

# News from Appalachian Corridor



WINTER 2020

AVAILABLE ON LINE : [APPALACHIANCORRIDOR.CA](http://APPALACHIANCORRIDOR.CA)



## Let's protect Mount Foster forever: we are almost there!

Last October, Appalachian Corridor launched a fundraising campaign in the population to protect Mount Foster in perpetuity. The saga surrounding Mount Foster has been going on for almost a decade. Initially, the development project proposed the construction of nearly 70 houses; there will now be a maximum of 25. It now focuses on protecting 75% of the territory, i.e. 217 hectares. In addition, the conservation project will restore the public access to the Scouts Tower via a network of trails. Mount Foster's conservation project is a collective effort, allowing the future generations to enjoy and benefit from this exceptional natural area. The project's total cost is \$2.5 M. "We worked really hard to finance this project, we have solicited all possible funding partners. Since the beginning of the fundraising campaign, we raised nearly \$200,000 from the local population. Recently, we also received increased funding from the federal government, which means that to date, we are missing less than \$100,000 to reach our goal: we are almost there!", said Marie-José Auclair, President of the Board of Directors at Appalachian Corridor.

### A SAGA UNFOLDING

From the beginning, the development project raised the ire of citizens as well as Appalachian Corridor, considering the number of houses to be built, the great ecological wealth of the area and strategic location at the heart of the Green Mountain range. After several years of advocacy and negotiation attempts to protect the site, Appalachian Corridor reached an agreement with the current developer in September 2018. Conservation gains are considerable; the most sensitive ecosystems and the rarest species will be almost entirely protected. Of course, Appalachian Corridor would have preferred that this area had been left intact with no real-estate development, but this was not possible. Gail Watt, a West-Bolton citizen, is relieved by the outcome. "I have lived lower down on the South flank of Foster Mountain for over 30 years, and have been walking on the mountain almost every day, long before there were any roads or even a hint of a road or development. With a sinking heart I have watched, little by little, roads materialize, a house going up here and there. What could I do? I didn't own the land. But it will not be true anymore. Today, I'm glad because I can contribute to Appalachian Corridor's conservation project and make sure the mountain will be protected forever. Please join me and make a donation to protect this territory we are privileged enough to live on. Be assured that every donation counts – large or small – and will make a difference! Together, we can give the mountain back to the community."



Mount Foster's protection will benefit everyone.  
Photo Credit: Annie Dugré

### A COLLECTIVE PROJECT

Mount Foster's protection will benefit everyone thanks to its inspiring landscapes, the quality of life it procures and the ecological services it renders. It is a collective project, each and every one is called to participate. West-Bolton and Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton municipalities have been involved since the beginning to ensure it is a win-win situation for nature and citizens. The Mayor, Jacques Drolet, was very happy with the outcome: "I wish to thank the population of West-Bolton supporting this project, it's the end of many years of debate, as well as the developers who agreed to "put water in their wine" in order for this project to reach social acceptance. I also thank Appalachian Corridor for its infallible engagement, its expertise and support throughout. I invite all citizens to contribute generously". Michèle Turcotte, Mayor of Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton, also calls the citizens to action: "In Saint-Étienne, we have always been aiming at protecting our mountains. Since the major part of the future conservation area is located on our territory, I invite you to contribute generously to the fundraising campaign. The conservation project will have a positive impact for Saint-Étienne and the surrounding region since we will have a secured access to Mount Foster and the Scouts Tower. All contributions will make a difference. Together, we can save Mount Foster".

**To make a donation :**  
[appalachiancorridor.ca](http://appalachiancorridor.ca) or 450 297-1145







# A first link to protect the Brome-Shefford natural corridor

IN PARTNESHIP WITH CONSERVATION ESPACE NATURE SHEFFORD



A press conference took place to announce the protection of the CENS-Entre-Monts property

Located in the Brome-Shefford high priority wildlife corridor, this 41 ha newly protected natural area brings to more than 13,500 ha the network protected by Appalachian Corridor and its partners in the Appalachian region of Southern Quebec. “The acquisition of this property by CENS, an affiliate of Appalachian Corridor, will contribute to maintain ecosystem connectivity by protecting forest and wetland habitats located in the heart of the wildlife corridor, allowing the movement of species between the Brome and Shefford Mountains on both sides of Highway 10” explained Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director at Appalachian Corridor. The conservation of this site is a significant step in protecting the natural corridor. Other soon-to-be protected areas will consolidate connectivity in this sector. “We are very pleased with the conclusion of this strategic project, which allows us to protect an exceptional natural area in perpetuity. We hope that the CENS-Entre-Monts protected area is the first of many links in establishing the Brome-Shefford natural corridor, leading to future wildlife habitat management” commented Gérard Lavoie, President of CENS.

