

88 Reasons to Love Alberta Parks

1. Explore the night sky! Head to [Miquelon Lake Provincial Park](#) to get lost among the stars in the Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve.
2. Experience [Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area](#) in the Beaver Hills UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. This unique 1600 square km reserve has natural habitats that support abundant wildlife, alongside agriculture and industry, on the doorstep of the major urban area of Edmonton.
3. Paddle the Red Deer River through the otherworldly shaped cliffs and badlands of [Dry Island Buffalo Jump Provincial Park](#).
4. **Wildlife viewing. Our parks are home to many wildlife species. We encourage you to actively discover, explore and experience nature and wildlife safely and respectfully.**
5. Vibrant autumn colours paint our protected landscapes in the fall. Feel the crunch of fallen leaves underfoot and inhale the crisp woodland scented air on trails in many provincial parks and recreation areas.
6. Sunsets illuminating wetlands and lakes throughout our provincial parks system, like this one in [Pierre Grey's Lakes Provincial Park](#).
7. Meet passionate and dedicated Alberta Parks staff in a visitor center, around the campground, or out on the trails. Their enthusiasm and knowledge of our natural world combines adventure with learning to add value to your parks experiences!.
8. **Get out in the crisp winter air in [Cypress Hills Provincial Park](#) where you can explore on snowshoe, cross-country ski or skating trails, or for those with a need for speed, try out the luge.**
9. Devonshire Beach: the natural white sand beach at [Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park](#) is consistently ranked as one of the top beaches in Canada!
10. The views from the top of Marten Mountain in Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park: on a clear day the panorama of the lake and surrounding forests is awe inspiring!
11. You can watch bald eagles hunt for fish over the lake from lakeside campsites at [Peppers Lake Provincial Recreation Area](#).
12. Thrilling views. You can peek over one of the deepest gorges in Alberta (nearly 100m deep!) from a viewing platform at [Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area](#).
13. Saving endangered species! Hunted until there were only 77 breeding birds in Canada, the trumpeter swan was on the threatened species list until 2014. Conservation efforts, including protection of breeding habitats at [Saskatoon Island Provincial Park](#) and many other northern lakes, has resulted in the trumpeter population increasing to about 16,000 throughout North America.



14. An oldie, but a goodie! A warm summer's day still attracts crowds of people to [Aspen Beach Provincial Park](#), which was [one of the first Provincial Parks established in 1932!](#)
15. **Wind surfing on the Traverse Reservoir where the warm southern prairie winds blow steady at Little Bow Provincial Park.**
16. Experience the prairie grasslands set against the stunning backdrop of the Livingston Range and the peaks of Waterton National Park from your campsite at [Chain Lakes Provincial Park](#). Enjoy canoeing, fishing and windsurfing at this unique south west Alberta park.
17. Starting in the [Kootenay Plains Ecological Reserve](#) cross the North Saskatchewan River on the suspension foot bridge and continue your hike to Siffleur falls.
18. Hidden Gems: There are many places to discover, from the Canadian Shield and Boreal Forest to the Foothills and Parklands, and the Rocky Mountains and Grasslands. Each [natural region of the province](#) has its own treasures and surprises!
19. Bugs! You can always find the coolest of critters in any one of our parks and protected areas.
20. **The amazing stewardship opportunities and the hard work of [our many volunteers](#). Volunteers don't get paid for their services, but sure are priceless to us!**
21. Conservation: Alberta Parks protects wetlands, which are crucial to all life on the planet. Wetlands filter sediment and toxins out of lakes, rivers and streams. Wetlands store rain water like a giant sponge, and let it out during dry times. Wetlands provide shelter and food for fish, birds and other animals. Without wetlands, opportunities for recreation, tourism, wildlife, fisheries, agriculture and water sources would be severely limited.
22. Knowledgeable, creative, and entertaining Alberta Parks Interpreters who make learning about nature fun!
23. **Move the body, still the mind: Alberta Parks remind us of our real scale in the greater scheme of things and it's good for our psyche to get outside.**
24. Many free events that are fantastic learning opportunities and fun for the whole family.
25. Alberta Parks' Public Safety Officers have incredible skills which they share at Avalanche Awareness Day to help all of us stay safe in the backcountry.
26. Getting up-close-and-personal with geology: thinking of the time and forces that have created deep river valleys, rugged cliffs and weird hoodoos is amazing!
27. Lake life is the best life: The simple tranquility of [Lakeland Provincial Park](#) and [Lakeland Provincial Recreation Area](#).
28. **S'MORES! Thousands of campfires unite the yummy goodness of chocolate and marshmallows every year**



