

1

00:00:06,950 --> 00:00:12,531

Hello, I'm Tobi Nussbaum, Chief Executive Officer of the National Capital Commission.

2

00:00:12,571 --> 00:00:15,571

Welcome to Gatineau Park.

3

00:00:15,611 --> 00:00:17,932

I'm here with two colleagues.

4

00:00:17,952 --> 00:00:20,812

Catherine, Rachel, can you introduce yourselves?

5

00:00:20,852 --> 00:00:22,193

Certainly.

6

00:00:22,233 --> 00:00:26,553

Catherine Verreault. I'm the Director of Quebec Urban Lands and Gatineau Park.

7

00:00:26,573 --> 00:00:31,194

I'm Rachel Paquette. I'm a program officer for nature interpretation in Gatineau Park.

8

00:00:31,214 --> 00:00:33,475

Very well, and welcome.

9

00:00:33,495 --> 00:00:36,075

We are here... Where exactly are we, Catherine?

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00:00:36,885 --> 00:00:43,968

We're at the north loop of the Gatineau Parkway, in Gatineau Park, in the Chelsea sector, south sector.

11

00:00:43,988 --> 00:00:49,070

Behind us is a magnificent waterway, the Chelsea creek, and a marsh.

12

00:00:49,090 --> 00:00:50,010

Very good.

13

00:00:50,070 --> 00:00:57,093

And this is a part of our parkways that's reserved for active transportation, isn't that right?

14

00:00:57,420 --> 00:01:10,447

Yes, it's a part of the parkway that's reserved for active transportation at all times, active mobility; so there are no motor vehicles in this section.

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00:01:10,767 --> 00:01:20,092

Yes, and today, we see lots of people walking and also a lot of cyclists; but in winter, it's another story, isn't it?

16

00:01:20,845 --> 00:01:23,046

Yes, in the winter there's cross-country skiing.

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00:01:23,106 --> 00:01:35,152

In fact, the parkways... the 33-km network in the south sector, is closed to vehicles and all other activities, except cross-country skiing.

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00:01:35,172 --> 00:01:40,074

Some areas also have snowshoeing, snow biking or hiking.

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00:01:40,619 --> 00:01:41,880

Very good.

20

00:01:42,360 --> 00:01:48,305

Rachel, I know that there are a lot of species at risk in Gatineau Park.

21

00:01:48,365 --> 00:01:58,393

Can you talk a bit about some of the interesting species here, in the park; ones that are worth noting?

22

00:01:58,433 --> 00:02:06,399

There are... what? Sixty... plants and how many... No! How many exactly? [smiles] Rachel?

23

00:02:06,439 --> 00:02:06,619

Catherine [laughs].

24
00:02:07,560 --> 00:02:16,764
60 animals, and about 90 plants.

25
00:02:16,784 --> 00:02:17,164
Okay.

26
00:02:17,204 --> 00:02:18,785
So, 91 and 58 to be exact.

27
00:02:18,805 --> 00:02:20,505
Okay.

28
00:02:20,565 --> 00:02:25,828
So, who would like to talk a bit about some of the species that might be interesting for our listeners?

29
00:02:26,588 --> 00:02:37,482
I can maybe start by saying is that one of the important things we have to think about, in Gatineau Park – which is a conservation park – is that we really want to prioritize biodiversity.

30
00:02:37,502 --> 00:02:43,345
Diversity makes the park stronger. So the species – plants and animals – complement each other.

31
00:02:43,546 --> 00:02:47,908
Overall, they're going to be healthier if we have more diversity.

32
00:02:48,068 --> 00:02:54,994
If we want to keep those animals healthy – plants, animals – we have to understand that some of them are at risk; some are more vulnerable.

33
00:02:55,054 --> 00:03:04,306
So we have to be a bit more careful and focus on those species to make sure that they have habitats and everything they need to stay healthy.

34
00:03:04,326 --> 00:03:06,909
More specifically, can Catherine maybe talk about some specific species?

35

00:03:07,349 --> 00:03:08,370

Yes, that's interesting.

36

00:03:08,410 --> 00:03:10,711

We have a lot of at-risk species.

37

00:03:10,751 --> 00:03:14,394

Some very interesting species, like the Blanding's turtle.

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00:03:14,434 --> 00:03:16,895

Blanding's turtles are on the move a lot.

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00:03:16,915 --> 00:03:29,263

During their mating season (end of June), we see these turtles near the roadways, where they try to make their nests in the substrate; in other words, a site where the ground is not as hard.

