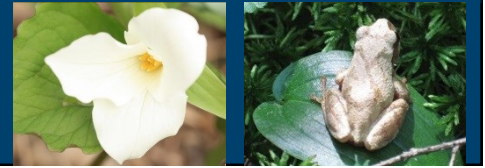


## Vaudreuil-Soulanges Green Corridor

### Toward a **GREENER** forest



Landowner's Newsletter

Vol.20 – November 2016

This newsletter offers insights into the project and informative articles to learn more about the Vaudreuil-Soulanges natural areas. Enjoy!

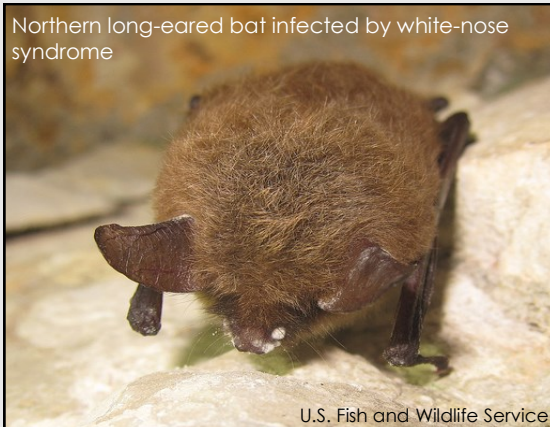
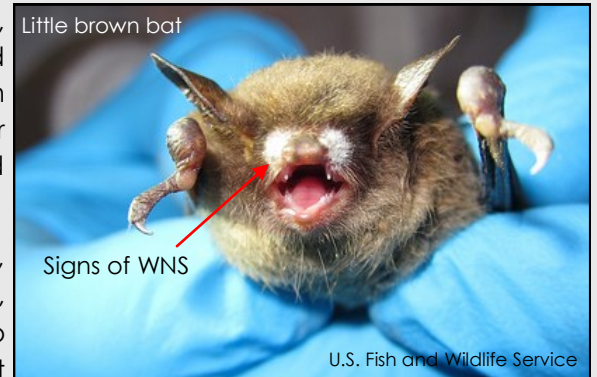
*The Green Corridor team*

### Bats in decline

Québec is home to eight species of bat. Five of these (little brown bat, northern long-eared bat, eastern small-footed bat, big brown bat, and tri-coloured bat) are year-round residents and spend the winter in enclosed spaces (called "hibernacula") such as abandoned mines or natural caves. The three other species (eastern red bat, hoary bat, and silver-haired bat) are migratory and spend the winter farther south.

While all of Québec's bat species face various threats (e.g., habitat loss, development of wind farms), resident species are also threatened by a fungus that causes an infection called **white-nose syndrome** (WNS). The fungus infects the muzzles, wings, and ears of bats, and during hibernation, WNS disturbs the bats enough to make them wake up more frequently than normal. Since a single awakening consumes as much energy as is conserved in 30 to 60 days of hibernation, repeated awakenings due to WNS cause the bats to become dehydrated and expend fat reserves accumulated over the summer. Fewer of them thus survive the winter.

**WNS has caused a very rapid decline in bat populations.** For example, after two years of infection, some bat populations have declined by up to 94 percent. WNS is spreading at blinding speed!



### Three bat species are on the list of wildlife species at risk in Canada since 2014 :

- Little brown bat.
- Northern long-eared bat.
- Eastern pipistrelle.

### Why protect bats?

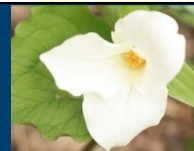
Small and generally unloved flying mammals, bats nevertheless play a vital role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Insect hunters par excellence, they are extremely valuable in controlling insect populations. Every night, a single bat can eat its weight in insects (mayflies, flies, and moths). Their presence near farm fields can help reduce pesticide use.

Depending on the species, bats may also utilize different types of habitats, such as riverbanks and wetlands. More specifically, they live in caves, large snags (standing dead trees), or buildings. They always choose shelter near a body of water.

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### How to help bats

- **If you know of any, share the location of shelters used by bats** using the interactive map at the site [www.batwatch.ca](http://www.batwatch.ca).
- **Never visit non-commercial caves** likely to be used as hibernation sites.
- **As long as they don't pose a danger, preserve old buildings and large snags (dead standing trees)**, which bats may use as shelter.
- **Install bat houses.** Caution: a number of conditions must be met before a bat house will be effective; learn more before installing one.



## Nature reserves on private land

The nature reserve on private land (NRPL) is a legal agreement under which the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and the Fight against Climate Change recognizes the commitment of land owners who decide to restrict certain activities on their property or a portion thereof in order to conserve its natural features. The NRPL is possible thanks to a provision under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* aimed at giving land owners a tool to protect the ecosystems, species, or landscapes on their properties. Recognition as an NRPL occurs through a notarized statement attached to the property's deed, making it binding upon subsequent owners. **The NRPL is a means of protecting a natural environment for future generations while continuing to own the property.**

### Benefits:

- Become a leader in the conservation of natural areas.
- Retain ownership and preserve family heritage.
- Benefit from certain tax advantages (reduction/exemption of municipal and school taxes).
- Protect the property from development.
- Create a snowball effect in the community.

For more information, visit the website:

[www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversite/prive/depliant-en.htm](http://www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversite/prive/depliant-en.htm) or contact us ([corridorvert@nature-action.qc.ca](mailto:corridorvert@nature-action.qc.ca)). The experts at Nature-Action Québec can guide you through all the steps involved in having your property recognized as an NRPL.

## Sunning sites for the northern map turtle

In October, the green corridor team **installed five sunning sites for the northern map turtle** in Jack Layton Park and Sandy Beach Nature Park in Hudson. Made from blocks of wood tied together and anchored, these structures are used as rest areas for the turtles, which need a source of external heat to maintain their body temperature. Regular exposure to the sun also helps them rid themselves of algae and parasites. These new sites will thus definitely be beneficial for the turtles.

We thank the Town of Hudson for its collaboration and assistance!

Our work to improve the habitat of the northern map turtle was made possible thanks to funding from the Government of Canada, the Fondation de la Faune du Québec, and the MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges.



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## Open house at Le Nichoir



© Le Nichoir

On July 30, the green corridor team operated a kiosk as part of the open house at the wild bird conservation centre Le Nichoir. Over one hundred citizens from the region learned about the northern map turtle in Lake of Two Mountains and about best practices for protecting this species.

Our work to protect the northern map turtle was made possible thanks to funding from the Government of Canada, the Fondation de la Faune du Québec, and the MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

**For more information, contact us !**

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