29. Wandering where the wifi is weak: Unplugging and reconnecting with friends is the best activity in Alberta Parks.
30. **Playing at Alberta's only island that is a provincial park: [Sir Winston Churchill](#). With lake access, and kayak, canoe and paddleboard rentals, there are so many ways to enjoy the water!**
31. The enthusiasm that our summer staff share with our visitors each year!
32. Ice fishing in [William A Switzer Provincial Park](#) and many others across the province, is a favorite winter pastime!
33. The Golden Hour Hike in [Dinosaur Provincial Park](#): Grab your camera and join us on a journey to uncover paleontological secrets and savor the setting sun in the spectacular badlands. An ideal time for spotting local wildlife.
34. Camp on the [Crown of the Continent](#) at [Chinook Provincial Recreation Area](#). Located in the southern Rockies, where you can relax in your RV or tenting site in a well treed campground next to Chinook Lake. Canoe, kayak or swim in the lake, or hike and mountain bike on the trails.
35. School Programs: A field trip to Dinosaur Provincial Park is an experiential learning opportunity like no other! Our programs are curriculum connected and fun.
36. Family Dino Stomp - Stomp back in time and learn about the marvelous Cretaceous creatures who once roamed these lands. Learn about the dinosaur enthusiasts who are uncovering the Mesozoic mysteries lying just beneath the hills. The hike makes a number of stops throughout the meandering valleys of the badlands on this family friendly hike.
37. **Set in the prairie grasslands of southern Alberta, in [Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park / Áísínai'pi UNESCO World Heritage Site](#) is a sacred landscape. The spiritual presence at Writing-on-Stone connects people to the landscape in ways not found elsewhere. Explore the cultural history at Writing-on-Stone with stories and knowledge that have been passed down by generations of the Blackfoot people.**
38. Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park / Áísínai'pi UNESCO World Heritage Site contains the largest concentration of First Nation petroglyphs (rock carvings) and pictographs (rock paintings) on the great plains of North America.
39. [Nakiska Ski Resort](#), located only a few minutes' drive from [Kananaskis Village](#) is a great winter ski getaway.
40. Equestrian campgrounds: Alberta Parks has a number of campgrounds for visitors who bring their horses to ride equestrian trails. Facilities may include hitching rails, horse corrals and loading ramps.



41. Mountain Biking in Kananaskis Country:

There are a variety of [biking trails throughout Kananaskis County](#) for cross-country and downhill mountain biking.

42. Catch a glimpse of more than 160 species of birds including prairie falcon, kestrel, ring-necked pheasant, gray partridge, great horned and short-eared owls, mourning dove and cliff swallow at Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park / Áísínai'pi UNESCO World Heritage Site.

43. Mountain climbing in Kananaskis Country: Enthusiasts pursue both sport climbing and traditional climbing in Kananaskis County, as well as scrambling.

44. Fat biking in Kananaskis Country! There are so many [trails](#) to choose from.

45. Alberta Parks is home to Canada's first Interprovincial Park: Cypress Hills! We share the love of this special spot with our neighbours in Saskatchewan.

46. Hook, line and sinker...At [Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park](#) you can catch a big one on Alberta's second largest lake!

47. The Cypress Hills area is the highest point between the Rocky Mountains and Labrador, making it a montane oasis on the prairie - cooler in the hot summer and warmer in the cold winter.

48. Sightseeing by vehicle: sit back and enjoy Alberta Parks as a passenger or driver. We have [scenic sightseeing routes](#) in [Kananaskis Country](#), the northern Rockies, Cypress Hills and the Southwest Crown of the Continent that are truly spectacular.

