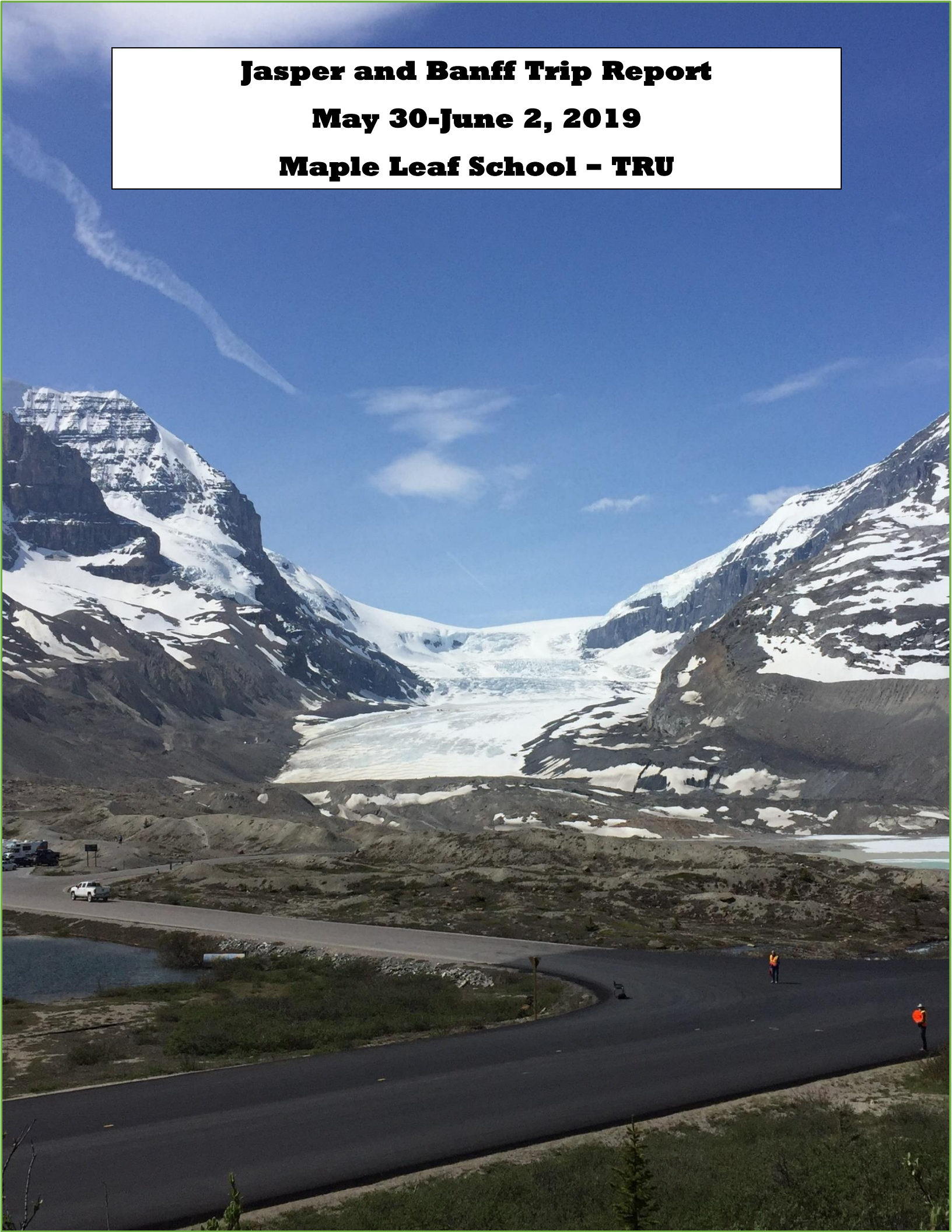


Jasper and Banff Trip Report

May 30-June 2, 2019

Maple Leaf School - TRU



Maple Leaf School – TRU took 10 students on a trip to Jasper and Banff from May 30 to June 2, 2019. We left Kamloops at 4:10 pm on May 30 and drove the 5 hours to Jasper. This is a beautiful drive and the weather was perfect. Along the way we took in the beautiful scenery and saw a coyote, a mule deer, a beaver, and 3 black bears. We also stopped for food and washroom breaks in Clearwater and Valemount. We also stopped for a photo at the Mt. Robson sign.



