISIT:

- Bring 2-3 litres of water/person/day – potable water is available at the Frenchman Valley and Rock Creek Campgrounds
- Carry a first aid kit and cell phone, coverage is limited
- Roads may become impassable when wet

PRAIRIE DOG VISITS

- Keep pets away from Prairie Dog towns – for their safety and yours
- Fleas from wild rodents such as Prairie Dogs may transmit diseases such as sylvatic plague
- Tuck pants into socks and use insect repellent with DEET
- Beware of Black Widow spiders and fleas, especially in prairie dog burrows
- Don't handle dead wildlife! If possible, report to park staff



FINDING YOUR WAY

- Tell someone your plans and place the backcountry camping permit on the dashboard of your vehicle.
- Inquire with staff at Visitor Center for up to date information and navigation tools (e.g. maps, compass, GPS and batteries)
- Pause frequently to be aware of your surroundings
- If lost or disoriented, stay put, stay calm and remain visible
- Find shelter if the weather turns bad or if night falls



WEATHER AND WILDFIRES

- Be prepared for sudden weather changes such as strong winds and electrical storms. Lightning frequently ignites grass fires – avoid high ground and barbed wire fences
- Report sightings of smoke or flames by calling 911 or Parks Canada Dispatch – 1-877-852-3100
- Grass fires travel quickly, be prepared to evacuate
- If fire traps you, head for low vegetation areas (e.g. gravel roads, Prairie Dog colonies) or burned areas

BISONS

- Remember that Bison are wild animals. Your best protection is to maintain a safe distance of 100 metres or more (length of a football field). Getting too close is wildlife harassment at the least, and life threatening at the most
- If encountering Bison during your drive, stay in your vehicle, drive slow and do not honk
- Use caution when cycling, horseback riding or hiking (especially with pets)
- Remember that Bison are more aggressive during calving (May) and rutting (mid-July–August)



WATCH FOR THESE SIGNS OF BISON AGGRESSION:

- Shaking their head
- Loud snorting
- Pawing
- Raising the tail
- Short charges or running toward you



QUICKSAND

- Beware of quicksand in the East Block – typically, they are identified with signs

RATTLESNAKES

- Wear over-the-ankle footwear and long pants to protect against bites
- Watch where you walk and keep children close – you may not hear the rattle
- Stay calm and slowly move away if you see or hear a rattlesnake
- Know that snakes will only strike when threatened or cornered
- Consider borrowing snake gaiters at the Visitor Centre for your personal comfort

Contact the Visitor Centre regarding snake hibernaculum restrictions



IF BITTEN:

- Stay calm and restrict movement
- Cleanse the wound, keep limb below heart level and do not drink fluids
- Call 911 and seek medical attention immediately

SPECIAL EVENTS:

GRASSLANDER CLASSIC (WEST BLOCK, JULY)

Spend the day kayaking the heart of the Frenchman River, then tour the Bison Handling Facility all before riding on a wagon to hear stories of the open range. Try your hand at archery and rally your team to play in the ball hockey tournament. Join in the excitement at the kids activity pavilion and dance into the evening at the outdoor concert.

ASTRONOMY: BEYOND THE BIG DIPPER (WEST & EAST BLOCK, MAY, JULY & AUGUST)

The new moon opens the door to the darkest Dark Sky Preserve. Join us as we unfold the mysteries within the rich darkness we actively protect.

BADLANDS BLAST (EAST BLOCK, AUGUST)

Wagon rides, kids activities, and fossil experts share their adventures. Dine and dance at the Rock Creek Hoedown. Bring your instrument and jam with the locals.

FOSSIL FEVER (EAST BLOCK, AUGUST)

Always wanted to dig into the past? Join the Royal Saskatchewan Museum as they uncover the ancient secrets. You can be part of the dig, a palaeontologist for the day. Come enjoy the 'fossil talks' each evening.



EXPLORE AND DISCOVER

ECOTOUR SCENIC DRIVE:

Pick up a self-guided brochure from the Visitor Centre, and embark on your tour through the West Block to view rare wildlife and breathtaking landscapes.

HIKING:

Select a trail experience that's right for you – from leisurely strolls to awesome back country experiences.

GEOCACHING:

Embark on a self-guided trip to experience some of the park's most interesting cultural and natural hotspots!

KAYAKING:

Launch at the Belza Bridge and explore the Frenchman River. Don't have a kayak? Give a local outfitter a call.

HORSEBACK RIDING:

Bring your equine companion and explore the prairie landscape on horseback! Equestrian camping available in both blocks.

CYCLING:

A prairie bike ride has its challenges, and its rewards. Travel the Ecotour road or try a prairie trail. Check with campground staff about bicycle rentals.

JUST FOR KIDS:

Pick up your Xplorers booklet at the Visitor Centre. Complete the fun activities and puzzles and earn a cool souvenir! Also, be sure to ask about our Junior Naturalist backpacks, and kids programs this summer.

OUTFITTER ADVENTURES:

Many great guided outfitter experiences available in the area, including: horseback, kayaking, hiking, art, photography and yoga.

SEEK OUT THE RED CHAIRS:

Parks Canada started the "Red Chair Experience," placing red Adirondack chairs in scenic locations throughout the national parks and encouraging visitors to seek them out and share their experience. Grasslands National Park has 3 locations in the West and East blocks. Be sure to #sharethechair.

Ask for an 'Activity Guide' for more information on our interpretive programs.



DID YOU KNOW? The park offers outdoor education programs for schools groups and other organizations.



Indigenous People



Ranchers

THE PRAIRIE PEOPLE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

For centuries, the prairies were the domain of Indigenous Peoples who had linked their lives to the migrations of bison. One after the other, they came – Gros Ventre, Assiniboine, Cree, Blackfoot and Sioux. They left behind bison drive lanes, arrow heads, and tipi rings for you to see.

In the late 1880's, after the Battle of Little Big Horn against the American Cavalry, Sitting Bull and 4000 Lakota Sioux sought sanctuary here. Sitting Bull camped on five different waterways in what now is the park: Breed Creek, the Frenchman River, Medicine Lodge Creek (Wetherall), Horse Creek and Rock Creek.

DID YOU KNOW? There are over 12,000 tipi rings found in the park.



