An Introduction to Alberta’s Provincial Parks

ALBERTA PROVINCIAL PARKS

PROTECTING NATURE

THE ALBERTA PARKS NETWORK BY NATURAL REGION

WHAT TO DO

STAYING SAFE

LEARNING ABOUT AND CONNECTING TO THE NATURAL WORLD

PARK PEOPLE

PARK STEWARDSHIP (GETTING INVOLVED)

BASIC INFORMATION

(Punjabi)
When people think of Alberta, some think of rolling grasslands beneath a big blue sky. Others picture towering Rocky Mountains with white, snowy peaks. And some imagine endless forests filled with lush wetlands. Alberta is known for its many different landscapes and the amazing diversity of wildlife that live in them, from grizzly bears and bald eagles to pronghorn and hundreds of songbird species.

When Albertans want to get away from their busy lives, they can visit these wild places to experience and learn about the natural world. That’s why the Alberta government has created parks and protected areas all over the province. The government protects these landscapes so that they stay natural, and so people can enjoy them now, and into the future.
Parks are great places to visit and explore. Parks also play an important role protecting the landscapes that wild animals and plants need. In addition, parks contribute to the environment by protecting natural systems such as the rivers and streams that provide Alberta with drinking water.

Most of all, parks protect biodiversity, or the “variety of life.” There are many diverse species of fish, mammals, birds, plants, and lichens in our province, and even more types of insects. Whenever you visit a park, think about how you can reduce your impact on nature and the wildlife we are trying to protect.

If you learn how to protect nature in a park, you can help care for the environment on the rest of the planet as well!
There are many ways to enjoy Alberta’s parks and protected areas. You could camp overnight in a tent or recreational vehicle. Or you could take a day trip, and meet your family and friends for a sunny picnic by a lake. There are parks with excellent walking or skiing trails, parks where you can spend a relaxing afternoon fishing, and parks where you can learn about natural environments from the people who work and spend their time there.

Whatever you decide to do, visiting a Provincial Park in Alberta is free! Only a few activities, such as overnight camping and fishing, cost money.

There are hundreds of parks for you to discover! Why not start right now?
Alberta is divided into six different natural regions – the Boreal Forest, Canadian Shield, Aspen Parkland, Foothills, Grassland, and Rocky Mountain – and each has a unique blend of plants, animals, weather, geology and soils. Alberta’s many parks and protected areas conserve the different landscapes, plants, and animals within each of these regions while providing opportunities for visitors to enjoy the outdoors and connect to the wilderness.

There are many different types of parks across Alberta. In some, such as ecological reserves, the landscapes are sensitive or rare, so only research or other educational activities that do not disturb the area are allowed. Recreation areas and provincial parks have less sensitive landscapes where many more kinds of facilities and activities are allowed. In all parks and protected areas, the activities allowed are balanced with the need to protect the environment.

With each region and protected area so different from the next, you might have a hard time choosing which place to explore first. The following section will tell you more about each region. And for each natural region we’ve profiled two parks. The following section will tell you more about the natural regions. For each one, we look at two parks: one that is popular and easy to get to, and one that is more difficult to reach and where fewer people visit, but contains wilderness at its best!
Boreal Forest Natural Region

The boreal forest is Alberta’s largest natural region. It covers more than half of the province and stretches all across Canada. The boreal forest also covers northern Europe, northern China, and Russia. Here you will find thick green forests and many lakes and wetlands. The boreal forest has short summers and long, cold winters with lots of snow.

The forests and wetlands of the Boreal Forest Natural Region are home to many animals including moose, black bears, wolves, beavers, owls, and millions of migratory birds. If you like birds, this is the region for you: nearly half of all North American birds rely on the boreal forest.
Notikewin Provincial Park
visit at www.albertaparks.ca
Notikewin Provincial Park offers a quieter wilderness experience than Lesser Slave Lake. Located in northern Alberta where the Peace River and the Notikewin Rivers meet, this quiet park has excellent fishing in both rivers and is an amazing place to recharge and connect with the wilderness.

Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park
Along the eastern shore of one of Alberta’s largest lakes, Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park is one of the most popular parks in the boreal forest region. From the top of Marten Mountain you can enjoy amazing views, and on warm summer days the sandy beaches are full of people enjoying the water and the sun. Lesser Slave Lake is also an Important Bird Area—a place where hundreds of different kinds of birds stop on their migration journeys every year.

Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory
The Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory and the Boreal Centre for Bird Conservation (BCBC) are the only facilities of their kind in the world. They offer many exciting opportunities to explore and learn—all for free! Visitors can learn about the boreal forest in the exhibit gallery and watch scientists do important bird research at the Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory. They can talk to knowledgeable staff about the forest and bird life or explore the many trails through the forest.

Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory
visit site at www.lslbo.org

Visit at www.albertaparks.ca
there are over 200 parks to explore in the boreal forest!
Foothills Natural Region
Most of the foothills natural region lies just east of the Rocky Mountains, although there are small areas in other parts of Alberta. This region is known for its beautiful forests and hills, which make it an excellent place for outdoor activities from mountain biking and canoeing in summer to skiing in winter. The weather in the foothills is relatively damp and cool most of the year.
Musreau Lake Provincial Recreation Area
visit at www.albertaparks.ca

Musreau Lake is a quiet, relaxing place with tall forests, few visitors, and many opportunities for fun outdoor activities. Visitors can hike, boat on the lake in the summer, and cross-country ski in the winter.

there are over 100 parks to explore in the foothills!
Grassland Natural Region

If you like warm, dry weather, endless horizons, and a landscape shaped by glaciers 10,000 years ago, you'll enjoy exploring the Grassland Natural Region. This is the land of wide-open spaces, and if you stand on one of the few hills and look out you'll feel like you can see forever. Look a little closer though, and you may discover hidden coulees full of life!

You won't find many trees or shrubs in the grasslands, as they are mainly found hugging the rivers and sheltered places. You will find many kinds of grasses though, such as needle and thread, and blue gramma. This area is also known for its colourful wildflowers such as prairie crocus and wild blue flax. Many interesting animals live here too—from rattlesnakes and pronghorn to badgers and prairie falcons.
Dinosaur Provincial Park
visit at www.albertaparks.ca

A visit to Dinosaur Provincial Park is like a trip 75 million years back in time. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, this hot and dry park has the world's richest source of Late Cretaceous fossils (such as dinosaur and reptile bones and footprints) in one spot on earth. Visitors can learn all about fossils at the Royal Tyrrell Museum Field Station, right in the park! Located in the badlands, this area is famous for its amazing rock formations called "hoodoos" and for its winding river valleys.

Red Rock Coulee Natural Area

Red Rock Coulee Natural Area is known for its amazing huge round red rocks. These unusual rocks are reddish due to the oxidation of iron, and are some of the largest of their kind on earth. Visitors can also see grassland plants such as sagebrush, gumbo primrose and prickly pear cactus, and wildlife such as meadow lark, rock wren, Richardson ground squirrel, and pronghorn. One might even encounter rattlesnakes, short-horned lizards, and even scorpions, so be careful when walking!
Parkland Natural Region

Grassy hills, shady forests, and calm lakes make this a peaceful area—and an especially beautiful one when the leaves change colour in September and October to create a backdrop of orange and yellow against crisp blue skies. While many of Alberta’s forests are dominated by evergreens that keep their needles year-round, the parkland region is dominated by deciduous trees that shed their leaves for the winter.

The region is especially known for its balsam poplar and aspen trees, which are tall and thin with broad leaves that shake in the wind. You might see coyote and white-tailed deer in the parkland region. And be sure to bring your binoculars so you can spot birds such as the trumpeter swan, snow goose, and red-tailed hawk.
Saskatoon Island Provincial Park
visit at www.albertaparks.ca

Saskatoon Island Provincial Park is a favourite spot for people to visit in northwestern Alberta, an area known as the Peace Country. Many go to pick saskatoon berries in July and August, while others enjoy the still waters of Saskatoon Lake and Little Lake. This park is one of the oldest in Alberta.

At the end of April every year, the community and park visitors celebrate the annual return of the trumpeter swans to the Peace Country with the Swan Festival. Trumpeter swans are an important symbol for the community. The festival builds awareness and appreciation for these birds and their habitat, and has many free activities and events.

Rumsey Ecological Reserve
visit at www.albertaparks.ca

There are no public roads in the Rumsey Ecological Reserve, so visitors must explore the flat-topped hills and forests on foot. With no cars or trucks around, you will have a peaceful hiking experience and a good chance to see birds, deer, and maybe even a porcupine.

