



ACRE NEWSLETTER

August 2025



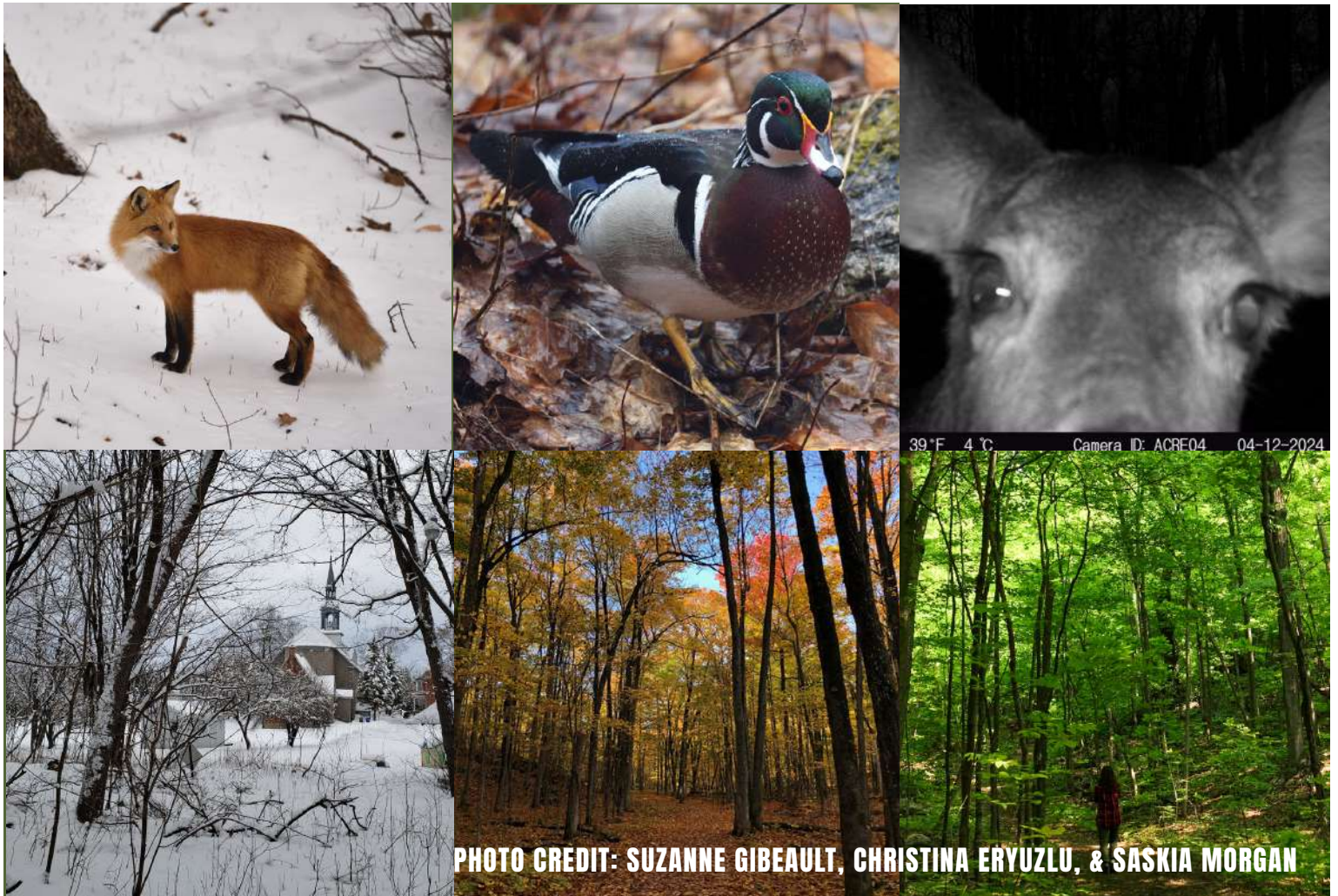
PHOTO COURTESY: MICHEL LEGER

THIS SUMMER, WE'RE RALLYING TO PROTECT THE HEART OF CHELSEA!