49. Explore the Hoodoos Trail at Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park / Áísínai'pi National Historic Site and 'get lost' in an ancient landscape. This 2.2 kilometre trail winds through hoodoos, sandstone cliffs and rock art, upland prairie grasslands and coulees of the Milk River valley.

50. Neo-tropical songbirds! The Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory (LSLBO) Banding Lab offers visitors the opportunity to see the many different beautiful and vocal songbirds that come to Alberta's boreal forests to breed every year. Learn about the ongoing important bird research and see up-close the bird banding process that allows us to understand bird migration.

51. Explore the [interpretive canoe route](#) on Jarvis Creek in [William A. Switzer Provincial Park](#). It is approximately 4 km in length, starting from where Highway 40 crosses Jarvis Creek near the [Visitor Centre](#) at [Kelley's Bathtub Day Use Area](#) and ending at [Graveyard Lake/Halfway Campground](#).

52. And S'MORES.....



53. **Fishing in William A. Switzer Provincial Park.** All five lakes have northern pike and lake whitefish. The trout pond near Cache Lake is stocked with hundreds of rainbow trout each spring.
54. The waterfalls at Ogre Canyon near [Rock Lake-Solomon Creek Wildland Provincial Park](#), in summer or winter, are a sight worth seeing!
55. It's not just humans that camp out in [Cypress Hills Provincial Park](#). Explore the world of birds in the Cypress Hills with its unique habitat for bird migrations, and over 220 species of birds to be found! There are also 47 mammal species, and several species of reptiles and amphibians, making it a wild and wonderful place!
56. **Snowshoeing! Enjoying a fresh winter day making the first set of tracks and observing animal tracks and trail signs is a great way to discover a provincial park.**
57. Not so Cold Lake! Marshes, mixed wood forests, beautiful sand beaches and lakeshore landscapes support a diverse community of wildlife. Despite its name, the lake's depth actually creates a thermal basin that prevents ice forming until well into December. Not only is this a great place to see waterfowl and shorebirds, hundreds of songbirds and other forest species live in the varied and rich habitats in [Cold Lake Provincial Park](#).
58. **Our parks are so diverse: walk from the warm, dry grassy plain up into the cool mountain forest in the montane environment of [Kootenay Plains Ecological Reserve](#).**
59. Ongoing wildlife research to increase the understanding of wildlife habitats in Alberta Parks. For instance, [three species of bats](#) are known to over-winter in Dinosaur Provincial Park. The rugged badlands landscape provides abundant underground habitat below the frost line, making the park an important hibernation site.
60. Backpackers and horseback riders seeking a true backcountry experience can explore over 750 km of trails in [Willmore Wilderness Park](#), staging from [Sulphur Gates Provincial Recreation Area](#) or [Rock Lake Provincial Park](#).
61. [Pierre Grey's Lakes Provincial Park](#) is known by locals as a fishing paradise. Lakes are stocked with brook trout and rainbow trout. You can fish from the walking bridge that connects to an island in one of the lakes.
62. The two-tiered falls at [Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area](#) is breathtaking! View the falls on the Bighorn River from a developed viewing area.
63. The peculiar and elegant hoodoos at [Sundance Provincial Park](#). It's also a diverse landscape of moist old-growth forest, spectacular sandstone cliffs, steep valleys, and a wetland complex.



