



Forillon
National Park

Parc national
Forillon



Year in Review 2015



Parks
Canada

Parcs
Canada

Canada

A Year of Accomplishments



In 2015, it was an excellent year at Forillon National Park. As proof, we can point to an upsurge in visitation, new activities, new research and investment projects, new partnerships with community players and citizens, and much more.

The entire team went out of its way to achieve our common goals of wisely managing the natural and cultural treasures that we preserve on your behalf, offering authentic, inspiring experiences, attracting more people to the park, and actively contributing to the development of our beautiful region.

This “Year in Review” is not designed to be an exhaustive report on our activities, but rather an overview of the main projects and highlights of year 2015 in Forillon National Park. It is also a way of “setting the table” for further developments in the year to come.

Dear partners and fellow citizens, allow me to take this opportunity to wish you a

Very Happy New Year 2016!

Stéphane Marchand, Superintendent

Our Priorities in 2015

1. Protecting the richness and diversity of our natural and cultural treasures



Producing an estimate of the black bear population

At this time, there is no direct method for doing a “bear count,” as is the case with moose, for example. Consequently, researchers designed population models based on the biological characteristics of the black bear along with data from hunting and trapping. However, it is hard to adapt these models to the context of a national park (where hunting and trapping are prohibited).

We thus launched a research project in collaboration with the Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR) for the purpose of testing new population survey methods. This project will enable us to estimate the number of black bears across the park. In it, two survey methods will be tested and compared (i.e., hair capture combined with genetic analyses, plus camera monitoring). Stay tuned!

Ecological restoration of the Cap-des-Rosiers beach

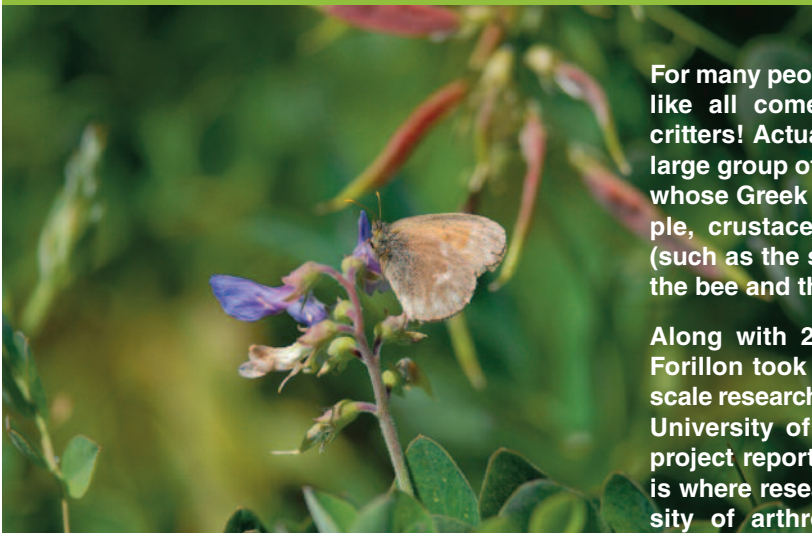
Beginning over 15 years ago, spring tides and violent fall and winter storms have factored strongly in the deterioration of the Cap-des-Rosiers beach and the neighbouring road infrastructure. In that connection, Parks Canada has been studying the coastal dynamic of the Cap-des-Rosiers beach in collaboration with the Université du Québec à Rimouski's coastal dynamic experts since 2013.

This year, a coastal restoration project was launched for the purpose of re-establishing a coastal habitat for numerous animal and plant species (in particular, capelin, which travels to this area to spawn). It will also serve to create a beach suitable for swimming and walking.

Finally, this project represents an opportunity to study the impacts of dismantling a riprap structure, a type of intervention that has rarely been documented in Canada or the rest of the world.



Fascinating biodiversity!



For many people, spiders, ladybugs, ants and such like all come under the umbrella category of critters! Actually, these species belong to a very large group of animals called “arthropods” (a term whose Greek roots mean “jointed leg”). For example, crustaceans (such as the crab), arachnids (such as the spider) and insects (such as the ant, the bee and the butterfly) are all arthropods.

Along with 28 other national parks of Canada, Forillon took part in the BIObus project, a large-scale research project on arthropods conducted by University of Guelph, Ontario. According to the project report published in January 2015, Forillon is where researchers observed the greatest diversity of arthropods in the country (more than 4,000 different species)! They even collected a species of spider that had never before been inventoried in Quebec (*Pardosa dorsalis*)!

Other projects in 2015 include:



- Within the framework of the **ecological integrity monitoring program**: monitoring of medium-sized carnivore populations (i.e., marten, fisher and lynx), fish communities, benthic invertebrates, river and stream temperatures, Penouille eelgrass beds, commercial lobster fishing, changes in forest stand composition, etc.
- **Validation of the presence of the Maritime Ringlet**. The Maritime Ringlet (a small saltmarsh butterfly) is a threatened species but one that is very difficult to conclusively identify, due to the presence of another highly similar species, the Common Ringlet. The objective of this project, conducted in collaboration with the University of Guelph, is to use DNA analyses to validate the presence of the Maritime Ringlet in Forillon National Park,



- Abundance estimate of the **harlequin duck population**. A count of these ducks is produced once every five years, during the moulting period and prior to migration.
- **Prescribed burn** of the C-48 oak stand. Our fire management specialists conducted a prescribed burn for the purpose of aiding red oak populations to regenerate. The results obtained to date give us reason to think that we have established the conditions required to ensure oak regeneration in the burn area.
- Completion of Forillon National **Park's Cultural Resource Value Statement**. In particular, this important document serves to identify the heritage values and cultural resources found on park land and thereby provide a framework for their sustainable management.