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This summer, we are thrilled to be working alongside St. Stephen's Parish and the Chelsea community to protect 70.9 acres of beloved forest behind St. Stephen's Church. This forest, located in the heart of Chelsea, is both ecologically and historically significant. It provides critical connectivity between Gatineau Park and the Gatineau River, supports wetland ecosystems, and offers refuge to several species at risk. Forests like this help define Chelsea's character as a community deeply committed to coexisting with nature. Protecting St. Stephen's Forest is not only about safeguarding biodiversity—it's also about preserving a cherished space and investing in your property value.

Thank you to everyone who has supported—and continues to support—this project. It's thanks to this extraordinary community support that we're able to make projects like this possible. **We've almost done what many said was impossible... 1% away from reaching the goal! To learn more or to make a pledge, visit our website: acrechelsea.qc.ca**



FEATURED PROJECTS & INITIATIVES



➤➤➤ POLLINATOR HABITAT RESTORATION IN THE HUNDRED ACRE WOOD

The goal of the project—made possible by the financial support of the Canadian Wildlife Federation and the Green Fund of the Municipality of La Pêche—is to restore pollinator habitat on approximately three acres in the Hundred Acre Wood. In May, over twenty volunteers helped plant 700 native wildflowers to enhance the pollinator habitat there. We will install an interpretive sign and monitor the success of these efforts over the long term.



➤➤➤ POLLINATOR HABITAT RESTORATION AT PLACE ECO RUBIN

The strategy to restore pollinator habitat at Place Eco Rubin differs from the approach at Hundred Acre Wood, due to lower plant diversity and the presence of invasive pampas grass. With support from the Canadian Wildlife Federation, the site has been ploughed and oats—used as a cover crop—were planted twice this season. A final ploughing is planned for September, followed by the manual seeding of native wildflowers.



➤➤➤ ECOLOGICAL MONITORING PROJECTS

We're very fortunate to once again borrow fixed bat recorders from the National Capital Commission (Gatineau Park) this year. The devices have already been installed at a height of 3 metres across five different sites for 10 nights at each site, resulting in a large volume of data that will be processed in the fall and winter. We're also continuing data collection through camera trap surveys. The most recent surveys include sites in the Brink Forest, Forêt aux Étangs, and Place Éco Rubin.

Photos (from top to bottom): Stephen Woodley and Linda at the Hundred Acre Wood; oats planted as a cover crop at Place Eco Rubin; and our Program Coordinator Saskia Morgan with a bat recorder.



FEATURED PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

>>> SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM

We are so happy to have carried out an educational program with the Club Cascades and Centre Meredith summer camps, and we had so much fun doing it! ♥ We buzzed into the world of pollinators with Pollination Tag! We loved exploring colour and texture with native wildflowers and leaves. Laughter filled the air as we played picture charades and acting games using words like monarch, acorn, and cattail—learning about local wildlife, forests, rivers, and even plastic reduction along the way. Thank you to all the campers for their energy and big smiles!



>>> BAT HOUSE CONSTRUCTION AND INSTALLATION

As part of Chelsea Days, 12 community members participated in a workshop where eight BCI 4-chamber bat nurseries were built. Creating the right microclimate is vital for bats' survival, especially given threats like white-nose syndrome. Four bat houses have already been installed in the Jolicoeur-McMartin and Dionne-Wilson Forests. Since installation requires significant height, creative solutions were used. The remaining four nurseries will be installed by year's end, and monitoring will continue.



>>> NATURE WALKS

We're excited to share that since April, we've hosted four expert-led nature walks through our conservation properties. The next walk will take place in Stephen's Forest on August 10 (rain date: August 16). One more walk is planned before the end of the year. Register on our website before spots fill up:

<https://acrechelsea.qc.ca/en/events>

All projects on this page are funded by the Government of Canada through the New Horizons for Seniors Program.



