

can vary from archaeological digs or guided tours to preparing photographic or audio-visual programs.

Regional divisions

To identify the variety of Canada's landscapes, in the early 1970s Parks Canada divided the country into 48 natural regions, 39 of which are terrestrial and nine are marine. Eventually each of the regions will have an area of outstanding scenery and distinct features set aside as a national park.

Currently, 20 of the natural regions are represented by parks and each province and territory has at least one. They are situated from Terra Nova, on the east coast of Newfoundland, to Pacific Rim, along the west coast of Vancouver Island and from Point Pelee, a migratory bird sanctuary on the southernmost tip of the Canadian mainland, to Ellesmere, on the northern shores of Ellesmere Island. They are also very diverse and range from Elk Island, covered with forests and meadows, to Mingan, with its unusual natural sculptures; or from St. Lawrence Islands, which measures a mere 4.1 square kilometres, to Wood Buffalo, which extends over 44 807 square kilometres.

Many of the regions without parks are at least partly in the north. Of the parks already established in the territories, only Northern Yukon and Wood Buffalo have national park status; Auyuittuq, Kluane, Nahanni and Ellesmere are national park reserves, which are intended to become national parks when native land claims are settled.

Preserving history

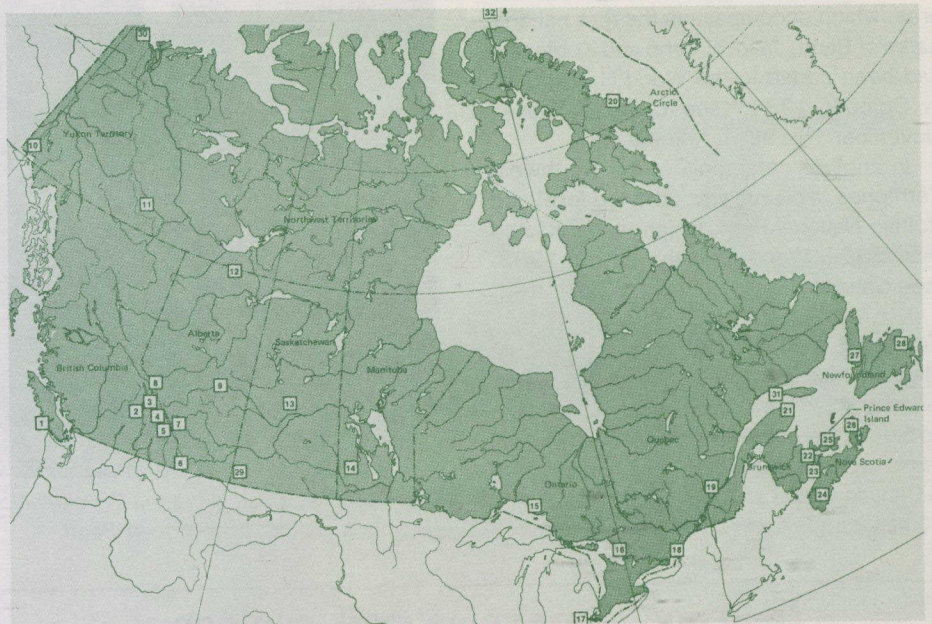
Canada's parks system also includes several historic parks, sites, monuments and canals that have been established to preserve Canada's historic heritage.

Selected on the basis of their cultural, social, political, economic, military or architectural importance, there are some 100 national historic parks and sites that range from forts, churches, homesteads, lighthouses and museums to iron forges, walls and gates. In addition, there are more than 900 plaques marking important sites and commemorating the contributions of specific people. The nine canals in the system, were constructed originally to facilitate defence or trade.

Marking the centennial

The national parks centennial program, which continues until the end of the year, has been extensive and varied. Some 25 000 planned events and activities range from pageants and festivals to theatrical and musical performances, and from carnivals, snowfests, regattas, military demonstrations and cannon

National parks of Canada



	Estab- lished	Area (km ²)		Estab- lished	Area (km ²)
1 Pacific Rim	1970	389	17 Point Pelee	1918	16
2 Mount Revelstoke	1914	263	18 St. Lawrence Islands	1914	4
3 Glacier	1886	1 349	19 La Mauricie	1970	544
4 Yoho	1886	1 313	20 Auyuittuq	1972	21 471
5 Kootenay	1920	1 378	21 Forillon	1970	240
6 Waterton Lakes	1895	526	22 Kouchibouguac	1969	225
7 Banff	1885	6 641	23 Fundy	1948	206
8 Jasper	1907	10 878	24 Kejimikujik	1968	382
9 Elk Island	1913	194	25 Prince Edward Island	1937	18
10 Kluane	1972	22 015	26 Cape Breton Highlands	1936	951
11 Nahanni	1972	4 765	27 Gros Morne	1970	1 943
12 Wood Buffalo	1922	44 807	28 Terra Nova	1957	397
13 Prince Albert	1927	3 875	29 Grasslands	1981	1 000
14 Riding Mountain	1929	2 976	30 Northern Yukon	1984	6 050
15 Pukaskwa	1971	1 878	31 Mingan Archipelago	1984	94
16 Georgian Bay Islands	1929	14	32 Ellesmere Island	1985	39 500

ball hunts to expanded programs and tours within the parks. As the centennial coincided with International Youth Year, some activities were especially designed for young people.

A major event of the centennial celebrations was the national conference called Heritage for Tomorrow: Canadian Assembly on National Parks and Protected Areas, held in Banff, September 4-8. Representatives from across Canada met to discuss heritage conservation issues that are important for the future of the Canadian national parks system.

A new northern park

One of the highlights in the year of celebration was the establishment of Canada's newest park, Ellesmere Island National Park Reserve, in the northern part of the island. It is the country's most northerly park, situated in the high Arctic some 2 500 kilometres northeast of Yellowknife.

Ellesmere Island National Park covers 39 500 square kilometres and is dominated

by the Grant Land Mountains and Hazen Plateau. Most of the territory is polar desert with mountain ranges, ice fields, glaciers and fiords. Lake Hazen, the largest lake north of the Arctic circle, is one of the areas of thermal oasis, moist and warm enough to support vegetation and maintain animal life.

Inaugurations of new national historic parks included two in Quebec, the Battle of Ristigouche National Historic Park and the Port of Quebec in the Nineteenth Century National Historic Park. The official opening of Newfoundland's L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Park, the oldest Viking settlement in North America, was also held.

World heritage sites

Plaque unveiling ceremonies were held at various sites during the year and two very important ones commemorated the inclusion of five Canadian national parks as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage sites.