

NATIONAL PARK · CANADA · ALBERTA

Elk Island

at a glance

Canada's only fully fenced national park, half an hour from Edmonton, with bison that have repopulated half of North America from here.

1906

ESTABLISHED

48 kmLOCATION
(30 mi) east of Edmonton**over 80 km**TRAILS
(50 mi), eleven hiking trails**42**

WILDLIFE

BEFORE YOU GO



48 kilometres east of Edmonton

The park lies on Highway 16, the Yellowhead, a little over half an hour from downtown.



Treaty 6 and Métis homeland

The park lies within Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis.



South entrance on Highway 16

The main entrance lies about 48 kilometres (30 mi) from downtown Edmonton on Highway 16 East.



Camping season

The Astotin Lake and Oster Lake sites are open from mid-May to the Thanksgiving weekend in October, weather permitting.



A hundred metres, measured with your thumb

You must not get closer than 100 metres (328 ft) to any bison.



Recognising warning signs

Bison snort, shake their heads, raise their tails, paw the ground or bluff charge.



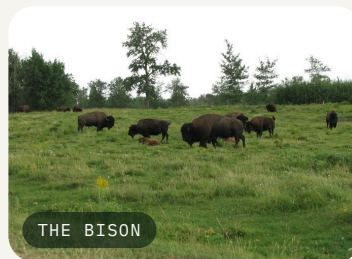
Fees and opening hours, up to date

Fees and times change. The park page lists them with source and date:
nationalparksatlas.com/en/canada/elk-island



- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre | 5 Living Waters Boardwalk |
| 2 Astotin Lake | 6 Tawayik Lake |
| 3 Elk Island | 7 Moss Lake |
| 4 Astotin Lake Campground | 8 Oster Lake |
| | 9 Bison Loop Road |

Green: entrances. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors (ODbL).



THE BISON



ASTOTIN LAKE



AT NIGHT IN THE DARK SKY PRESERVE

THINGS TO DO

Eleven trails through aspen forest and bog

From the 400-metre Living Waters Boardwalk over Astotin Lake to the 15.6-kilometre (9.7 mi) Wood Bison Trail ...

Paddling on Astotin Lake

The lake and its islands can be explored by canoe, kayak or stand-up paddleboard; boats can be rented in the ...

Four red chairs

Two sets stand in the Astotin Lake day-use area, one on the Shoreline Trail.

The bison came in 1907

The Canadian government bought one of the last large plains bison herds, the Pablo-Allard herd from Montana.

[More on the park page](#)

Stuck in a bison jam

By its own account, Elk Island may be the only place in Canada where you can get caught in a bison jam.

Northern lights in the dark sky preserve

The park is part of the Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve, designated by the Royal Astronomical Society of ...

Why the park exists

In 1906 five Albertans from the Fort Saskatchewan area persuaded the government to create a refuge for one of ...

Two kinds, separated by a highway

North of Highway 16 live plains bison; south of it, in the Wood Bison Area added in 1947, live the wood ...

TOURS AND GETTING THERE



PARK AUTHORITY • NO PARTNER LINK • SHUTTLE • SELF-GUIDED • FROM EDMONTON: ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM

By Parkbus from Edmonton to Astotin Lake

ON [PARKBUS.CA](#) ➤





PARK AUTHORITY • NO PARTNER LINK • PARK AUTHORITY PROGRAMME • EVENING

“Gateway to the Stars” stargazing programme at Astotin Lake

ON [PARKS.CANADA.CA](#) ➤





PARK AUTHORITY • NO PARTNER LINK • BOAT RENTAL • ASTOTIN LAKE

Canoe, kayak or paddleboard on Astotin Lake

ON [RIDGEWILDERNESS.COM](#) ➤



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