The Métis

From 1850 to 1880, as the fur trade moved westward, the Métis hunted not only for themselves but they supplied the new demand of trading posts setting up in the region. In Medicine Lodge Creek (Wetherall), remnants of an old traders trail still exists. In the early morning if the sun glints off the grass just right, a series of parallel ruts can still be seen.

RANCHERS

By the late 1800's, cattle replaced bison creating a different way of life on the prairies. The government passed leasehold legislation to promote ranching in the west.

DID YOU KNOW?

The park has thousands of archaeological sites and is one of the largest concentrations of undisturbed pre-contact cultural resources in Canada.

The Métis are descendants of Indigenous People and European and Euro-Canadian fur traders who worked in the fur trade era (circa 1670-1850). They are their own distinct nation of people with their own inherent Indigenous rights.

The rolling grasslands that stretched into the horizon was divided up into huge ranching companies such as "N-N", the "76 Ranch", and the "Turkey Track", grazing thousands of cattle on the "range". However, a succession of harsh winters, the massive die-off of cattle in 1906-07 and the Homesteaders Act in 1908 contributed to the loss of the open range. Cattle were fenced and the glory days of the open range were gone.

HOMESTEADERS

Pioneers were enticed by government to "tame the west" and "break the land". However, poor soils, rough topography and a hot, dry climate spelled disaster. After only a few years, many homesteaders picked up and left; their signature remains on the prairie to this day. The ranchers and homesteaders, who stayed, combined ranching and farming with western hospitality to create our local prairie communities.

DID YOU KNOW?

Will James, legendary artist and novelist lived life as a cowboy right here, where he homesteaded and worked on the 76 Ranch.



Homesteaders

GEOLOGY AND PALAEOLOGY

The geology and palaeontology of Grasslands National Park and surrounding area tell a story of fascinating land formations and fossils. The diverse landforms are windows into geological time. Whether it is a prehistoric triceratops skull from the Badlands or an iridescent clamshell gleaming in the Frenchman River Valley, discoveries of fossilized land and sea creatures stand as testimony to the

prehistoric world 60 to 80 million years ago! The East Block is one of a handful of places around the world that reveals the Cretaceous-Paleogene Boundary – evidence bearing witness to a world changing event. The revealing landscape of the Badlands led to the first recorded find of dinosaur remains in western Canada in 1874.

WHAT IS THE CRETACEOUS-PALEOGENE BOUNDARY?

A thin, white, chalky layer in the soil, separating age of dinosaurs from mammals. Below the line dinosaur fossils are found, above the line are mammal fossils.



Vertebrae fossil.



Inoceramus shell fossils from the last intercontinental seaway 70-80 million years ago.

DID YOU KNOW?

The East Block Badlands are one of the richest resources for dinosaur fossils in Canada.

EAST BLOCK TRAILS

1. Zahursky Ridge Trail-Route

Choose high ground with horizon stretching views of the badlands, or delve to the intimacy of the valley bottom. This route delights either way.

Moderate terrain – 11 km loop (two options for return)



Start: Rock Creek Day Use Area



2. Rim Walk Trail

Looking for a short, sunset walk? Grab your coffee, your kids and leave the Rock Creek Day Use Area to the rim overlooking the valley.

Easy terrain – 2.5 km loop



Start: access at hill top above Rock Creek Day Use Area



3. Rock Creek Trail

Immerse yourself in a 360° view of native grasslands. With playful swallows close by, disappear into the prairie of days gone by. Enjoy the story along the way on this new trail.

Easy terrain – 1.5 km loop



Start: Rock Creek Day Use Area, across the Rock Creek bridge



4. Butte Creek/Red Buttes Route

Curlews, Swift Fox or Sage-Grouse may be one of your surprises along the way. Navigating a creek crossing and rough topography will be worth the rewarding view at the end.

Difficult terrain – 16 km out-and-back



Start: Rock Creek Day Use Area, across the Rock Creek bridge



5. Valley of 1000 Devils Route

Breathtaking views and acres of hoodoos. Who Knew?

Difficult terrain – 12 km out-and-back



Start: Rock Creek Day Use Area, across the Rock Creek Bridge



6. Creek to Peak Trail

Stroll along Rock Creek and wind your way up the coulee enjoying Mother Nature's seasonal attire.

Easy Terrain – 1.3 km out-and-back



Start: Rock Creek Day Use Area, South along the creek



TRAIL

A defined trail experience identified by one of the following:

- built trail with hardened surface
- mowed prairie outlining the trail
- yellow markers may be present

ROUTE

An undefined experience characterized by one of the following:

- no defined trail or path
- requires route finding skills (i.e. ability to read compass, read map and understand written instructions)
- hiking route guide available for loan at the Visitor Centre