Photos (from top to bottom): Kids creating; bat house construction on Chelsea Days; and participants of a bird walk with their binoculars (photo courtesy: Michel Leger).



FEATURED PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

➤➤➤ PLASTIC-FREE TEA PARTY

On June 7th, ACRE and the plastics working group hosted a Plastic-Free Tea Party to create a space for dialogue, resource-sharing, and collective learning about everyday strategies to reduce single-use plastics. Community members shared their best tips for avoiding plastic. From homemade salad dressings to reusable produce bags, these simple changes make a big impact. The project partners are Nearly New and recyclewarriorgrl.ca. Funding for the event was provided by the Municipality of Chelsea.



➤➤➤ LIGHT POLLUTION PROJECT

We have recently purchased a light meter and, in consultation with renowned light pollution expert Robert Dick, developed a detailed protocol for measuring light pollution. Initial measurements have already been taken, and additional readings will be collected on moonless nights later this year. The initiative is funded by the Green Fund of the Municipality of Chelsea.

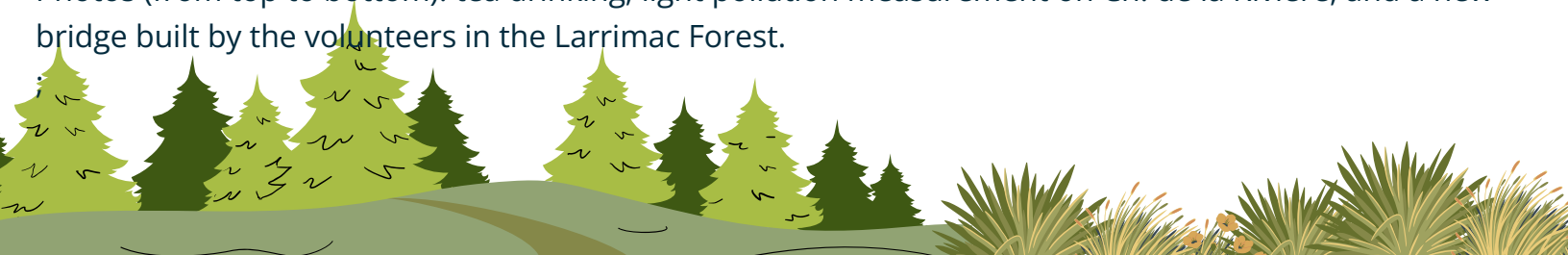


➤➤➤ TRAIL WORK

A lot of work has been done on the trails by our incredible volunteers. The bridge pictured to the left was built by the Larrimac Forest Stewards and other dedicated volunteers to replace a previous beaver dam crossing. Improving trails in wetland areas helps reduce disturbances to these sensitive ecosystems. These enhancements allow us to enjoy the natural beauty of the wetlands and surrounding landscapes while minimizing their environmental footprint. A big thank you to the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for funding this important project!



Photos (from top to bottom): tea drinking; light pollution measurement on Ch. de la Rivière, and a new bridge built by the volunteers in the Larrimac Forest.



A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO

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FUNDERS AND PARTNERS



TD Friends of the
Environment Foundation



ENVIRO LAC GAUVREAU

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All of our donors

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We want to take a moment to thank all of you who are making stewardship possible. Whether you're serving on the Stewardship Committees, helping with numerous programs, or joining us for hands-on work, your commitment is driving real impact. This summer, volunteers have been upgrading trails, planting wildflowers, fundraising for the St. Stephen's Forest Project, and doing much more. Your energy, insight, and care are the heart of this work. We're deeply grateful for all that you do!

OUR SUMMER STUDENT



We were very lucky to work with Saskia Morgan as our Program Coordinator this summer! Saskia previously worked in wetland research and management, hydrological fieldwork, and climate vulnerability and adaptation research. Raised in Wakefield, she is grateful to have contributed to protecting the landscapes she grew up in and loves. This project is made possible with help from the Government of Canada and the Municipality of Chelsea's Green Fund.