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00:03:29,303 --> 00:03:31,345

So, rocks, small gravel...

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00:03:32,165 --> 00:03:35,086

It's a species that we can pay more particular attention to.

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00:03:35,226 --> 00:03:42,268

They're easily recognizable because their shell is dome-shaped and their neck is bright yellow.

43

00:03:42,308 --> 00:03:43,868

This species is easy to identify.

44

00:03:43,888 --> 00:03:50,030

This species is somewhat representative of Gatineau Park because its population is quite high in the west section of the park.

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00:03:50,630 --> 00:03:59,440

Other, rarer species include the eastern red cedar, which isn't necessarily at risk; but it's the highest concentration in Quebec.

46

00:03:59,450 --> 00:04:03,144

-Eighty percent of eastern red cedar trees are in Gatineau Park.

-Wow!

47

00:04:03,164 --> 00:04:06,407

The other populations are more in the Montreal area.

48

00:04:07,528 --> 00:04:14,491

There are other trees, like the rock elm, black maple, butternut tree, that are at risk.

49

00:04:14,511 --> 00:04:18,652

Several types of snakes are at risk, and also, bats.

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00:04:18,692 --> 00:04:23,374

So... to maintain biodiversity, maintain a variety of habitats like the ones we see here.

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00:04:23,494 --> 00:04:28,156

There are trees. There are forests on the other side. There are creeks. There are marshes.

52

00:04:28,176 --> 00:04:32,558

This enables [the park] to shelter a large diversity of wildlife and plants,

53

00:04:33,358 --> 00:04:37,704

and they find their place.

54

00:04:37,744 --> 00:04:42,470

So we [...], it allows us, over the long term, to protect every species, including all the species at risk.

55

00:04:42,971 --> 00:04:43,651

Very good.

56

00:04:43,711 --> 00:04:47,476

And I imagine that scientific research is being conducted here?

57

00:04:48,309 --> 00:04:55,974

Yes, every year we issue about 40 science research permits. We know the researchers who come here.

58

00:04:55,994 --> 00:04:59,556

We can often direct them to the best spots, depending on what they are studying.

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00:04:59,616 --> 00:05:12,004

Right now, there's a study under way on the parkways, for example, on the effect traffic is having on bird and mammal populations; road mortality.

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00:05:12,024 --> 00:05:17,287

It's an important thing. There are studies currently being done on bats, for example;

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00:05:17,647 --> 00:05:27,013

on monarch butterflies, some pollinators, mussels, fish, snakes.

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00:05:27,053 --> 00:05:28,754

So, it's really diverse.

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00:05:28,794 --> 00:05:31,736

Gatineau Park is like an open-air laboratory.

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00:05:31,776 --> 00:05:33,376

After all, it covers 361 km².

65

00:05:33,417 --> 00:05:39,120

So it allows for many, many research possibilities.

66

00:05:39,643 --> 00:05:40,324

Very good.

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00:05:40,384 --> 00:05:46,810

And I know that people like to see, for example, bears and other animals like that.

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00:05:46,850 --> 00:05:49,393

How many black bears do we have in the park?

69

00:05:50,032 --> 00:05:52,573
There's not a specific number.

70
00:05:52,633 --> 00:05:58,656
We know that the black bear population is really healthy.

71
00:05:58,717 --> 00:06:00,007
Is it 50?

72
00:06:00,017 --> 00:06:02,178
Is it more than that?

73
00:06:02,238 --> 00:06:04,389
Is it more like 200?

74
00:06:04,399 --> 00:06:10,983
We do inventories with Quebec's Department of Natural Resources ... and Wildlife...
Parks [laughs]

75
00:06:11,443 --> 00:06:13,464
and Environment.

76
00:06:13,504 --> 00:06:14,505
[laughs]

77
00:06:14,545 --> 00:06:17,267
Sorry, the name changes frequently.

78
00:06:17,327 --> 00:06:25,673
They can tell us a little bit more about the bear population; about white-tailed
deer populations, too, from year to year.

79
00:06:25,693 --> 00:06:33,958
Bears have a fairly large territory. So, it's both easy and difficult to estimate
the numbers.

80
00:06:34,019 --> 00:06:36,100
We look at signs of their presence.

81

00:06:36,496 --> 00:06:48,402

I think it's important, when we talk about bears... people are scared of them or, strangely enough... either they're very scared of bears or, when they see them, they're not afraid enough; so they stay there, or they approach them.

82

00:06:48,442 --> 00:06:51,044

Part of my role is educational, about what's important to know.