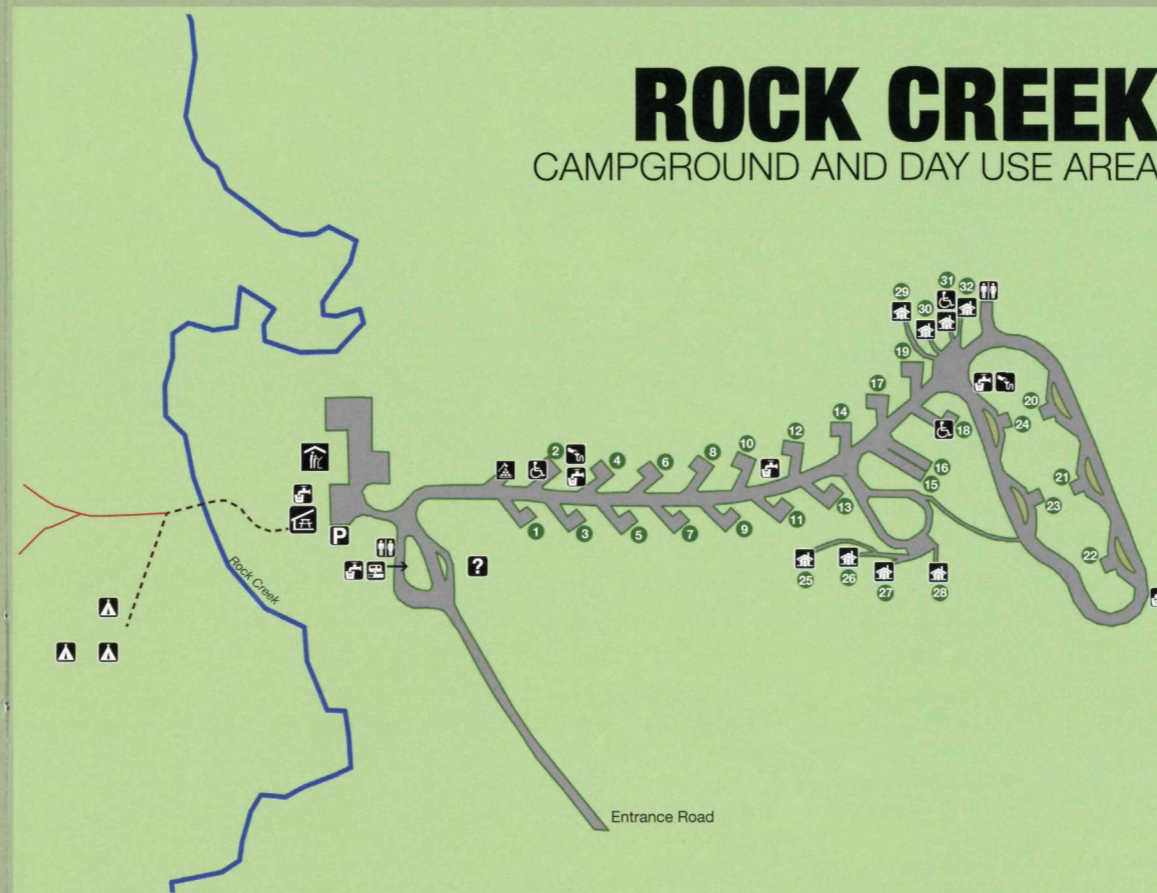
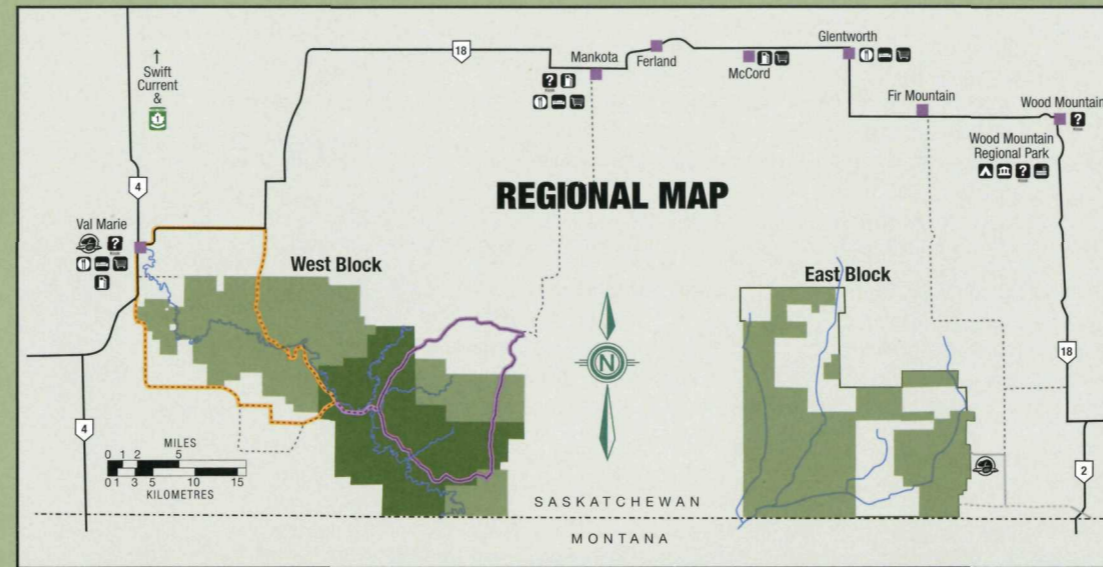
EAST BLOCK

LEGEND

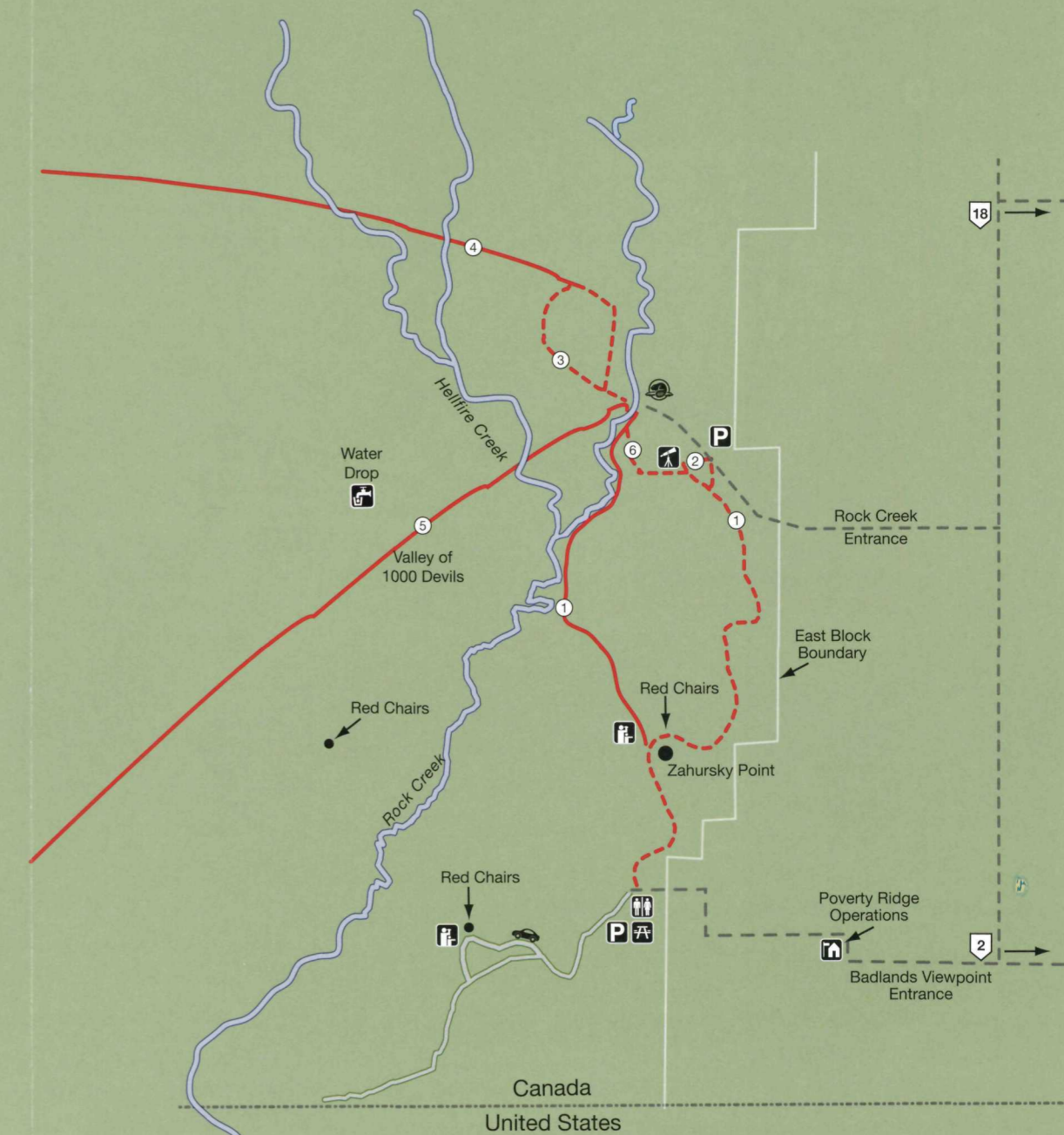
- Visitor Centre
- Private residence
- Park operations
- Information kiosk
- Viewpoint
- Present holdings
- Lands in transition – contact Visitor Centre for permission and updates
- Proposed park boundaries
- Paved road
- Gravel road
- Dirt road
- Trails
- Routes
- International Boundary