There are over 50 parks to explore in the parkland!
Rocky Mountain Natural Region
With its towering mountains and large carnivores such as grizzly bears and cougars, the Rocky Mountain natural region attracts visitors from all over the world. Some are surprised to see different landscapes inside this natural region, from dry valley bottoms to windswept alpine meadows.

Along the valley bottoms you’ll find the dry and grassy montane zone, with trees such as the Douglas fir and animals such as elk, bighorn sheep, and moose. Higher up along the sides of the valleys is the subalpine zone, with lodgepole pine and subalpine fir trees. You might even spot grizzly bears, cougars, lynx, and gray jays. Hike or climb even higher to the alpine zone and you might see spectacular wildflowers and lichens, animals such as the mountain goat, hoary marmot, or ptarmigan. But come prepared, for in the alpine there is the chance of snowstorms year-round!
If you want to see the Rockies as you've seen them in books and photos, visit Peter Lougheed Provincial Park. One of the many provincial parks in Kananaskis Country, a large protected area just southwest of Calgary, Peter Lougheed Provincial Park is famous for its jagged mountain peaks, dramatic lakes, and interpretive theatre about the natural world. This park is also home to dozens of grizzly bears, and its conservation officers keep both wildlife and people safe by closing hiking trails when bears are in the area, and educating visitors.

Visitors to the Siffleur Wilderness Area must explore the rough terrain on foot, as there are no public roads through this area of high mountain peaks and glaciers. Spend a few days backcountry camping in places where bighorn sheep and bears are far more common than people, and you'll probably have quite the wilderness story to tell!

Visit at www.kananaskis-country.ca

Visit at www.albertaparks.ca

there are over 100 parks to explore in the rocky mountains!
You might not expect to find a montane landscape in the middle of the prairies, but that's exactly what you'll see in Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park. Straddling the southern Alberta-Saskatchewan border, this popular "interprovincial" park is like no other in the province. It is an oasis of lodgepole pine and mixed forest surrounded by grasslands. The Cypress Hills – named by French settlers who mistook the lodgepole pine trees as jackpine, or cypres – rise 600 metres higher than the surrounding prairies, and are the highest point of land between the Rocky Mountains and the east coast of Canada. Just imagine the views!
The Canadian Shield is home to many different landscapes—from forests and lakes to some of the oldest exposed bedrock in Alberta! Located in the far northeast corner of Alberta, the Canadian Shield is more difficult to reach than any of the other natural regions. Many parks can only be reached by floatplane, but people who visit this region are always glad they went!
Visitors to Colin-Cornwall Lakes Wildland Provincial Park can expect an inspiring outdoor wilderness experience exploring wetlands, rocky islands, and large lakes. You must travel by floatplane to reach this park.

Fidler-Greywillow Wildland Provincial Park protects part of the north shore of Lake Athabasca and two of its islands. An enormous lake at 7,850 km², Lake Athabasca stretches across the Alberta border into Saskatchewan. Visitors can only reach Fidler-Greywillow Wildland Provincial Park in the summer by floatplane or boat.

There are 4 parks to explore in the Canadian Shield!
Just a forty-five minute drive west of Calgary, Kananaskis Country is a popular destination for Albertans who love the outdoors. With over 4000 km² of wilderness to explore, Kananaskis Country is perfect for all kinds of activities, from hiking and mountain biking to fishing and skiing.

In 1978, this vast area of Alberta was protected as a multi-use area aimed at balancing outdoor recreation, tourism, ranching, and other industries with the need to protect watersheds, wildlife habitat, and landscapes. In some places, the land is shared with grazing cattle, oil wells, logging, and even movie productions. In other places, different parks and recreation areas have been created to protect wildlife and nature, and for people to come and enjoy this special place!
Fish Creek Provincial Park

One of the largest urban parks in North America, Fish Creek Provincial Park has both parkland and grassland landscapes to explore. Located on the south side of Calgary, and accessible by public transit, this popular park offers visitors a wilderness experience without leaving the city. Stop by the visitor centre to learn about urban wildlife.

Note:
for an urban park close to Edmonton, visit the Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park, southwest of St. Albert, or the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area, east of Sherwood Park.