83

00:06:51,084 --> 00:06:54,265

It's really good to know that the population is healthy.

84

00:06:54,305 --> 00:07:01,229

When we know that the bigger mammals are doing well, it's because their habitat is healthy, and then we know that the smaller animals are no doubt doing well, as well.

85

00:07:01,289 --> 00:07:04,671

We like that people know that there are black bears in the park.

86

00:07:04,751 --> 00:07:07,252

We like that they might have a chance to see them.

87

00:07:07,292 --> 00:07:20,737

We can't promise anything, because it's quite rare, but we also want people to react appropriately, so that when they see a bear, the bear – which is in its habitat – also feels safe, and can live there and be healthy. So that people can return with a good story to tell at the end.

88

00:07:20,757 --> 00:07:24,899

So, you quietly back away, and leave the bear its space.

89

00:07:24,919 --> 00:07:26,280

It's pretty simple.

90

00:07:26,300 --> 00:07:27,280

Very good, thank you.

91

00:07:27,340 --> 00:07:31,042

Can we talk a bit about the birds in the park?

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00:07:31,062 --> 00:07:31,842

Who would like to start?

93

00:07:32,517 --> 00:07:35,818

I can just start with the fact that right now we are not hearing many birds singing.

94

00:07:35,878 --> 00:07:37,999

Yes, that's true.

95

00:07:38,019 --> 00:07:49,343

Over a year, we can expect there to be about 230 bird species in the park for a short time period, because they continue going north; some are here to nest and raise their young.

96

00:07:49,353 --> 00:07:50,403

Two hundred and thirty species over a year.

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00:07:50,413 --> 00:07:50,854

Two hundred and thirty?

98

00:07:50,854 --> 00:07:51,294

Two hundred and thirty!

99

00:07:51,304 --> 00:07:52,425

Wow!

100

00:07:52,445 --> 00:07:56,950

But right now, or very soon, we expect that only 30 [species] will stay.

101

00:07:56,990 --> 00:08:04,457

The birds that stay, it's because they're able to stand the cold, stay warm, and find food sources.

102

00:08:04,477 --> 00:08:13,686

The birds that eat insects have left and the very small ones, which cannot withstand the cold, also left a few weeks ago.

103

00:08:15,693 --> 00:08:18,734

As Rachel mentioned, there is a huge diversity of bird species.

104

00:08:18,774 --> 00:08:29,137

We're lucky. Fall is the time when they start to migrate from places like the lookouts and some rocky escarpments, all over the park.

105

00:08:29,197 --> 00:08:35,318

You can sometimes see bird migration. Often, they're birds of prey.

106

00:08:35,339 --> 00:08:38,100

Sometimes it's Canada geese.

107

00:08:38,140 --> 00:08:42,341

One of the birds that's protected in the park is the peregrine falcon.

108

00:08:43,142 --> 00:08:52,015

The peregrine falcon is a small bird of prey, but a really interesting one, because it can reach speeds of up to 300 km/h in a hunting dive.

109

00:08:52,035 --> 00:08:55,740

When it hunts, it reaches those speeds.

110

00:08:55,760 --> 00:08:58,444

We find them mainly on the Eardley Escarpment

111

00:08:59,345 --> 00:09:07,093

because they make their nests up high, on somewhat flat surfaces directly on rock.

112

00:09:07,133 --> 00:09:12,137

It's interesting because we usually say: "A big bird of prey, a big nest."

113

00:09:12,157 --> 00:09:15,240

No. Just a few branches on a rock surface.

114

00:09:15,280 --> 00:09:16,982

So that makes it interesting.

115

00:09:17,022 --> 00:09:19,545

They were at risk. We hadn't seen them

116

00:09:19,605 --> 00:09:21,807

for years in Gatineau Park.

117

00:09:22,808 --> 00:09:28,713

There are several reasons for their decline, in Canada and Quebec, including pesticides.

118

00:09:28,753 --> 00:09:32,156

But more recently, they've returned to the park.

119

00:09:32,196 --> 00:09:35,699

Since the 2000s, we have really been monitoring the population.

120

00:09:35,759 --> 00:09:36,460

So, that's it.

121

00:09:36,480 --> 00:09:38,942

This year, we saw a few individuals.

122

00:09:38,962 --> 00:09:42,726

Last year, there was confirmation of nesting pairs in the park.

123

00:09:43,226 --> 00:09:52,625

Since the 2010s, approximately, we've been seeing a successful return of the peregrine falcon in Gatineau Park, and that's been very satisfying.

