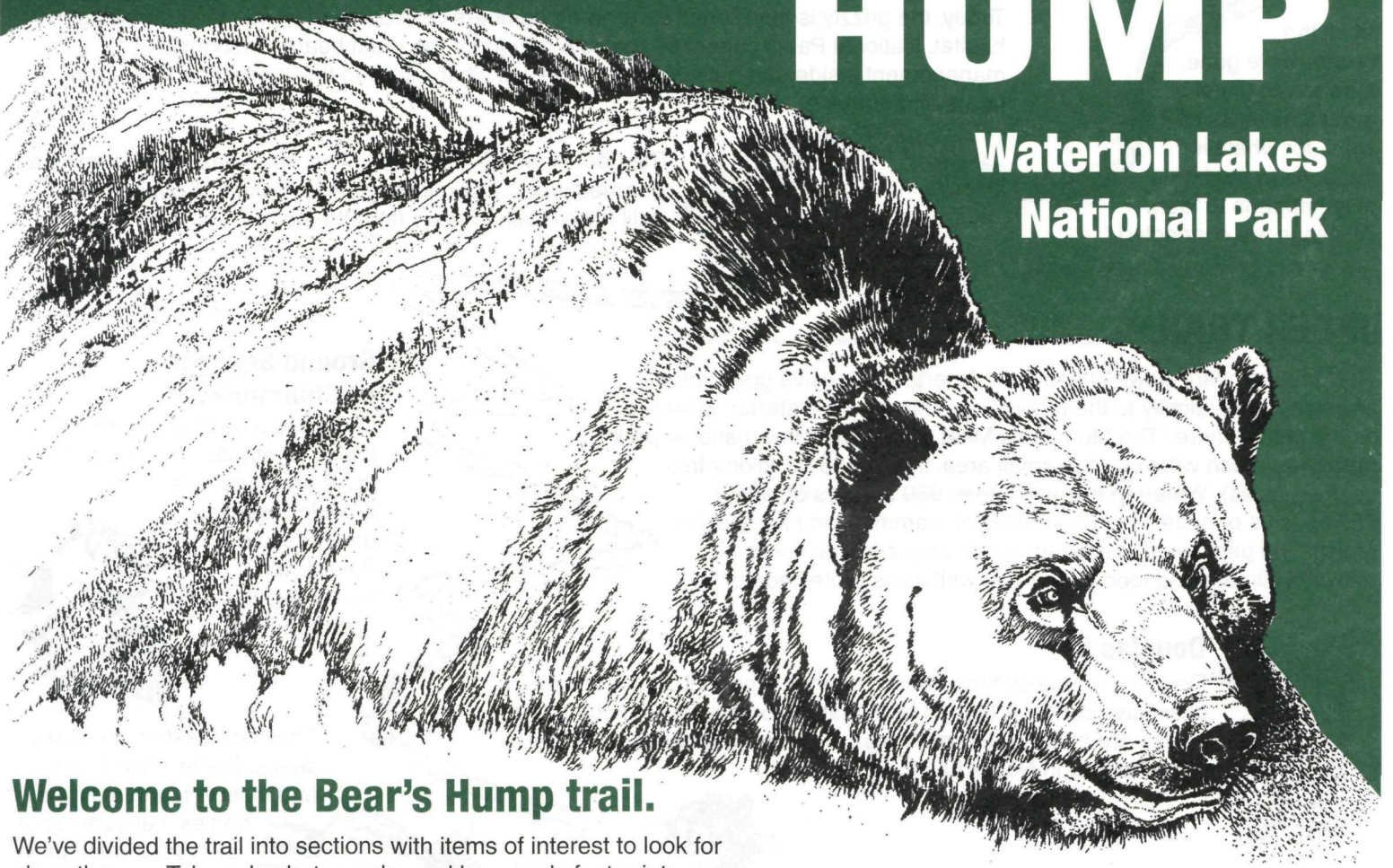


Guide to **HIKING** the **HUMP**

Waterton Lakes National Park



Welcome to the Bear's Hump trail.

We've divided the trail into sections with items of interest to look for along the way. Take only photographs and leave only foot prints. Please leave all natural treasures behind for others to discover.



Parks Canada's goal is to protect at least 3% of Canada's natural landscape. The plants and animals living in national parks help maintain healthy global systems.

Will 3% be enough if we don't treat the remainder with care and respect?

For the grizzly, variety is more than the spice of life, it's essential. This bear's survival depends on habitats created by fire, insects, floods, avalanches and wind. Grizzlies - in fact, most plants and animals - thrive where natural processes endure.

— Waterton/Glacier International Peace Park —

"We re not in the same boat, but we are pretty much in the same waters."
-Arthur Meighen

Vimy Peak
[2385 m (7823')] commemorates the loss of 3,500 Canadians at Vimy Ridge during World War I. Reminders of war can emphasise the importance of seeking peace and renewal.

Mount Boswell

Goat Haunt Ridge

Mount Cleveland
is the highest peak in Waterton/Glacier. It was named for U.S. President Cleveland.

Goat Haunt Ranger Station

Citadel Peaks, part of the Porcupine Ridge, are also known in Piikani as Ataniawxis, meaning the needles.

Upper Waterton Lake
embodies the peace and friendship shared along the world's longest undefended border (8,892 km/5,525 miles) - the basis for creation of the Peace Park.