After 11pm Alberta time, we arrived at the hostel near Athabasca Falls, our accommodations for the next two nights. The HI Canada Hostel at Athabasca Falls is an affordable accommodation with a great location from which to see the sights around Jasper. It is 25 minutes south of Jasper and right across the road from Athabasca Falls. We rented one of the larger cabins that can sleep 16 people. There is a great indoor space with a kitchen, wash up area, games table, etc... The cabins are heated and have bunk beds with linen provided. We fell asleep shortly after arriving.



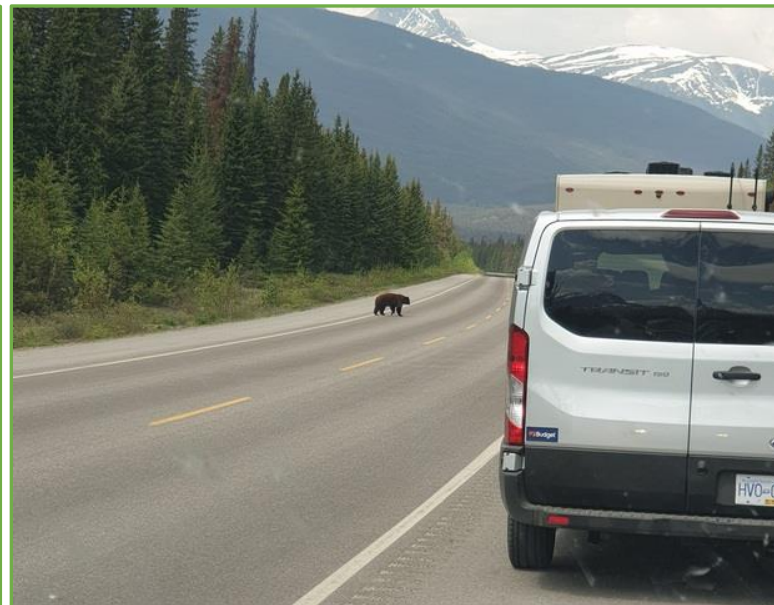
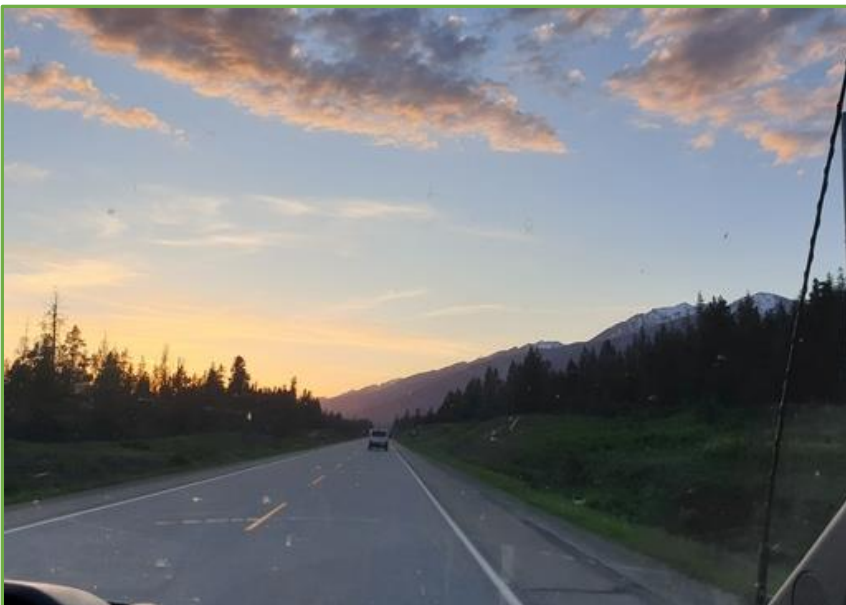
HI Athabasca Falls Wilderness Hostel

The next morning we drove to Jasper for breakfast seeing one elk on the way there and 1 on the way back. After breakfast there was free time to look around in the tourist shops and see the small downtown area. We then drove back to our hostel with a stop at Athabasca Falls on the

way. The Athabasca River was near flood stage with the recent warm weather which made the falls seem more loud and powerful than other times of the year. Our next activity was a trip up the Jasper Skytram so we had a quick stop at our hostel to change into alpine appropriate clothing. On the way to the Skytram we passed a very light coloured Black Bear along the road.