124

00:09:53,920 --> 00:09:55,021

I just heard a bird.

125

00:09:55,041 --> 00:09:56,161

A blue jay.

126

00:09:56,201 --> 00:09:58,702

What was it?

127

00:09:58,762 --> 00:10:00,223

I think it's a blue jay.

128

00:10:00,603 --> 00:10:00,904

Me too.

129

00:10:00,984 --> 00:10:01,344

Okay, very good.

130

00:10:01,364 --> 00:10:11,909

Obviously, Gatineau Park is a gem in this region, but along with its popularity, there's work that needs to be done.

131

00:10:11,949 --> 00:10:16,831

I think it's the most visited park in Canada, except for Banff, right?

132

00:10:17,192 --> 00:10:17,432

Yes.

133

00:10:17,512 --> 00:10:19,873

And about how many people come here every year?

134

00:10:20,659 --> 00:10:24,562

More than 2.6 million visits every year.

135

00:10:24,602 --> 00:10:25,303

Wow!

136

00:10:25,343 --> 00:10:35,070

So, after Banff, yes – it's the most visited park. But it's the park that has the most visitors per square kilometre, because it's small compared to Banff.

137

00:10:35,090 --> 00:10:36,091

Very well.

138

00:10:36,151 --> 00:10:48,280

Can you talk a bit about the things we need to be concerned with regarding the tension between recreation and conservation?

139

00:10:50,622 --> 00:11:00,825

What's important to me is providing people with the information they're looking for. What to do, when; so that they also feel safe and like they have some guidance.

140

00:11:00,845 --> 00:11:02,305

They can call the Visitor Centre.

141

00:11:02,345 --> 00:11:07,607

Social media networks are extremely important in helping them plan their outings in Gatineau Park.

142

00:11:08,347 --> 00:11:16,373

If they know what to do, and how to do it safely, everyone wins, because it also respects the conservation ethics that we want [to promote].

143

00:11:16,413 --> 00:11:24,399

By staying on the trails, knowing that it's very busy. It's not as frustrating for them, and for the animals too. Everyone wins.

144

00:11:24,419 --> 00:11:35,007

This type of tension can be gradually lessened with education, with information, so that people realize that there's more and more people in the park.

145

00:11:35,607 --> 00:11:42,611

The story can't be the same as it was 30 years ago, when... there are more people. The tension has increased.

146

00:11:42,651 --> 00:11:51,516

Through education and understanding the importance that the human footprint has on the park.

147

00:11:51,556 --> 00:12:02,843

This is our park. It's everyone's park, but by following some very simple rules, we can create a positive experience in nature – which is important for our own health, as well – by respecting the park's health.

148

00:12:04,445 --> 00:12:05,886

That's what Gatineau Park is all about.

149

00:12:05,927 --> 00:12:09,130

The park's mandate, its primary goal, is conservation.

150

00:12:09,310 --> 00:12:19,420

Of course, experiencing nature and culture is very important for us too, and therefore the visitor experience is very important.

151

00:12:20,100 --> 00:12:31,406

The fact that Gatineau Park (for people who don't know it) is very close to the city of Ottawa, near the Ville de Gatineau, in the cities of Chelsea, Pontiac, La Pêche, means that there are many people close by.

152

00:12:31,446 --> 00:12:33,947

You don't need to drive for two hours to get to the park.

153

00:12:33,987 --> 00:12:55,898

[...] Getting information before coming here, about best practices, but it's also up to us to communicate and up to the people to be able to appreciate all this nature. It makes them also want to protect it and understand why it's so beautiful, how it works, and then to want to respect it for future generations.

154

00:12:55,918 --> 00:13:03,701

I remember, in interpretation, before; in our training, they told us: "The more we know, the more we'll be able to protect."

155

00:13:03,741 --> 00:13:10,003

It's not necessarily knowledge in the sense of knowing the six kinds of frogs and their Latin names, you know...

156

00:13:10,043 --> 00:13:12,844

It's a feeling of belonging. Experiencing something positive.

157

00:13:12,864 --> 00:13:14,785

If you go to the park, people are friendly.

158

00:13:15,265 --> 00:13:17,347

The weather's nice. The trails are well maintained.

159

00:13:17,367 --> 00:13:29,857

All those little things mean that maybe, later, when you're listening to the radio and they talk about the NCC, and then Gatineau Park, you'll say to yourself: "I understand the importance of that, and I'm going to be part of that."

160

00:13:29,877 --> 00:13:35,161

It's not necessarily related to academic knowledge or knowledge of biology.