## NATURAL AREAS CONNECTIVITY

The CENS-Entre-Monts property is located within a high priority wildlife corridor and is a major contribution to the preservation of the ecological link between two Monteregian hills. "It is essential to ensure the protection of natural environments representative of all the natural regions of Quebec, including southern Quebec, a region with a great biodiversity. Protecting natural corridors and therefore connectivity is also an excellent way to fight climate change. That is why the Government of Quebec is proud to have participated in the acquisition of this new property through the major financial assistance granted to the Nature Conservancy of Canada for the creation of the Ensemble pour la nature project and the Action-Climat Québec program, which promotes civil society involvement in climate action" said Benoit Charette, minister of the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change. Connectivity of wooded areas is an essential measure to adapt to climate change.

# To the rescue of bats!

Several bat surveys were carried out last summer on Appalachian Corridor’s territory of action. However, bats do not shelter in the same places every winter so we looked for places where they could hibernate to protect them. Out of the 8 species of bats in Quebec, 5 will stay here and 3 will migrate south. Our team, headed by Victor Grivegnée-Dumoulin, bat expert, began searching for hibernacula in the area.

At the beginning of the cold season, bats will reduce their vital signs to a minimum. They will spend all winter in the hibernacula. Their body temperature will drop from 36°C to 6°C and their heart rate, from 600 to 25 beats per minute. They will wake up about once a month to drink but will not eat during this time. Hibernacula are often deep caves or old abandoned mines. The temperature must be constant and stay above the freezing point. In addition, a water source must be available nearby.

## VERY HARMFUL DISTURBANCES

Hundreds of bats gather in these hibernacula and they are very sensitive to human disturbance. During winter, every time a bat wakes from its hibernation, it uses up a large part of its fat reserves. White-nose syndrome is a fungus that causes itchiness, which in turn awakens the bats. This needlessly depletes their stored reserves, and they may not survive through the winter.



A volunteer, guided by our experts, visits a cave hoping to spot a hibernacle.

## LET US KNOW

Do you know of a potential location of a bats hibernacula? Please let us know: [biologiste@corridorappalachien.ca](mailto:biologiste@corridorappalachien.ca)

## WARNING!

Avoid entering a hibernacula – human presence is an additional stress for these small mammals. Let's not disrupt their well-deserved sleep!







## Fieldwork to protect warblers



Do you know the Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)? This cute little bird nests exclusively in eastern North America, mainly in the northeastern United States. It is very rare in Canada, found only in southern Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. In Quebec, there could be only between 25 and 75 breeding pairs. The Golden-winged Warbler can be distinguished from many other warbler species by a golden yellow spot on the gray wing. The breast is white in the male and female who are very similar. However, in the male, the bib and the eye contour are black and very visible, while in the female, they are rather gray. To help protect this species, the Appalachian Corridor is working to eradicate European buckthorn, an invasive exotic shrub species, found in the Golden-winged Warbler habitat. By removing the European buckthorn, we ensure that the layer of herbaceous plants essential to the nesting of the species are available. The Golden-winged Warbler inhabits a variety of semi-open environments, with herbaceous plants and shrubs and dotted with trees.

We would like to thank the Fondation de la faune du Québec, which funded this operation to protect the habitat of the warbler and to the landowner for protecting this natural area.



Victor Grivegée-Dumoulin, a biologist, pulls out European buckthorn to protect the warbler's habitat.

## Patrol grows at Mount Singer

Appalachian Corridor warmly thanks the patrol volunteers who ride the trails of Mount Singer summer and winter.

The team has doubled since last year, growing from 6 to 12 volunteers. We are grateful to have this dedicated and dynamic team to ensure the protection of biodiversity and provide a presence on the trails.

The Mount Singer trails are part of the réserve naturelle des Montagnes-Vertes. To learn more or to get involved: [corridorappalachien.ca/singer](http://corridorappalachien.ca/singer)



Part of the patrol meet for a trail cleanup.

## Feeding the birds in winter



Pileated Woodpecker

With the arrival of the cold weather, many bird enthusiasts have put up bird feeders to help birds get through winter. First, we should say that Appalachian Corridor does not encourage this practice. Wildlife can feed themselves without our help. Any human intervention has consequences for the ecosystems. Indeed, feeding birds can create a dependency, and birds may become helpless when

the resource is removed. In addition, in wilder areas, feeders can attract bears or other unwanted mammals near homes. However, we offer some advice to bird lovers who wish to install feeders this winter.