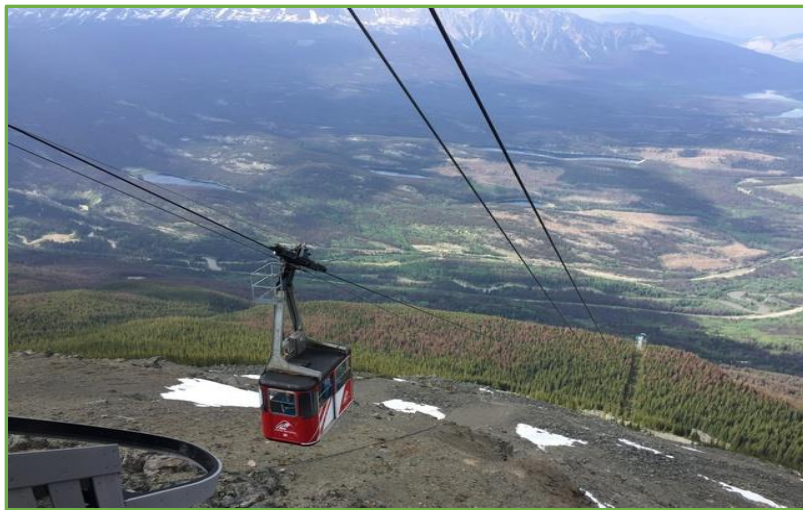


Athabasca Falls



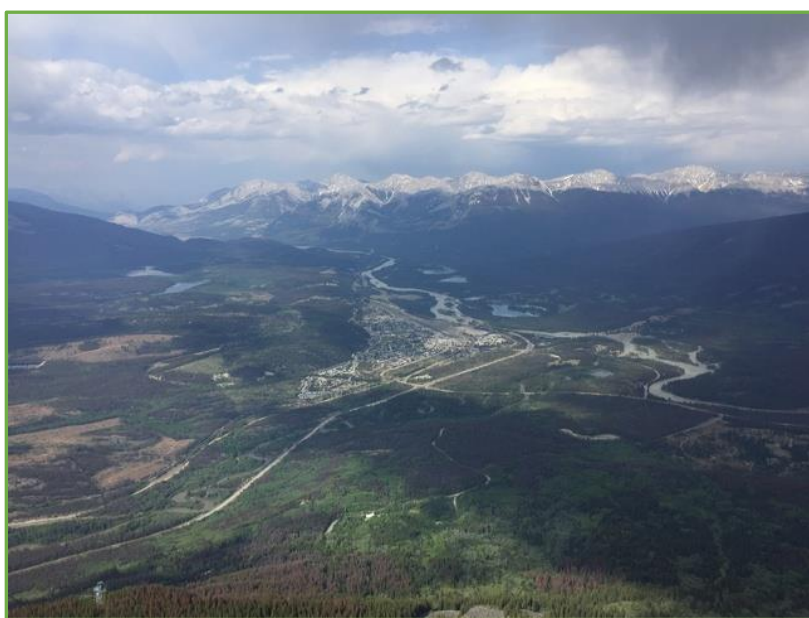
The Jasper Skytram provides people with a short ride up to an alpine area on the top of Whistlers Mountain. The views from the top are outstanding in all directions. There is a short clearly

marked hike from the top of the skytram to the peak. We were able to stretch our legs in this area for a couple of hours before our scheduled dinner at the restaurant at the top at 4:30. We saw 2-3 Golden Mantled Ground Squirrel, a couple Columbian Ground Squirrels, and 2 Hoary Marmots in this area. Alpine birds seen included Gray-crowned Rosy finches, American Pipits, Horned Larks, and 3 White-tailed Ptarmigan.