161

00:13:35,181 --> 00:13:38,464

It's really just experiencing something positive, in a way that can be enjoyed.

162

00:13:39,218 --> 00:13:44,266

It's interesting because I know that there are also many volunteers working in the park.

163

00:13:44,307 --> 00:13:49,094

Can you talk about our program a bit? How many volunteers? What do they do, etc.?

164

00:13:49,104 --> 00:13:50,563

165

00:13:50,573 --> 00:13:55,017

We have hundreds of volunteers who volunteer thousands of hours a year.

166

00:13:55,157 --> 00:14:09,769

Some programs, like trail patrol, have had volunteers for years, in both summer and winter. They patrol our trails to really help people, help guide them, give them information in emergencies, and also to help to provide first aid.

167

00:14:09,809 --> 00:14:18,376

We also have a group of volunteers who work mainly on the trails, helping to groom and maintain the trails in Gatineau Park.

168

00:14:19,256 --> 00:14:35,670

So, it's really interesting. The trail management group that has really looked at all the trails in the park; which ones were most appropriate and which ones were the least appropriate, too, in order to preserve some of the places, close some of the trails, and properly maintain others.

169

00:14:36,190 --> 00:14:41,333

So, it's really the park stewards who work with us on projects like this.

170

00:14:41,353 --> 00:14:47,336

Some of them work more on historical aspects, on cultural aspects; at the Mackenzie King Estate, for example.

171

00:14:47,356 --> 00:14:52,919

We also have the Friends of Gatineau Park who work with us, and who also organize a lot of activities.

172

00:14:52,959 --> 00:15:04,465

For example, activities can include picking invasive plants; removing the invasive plants that threaten biodiversity and species in Gatineau Park.

173

00:15:04,745 --> 00:15:17,630

There are also citizen science activities. If learning about what kinds of frogs, what kinds of birds, what kinds of trees are all around us interests you, then it can be interesting to get involved at that level.

174

00:15:17,690 --> 00:15:28,614

Knowing how science in the park works; accompanying a science researcher who's doing research to help take water samples, for example; that can be really interesting.

175

00:15:28,654 --> 00:15:32,556

It's also a good way to connect with nature.

176

00:15:33,822 --> 00:15:35,803

Very good.

177

00:15:35,843 --> 00:15:43,037

-I know we have a park master plan that was created in...

-January 2021.

178

00:15:43,047 --> 00:15:43,667

Okay!

179

00:15:43,747 --> 00:15:44,367

Exactly.

180

00:15:44,448 --> 00:15:47,489

Right during the pandemic, yes.

181

00:15:47,509 --> 00:15:47,969

That's right.

182

00:15:48,029 --> 00:15:58,334

And I know that there's a direction in the plan, that the park's character changes a bit if we go from the south to the north.

183

00:15:58,374 --> 00:16:01,816

Can you talk a bit about the differences between the sectors in the park?

184

00:16:02,787 --> 00:16:13,017

Basically, in terms of the experience, in the south sector – which is much more accessible – there's a higher trail density; a wider range of activities.

185

00:16:13,057 --> 00:16:15,620

Most activities take place in the south part.

186

00:16:15,640 --> 00:16:23,168

Where we are now is not very far from Meech Lake. The beaches, which are very popular in summer. The parkway network, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails

187

00:16:23,188 --> 00:16:25,310

in winter, too, which are very accessible.

188

00:16:25,790 --> 00:16:33,214

Going north a bit, let's say towards Meech Creek Valley, Philippe Lake, La Pêche Lake – these places are a bit further.

189

00:16:33,254 --> 00:16:36,716

Yes, you have to drive a little further, but you get a different kind of experience.

190

00:16:36,736 --> 00:16:40,158

It's a little wilder there.

191

00:16:40,198 --> 00:16:45,822

Yes, the trails are well maintained, there's clear signage, but you feel like you're further out in nature.

192

00:16:45,842 --> 00:16:57,409

If you are looking for a quieter, more contemplative experience, these are good locations to go to because there are fewer people.

193

00:16:57,429 --> 00:17:05,694

And also, it enables you to experience Gatineau Park differently; a little more of a backcountry experience when you go there.

194

00:17:06,278 --> 00:17:06,538

Very good.

195

00:17:07,239 --> 00:17:09,820

Do you want to add something, Rachel?

196

00:17:09,840 --> 00:17:15,105

Basically, there are fewer people there because the mandate dominates.

197

00:17:15,145 --> 00:17:16,386

The conservation aspect dominates.