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On the far southern edge of Alberta is Writing on Stone Provincial Park, or Áísínai’pi National Historic Site. This park is a sacred landscape that has special spiritual significance for the indigenous Blackfoot people who hunted and travelled the Great Plains for generations and whose culture continues to thrive. The First Nations petroglyphs (carvings) & pictographs (paintings) that cover the sandstone cliffs demonstrate the spiritual connection of a people with a place. In fact, the Blackfoot people called the area “Áísínai’pi,” which means “where the drawings are.”
If you can't decide which park or natural region to visit, start by deciding what you want to do while you're there. Alberta's parks and protected areas offer outdoor activities for visitors of every age and fitness level—whether they are there for a day or an overnight trip. Whether you want to canoe on a calm lake, ski under snowy spruce trees, or photograph wildflowers in a meadow, Alberta has a park for you.

In order to protect the natural landscapes and to keep the experience enjoyable for everyone, parks have rules about where and how you can do certain activities. Not all parks have visitor centres or full-time staff. Before your trip, visit one of the Provincial Park Visitor Centres across the province, call the Alberta Parks Information Line toll free at 1-866-427-3582, or visit www.albertaparks.ca to find out which rules will affect your visit, where you could buy or rent equipment or hire a guide, and to get maps and helpful advice.
STAYING SAFE

Plan ahead.
Alberta weather can change very quickly
• carry rain gear and warm clothes, even in the summer
• make sure someone knows where you are going and when you will return
• be aware of current trail conditions
• know your limits and when to turn back

Don't attract or surprise wildlife.
Make sure bears, cougars, and other wild animals know you're coming
• never approach or feed wild animals
• sing or talk loudly while hiking
• hike in groups when possible
• carry bear spray

Never leave a fire unattended.
Most wildfires are caused by people
• use provided fire pits only
• make sure your fire is out before you leave
• have a fire only when necessary
• keep fires small

Keep it natural
• clean up after yourself and others
• do not remove plants, rocks, deadfall (fallen branches and logs), or artifacts
• stay on designated trails

Keep your campsite clean.
Wildlife are attracted to smell – don’t give them a reason to visit
• keep food and toiletries in your vehicle or camper, but not your tent
• never leave drink containers, garbage, or coolers unattended
• use the provided bins for garbage—they’re bear-proof!
• pour the dirty water you use to wash dishes into outhouse toilets
Hiking and walking are two of the most popular park activities, and it’s easy to understand why. Alberta Parks maintains thousands of well-marked trails that are easy to find and follow so you can get exercise and fresh air, or spend some time exploring the natural setting and enjoying the sights, sounds, and smells of the great outdoors.

When hiking or walking in a park, remember to let someone know where you’re going and give yourself enough time to return before it gets dark. Some trails are flat while others climb steep hills or mountains. Trails range from fully accessible paved trails to rugged paths where a map or guide is recommended. Check the Alberta Parks website at www.albertaparks.ca or phone a Provincial Park Visitor Centre for maps and about current trail information such as closures, wet or snowy ground, obstacles, or wild animals in the area.

Checklist:
• day backpack
• first aid kit
• good shoes or boots
• good socks
• water bottle
• snacks
• camera
• warm clothes and rain gear
• map of the area
One of the easiest and most enjoyable things to do in a park is spend time with family and friends over a meal in the outdoors. Few parks have stores where you can buy food, so be sure to bring your own food and clean up after you are done. With hundreds of picnic sites across the province complete with picnic tables, outhouse toilets, and places to set up barbecues and stoves, you can always enjoy some fresh air with your food. Many sites also have campfire pits and firewood sales, and some sites even have playing fields.

**Picnicking**

**Checklist:**
- food
- drinks
- proper clothes: be prepared for unexpected weather
- camp stove or portable barbecue
- firewood and matches (if there are campfire pits available)
- cutlery and plates
- bags for garbage and for recyclables
- sunscreen and bug spray
Camping

Camping-staying overnight in a portable home like a tent, motorhome, camper or trailer-can be great fun for the whole family and is an easy way to spend more time in the outdoors.

Frontcountry campgrounds in Alberta have picnic tables, fire pits, clean drinking water, outhouse toilets, and garbage containers. Some also have shelters where you can eat and cook if it rains. Some locations have electrical and sewer hook-ups at your site and comfort stations with showers and laundry facilities.

You’ll need to bring your own equipment and you must pay fees to camp in an Alberta Parks campground. Many sites are available on a first-come-first-served basis, although most parks allow you to reserve a campsite before your visit. Check the Alberta Parks reserve.albertaparks.ca website or phone a visitor centre to find out more about reserving a campsite.

