

# JASPER NATIONAL PARK

ALBERTA

## Jasper National Park Alberta

### Location

Jasper National Park lies along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains with its townsite 235 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

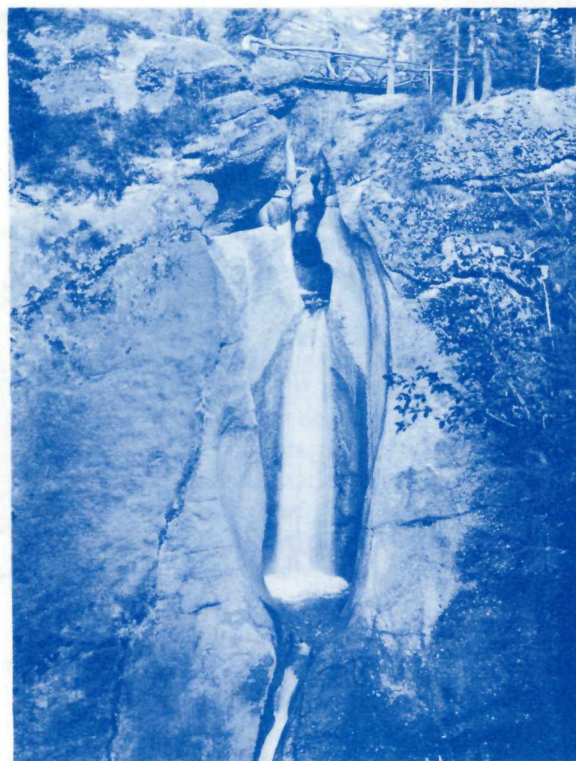
Jasper was established as a National Park because its magnificent mountainous area was worthy of being preserved in its natural state for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Unique natural wonders such as the great glaciers, the valleys carved by the Ice Age, the primitively 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 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 era in the history of this planet, the Precambrian. 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. Many of the mountains in the Park display great thicknesses of rocks which were laid down in the next era, the Palaeozoic. This was a time of rapid development of living things with plants spreading over the lands and a vast increase in animal life. Fishes swarmed in the seas and the reptiles had appeared. A third major chapter in



*Glacial waters carve their way through solid rock at Punch Bowl Falls.*

the history of the earth is represented in the rocks which were laid down in the Mesozoic, the time when reptiles dominated the earth and forests gradually approached those that we know today. The latest chapter in earth's history, the Cenozoic, a time when mammals appeared and became successful and, in quite recent geological times, man appeared on the scene.

Examples of these types of rocks are as follows:

#### (1) *Precambrian and Cambrian*—

Pyramid Mountain, six miles north of Jasper, Mount Athabasca and the Ramparts of Tonquin Valley, and Mount Columbia on the Continental Divide. All have characteristic pyramid or beehive shaped summits.

#### (2) *Palaeozoic*—

Mountains in the eastern part of Jasper Park, Roche à Perdrix (Fiddle Range) and Roche Miette (summit of Miette Range) show folded strata, broken into large fault blocks and thrust

to the east on top of each other. The same rocks appear as the rugged, precipitous cliffs and castellated peaks of the Jacques and De Smet Ranges.

#### (3) *Mesozoic*—

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 palaeozoic mountain ranges, where they form areas of low, undulating relief and where they can be seen in the steep sides of some of the rivers, as for instance at Snake Indian Falls. In places they have been crumbled and folded into structures called anticlines and synclines.

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 Palaeozoic 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 profusion throughout the Park, with a few arctics in the higher altitudes to intrigue the botanist. The flowers present an ever-changing carpet of colour for most of the summer season.

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

Some very interesting flowers are found around and above timberline (approximately 7,000 feet altitude) among them red and pink mountain-heath, white mountain-heather, forget-me-not, mountain rhododendron, Arctic harebell, one-flowered wintergreen, moss-campion, and northern gentian.