198

00:17:16,406 --> 00:17:19,148

So, we're not waiting for it to become more developed.

199

00:17:19,329 --> 00:17:28,696

Those parts of the park will remain the same because we essentially want to have bigger spaces that are less affected by the human footprint.

200

00:17:28,736 --> 00:17:29,077

That's right.

201

00:17:29,117 --> 00:17:37,123

Where we are now, more to the south, "recreational activities" always go along with conservation.

202

00:17:37,143 --> 00:17:41,606

So... we just saw a runner go by, right beside us.

203

00:17:41,646 --> 00:17:47,190

As we move further to the north, conservation becomes more important.

204

00:17:47,230 --> 00:17:49,132

Up to the Eardley Escarpment.

205

00:17:49,939 --> 00:17:55,506

Because I can't not talk about the Eardley Escarpment, which is really our conservation environment.

206

00:17:55,566 --> 00:17:59,311

There are very few recreational activities at the Eardley Escarpment.

207

00:17:59,351 --> 00:18:06,399

A few trails, really, with a minimal footprint; they're not as big, so they offer more of a backcountry experience.

208

00:18:06,439 --> 00:18:09,043

A few climbing walls, which are open...

209

00:18:09,483 --> 00:18:11,104

It's a different experience.

210

00:18:11,144 --> 00:18:14,786

This is where we find the greatest numbers of at-risk species.

211

00:18:14,826 --> 00:18:15,126

Why?

212

00:18:15,146 --> 00:18:19,368

Because the Eardley Escarpment is a cliff, about 3 m high, that faces south.

213

00:18:19,388 --> 00:18:26,052

It creates a microclimate that is much warmer and drier than anywhere else in the park and even anywhere else in the region.

214

00:18:26,072 --> 00:18:27,593

So, we find some species there

215

00:18:28,637 --> 00:18:32,040

that we don't find elsewhere, and that we might find in the American Midwest.

216

00:18:32,081 --> 00:18:43,712

There really are red oak, white oak, oak groves, eastern red cedar (as we mentioned before), and fragrant sumac, Douglas fir.

217

00:18:43,732 --> 00:18:48,677

That makes it a very special type of vegetation.

218

00:18:48,717 --> 00:18:51,900

When you're there, it's like you're in another world.

219

00:18:52,357 --> 00:18:54,538

Hmm! Interesting.

220

00:18:54,578 --> 00:19:01,360

Bottom line: what, in your opinion, are the biggest challenges for the park?

221

00:19:01,420 --> 00:19:09,162

Is there anything... we talked about it being a very, very popular park; there are a lot of people; we have a conservation mandate...

222

00:19:09,202 --> 00:19:13,484

Are there any challenges that we need to start addressing?

223

00:19:13,504 --> 00:19:19,546

Are you thinking, "No, things are going well, there aren't really any big challenges in the future"?

224

00:19:19,586 --> 00:19:20,246

What do you think?

225

00:19:21,875 --> 00:19:26,498

I think that people should gradually understand the mandate.

226

00:19:26,518 --> 00:19:31,162

They need to feel some ownership.

227

00:19:31,222 --> 00:19:33,483

They want to get to the park. They just need to find out how.

228

00:19:33,503 --> 00:19:43,070

I think the challenge will be the same for many more years, but if the message gets through... I think people love nature; they want it to remain

229

00:19:43,630 --> 00:19:46,773

interesting, a natural space that feels good to be in.

230

00:19:47,133 --> 00:19:50,316

I think that's the message... that people need to take home:

231

00:19:50,336 --> 00:19:52,738

"I'm doing this in a conservation park,

232

00:19:52,918 --> 00:19:58,622

and the conservation park is not there to meet all of my recreation expectations."

233

00:19:58,662 --> 00:20:03,066

I think those expectations should be tempered; they have to be realistic.

234

00:20:04,487 --> 00:20:10,694

And with respect to climate change... there are more and more extreme climate events.

235

00:20:10,754 --> 00:20:14,137

We can even see changes in the vegetation.

236

00:20:14,157 --> 00:20:15,919

Before, we were talking about invasive species.

237

00:20:16,159 --> 00:20:20,003

We have to remove certain invasive species that threaten other species.

238

00:20:20,023 --> 00:20:20,904

The climate is changing.

239

00:20:20,944 --> 00:20:24,508

It's going to favour certain species and even insect species are going to come [into the park].

240

00:20:25,008 --> 00:20:30,570

So we have to be ready to help our park, to volunteer, and also to develop a direction.