DID YOU KNOW?

That the park has grazing agreements with ranchers that manage lands within the proposed park boundaries? The agreements allow these ranchers to bring cattle to graze on park lands, improving park Sage Grouse habitat. Parks Canada, ranchers and Sage Grouse – all winners in this arrangement.



BADLANDS VIEWPOINTS



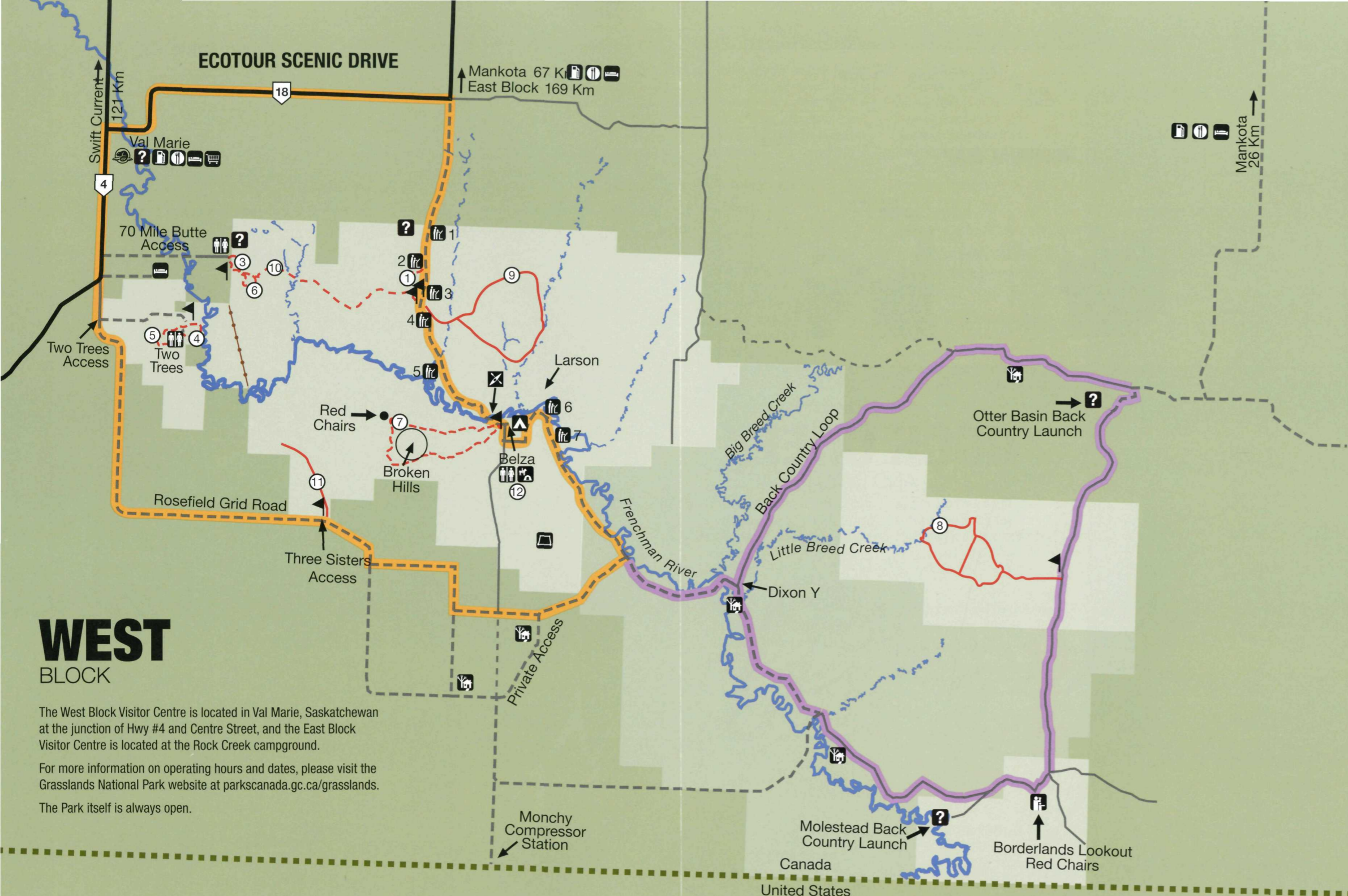
WEST BLOCK

The West Block Visitor Centre is located in Val Marie, Saskatchewan at the junction of Hwy #4 and Centre Street, and the East Block Visitor Centre is located at the Rock Creek campground.