The Jasper Skytram





White-tailed Ptarmigan, Horned Lark, the restaurant at the top, and the view of Jasper from Whistlers Mountain.

Our hike was followed by a choice of Elk, Salmon, or Gnocchi in the restaurant at the top of the skytram. This restaurant features mountain top views of the valley below. After our skytram experience, we drove back to Jasper to get campfire supplies. We then split into two vehicles with one group heading back to the hostel to have a rest and prepare for a fire and the other going on a dusk wildlife drive. The wildlife drive produced one more Black Bear, 1 Grizzly Bear, and 3 more Elk.





Grizzly Bear

The campfire at the hostel was enjoyed later that evening with marshmallows, sausages, and chunks of beef over the fire. Sleep came easy after another action filled day.



Campfire



Games inside the main cabin

The following morning we drove to Jasper again for breakfast. We then said our goodbyes to Jasper and headed south on the Icefield Parkway towards Banff. Several stops were made at scenic places before arriving at the Icefields Discovery Centre. We had prearranged to go on the skywalk and glaciers tours. The Skywalk is a glass bottomed walking experience situated 280 m over the glacial valley below. A Mountain Goat was seen from the Skywalk as well.



The glass part of the Skywalk



Mountain Goat



The Glacier tour involves riding out onto the Athabasca Glacier on Ice Explorers which are busses with huge tires. Tourists are given 30 minutes to be out of the explorers and experience the glacier. The Athabasca Glacier viewed from the discovery centre below.





Photos from on the Athabasca Glacier

After both experiences and lunch at the discovery centre, we continued south through the gorgeous scenery between there and Banff. Once at the end of the parkway near Lake Louise, we turned east towards Banff. Our accommodation for our last night was the Banff Park Lodge located right in the heart of Banff.

We were on the road again by 8:00 the next morning. We stopped at Lake Louise for an hour on the way back to Kamloops. The rest of the ride was rather uneventful other than seeing another Black Bear in Glacier National Park and stops in Golden, Revelstoke, and Sorrento for food and washroom breaks. We arrived in Kamloops at 4:00 pm.

Trip Mammal List:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Black Bear – 7 | 7. Elk – 3 | 13. Yellow-pine Chipmunk – 2 |
| 2. Grizzly Bear – 1 | 8. Mountain Goat – 1 | 14. Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel – 3 |
| 3. Coyote – 2 | 9. Bighorn Sheep – 22 | 15. Columbian Ground Squirrel – 2 |
| 4. Beaver – 1 | 10. Snowshoe Hare – 1 | |
| 5. White-tailed Deer – 6 | 11. Red Squirrel – 2 | |
| 6. Mule Deer – 1 | 12. Hoary Marmot – 2 | |

Favourite moments on the trip:

Grace – seeing the Grizzly Bear

Lauren – Seeing Lake Louise

Jax – The Jasper Skytram

Arshia – Being at Lake Louise

Stella – Seeing the beautiful glacier and mountain goat.

Josh – Beating Mr. Beeke in an arm wrestle (before he had breakfast)

Davina – Being on the top of Whistlers Mountain

Ann – On the Athabasca Glacier

Charlie – walking by Lake Louise

Vivi – Seeing wildlife in Jasper



One thing I learned on the trip:

Grace – Grizzly Bears have a hump on their back and Black Bears do not. Josh – Banff is a very expensive place.

Lauren – Ptarmigan have no land predators, so they are not afraid of people.

Jax – Extreme weather can create dangerous situations for tourists! Ann – Snow can change to ice and change colour.

Davina – Never give your water bottle to someone else.

Stella – The difference between Grizzly and Black Bears.

Arshia – The structure of water can change by pressure.

Charlie – You can wear a T-shirt on a glacier.

Vivi – Ptarmigan change the colour of their feathers when the seasons change.