Checklist

(most camping gear can be rented or purchased second-hand)

- tent or recreational vehicle (RV)
- sleeping bags and sleeping pads
- food and a water container
- cooler to store food
- newspaper and matches to light a campfire
- clothes for all weather conditions
- flashlights
- camp stove

- tent
- recreational vehicle (tent trailer)
BACKCOUNTRY VS. FRONTCOUNTRY CAMPING

Frontcountry facilities are places that you can access by car. The backcountry includes the parts of our parks that are more wild and undeveloped. There are many backcountry campsites and trails across the province. If you travel to the backcountry you will need to plan for a full day or overnight trip and may need specialized equipment or training. Travelling in the backcountry is a great way to have an adventure and to see parts of the natural world that most people never visit. Just remember to always check with local Provincial Park Visitor Centres, park offices or the Alberta Parks Information line before your trip, or consider hiring a professional guide to lead your trip.
If you like being on the water, try exploring a park by boat! Whether you choose to paddle a canoe, take a whitewater raft tour, or drive a recreational motorboat, you'll get to see a part of the landscape you might otherwise miss. Motorboats are not allowed in all parks, and some rivers have dangerous sections that require special boats and skills.

You must follow provincial regulations for boater safety, such as getting a Recreational Boat Operators License, wearing a personal floatation device that helps you float in the water and carrying proper equipment. Weather can change very quickly on Alberta lakes and rivers—always be prepared to return to shore.

Checklist:
- boat (canoe, kayak, motorboat, etc)
- safety equipment such as spare paddles, bailing bucket, and a whistle
- personal floatation devices
- clothes for all weather conditions
- recent weather report and forecast
Some parks allow visitors to ride bicycles on certain trails. These might be smooth, paved trails where a regular city bicycle would work, or they might be more rugged where you need a specialized mountain bike with wide tires. Either way, riding a bike is a fun way to get to know a park. Just make sure you know which trails allow bicycles before you go.

Just as you would when hiking, remember to let someone know where you're going and give yourself enough time to return before it gets dark.

Biking

साइकिल चलाकर

Checklist:
- a bicycle (a mountain bike is best for unpaved trails)
- a helmet
- water bottle
- snacks
- map of the area
Fishing

While you can eat most types of fish that you catch in Alberta’s parks, people here fish for sport and for fun, not for food. Many of Alberta’s lakes and rivers have lots of fish, but to conserve the numbers of wild fish, visitors require an Alberta fishing license and are only allowed to keep a certain number of fish each day. For some species that have been threatened with extinction-like the bull trout—you are required to release any fish you catch back into the water.

Many lakes and rivers in Alberta have unique fishing rules. Ask about these rules before you go fishing, and be sure to get a sportfishing guide when you purchase your license.

Checklist:
- Alberta fishing license (you can buy this online or in convenience stores and gas stations)
- fishing rod
- fishing tackle such as pliers and a knife
- bait to attract fish where allowed
- barbless hooks: barbed hooks are illegal in Alberta
You could also make your visit to a park part of a larger sightseeing trip as you get to know Alberta. Enjoy a picnic or a hike in a park during the day, and then get to know a nearby community at night. Wherever you are exploring in Alberta, a provincial park or protected area is never far away.
In many parts of Alberta, the weather often turns cold and snowy in October or November and stays that way until March or April. But don’t let cold weather keep you inside. Instead, visit a park and try some outdoor winter sports. You can ski down hills or along flat trails, or wear snowshoes to walk on top of the snow. You can toboggan or you can ice-fish, or even winter camp! Whatever you do, dress warmly and get ready to discover why so many Albertans love the winter!

When skiing or snowshoeing in a park, let someone know where you’re going and give yourself enough time to return before it gets dark. Remember that it gets dark very early in the evening during Alberta winters. Also, check with a visitor centre to make sure it’s safe before walking on a frozen lake or pond.

If you’re driving to a park in the winter, it’s a good idea to check the road conditions on the Internet before you leave.

Weather conditions in the Rocky Mountains can change quickly, which, in winter, may cause snow to suddenly slide downhill in deadly avalanches. If you plan to travel in the backcountry in the mountain parks, you should take an avalanche safety course and visit www.avalanche.ca to check on current warnings.