For more information on operating hours and dates, please visit the Grasslands National Park website at parksCanada.gc.ca/grasslands.

The Park itself is always open.

ECOTOUR SCENIC DRIVE



LEGEND

- Visitor Centre
- Old corrals
- Private residence
- Frenchman Valley Campground
- Bison compound
- Information kiosk
- Prairie dog colony
- Trailhead markers
- Ecotour stop
- Kayak launch
- Present holdings
- Lands in transition
- Paved road
- Gravel road
- Dirt road
- Bison fence
- Prairie trail
- Trails
- Routes
- Ecotour Scenic Drive
- Back Country Loop

DID YOU KNOW?

That sign can be one of the most important services for visitors to safely and enjoyably navigate the park, yet can also impact the scenery due to our open landscape? Along your drive, take notice where we have hidden a road sign in a low spot with a hill as backdrop, or unconventionally placed it on the left side to protect the long views and prairie view scapes.

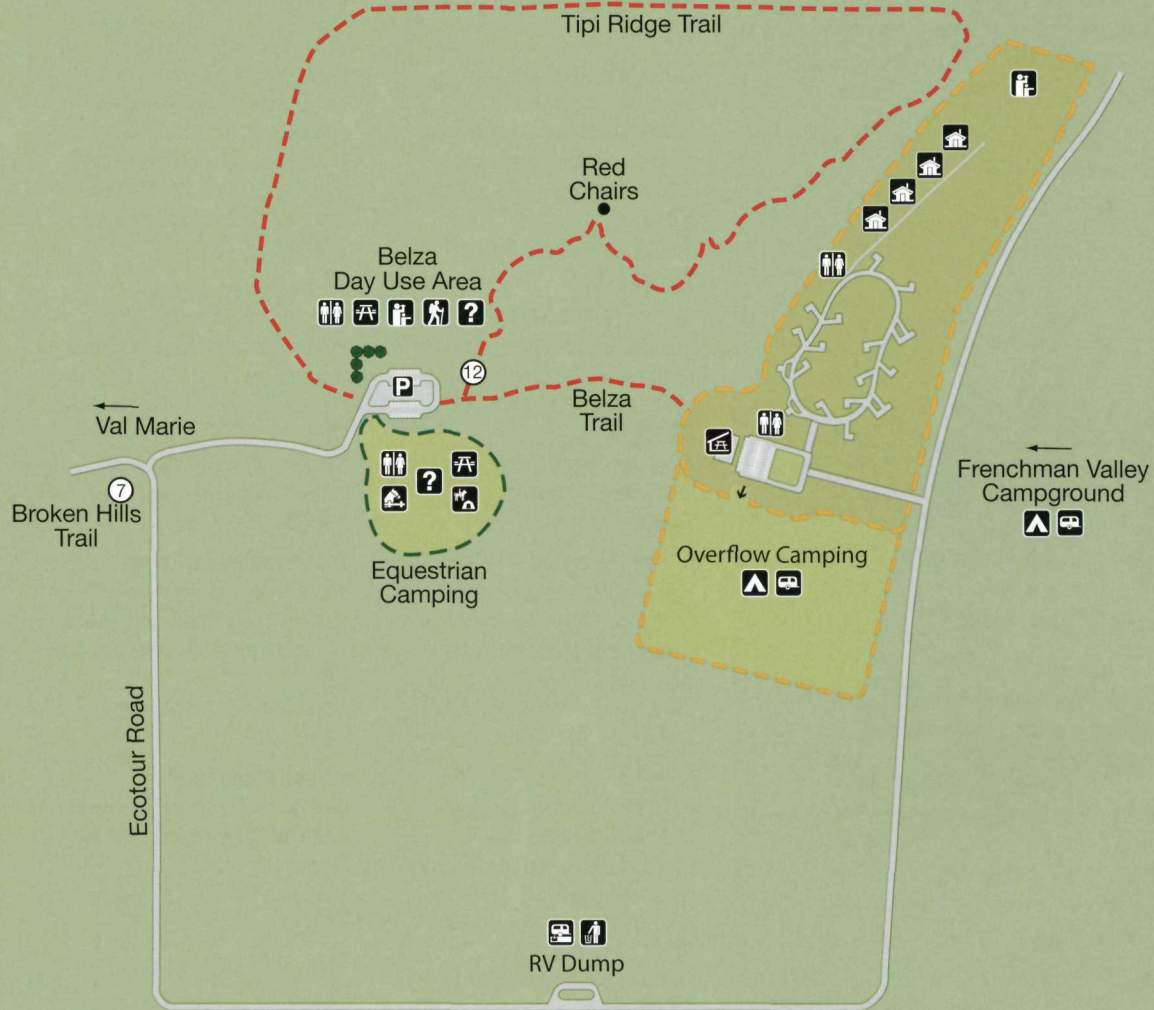
WEST BLOCK TRAILS

- 1. Top Dogtown Trail**
Listen to the rare Black-tailed Prairie Dog's 'bark' as you cross a colony to a superb viewpoint.
Easy Terrain – .74 km loop
 Start: Ecotour Road Stop #2
- 2. Larson Interpretive Trail**
Discover the story of one cowboy and his family who built a ranch that one day became a national park.
Easy terrain – 1.4 km loop
 Start: Ecotour Road Stop # 6
- 3. Eagle Butte Loop Trail**
Enjoy the common and rare flowers, the intriguing geology and surprising views.
Moderate terrain – 2.1 km loop
 Start: 70 Mile Butte Access Road
- 4. Riverwalk Trail**
Witness wildlife and explore the banks of the Frenchman River.
Easy terrain – 3.3 km loop
 Start: Two Trees Trail Access at Two Trees Day Use Area
- 5. Two Trees Trail**
Enjoy rolling hills and a scenic Frenchman River Valley view.
Moderate terrain – 4 km loop
 Start: Two Trees Trail Access at Two Trees Day Use Area
- 6. 70 Mile Butte Trail**
Conquer one of the highest points in the park. The view is worth the climb.
Difficult terrain – 4.1 km loop
 Start: 70 Mile Butte Access Road
- 7. Broken Hills Trail**
Hike through undulating and dramatic prairie.
Difficult terrain – 11.2 km loop
 Start: Ecotour Road at Belza Day Use Area
- 8. Otter Basin Route**
This challenging hike will meet your desires of back country wilderness and spectacular views.
Difficult terrain – 15.3 km loop
 Start: Back Country Loop
- 9. Timbergulch Route**
Experience the essence of land and sky. This is truly a hike of open vistas.
Difficult terrain – 16.8 km loop
 Start: Ecotour Road Stop #3
- 10. Bearpaw Sea Trail**
Rise and fall with the 'coulees' while embracing the Frenchman River Valley.
Difficult terrain – 9.6 km one way
 Start: Ecotour Road Stop # 3 * vehicle shuttle required
- 11. Three Sisters Route**
Travel an old trail and view the striking hills of the Three Sisters.
Moderate terrain – 4 km one way
 Start: Three Sisters Access
- 12. Tipi Ridge Trail**
Discover tipi rings as you travel along the ridge overlooking the Frenchman Valley.
Moderate terrain – 2 km loop
 Start: Belza Day Use Area