Some of the more common shrubs found in the Park are wild rose, buffaloberry, willow, alder, juniper, shrubby cinquefoil, silverberry, Saskatoon berry, Labrador tea, red osier dogwood, and two kinds of bearberry.

*A young cow moose 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 Englemann 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, balsam 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 and photographed with 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, fisher, marten, short-tailed 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, ptarmigan, warblers, and grouse are but a few of the many other birds which are frequently seen.



*White-tailed ptarmigan in winter dress.*

### 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 splake (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 Centre, sporting goods stores, and from Park Wardens or campground attendants. Fishing Regulations change periodically and anglers are advised to consult Park Wardens or the Park Information Centre concerning these changes.

### 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 coloured slides and motion pictures. Interesting films of nature subjects are presented frequently in the evenings at the various campgrounds. Well marked nature trails of a 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.

### How to See the Interesting Features

While roads lead to many of the interesting Park 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 the 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 inclination, Jasper is one of the chief outfitting 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 Outings at Jasper* which includes a large scale map of the area.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Park Administration

A resident Superintendent is in charge of the Park. The protection of the Park and the visitor 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 all the usual facilities of a town are available in Jasper townsite.

### Camping

There are 12 campgrounds readily accessible to motoring visitors. Two of these, at Cottonwood Creek and Miette Hot Springs, are serviced campgrounds and a nominal charge is made for their use.

At Cottonwood Creek there are kitchen, laundry, and washrooms facilities with showers. Electrical plug-ins for trailers are available.

At Miette Hot Springs, kitchens, washroom facilities and drinking water are available.

No charge is made for use of the other 10 campgrounds which provide individual tent sites, cooking facilities, drinking water and sanitary arrangements.

Picnic areas and wayside tables are located at various points throughout the Park as indicated on the map. Some of these free picnic sites have a kitchen shelter with firewood, water, and sanitary facilities.

### Preservation

National Parks are selected areas set apart as nature sanctuaries and special care is taken to maintain them *in their natural state*. For this reason, all birds, animals, wildlife, trees, rocks and fossils are to remain undisturbed. Even the wildflowers are not to be plucked; they are to be left for others to enjoy. Feeding, touching, or molesting wild animals is not permitted. This is in the interests of the animal as well as the human who could receive serious injury.

Please help protect your own Park for future enjoyment. It is part of your national inheritance.

### Prevent Fire

Campfires may be kindled only in fireplaces provided for this purpose and must be completely extinguished before campers leave the site. Visitors observing an unattended fire should attempt to extinguish it if possible and promptly report it to the nearest Park Warden.

Fire in a National Park can cause damage which cannot be repaired in a hundred years.

### Mountain Climbing

For the protection of mountain climbers, all travel off the Park trails must be registered with the District Warden, before and after the climb.

Inexperienced climbers should obtain the services of a guide and full information concerning the necessary equipment.

### Pets

Dogs and cats may accompany visitors into the park. For the protection of park animals however, dogs must be kept on leash.