This guide is one of many educational products developed by the Waterton Natural History Association. For more information, visit the Waterton Heritage Centre or contact them at Box 145, Waterton Park, AB T0K 2M0; ph.(403)859-2624. (37)

VIEWPOINT

You've Made It To The Top!



Everything you see is bear habitat - from grasslands to mountain peaks. But this view is NOT all national park lands. Waterton, like the bear, is part of a much larger ecosystem extending well into Alberta, British Columbia and Montana. Our neighbours are equally important in determining the fate of this landscape.

"If all the beasts were gone, man would die of a great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beast also happens to man. All things are connected."

- Attributed to Chief Seattle, 1855

Today, the grizzly is threatened as growing numbers of people crowd into their shrinking habitat. National Parks cannot be the sole refuge for the great bears. Responsible management inside and outside park borders is what will keep this landscape fit for both bears and humans.

The poet Robert Frost wrote: "The world has room to make a bear feel free." Our challenge is to make this happen. We still have much to learn from the bear.

UPPER TRAIL

This section offers views of southern Alberta's extensive grasslands sweeping dramatically to the mountains. This is why Waterton is known as the place where "The Mountains Meet the Prairie." Few national parks protect so much within such a small area. In just 525 sq. kilometres (203 sq. miles), Waterton has more than 950 species of plants, 257 species of birds, over 60 species of mammals and 24 species of fish. The park owes this variety to its unique interactions between climate and topography - as well as its protected status.



Douglas fir

Douglas firs are common near the end of the trail. Look for their distinctive cones. A legend says that the bracts sticking out of the scales are the tails and back legs of some unfortunate mice that dared to play in Napi's hair long ago.

Ground Squirrel or Chipmunk?

If you see a LARGE chipmunk, check for stripes on its face. If there are none - it's a golden mantled ground squirrel. Please don't feed these trailside panhandlers.



They fare best on the many seeds, flowers, fruits, fungi and insects found near their homes. Favoured spots are rocky outcrops in wooded areas, particularly burned-over pine forest.

REST AND READ

At the second trail bench - rest and read this Piikani legend of **Great Bear Mountain**



second trail bench

Long ago, there lived a huge bear with a quick temper. One night, warring shamans woke the bear from his winter slumber. In rage, the great bear tried to destroy them. Napi (the creator's ambassador) was in a rage and sentenced the bear to a life of wandering. Banished from his home, the Great Bear's fury grew. He tore at the land with claws and teeth, digging deep trenches and throwing up great mounds of earth and rock. Mountains, valleys, lakes and rivers lay in his wake as he wandered. One of his excavations became the deepest lake in the Canadian Rockies - Upper Waterton Lake (148 m/487 ft deep).

At that spot, with broken teeth and worn claws, the repentant bear cried out, "Napi, I am old and tired! Please let me rest." Taking pity on the Great Bear, Napi let him stop and sleep. As he slept, Old Man changed him into a mountain. Today, the Great Bear (Crandell Mountain) sleeps at the junction of the three valleys he created - Waterton, Cameron and Blakiston.

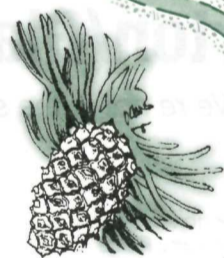


From the trail, you'll catch glimpses of the Prince of Wales Hotel - a National Historic Site. It was built in 1927 by the Great Northern Railway, as part of a chain of similar lodges in Glacier National Park.

MIDDLE TRAIL

Check the ground for lodgepole pine cones! Lodgepole pines are adapted to fire. They produce cones, tightly sealed with resin, which explode in a shower of winged seeds when exposed to fire. Hot updrafts lift the heat-resistant seeds above the fire. As the fire moves on, thousands of seeds spiral down and germinate in the nutrient rich ash. The resulting progeny grow thick and quick. The sun-loving nature of these trees causes growth of long, straight trunks and dense crowns. Would so many plants and animals benefit from fire if it was not part of the natural world? The many dead pines you see are old trees killed in a population explosion of mountain pine beetles in the late 1970's. This wasn't a disaster - it was the ecosystem's response to human suppression of fire.

Nor are these trees a waste - as the wood decomposes, its nutrients return to the soil. Insects found inside the decaying wood provide food for many animals, including bears.



False hellebore or Corn lily

This poisonous plant contains an alkaloid which slows the heart and breathing. Traditionally, some native peoples used very small amounts as a heart sedative. As you may have guessed, bears avoid false hellebore.

LOWER TRAIL

Imagine our lives without grocery stores, drug stores or farms. How would we learn about edible or medicinal plants? Native peoples learned by observing wildlife like the grizzly. Bears, being primarily vegetarian, have an uncanny knowledge of plants. Is it a coincidence that many indigenous foods and medicines are also key bear foods?

Thimbleberry

This plant's white "wild rose" flowers become a raspberry-like red berry in summer. Some trailside tasting of these berries is okay, but please leave berries for the wildlife who need them to survive.

It's no surprise that these and other plants have health and medicinal properties. Many of today's valuable drugs like aspirin, cortisone and digitalis derive from plants. Plant extinctions affect more than just wildlife!



first trail bench

Cow parsnip

Bears eat a lot of cow parsnip - and its seeds are more fertile once they've run through the digestive tract of a bear! Native peoples also ate the spring stalks of cow parsnip.



Start here.