HUB

DID YOU KNOW?

That during the design of the Campground, our archaeologist helped identify tipi rings and other artifacts existing in the proposed campground area? We ensured that any development avoided disturbing these special features. This way, we can have modern campers respectfully sharing the same space as campers from many generations ago.



LEGEND

- oTENTiks, 20 amp
- Coulee Centre
- Electrical sites, 50 amp (all sites equipped with 20, 30 amp)
- Grey water
- Handicap access
- Information kiosks
- Parking
- Potable water
- Public washrooms
- RV dump
- Telephone
- Viewpoint
- Waste bins
- WiFi
- Trails
- Routes
- Fence
- Gates - pedestrian



FRENCHMAN VALLEY CAMPGROUND



CHOOSE YOUR CAMPING EXPERIENCE

Camping is one of the best ways to enjoy all the park has to offer. Whether pulling a trailer, stuffing a tent into your backpack, or simply arriving to the convenience of a ready-to-use tipi or oTENTik, Grasslands has your experience covered.

FRENCHMAN VALLEY CAMPGROUND-WEST BLOCK

With a view of the Frenchman River, rolling hills, tipi rings and roaming bison, the perfect destination for your front country experience. 32 km SE of Val Marie.

- 20 tent/RV electric campsites (20,30,50 amp)
- 4 oTENTik units
- Picnic tables, fire pits, vault toilets, potable water, RV sani dump, and Wi-Fi
- Coulee Centre cook shelter
- Overflow sites available

ROCK CREEK CAMPGROUND-EAST BLOCK

Amazing skies day and night, the leopard frogs' symphony at dusk, and the Meadowlarks' serenade at dawn. 29km SW of Wood Mountain.

- NEW Campground
- 24 tent/RV electric campsites (all 50amp)
- 8 oTENTiks
- Picnic tables, fire pits, vault toilet, potable water, RV sani dump, and Wi-fi
- Summer kitchen
- Tipis



DID YOU KNOW?

The location for both campgrounds were former homestead sites? You won't recognise it now, but there were once cows, corrals, sheds, hay fields and other livestock at these places. We chose these places to avoid development on native prairie.

Conditions vary year-round, but plan for fire bans in summer. Contact Visitor Centre for details.

Keep vehicle and RV/trailer on the gravel part of your campsite.

Keep campsites clean and attend campfires at all times.

Check in 2:00pm, check out 11:00 am.

Store food in a vehicle or RV when not in use.



oTENTik CAMPING

Share moments and create new memories in this spacious blend of a tent and an A-frame cabin equipped with beds and furniture.

- In each oTENTik: Table and seating, heater, lantern, electricity, sleeping area for up to 6 people
- On each site: Barbeque, firepit, picnic tables and Adirondack chairs
- Don't forget to bring your own bedding and cooking supplies
- 2-Pet Friendly, and 1-Wheel Chair accessible unit
- Check-in 3:00pm, check out 11:00am
- No smoking or cooking permitted inside the units



TIPI CAMPING

Go back in time and enjoy the rustic nature of a tipi camping experience.

West Block – Two Trees Day Use Area 13 km south of Val Marie (no potable water available)

East Block – Located in the Rock Creek Campground

- Vault toilet
- Sleeps 5-6 people
- Camping pad included
- Cots and lantern available to rent
- Adirondack chairs
- Shared firepit and barbeque



BACK COUNTRY CAMPING

Drop your pack following an exhilarating hike. Pitch a tent where no one has camped before – well, maybe not for a thousand years! The park is yours to explore when Back Country Camping. See map for ideas – you get to pick the location.

- No open fires at any time
- You must check in at the Visitor Centre, or kiosk upon arrival
- Staff will provide information on designated Back Country parking
- Camp out of view from roads and trails – a minimum of 1 km
- Conditions vary year-round, but plan for fire bans in the summer, which may also include camp stove restrictions
- Leave no trace of your visit

EQUESTRIAN CAMPING

After a day of miles of open riding, settle in for the evening while your trusted companion rests nearby.

West Block – South of the Belza Day Use Area.

East Block – Rock Creek Campground

- Horsepens
- Water trough
- Manure receptacle
- Vault toilet
- Shared fire pit
- First come, first served
- Check in at Visitor Centres or at the Frenchman Valley Coulee Centre



HORSE USERS

- Horses, while hobbled, tethered or corralled may graze in the park. Avoid grazing Crested Wheatgrass after May 31st to avoid the spread of this non-native plant species.
- Dispose of horse manure at on-site receptacles.
- Bagged cubes, pellets and rolled or steamed oats are the preferred feed. Weed free hay is permitted in equestrian camping areas.
- Please respect private landowners around the park and remain on park owned lands.
- Caution! Extreme dry conditions and horseshoes can be a bad combination. Sparks may result from a horse clipping a rock with their shoes.
- Watch where you ride. Many prairie species, including rattlesnakes, are well camouflaged.

CAMPING RESERVATIONS:

Reservation.pc.gc.ca or 1-877-737-3783

Applies to all Campgrounds, oTENTiks, Tipis, and West Block Back Country Camping.

In the event the campgrounds are full, unserviced overflow camping is available by self-registration.