### Motor Licence

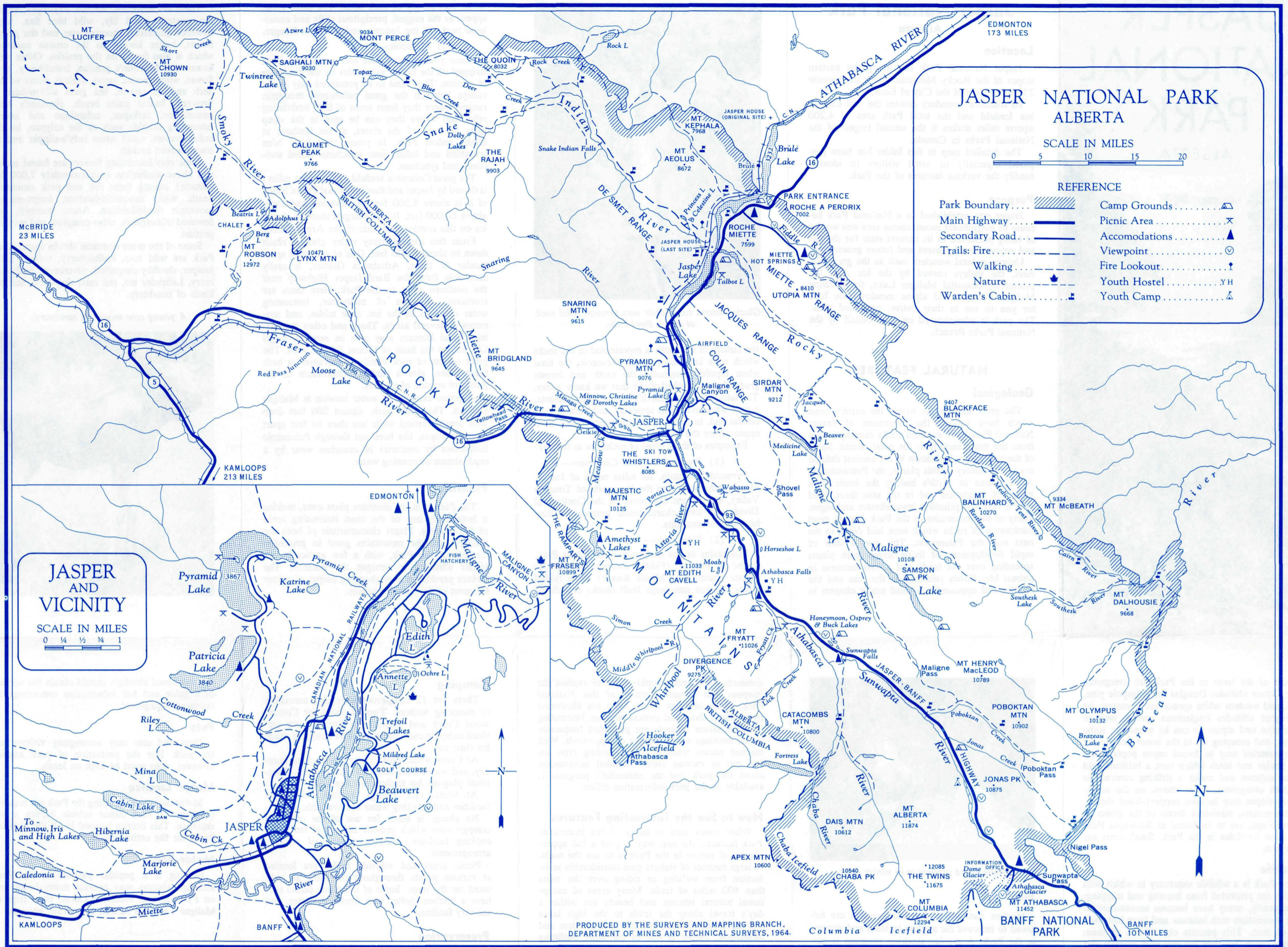
Motoring visitors entering the Park are required to obtain a Park motor vehicle licence at the entrance. This licence is good in all the National Parks for the entire season.

### Motor-Boats

Boating is a popular pastime in the Park, although visitors may operate motor-boats only on Pyramid and Medicine Lakes. Boat trips on Maligne Lake are offered by private interests.



*A variety of evergreens clothe the mountain slopes to tree line.*



PREPARED AT THE SURVEYS AND MAPPING BRANCH, OTTAWA.

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 air field 7½ 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 Tonquin 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 furs. 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 Brulé 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 1912-13 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.

Persons wishing additional information concerning the Park may address their enquiries to:

The Superintendent,  
Jasper National Park,  
JASPER, Alberta.  
or  
National Parks Branch,  
Department of Northern Affairs  
and National Resources,  
OTTAWA, Canada.



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