



Vaudreuil-Soulanges Green Corridor

Toward a **GREENER** forest



Landowner's Newsletter

Vol.21 – February 2017

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 – myths and realities

Even today, bats are poorly understood creatures who suffer from many misconceptions. They are in fact harmless and quite necessary for ecosystem balance. Let's lay some of these myths to rest and get to know these fascinating animals a little better.

“They feed on blood”

Only three bat species in the world feed on blood, and they all live in tropical areas of South America. Most bat species, including those that live in Québec, feed on insects. In a single night, one bat can eat the equivalent of its own weight in insects. That adds up to hundreds of bugs!

“Bats get tangled up in people's hair”

This old wives' tale was once used to discourage young girls from going out at night. However, bats' system of echolocation is so accurate that they can detect a human hair while flying at 30 km/h. So you don't have to worry about your hairdo, even if you're surrounded by insects!

Did you know that the little brown bat can live up to 34 years? This is exceptional longevity for such a small animal.

Eastern pipistrelle



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A bat's heart rate can range from 400 to 1000 beats per minute when active. During hibernation, it decreases to 25 beats per minute. By comparison, the average human heart rate ranges from 60 to 100 beats per minute.

“Bats carry rabies”

Less than 1 percent of bats are infected by the rabies virus. The most frequently observed sign of an infected bat is paralyzed limbs. So a bat found on the ground has a greater chance of being infected. Because rabies is a fatal illness, be careful to never touch a dead bat. Trying to catch a live bat is also not recommended. They are wild animals and may try to bite to defend themselves.

In case of physical contact, bites, or scratches from a bat, wash the wound immediately with soap and water for at least 15 minutes and contact Info-Santé quickly by dialling 811.

“Bats are blind”

Contrary to popular belief, bats have excellent vision, but because they are nocturnal, they also use echolocation to find their way and hunt prey. They do this by emitting ultrasonic waves that bounce off surrounding features. The bats' brains analyze the waves that bounce back, providing a highly accurate mental image of the environment, including the direction, distance, size, and even the texture of an insect.

“Bats are flying mice”

Though the name for bat in several languages refers to mice (e.g., *chauve-souris* in French, *Fledermaus* in German), bats are not rodents like mice but are from the order Chiroptera, a word that means “wing-shaped hand.”

If you see a bat flying in winter, a dead bat, or if you find a bat in your home, do not touch it. We urge you to instead contact the **customer service department of the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs at 1-877-346-6763**, to get instructions on what to do. In certain cases, bats may be taken to a temporary winter refuge or the Granby Zoo.



Thank you for protecting natural areas

On February 4, we paid tribute to the engagement of property owners who had signed a declaration of intention to conserve natural areas. At a breakfast event, participating property owners attended an interactive presentation by the Ecomuseum Zoo on the wildlife of the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region, in particular the amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds likely to be found on their properties. They got a chance to see and even touch living animals and learn more about the yellow spotted salamander, the northern map turtle, the eastern milk snake, the American marten, and the Great Horned Owl. The Green Corridor team also talked about various project activities and presented each owner with a gift basket containing items from a local producer.

This acknowledgement activity was made possible by funding from the Government of Canada, the Fondation de la Faune du Québec and its partner Wildlife Habitat Canada, and the RCM of Vaudreuil-Soulanges.



Great Horned Owl

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Yellow-spotted salamander

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Boat and watersports show

From February 3 to 5, the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Green Corridor team was present at the Montreal Boat and Watersports Show. In partnership with the Quebec Marine Association, it operated a booth for the Lake of Two Mountains nautical station, raising awareness among over 525 boaters of the ecological wealth of this body of water, and in particular about the presence of the northern map turtle, a vulnerable species in Québec. A map of the lake identifying sensitive areas and various other information resources were handed out to boaters.



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Lake of Two Mountains

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Our actions to protect the northern map turtle were carried out with funding from the Government of Canada, the Fondation de la Faune du Québec, and the RCM of Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

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For more information, contact us !

corridorvert@nature-action.qc.ca

Geneviève Gervais, Biologist
450-536-0422, extension 422

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