Winter Sports

Checking off:

- equipment for your winter sport (skis, ski poles, ski boots, snowshoes)
- avalanche safety equipment (if necessary)
- warm layers of winter clothes
- water bottle and snacks

AVALANCHE!

Weather conditions in the Rocky Mountains can change quickly which, in winter, may cause snow to suddenly slide downhill in deadly avalanches. If you plan to travel in the backcountry in the mountain parks, you should take an avalanche safety course and visit www.avalanche.ca to check on current warnings.
Learning about nature in parks

Parks and protected areas are outdoor classrooms where anyone can be a student. By learning to recognize the wildlife and landscapes around you, you’ll feel more at home in the outdoors and become inspired to protect our natural world.

There are many ways to learn about Alberta’s natural landscapes, wildlife and features. If you like to be alone and learn quietly, you can take a guidebook to go bird watching, or teach yourself to recognize plants. Some parks even have park educators who will teach you about the park’s natural surroundings through guided walks, bus tours, and campground educational theatre shows. Learning in parks is free, but formal bus tours and a few special events may cost money. You will also have an opportunity at some parks to donate money in support of these education programs.

LEARNING ABOUT AND CONNECTING TO THE NATURAL WORLD
Art and Inspiration

Would you prefer to paint, write, or take photographs on your park visit? Or sit quietly and be inspired by the beauty of the world around you? Parks are perfect places for activities such as these, and they can be done almost anywhere.

Just remember, cutting or removing of any plants, antlers, rocks or fossils is not allowed in parks or protected areas. Make your art from memories instead!

Checklist:
- proper clothes—always dress for unexpected weather!
- water and snacks
- education program schedule
- money for fees if required
- your questions about the park
- guidebooks
- binoculars
- art supplies
Thousands of people contribute to parks and protected areas by being stewards of the natural world. Being a steward means caring for parks and protecting them for future generations. Anyone can become a steward by becoming a volunteer or even working for Alberta Parks. And just by visiting a park you can act in ways that help protect these amazing areas – you can pick up any garbage you find or report problems and concerns to park offices.

Here are some of the stewards you might meet while exploring the parks.

**PARK PEOPLE**

**Name:** Jay Nagendran  
**Originally from:** Sri Lanka  
**Arrived in Canada:** 1974

As Assistant Deputy Minister of Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Jay enjoys working to improve Albertans’ quality of life. He also enjoys hiking and site-seeing in the province’s parks - especially Cypress Hills Provincial Park and Kananaskis Country. Jay has even taken a horseback riding course so that he can explore more remote parks on horseback.
Visitor Information Officers

Who they are:
Information officers work at Park Visitor Centres and answer all kinds of questions about the parks. They know about trail and weather conditions, outdoor activities, learning opportunities like guided walks and campground shows, and park rules.

How they can help you:
Visitor information officers can give or sell you maps and brochures. They are great at suggesting places to go, activities you might enjoy, and any hazards to watch out for during your visit.

Where to find them:
You can speak to an information officer in person at a Provincial Park Visitor Center, or by phone and email.

Name: Marie-Pierre Chappeland
Originally from: France
Arrived in Canada: 1993

As the Office Manager at Bow Valley Provincial Park, Marie-Pierre gives information to visitors and coordinates the Volunteer Stewards program, among many other duties. She loves the hikes along mountain ridges for their amazing views, and enjoys hiking or skiing into a cozy backcountry cabin, then warming up by a fire.
Conservation Officers

Who they are:
Conservation officers are like police officers, and are experts at public safety. They make sure that visitors are safe and are following park rules, and they ensure that nature is protected.

How they can help you:
Conservation officers can answer your questions and can help you if you do not feel safe, have a concern or question, or have been hurt.

Where to find them:
Conservation officers patrol by truck, horse, boat, or on foot through campgrounds, trails, and day-use areas. If you need to speak with one, just walk up to them—they are very friendly!

If you have an emergency, you can call 9-1-1 in most parks just as you would in the city.

Name: Eric Panorel
Originally from: the Philippines
Arrived in Canada: 2006

Fish Creek Provincial Park was the first park Eric explored when he came to Canada. When he found out that he could volunteer there, he decided this would be a good way to give back to the Park, and joined volunteers of all ages picking up garbage near Fish Creek. Eric’s favourite park is Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, where he enjoys hiking, mountain biking, and camping. He looks forward to his first winter camping experience this year.
Who they are:
Friendly park interpreters and environmental educators know all about animals, plants, and landscapes in the park. Their job is to help visitors connect with the natural world through educational programs and experiences. Most interpreters are hired seasonally, so you will usually only see them from May to September. In the fall, winter and spring, park educators do many environmental education programs for schools and community groups.