241

00:20:30,590 --> 00:20:53,200

One of the big challenges is going to be to develop a direction, and then react to the extreme climatic events; to keep our visitors safe; to adapt based on the research done on species, too; and then to be able to have sustainable infrastructure, sustainable trails, bridges, culverts, picnic areas... all of this

242

00:20:54,484 --> 00:20:57,618

to resist the changes that are coming.

243

00:20:58,416 --> 00:21:10,083

Visitors and employees who are involved; a master plan... these help us align our activities, but also what is coming, how to prepare, plan the next steps.

244

00:21:10,363 --> 00:21:11,303

Yes, with the people.

245

00:21:11,343 --> 00:21:16,106

When people help us, basically... people are involved in their activities.

246

00:21:16,146 --> 00:21:20,728

People are often willing to help us with everything that needs to be done.

247

00:21:20,768 --> 00:21:23,850

The stewardship of the park is a shared stewardship.

248

00:21:23,910 --> 00:21:26,692

We want a park that is accessible to everyone. This is very important,

249

00:21:27,132 --> 00:21:32,757

but at the same time, everyone can help out and feel a little concerned with our mandate.

250

00:21:32,777 --> 00:21:38,503

So far, we've talked a lot about different activities in the park, except camping.

251

00:21:38,563 --> 00:21:39,143

That's true!

252

00:21:39,323 --> 00:21:45,449

So, do you want to talk a bit about camping and a little project that we are completing in the park's north sector?

253

00:21:45,958 --> 00:21:47,459

You can sleep in the park.

254

00:21:47,479 --> 00:21:53,181

It's important to know that you have to sleep in the areas made for that, the designated camping areas.

255

00:21:53,221 --> 00:21:56,863

So, we can go canoe-camping in Gatineau Park.

256

00:21:56,943 --> 00:21:59,724

You can head out from the La Pêche Lake beach by canoe.

257

00:21:59,744 --> 00:22:02,625

You can rent the equipment, if you don't have it.

258

00:22:02,685 --> 00:22:06,527

You arrive on some of the shores of that big lake, and then really, it's a camping experience... out in the wild.

259

00:22:07,407 --> 00:22:10,530

It's peaceful – no running water. It's great.

260

00:22:10,570 --> 00:22:25,820

The campsite, at the moment, is undergoing major renovations; but there will also be a campsite with a few hundred sites that you'll be able to reach by car, very accessible; where it's also possible to rent four-season tents, rent yurts, small cottages.

261

00:22:25,900 --> 00:22:27,982

There are really quite a few options,

262

00:22:29,063 --> 00:22:32,366

so you can decide where you're going to sleep and in what kind of site.

263

00:22:32,406 --> 00:22:34,107

But these sites are close to the lakes.

264

00:22:34,127 --> 00:22:38,712

It's a great way to spend time with family or friends, or alone.

265

00:22:38,752 --> 00:22:40,514

But soon... winter is coming.

266

00:22:40,574 --> 00:22:45,598

It's fall, we're in the middle of fall, but winter camping is also possible.

267

00:22:45,639 --> 00:22:51,344

You can camp in tents, sleeping bags, as well as in the yurts, four-season tents and small cottages.

268

00:22:51,384 --> 00:22:52,145

It's popular.

269

00:22:53,266 --> 00:22:59,470

It is very popular in winter, and it will be popular, there's no doubt, with the new campsites opening soon.

270

00:22:59,510 --> 00:23:02,512

We have a campsite renovation project going on now.

271

00:23:02,552 --> 00:23:06,634

We can't wait for it to be finished, and to welcome people.

272

00:23:06,674 --> 00:23:13,639

There are different units, as Rachel said: yurts, four-season tents, what is called "ready-to-camp units."

273

00:23:13,699 --> 00:23:17,682

There will be new, ready-to-camp units, and that will really allow us to welcome visitors

274

00:23:18,322 --> 00:23:24,065

who come with their sleeping bags and food; all the equipment is provided.

275

00:23:24,105 --> 00:23:26,086

It makes our park even more accessible.

276

00:23:26,166 --> 00:23:32,649

There are sites for more traditional camping, in a trailer or a tent.

277

00:23:32,709 --> 00:23:36,551

We're going to have almost 300 sites.

278

00:23:36,591 --> 00:23:38,492

It's a very interesting experience.

279

00:23:38,512 --> 00:23:41,153

It allows people to spend a night in the park.

280

00:23:41,193 --> 00:23:46,756

You can also go winter camping, in a yurt, or you can go winter camping in a tent.