For seeds selection, start with black sunflower that will attract a wide variety of species (blue jay, cardinal, tits ...) as recommended by Go oiseaux! Seed mixtures are usually quickly thrown to the ground and corn mainly attracts black-birds, so it is better to avoid them. Remember that bread is not good for birds; it hinders their digestion.

The thistle feeders will attract Goldfinches and Redpolls, suet feeders will attract Nuthatches and Woodpeckers. A water supply is very useful, but cold temperatures require that we use heated waterers. It is possible to offer hot water twice a day if you want to avoid the purchase of such a device. Be careful to clean the feeders at least once a month to limit the transmission of diseases, such as mycoplasmosis. The shelter Le Nichoir recommends soaking the feeders for 30 minutes in a solution of one-part bleach to 9 parts water. Let it dry completely to limit the risk of seed rot. Be sure to put the feeders in a place inaccessible to cats. In addition, it is important to continue to feed throughout winter, as suddenly stopping can be fatal for birds that have become accustomed to this largesse. From mid-March, it is possible to reduce the pace of feeding. Once you have the routine down pat, the new challenge is to identify your new protégés! An identification guide, a good pair of binoculars and the adventure begins!

References:  
[gooiseaux.ca](http://gooiseaux.ca)  
[lenichoir.org](http://lenichoir.org)







# Honouring our affiliate member: 40 years of nature at Parc d'environnement naturel de Sutton



The Parc d'environnement naturel de Sutton (PENS) has just turned 40 years old. This is a great opportunity to see how much work has been done by a plethora of volunteers and a handful of employees, with the support of a whole community.

In 1979, one really had to be visionary to claim to protect nature by allowing public access to it. A few decades later, in order to maintain the delicate balance between conservation and public access, the PENS, which has since become the main gateway to the réserve naturelle des Montagnes-Vertes, decided to create an environmental education program that promotes an understanding and respect of natural environments.

The PENS hiking trail network is its best outreach tool as well as its main source of funding. Mainly located on the lands of three landowners, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the City of Sutton and Ski Sutton, the network welcomes nearly 50,000 visitors each year, including several thousand young people to whom it offers a unique experience to connect with nature. Primarily funded by the orga-

nization, with recurring support from Appalachian Corridor, the school component of the PENS youth programs is extensive, as is the 4 Summits Summer Day Camp. Its well-deserved success has brought unexpected growing challenges. The support of its faithful friends and partners remains an essential condition of its durability.

Congratulations and long live the PENS!

*The Parc d'environnement naturel de Sutton (PENS) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to protect Sutton's nature by providing well-controlled public access, accompanied by an environmental education program, promoting understanding, respect and conservation.*

*Incorporated at the federal level in 1979, this non-profit organization, independent of all three levels of government, enjoys a charitable status by virtue of its mission, which allows it to accept charitable donations to finance its activities.*

For more information: [www.parc Sutton.com](http://www.parc Sutton.com)



The PENS offers a unique connection to nature for thousands of young people.

## COMING SOON

A second series of conferences on biodiversity will take place in collaboration with the Collectif de Bolton-Ouest. Several dates will be announced in 2020. Watch our website and our Facebook page for details.

**January 18**  
Projection of *Dark Waters* at Cinéma Magog at 3 p.m. by Memphrémagog Conservation inc. Admission: \$8,50  
[admin@memphremagog.org](mailto:admin@memphremagog.org)

**February 13**  
Free projection of *The Biggest Little Farm* by the Fiducie foncière du mont Pinacle  
[Montpinacle.ca/activites](http://Montpinacle.ca/activites)

## WE WERE THERE

**November 28**  
Estrie Conference on Invasive Alien Species

**October 7 to 10**  
Canadian Parks Conference, Quebec

**September 28-29**  
Bolton-Est Nature Days : To soar with birds

**September 24**  
Documentary Screening: *Un monde inaperçu* at the Marais-de-la-Rivière-aux-Cerises Interpretation Center in Magog

Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit organization with a mission to protect the natural habitats and biodiversity of the Appalachians of Southern Quebec, in collaboration with private landowners, local conservation groups as well as regional, national and international partners.

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Visit our website at [appalachiancorridor.ca](http://appalachiancorridor.ca)

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