How they can help you:
Park interpreters will answer questions and help you recognize wildlife. They also lead walks and present campground shows to teach visitors about the natural world.

Where to find them:
Interpreters spend their time in campground theatres (called “amphitheatres”), popular day-use areas, trails, and sometimes in schools or at community events.

Park Interpreters and Environmental Educators

Name: Christian Héry
Originally from: France
Arrived in Canada: 1998

As the Web and Print Publications Coordinator in Kananaskis Country, Christian is happy to have found his “dream job” in his favourite protected area. He hikes, bikes, and skis in Kananaskis, and hopes to soon try snowshoeing.
Who they are:
Campground Hosts volunteer in campgrounds to provide hospitality and information, ensuring that visitors have enjoyable and safe experiences.

How they can help you:
Campground Hosts provide information and answer questions about facilities, services, activities, rules, and regulations. They also share their knowledge about amenities and services within the surrounding community, and about the Alberta Parks network. In the case of emergencies, Campground Hosts can help visitors access help.

Where to find them:
Campground Hosts can be found either in their well-marked campsite or sometimes walking around the campground, wearing identification that says Parks Volunteer. They are always looking for the next new visitor to greet and introduce to their park or provincial recreation area.

Name: Dusan Rokvic
Originally from: Serbia
Arrived in Canada: 2005

Dusan Rokvic is the Program Coordinator for the 4 Seasons Recreation Program, which gets new Canadians in Calgary involved in recreational opportunities. He enjoys many park activities, very often accompanied by new immigrants. He has great memories of melting snow, flowers, streams, sunny peaks and hundreds of new Canadians exploring the parks.
Facility Operators

Who they are:
Facility Operators run private companies that work with the Alberta Government to operate campgrounds and day-use sites. They make sure campgrounds are clean, safe, and protected. They register campers, provide firewood for sale, and often operate stores and comfort stations.

How they can help you:
If there's a problem with the campground facilities such as drinking water, toilets, picnic tables, and so on, tell the Campground Operators.

Where to find them:
Facility Operators are often busy, but they are easy to find around campgrounds, day-use sites, or campground stores.

Name: Bocar Diallo
Originally from: Senegal
Arrived in Canada: 2005
A PhD student in Geomatics at Sherbrooke University in Quebec, Bocar worked as a research assistant in Kananaskis Country while on a student exchange. This job allowed him to explore the parks while helping with activities like GIS mapping, taking water samples, and tracking bears. He still remembers how impressed he was at the sight of his first bear.

Name: Romana Windsteig
Originally from: Italy and Austria
Arrived in Canada: 1953
Romana retired from nursing in 1992 and now volunteers with many Park groups, including the Friends of Fish Creek, where she helps with most outdoor programs, including the Park Clean-up and high school education programs. She enjoys cycling, walking, and wildlife watching, and has found that being outdoors has greatly improved her health.
Who they are:
park maintenance workers are responsible for repairing and cleaning park buildings and facilities. They help keep the parks in excellent condition.

How they can help you:
If there is a problem with a building or facility such as the public outhouses, comfort stations, and shelters, tell the park maintenance workers.

Where to find them:
In campgrounds, visitor centres, and day-use areas throughout the parks.

Park Maintenance Staff

Name: Slawa Gruszcynska
Originally from: Poland
Arrived in Canada: 1979

The Cultural Diversity Coordinator with the City of Calgary – Arts and Culture, Slawa Gruszcynska has wonderful memories of bringing her daughter to Alberta’s parks. They would join a group of friends and spend the day hiking and picnicking. Her daughter is now grown up, and Slawa still loves to sight-see, walk, and relax in Fish Creek and Bow Valley Provincial Parks.

Name: Ashim Banerjee
Originally from: Kenya
Arrived in Canada: 2006

A student in the Business Administration and Information Technology program at Medicine Hat College, Ashim has been helping the Heritage Association of Cypress Hills with trail maintenance and marking ski trails in Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park for the past two years. He also enjoys hiking, biking, and “meeting new people from all walks of life” in the parks.
Who they are:
These scientists study plants, wildlife, and their relationship with each other and the land. Some even study people to figure out the best ways to provide rewarding park experiences. Many researchers work for Alberta's colleges and universities in partnership with the Government of Alberta.

