

Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard Nature Park

The activities presented in this circuit, along with the Montréal Urban BioKit, allow you to explore biodiversity in the Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard Nature Park. The locations of sites of interest are identified by a short description, a symbol on the map, and GPS coordinates. Complementary information is hidden in a Geocache, which is a small container concealed near the GPS coordinates indicated. See what wonderful treasures you can uncover!

A forest for lunch

GPS: N 45° 30.813' W 73° 53.429'

At the beginning of the long swamp boardwalk

Wetlands are among the places with the richest biodiversity. They also filter water, removing 90% of the pollutants. You're in luck, because you're standing in front of one of the finest wetlands in Montréal's large parks! A beaver dam maintains the water level. The beavers are sterilized to control their population and, accordingly, their impact on the park. It is important to do this, because an adult cuts down a little more than 200 trees a year to feed itself and maintain its dam!



Photo: Ville de Montréal



Photo: Ville de Montréal



Photo: Ville de Montréal



Photo: Bibliothèque et Archives Canada/C-003861

HISTORY OF THE PARK



GPS: N 45° 31.036' W 73° 54.114'
At the lookout in the Pointe-aux-Carières sector

One of the means used to transport timber in the 19th century was to fasten many logs together to form large rafts that floated down the rivers to the sawmills. The men who steered the rafts were known as raftsmen. You are standing in front of the place where they stopped to take the rafts apart so that the logs could go through the Lalemant Rapids, a little farther downstream on your right.

There are still metal rings on this site used by the raftsmen to attach their rafts.



Do you want to see them? Look by the water's edge... or find the Geocache to obtain their precise position!
GPS: N 45° 31.025' W 73° 54.135'

Philémon Wright steering his first timber raft. 1806/C. W. Jefferys



Citizen Science:

The beaver dam water level varies with the seasons and constantly alters this environment. **Observe the water level on the water level gauge.**
Send us your observations: observationscitoyennes@ville.montreal.qc.ca

RAPTORS ON THE ALERT



GPS: N 45° 30.502' W 73° 53.008'

Where the paths meet at the centre of the park

Two magnificent birds can be seen near the spot where the paths meet. A Great Horned Owl lives there all year round. If you can't see it, you may have a chance to hear it in early evening: hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo!

The Great Gray Owl nests in northern Quebec during the summer and then flies south when winter comes. You can see one here while cross-country skiing, snowshoeing or hiking in your winter boots! Its hearing is so acute that it can hear a small rodent moving under 30 cm of snow. It is Quebec's biggest owl.



Photo: Antonio Rizi

Great Horned Owl



Photo: Antonio Rizi

Great Gray Owl



Photo: iStockphoto

The tree of life



GPS: N 45° 30.724' W 73° 53.154'

In the white cedar forest, just after the long swamp boardwalk

A solid stand of eastern white cedars covers the section of the park located between the two boardwalks. Freshness is all around you! You can appreciate the invigorating fragrance of these coniferous trees all year round. In winter, you'll admire their green colour, contrasting with the snow. In summer, the thick cover created by the white cedars keeps part of the trail in the shade. These trees are also known as also known as arborvitae, meaning tree of life, for their medicinal properties. Few other tree species can grow here, due to the lack of light. Do you see any?

Resources:

- Groupe uni des éducateurs-naturalistes et professionnels en environnement (GUEPE)
guepe.qc.ca
- Ville de Montréal network of large parks
ville.montreal.qc.ca/grandsparcs
- Biosphère
ec.gc.ca/biosphere
- BioKits
ec.gc.ca/biotrousses-biokits