281

00:23:47,633 --> 00:23:50,454

It allows you to get closer to nature.

282

00:23:50,494 --> 00:23:56,415

At the Philippe Lake campground, in summer, there will still be an interpretation program.

283

00:23:56,435 --> 00:24:02,476

The fact that people can spend the night in the park... allows us to experience a different kind of connection,

284

00:24:02,516 --> 00:24:06,076

to find out, sometimes, what happens in a park at night.

285

00:24:06,096 --> 00:24:09,777

Sleeping in a tent is also an interesting experience.

286

00:24:09,797 --> 00:24:17,420

To even hear an owl, a barred owl, a great horned owl. Oh! You wonder what it is! [laughs].

287

00:24:17,460 --> 00:24:22,002

Sometimes it's not reassuring, but on the other hand, it allows us to gain an understanding of nature.

288

00:24:22,022 --> 00:24:24,544

We're really looking forward to welcoming everyone.

289

00:24:24,604 --> 00:24:33,949

There will be a new service pavilion that will become a shelter, that will be open all four seasons; a new convenience store; boat rentals, and then bicycles, all of that.

290

00:24:33,989 --> 00:24:36,630

So, access for everyone.

291

00:24:36,690 --> 00:24:41,553

A really important activity hub, with three beaches there.

292

00:24:42,361 --> 00:24:44,923

So, I know that you are very proud of the park.

293

00:24:44,943 --> 00:24:47,345

I'm also very, very proud.

294

00:24:48,326 --> 00:24:49,407

Any final comments?

295

00:24:49,467 --> 00:24:53,851

Is there anything that we haven't discussed so far that you want to mention?

296

00:24:53,931 --> 00:25:01,157

Something about the park that we didn't talk about this morning, before we stop?

297

00:25:01,197 --> 00:25:01,918

A final comment?

298

00:25:02,942 --> 00:25:09,366

I really encourage people to go and discover places they've never been to.

299

00:25:09,406 --> 00:25:19,952

We often hear about... of course, Pink Lake, the lookouts, Mackenzie King Estate, these are popular. You have to go there. We understand why people go there.

300

00:25:19,992 --> 00:25:32,720

Try somewhere you've never been before, a special trail. Go visit Lusk Cave. Go on a trail you've never been on before; Skyline, Trail 6 or... the Philippe Lake sector.

301

00:25:32,780 --> 00:25:35,703

Go snowshoeing this winter, then go around Philippe Lake on snowshoes.

302

00:25:35,743 --> 00:25:39,767

Stop at one of the rest areas where you can start a fire [in the fire pit].

303

00:25:39,787 --> 00:25:41,790

It gives you another perspective.

304

00:25:41,810 --> 00:25:43,992

It's interesting, too.

305

00:25:44,012 --> 00:25:44,532

Thank you.

306

00:25:44,573 --> 00:25:44,853

[...]

307

00:25:46,263 --> 00:25:51,145

I would say, to feel like the park is a possibility. That you can go there. Anyone can go.

308

00:25:51,185 --> 00:25:56,907

Sometimes, we see big families in the picnic areas who are having a great time.

309

00:25:56,947 --> 00:25:57,827

We biked here, today.

310

00:25:57,847 --> 00:25:58,787

I have an electric bike.

311

00:25:58,807 --> 00:26:01,528

It's possible to go to the Champlain Lookout by electric bike.

312

00:26:01,568 --> 00:26:03,949

You can rent one for the afternoon.

313

00:26:03,969 --> 00:26:05,790

You can do that. It's doable. It's accessible.

314

00:26:05,830 --> 00:26:11,752

You can hike on very flat trails, where you can push a stroller or even a wheelchair.

315

00:26:11,932 --> 00:26:24,941

Feeling that the park is possible, that it can be enjoyable; you feel like you're out in nature, no matter your age or level of physical ability.

316

00:26:24,961 --> 00:26:25,962

Very well.

317

00:26:26,002 --> 00:26:29,805

So with that, thank you, Rachel, thank you, Catherine.

318

00:26:29,825 --> 00:26:33,027

I found this to be an interesting discussion.

319

00:26:33,047 --> 00:26:37,130

That concludes this episode Capital Stories.

320

00:26:37,170 --> 00:26:39,972

Join us for our next episode,

321

00:26:40,577 --> 00:26:48,961

when we talk about successes and challenges, and imagine the National Capital Region's ongoing evolution.

322

00:26:48,981 --> 00:26:50,262

Thank you for listening.