



La Rumeur

Vaudreuil-Soulanges Green Corridor Toward a **GREENER** forest



Landowner's Newsletter

Vol.17—March 2015

The La Rumeur newsletter : project news and informative articles to learn more about nature.

Enjoy!

The Green Corridor team



Potential habitat (marsh) for Least Bittern visited in 2014. Les Cèdres © NAQ

Thanks to committed land owners !

To mark the first five years of the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Green Corridor project, our team and MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges wanted to highlight the landowners commitment to protect their natural environment.



The 13 committed owners present at the special evening, with Mr. Jean A. Lalonde, prefect of MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges, Alexandra Lemieux of the MRC and Geneviève and Florence from the Green Corridor team.

A special evening event took place on January 14th. The MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges presented the results of its *Trees and woodlands policy* which aims at stimulating regional initiatives in terms of enhancement of natural heritage and environment. The accomplishments of the first years of the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Green Corridor project have also been presented.

Between 2009 and 2013, as many as 66 landowners committed themselves, through the signing of a statement of intent based on the honor system, to ensure the integrity of natural environment present on their land. Through their efforts, nearly 1200 hectares (12 km²) of natural areas were protected by voluntary conservation.

This event was made possible with financial support from the government of Canada through the federal Department of the Environment, the Fondation de la faune du Québec and its partner Wildlife Habitat Canada and the MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

Protection and restoration of natural areas in Vaudreuil-Soulanges: The community paves the way!

This project spanned from spring 2013 to March 31th, 2015. It allowed the realisation of many activities on Mont Rigaud. Following are some results:

We raised awareness of 22 landowners about the conservation of their property's natural areas, by presenting them with personalized handbooks.



Students were able to take part in **guided walks** and a **permanent geocache** was created on L'escapade du Mont Rigaud trails. These activities have permitted, among other things, to teach people about best practices to be adopted while hiking.

Two community plantings were organized (mentioned in the December newsletter), in addition to building 10 **animal shelters** and installing 15 **nesting boxes** on Nature-Action's land on Mont Rigaud.

Nearly 40 nesting boxes have also been given to landowners in the area, to be installed on their property.

This project was made possible with the financial support from the government of Canada through the federal Department of the Environment, the MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges and many other partners.



Report of our 2014 season

Survey of private lands

All projects combined, we visited and surveyed 35 properties looking for interesting biological elements (animals, wetlands, etc.). In total, our team covered nearly 440 hectares (4.4 km²) of natural areas and compiled information in personalized handbooks presented to landowners.

Birds surveys

In the Spring of 2014, our team conducted several bird surveys to find species at risk. Potential nesting habitats for Least Bittern, Chimney Swift, Eastern Whip-poor-will and Common Nighthawk were visited. Unfortunately, our surveys were unsuccessful. If you happen to see one of these species in your area, please contact us! Later in the summer, some Chimney Swifts were seen in Vaudreuil-Dorion and Sainte-Justine-de-Newton. Bobolinks have also been spotted in Notre-Dame-de-l'Île-Perrot.



Swamp visited in 2014, Rigaud © NAQ

Exceptional forested ecosystem

Our team was also mandated to collect data in order to validate the presence of four rare exceptional forested ecosystems (EFE) in the region. A rare forested ecosystem is a forestry unit not often seen in a region.

What threatens the Bobolinks?

The Bobolink is a threatened¹ species in Canada. In the last 40 years, a 88% drop of its Canadian population was observed. The drop of Bobolinks population is mainly caused by:

- **Habitat loss:** hayfields are becoming increasingly rare because of changes in agricultural practices.

How to help?

If you have a hayfield or a long grass meadow it is important to preserve it. This type of habitat is essential to Bobolinks, and to other birds like the Eastern Bluebird.



Bobolink couple (male to the left and female to the right).

- **Mortality among**

hatchlings: Bobolinks build their nests directly on the ground in tall grass. When a field is mowed before the young Bobolink chicks learn to fly, they have little or no chance to survive.

How to help?

It is possible to prevent the mortality caused by farm machinery by delaying mowing your field until mid-July, after the young birds have learned to fly.

¹ A wildlife species that is likely to become endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.

Raising Boaters Awareness

We were present at the **Montreal Boat and Water Sports Show** last February. There, we were able to raise awareness of nearly 350 recreational boaters about the presence of the Northern Map Turtle in water bodies of the Montreal region; among them the Lac des Deux-Montagnes.

The Northern Map turtle, a species of special concern in Canada, lives mainly in the water and is at risk of being hurt by boat propellers.



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For more information, contact us !

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This newsletter was made possible with the financial support from the government of Canada through the federal Department of the Environment and the MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

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