For East Block Back Country camping, reserve at 1-306-476-2018

GRASSLANDS

NATIONAL PARK

A LEADER AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THE
RECOVERY OF CANADIAN SPECIES AT RISK

Visitors from around the world come to **Grasslands National Park** in southern Saskatchewan to see the who's who of prairie species at risk: Burrowing Owls, Greater Sage-Grouse and the crowd pleasing colonies of *Prairie Dogs*, just to name a few. The park is home to over 20 species at risk.

RETURN OF THE PLAINS BISON THE PLAINS BISON NOW

In December 2005, after a 120-year absence, Plains Bison were brought back to the park.

They came from Elk Island National Park's well-established herd. Now, a herd of approximately 350 animals is once again at home on the wild open prairie.

Bison or Buffalo? So what is the difference? Simply put, the correct term for the largest land mammal in North America is Bison. Bison may resemble their relatives but they are different species than that of the Asian water Buffalo and African Buffalo that live in Southeast Asia and Africa. There are three distinct sub-species of Bison in the world today. European Bison live in Poland and portions of the former Soviet Union. Plains and Wood Bison are exclusive to North America. The park is home to the Plains Bison.



PROTECT YOUR NATIONAL PARK

- Keep vehicles on designated roads and pull-offs
- Leave natural and cultural objects undisturbed for others to discover and enjoy
- Give wildlife their space and respect.
- Do not approach or feed wildlife! Plague is present in our prairie dog and squirrel populations. Do Not Feed!
- All terrain vehicles and snowmobiles are not allowed in the park
- Keep pets on a leash and off the Prairie Dog colonies
- Report any concerns or unlawful activities to Parks Canada staff or RCMP

IN DANGER TODAY

Extinct: A species that no longer exists.

Extirpated: A species no longer existing in the wild in Canada, but occurring elsewhere.

- Black-footed Ferret

Endangered: A species facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

- Burrowing Owl
- Greater Sage-Grouse
- Greater Short-horned Lizard
- Little Brown Myotis









Threatened: A species likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.

- Loggerhead Shrike
- Sprague's Pipit
- Ferruginous Hawk
- Eastern Yellow-bellied Racer
- Swift Fox
- Chestnut-collared Longspur
- Common Nighthawk
- Black-tailed Prairie Dog
- Plains Bison
- Mountain sucker
- Barn Swallow

Special Concern: A species of special concern because of characteristics that are particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events.

- Long-billed Curlew
- Northern Leopard Frog
- Short-eared Owl
- Prairie Rattlesnake
- Baird's Sparrow

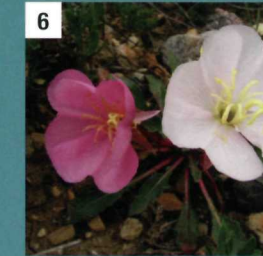
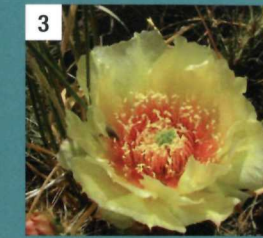
WILDLIFE WONDERS







CHECK OUT	EASY ID TIPS	CLUES	WHERE TO VIEW	GNP FACTOID!
<p>Plains Bison</p> 	<p>Male or female? Look at the horns for size and shape. Bulls grow larger, more robust horns and 'horn buds' are visible on the male calf within the month they are born.</p>		<p>Ecotour Road after a prescribed burn; they are attracted to the green, tender grass shoots.</p>	<p>Bison were absent from this landscape for over 120 years. As of 2005, Bison roam free in the West Block of GNP.</p>
<p>Black-tailed Prairie Dog</p> 	<p>They are easily distinguished from the Richardson's Ground Squirrel "gopher" as the Prairie Dogs are twice the size. Prairie Dogs are ALSO highly...social critters and live in extensive communal 'dog towns'.</p>		<p>Sneak a peek at the Prairie Dogs through the telescopes at Stop 2 and Stop 7 on Ecotour Road.</p>	<p>The West Block and neighbouring lands are the only places in Canada where Black-tailed Prairie Dogs exist in their natural habitat.</p>
<p>Prairie Rattlesnake</p> 	<p>They have a wide, flat triangular shaped head and a rattle on their tail. Female colouring is a light olive green and males are pale gold; both have dark blotches on their back.</p>		<p>Within 100 square kms of the Frenchman River Valley. Slumping hillsides provide ideal locations for winter hibernation dens. They gather at these areas in September for the winter, and emerge from hibernation in spring.</p>	<p>In 2011, historic moisture conditions created flooding and slumping in the Frenchman River Valley and buried one of the largest rattlesnake dens in the park. The same type of natural phenomenon that created these slumping formations destroyed it!</p>
<p>Burrowing Owl</p> 	<p>Burrowing Owls are comical birds that appear to look like a short, fat owl on stilts. They can be mistaken for a gopher due to their size and that they perch on abandoned gopher holes and Prairie Dog burrows.</p>		<p>At dawn and dusk from Ecotour Road within the Prairie Dog towns.</p>	<p>GNP Burrowing Owls arrive in early May and head south to Mexico and Texas in early October to spend the winter.</p>







A PRAIRIE IN BLOOM...

Witness a succession of vibrant colours and sweet aromas. Crocus, prairie onion, cinquefoil, rose, cactus, vetch, locoweed, violets, asters, fleabanes, goosefoot, and buttercup to name a few! June is the peak season.