How they can help you:
Biologists and researchers make important discoveries about the parks and share them with the public and other park staff.

Where to find them:
You may never encounter a researcher as they often work behind the scenes, but research sites such as the Kananaskis Field Station or the Boreal Centre for Bird Conservation often provide free tours and open houses.

Name: Dragomir Drajs Vujnovic
Originally from: the former Yugoslavia
Arrived in Canada: 1993

A zoologist with the Parks Division of Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation has taken her to many beautiful places, from the Onefour Heritage Rangeland Natural Area in the very southeastern corner to the Canadian Shield Natural Region in the northeast. Her favourite park is Fidler-Greywillow Wildland Provincial Park in the Canadian Shield. In the winter, she enjoys cross-country skiing at the Cooking Lake - Blackfoot Grazing, Wildlife and Provincial Recreational Area with her husband Drajs, a Park zoologist.

Name: Ksenija Vujnovic
Originally from: the former Yugoslavia
Arrived in Canada: 1993

Ksenija’s job as an ecologist with the Parks Division of Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation allows her to study wildlife in some of his favourite parks, including the Milk River Natural Area and Rock Lake-Solomon Creek Wildland Park. One day in the Willmore Wildland Park, he spotted four grizzly bears, a caribou, and a marmot all in the same spot! Drajs also enjoys cross-country skiing, cycling, and taking photographs.
There are many more people who make sure that our parks and protected areas are safe, organized, and easy to explore. These include Planners, Managers, and Communications people, to name just a few. You might not see these people in the park, but they are working hard to make sure you have an excellent visit, and to make sure parks stay natural, protected, and accessible to you.

Richard first came to Canada to visit friends, but found it simply “too nice to leave.” Now a biathlon and cross-country ski coach at the Canmore Nordic Centre, he enjoys skiing, biking, and climbing in Kananaskis Country. One of his best memories is of the time he navigated the Mt. Indefatigable traverse—carrying his one-and-a-half-year-old baby!
If you decide that you want to become a park steward, there are many ways to get involved:

By Visiting Parks:
You can be a steward simply by caring for Alberta’s parks and protected areas and understanding why they are so important. Each time you visit, the fees you pay for your campsite or firewood allow park employees to care for the park in a way that is responsible to nature.

By Volunteering:
Each year, hundreds of volunteers contribute thousands of hours to parks. From helping with education programs and special events to building and cleaning up trails or working with cooperating associations, these generous people are a big part of Alberta’s Provincial Parks.

By Working for Parks:
If you dream of working outdoors and protecting a beautiful environment, think about working for Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. Every year, parks across the province hire seasonal park interpreters, visitor centre and campground staff, and conservation officers.

You can learn more about volunteer, career, or contract opportunities with parks by visiting www.albertaparks.ca or by talking to park staff or volunteers in person.

The head of Visitor Services in Kananaskis Country, Eric will never forget the day when, while hiking alone in Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park, he came upon one rattlesnake, then another, and another! Surrounded by over a dozen snakes, he stayed calm and moved away slowly, taking with him a “thrilling memory.” Eric likes to explore the parks on foot and on skis.

Name: Eric Kuhn
Originally from: United States
Arrived in Canada: 1970

PARK PERSON
BASIC INFORMATION

If you have questions while visiting or planning a trip to Alberta Parks, stop at a Visitor Centre, check online at www.albertaparks.ca, or call the Alberta Parks Information Line at 780-427-3582; toll-free 1-866-427-3582.

If you see a fire in any of Alberta’s forests, call 310-FIRE (3473)

If you see a crime in a park, you can leave an anonymous tip by calling Green Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)

A complete list of park regulations can be downloaded at www.albertaparks.ca

For more information about travelling in Alberta, visit: www.travelalberta.com

ROAD CONDITIONS

For online information on road conditions, check websites such as:
The Alberta Motor Association www.ama.ca
The Weather Network Canada www.weather.ca

Avalanche Conditions

For information on current backcountry avalanche conditions, visit:
the Canadian Avalanche Centre at www.avalanche.ca

In case of an emergency, call 9-1-1

REPORT WILDFIRES

310-FIRE

www.avalanche.ca

In case of an emergency, call 9-1-1