64. Geocaching Alberta Parks! Using a GPS (Global Positioning System) receiver to locate a "geocache" (a hidden object, place or feature) makes a fun family-friendly outdoor activity. There are hundreds of geocaches in parks across the province!
65. Frozen Thunder at [Canmore Nordic Centre Provincial Park](#) makes skiing in October possible! The ski trail is comprised of stored machine-made snow that allows biathlon and cross-country skiers to start training early in the season.
66. Whitewater rafting in Willmore Wilderness Park and [Sulphur Gates Provincial Recreation Area](#) is a great summer adventure!
67. [Wainwright Dunes Ecological Reserve](#) is part of a large and diverse area of sand dune, outwash and kame moraine; some dunes reach heights of 30 meters.
68. **[Peter Lougheed Provincial Park](#) preserves a landscape of glacier-capped peaks surrounding the Upper and Lower Kananaskis Lakes. It includes Highwood Pass, the highest drivable mountain pass in Canada.**
69. Hike more, worry less. People come to Alberta Parks to enjoy the great outdoors - to connect with friends, family and the natural world. It's a proven fact that there are positive physical and mental health effects by viewing or being active in natural settings. Sometimes all you need is a walk in the park.
70. Pocatererra Ridge in Peter Lougheed Provincial Park is a well-established trail through subalpine meadows and woods that takes you high above-treeline. There, you can soak up 360° views to surrounding mountain peaks.
71. [Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park](#) is one of Alberta's newest provincial parks. It consists of more than 1,300 hectares of foothills parkland and preserves and protects significant natural features, including endangered ecosystems and rare species. It also provides a unique opportunity to showcase the rich history of ranching and historic Glenbow townsite.
72. [Kakwa Wildland Provincial Park](#) is a remote, rugged park containing over 650 square km of forested valleys, creeks, lakes and mountains. Along the Kakwa River, Alberta's largest waterfall drops 30 meters into a spectacular canyon.
73. Orchid hunting in Cypress Hills Provincial Park. The diversity and abundance of orchids found in the Cypress Hills cannot be matched anywhere else on the prairies. Many of these fragile and beautiful flowers can be found while hiking in early summer, making this area an orchid-lover's haven!
74. **[Parks Day celebrations](#): Canada's Parks Day takes place on the 3rd Saturday of July each year. Visitors join park staff and volunteers to celebrate how lucky we are to have parks and wild places where we can have adventures and make memories!**
75. Getting back to basics! If you like to venture off the beaten track, head to [Ram Falls Provincial Park](#). The gravel road into the park is like a time machine transporting you back in time to wild camping with no frills. Hike the trails, view the falls, and maybe even catch a glimpse of bighorn sheep.



76. Seeing visitors new to the province enjoy Alberta Parks! We're [committed to inclusion](#) that provides opportunities for all Albertans to explore provincial parks.

77. Canmore Nordic Centre's 18-hole disc golf course is known for its beautiful setting and challenging nature. Check out the [Disc Golf Map](#) has information on rules for this popular summer attraction. This fun sport is available in the winter too!



78. Finding [hidden ecological gems](#) like the massive Athabasca Sand dunes over 60 metres high. These active dunes are slowly migrating to the southeast, burying pine forests and filling in small lakes in their path.

79. Protecting all variety of habitats; lakes and wetlands, prairie grasslands, boreal forests, alpine forests, montane, parkland and foothills. Each different environment supports its own unique community of wildlife.

80. Parks staff are all passionate about sharing our love for Alberta Parks! We all support the management and operations of parks in our own roles. Whether we are business support staff, ecologists, GIS specialists, information officers, land use officers, zoologists or biologists, we have one thing in common – [We <3 Alberta Parks!](#)

81. [William Watson Lodge](#) provides year-round, barrier-free, wilderness lodging for persons with disabilities, seniors and their families. It's situated in beautiful Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, overlooking Lower Kananaskis Lake.

82. Walking through meadows of wildflowers in [White Goat Wilderness Area](#), with spectacular peaks over 3300 meters in elevation! The highest peaks have permanent snowfields and small glaciers. Flowering season begins at lower elevations in June and finishes in the high alpine meadows in mid-July.

83. Alberta Parks connects textbook learning to real life nature-based experiences [with school programs](#) that are curriculum-based and fun.

84. Winter fun! In all corners of the province you'll [find a park that stays open year-round](#) for day to get outside and enjoy all four seasons. There is a variety of winter activities you can do, including ice fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, ice climbing, and even a luge.

85. Weird and wonderful things live in our parks! Behold the [coral mushroom](#).

86. Saying yes to new adventures! The sense of exploration you get from hiking, mountain biking or paddling in a new area in Alberta Parks.





87. Did we mention S'mores!

88. Our visitors! We love to inspire people to discover, value, protect and enjoy the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations.

