

National Parks.—From 1885, when the first National Park was established around the mineral hot springs at Banff, Alta., until 1953, 28 areas covering more than 29,000 sq. miles have been set aside as National Parks.

These Parks are maintained by the Federal Government for the protection of their flora, fauna and natural phenomena, for the preservation of their scenic beauty and interest and, in some cases, the marking of their historical significance in the building of the nation. They are supervised by the National Parks Branch, Department of Resources and Development, and are developed and maintained in such a manner as to provide perpetual inspiration, education and healthful recreation for present and future generations.

The National Parks are Canada's greatest single tourist attraction. Accommodation in privately owned hotels, bungalow cabins, chalets, lodges and cottages is available, and modern cabins have been built in several of the Parks by the National Parks Administration to afford low-rental accommodation to Park visitors. Recreational facilities include heated outdoor swimming pools with dressing-room buildings; equipped camp-grounds, some with trailer-park facilities; golf courses in superb scenic settings; tennis courts; bowling greens; well-equipped children's playgrounds; athletic fields; horseshoe pitches; outdoor checker-boards; and, in some of the Parks, amphitheatres where plays, concerts and film shows are held in the open. For winter sports there are down-hill and slalom ski courses, ski jumps, ski tows and a chairlift.

A park warden service protects the forests and wildlife and maintains constant vigilance for the safety and comfort of visitors. Stocking and transfer of game fish in order to improve angling opportunities in Park waters are carried out extensively and successfully; fish hatcheries are operated in three of the mountain National Parks. (A special article on Game Fish in Canada's National Parks is given in the 1952-53 Year Book, pp. 34-36.) Two of the National Parks are largely big-game preserves where herds of buffalo and other animals find sanctuary.

In addition to the scenic, recreational and wild animal parks, Canada has eleven national historic parks. The National Parks and Historic Sites Service of the Department of Resources and Development is also responsible for the marking, preservation and restoration of places of great historic interest in Canada. More than 450 such sites have been marked on the recommendation of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The most important recent additions to the list of historic places transferred to National Parks Administration are Lower Fort Garry in Manitoba, Fort Battleford in Saskatchewan, and the Citadel at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

4.—Location, Year Established, Area and Characteristics of National Parks

Park	Location	Year Established	Area	Characteristics
<p>Scenic and Recreational Parks</p> <p>Banff.....</p>	<p>Western Alberta, on east slope of Rockies.</p>	<p>1885</p>	<p>sq. miles</p> <p>2,564.0</p>	<p>Magnificent scenic recreational area; noted resorts, Banff and Lake Louise. Mineral hot springs; summer and winter sports. Accessible by rail, highway and air. Hotel and bungalow cabin accommodation. Equipped camp-grounds.</p>