- 1: Dotted Blazing Star
- 2: Pin Cushion Cactus,
- 3: Prickly Pear Cactus
- 4: Three Flowered Aven
- 5: Smooth Blue Beardtongue
- 6: Gumbo evening primrose



CHECK OUT	EASY ID TIPS	CLUES	WHERE TO VIEW	GNP FACTOID!
<p>Pronghorn Antelope</p> 	<p>Male and female pronghorns have the only forked horns in the world. Pronghorn are much faster than deer; they can endure speeds of 100 km per hour to escape Coyotes.</p>		<p>In the open grasslands browsing sage bush, grease wood and cactus in the valley bottoms. Fences: Pronghorns go under and deer jump over!</p>	<p>Less than 300 antelope survived the harsh winter of 1926! Today, antelope are once again a common sight in the grasslands.</p>
<p>Mule Deer</p> 	<p>Mule deer have large 'mule-like' ears and are easily distinguished by their white rump patch and short black-tipped tail. Mule deer are often spotted bouncing on four limbs up and down hill sides.</p>		<p>At dawn and dusk they emerge from sheltered coulees to feed on shrubs and grasses. Snowberry bushes are nicknamed 'buck brush' as it makes for excellent shelter for 'bucks' to bed down in.</p>	<p>South-west Saskatchewan is well-known for producing magnificent mule-deer with large beautiful antlers. Perhaps, it is the sun-cured native grasses that provide the nutritional edge!</p>
<p>White-Tailed Deer</p> 	<p>'White-tailed' refers to the white underside of the flag-like tail, which waves when they are alarmed.</p>		<p>Grain and hay fields neighbouring the park lands. In the winter time, you can over see over 100 deer feeding in one hayfield.</p>	<p>Did White-tailed deer occur in SW Saskatchewan prior to farm settlement? It is uncertain, however, populations have risen due to agricultural development.</p>

CHECK OUT	EASY ID TIPS	CLUES	WHERE TO VIEW	GNP FACTOID!
<p>Greater Short-horned Lizard</p> 	<p>Short-horned Lizards do not resemble any other reptile or amphibian in the park. They look prehistoric, as they are a living remnant from the days of the dinosaurs!</p>		<p>In Badland habitat. Bearpaw shale slopes in the Frenchman Valley and the lower reaches of Rock Creek.</p> <p>August is the best time to view them as the young of the year have been born, and they are temporarily more abundant.</p>	<p>Short-horned Lizards are very difficult to see as they are very small and their camouflage is superior. Usually, you can only spot them if they move! In winter, the lizards will bury themselves under about 10 cm of loose soil on south facing slopes.</p>
<p>Coyotes</p> 	<p>These medium sized 'song-dogs' can be identified by their iconic howl and high-pitched bark. Since the extirpation of the prairie wolf, the Coyote is 'top-dog' on the prairie!</p>		<p>Coyotes are native to the prairie, but can be seen in both prairie and non-prairie environments.</p>	<p>Coyotes are territorial and will kill red and swift foxes. Foxes are viewed as competitors for hunting gophers, rabbits and mice.</p>
<p>Ferruginous Hawk</p> 	<p>It is the largest hawk in North America. Ferruginous Hawks usually have full white breast and belly with rust coloured legs. It sometimes is mistaken for the Golden Eagle.</p>		<p>Look for 3 habitat requirements: native grass, gophers and high elevated nest areas, i.e. steep cliff sides.</p>	<p>Before the 1900s, nests were often constructed with Bison bones and lined with fur and Bison dung. Nests today are made of dried sticks, lined with bark and cow dung.</p>
<p>Greater Sage-Grouse</p> 	<p>Greater Sage-Grouse or Sharp-tailed Grouse? Sage-Grouse are very rare in Canada and Sharp-tailed Grouse are comparably common. Sage-Grouse only exist in large tracts of sagebrush habitat.</p>		<p>Sage brush flats in the Frenchman Valley and Rock Creek tributaries.</p>	<p>The historical range of Sage-Grouse has been reduced by 94% in prairie Canada.</p> <p>This is one of the few places in Canada you may be fortunate to see this endangered bird.</p>

DID YOU KNOW?

That some of our road signs in the park have anti-perching devices on top of the posts? (Look for these as you travel.) This is done to protect the Sage Grouse so that raptors don't use the signs as perches to hunt this very endangered species!

A BIRDERS PARADISE

The grasslands bird community is in steep decline in North America.

Here, visitors can 'check the list' (copy available at the visitor centre) for the unusual as well as 'iconic'. Enjoy the Sprague's pipit's swirling trill, the horned lark's twinkle, the grasshopper sparrow's rasp and of course the meadowlark's welcoming gurgle.



1: Golden Eagle
2: Loggerhead shrike

3: Meadow Lark
4: Long billed curlew

5: Greater Sage Grouse
6: Rock wren

NATIVE PRAIRIE GRASSES

Grasslands National Park is a part of a larger vegetation zone known as the mixed grass prairie ecosystem that extends throughout the Great Plains of Canada and the United States. The term 'mixed grass' refers to the fact that no single plant species dominates the prairie and that there is a mixture of medium sized and short grasses. There are 70 plant species below your feet.



1. June Grass
2. Blue Grama Grass
3. Needle-and-thread Grass
4. Western Wheatgrass



WORKING WITH **OUR COMMUNITIES**

Prairie Wind & Silver Sage – Friends of Grasslands located at the historic Little Brick Schoolhouse is a volunteer, non-profit organization based in Val Marie, Saskatchewan.

- Eco-museum
- Art gallery featuring local artists
- Gift shop
- Espresso bar
- Wireless internet access

1-306-298-4910
www.pwss.org

The Rodeo and Ranch Museum is located in the Wood Mountain Regional Park near the East Block of Grasslands National Park.

- Museum activities and group tours
- Museum featuring ranching, rodeo, and homesteading artefacts
- Metis Adobe house and Heritage house
- Archive and extensive photograph collection
- Bookstore featuring books by local authors

Wood Mountain Historical Society – Rodeo and Ranch Museum

1-306-266-4953 (seasonal)
woodmountain.ca/RodRanc.html

Wood Mountain Regional Park

1-306-266-4249
woodmountainpark.ca

VISITOR CENTRE

The Visitor Centres will make your trip most memorable, as friendly, knowledgeable staff provide up-to-date information on park programs, camping opportunities, maps, road conditions, weather safety and more.

The Centres exhibit significant prairie stories: grassland ecosystems, endangered species, human history, palaeontology and geology.

West Block Visitor Centre is located in Val Marie, Saskatchewan at the junction of Hwy #4 and Centre Street.

East Block Visitor Centre is located at the Rock Creek campground.

For more information on operating hours and dates, please visit our website at parkscanada.gc.ca/grasslands.

The park itself is always open.



**Grasslands
National Park**
parkscanada.gc.ca



GRASSLANDS NATIONAL PARK

www.parkscanada.gc.ca/grasslands

grasslands.info@pc.gc.ca

306.298.2257 (West Block Visitor Centre)

306.476.2018 (East Block Visitor Centre)