2. Attracting more visitors to the park

Our strategies : Improving accommodations



More oTENTik tents

The park installed five new oTENTik tents in 2015 in response to the strong demand for this type of “ready-to-camp” type of accommodation. A total of 15 oTENTik tents have now been made available to visitors, including eight at the Des-Rosiers campground (basic service package) and seven at the Petit-Gaspé campground’s oTENTik loop (“all-inclusive” package).

Other actions in 2015 include:

- Work was completed at Petit-Gaspé campground’s Loop A so as to accommodate recreational vehicles over 10 m in length.
- Parks Canada has modified its reservations system so as to allow campers to reserve their stay earlier. Thus, beginning in 2016, campers will be able to make reservations at Forillon as early as January.



Renewing the visitor experience

Good times to be had at Penouille!

A **new service building** was built at the entrance to the peninsula. **The spacious, light-filled visitor area** also includes a gift shop offering various products stamped with the symbols of Parks Canada or Forillon National Park (Signature collection), such as apparel, souvenirs, etc.

Thanks to a partnership with Écorécréo, visitors were able to explore the peninsula on **bicycle, electric bicycle, quad and Segway**, get an introduction to **stand-up paddle boarding**, enjoy a bite to eat at the **new snack bar**, or rent (on location) chairs, parasols, chairs, parasols, kites, balls and other indispensable beach paraphernalia.

In addition to the new service building, the elevated boardwalk and new bird blinds (serving to keep a “closer eye” on marsh action), there is now a **new trail known as La Taïga**. Visitors may use it to explore Penouille’s taiga, a fascinating habitat that is generally encountered much farther to the north and identifiable as such on account of its numerous conifers and carpets of lichen.



Photo : Régine Fournier



Photo : Igor Nérisson

Other new experiences in 2015 include:

- Two new **campfire stories**, drawing on traditional Gaspé legends, proved to be a hit in the evening group activities program. The long interpretation walk known as “Sur la trace de l’original,” created and trialled in 2014, was also offered three different times in fall 2015.
- After selecting our absolutely “fave” spots, we installed a total of **16 Red Chairs** (8 pairs). The name “Red Chairs” refers to a set of comfortable Adirondack chairs that Parks Canada has set out in the country’s most beautiful locations (including eight at Forillon National Park). They are the ideal place to take a break, breathe deep, and soak up the surrounding landscape!

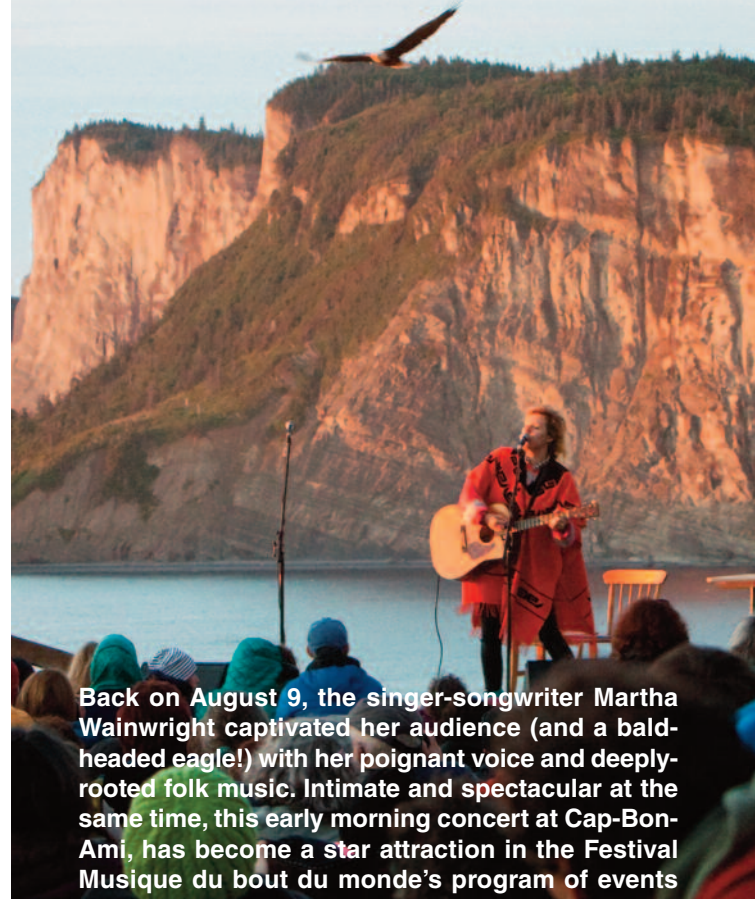
In addition, the park launched a **contest** inviting people to share their photos with the hashtag #SharetheChair on its Facebook page (www.facebook.com/PNForillon). Ms. Laurence Lemelin won a three-day stay at the park (including two nights in the oTENTik “ready-to-camp” tents) for her entire family.



- The exhibit entitled *Saga Lands (Terres de sagas)* by artist Jennifer Auer was staged at Grande-Grave and Fort Peninsula within the framework of the **Rencontres internationales de la photographie en Gaspésie**, a well-known photography event.
- In partnership with various community organizations, we played host to **special events and sporting challenges** all year long. A partial list of these activities includes the Traversée de la Gaspésie (one version being on cross-country skis/snowshoes and the other on foot), the inauguration of the first long-distance path (Grande Randonnée) in North America, the Gran Fondo Forillon and the Trail Fix Mont Saint-Alban.
- The park recently authorized **mountain biking** on the Les Lacs trail. Launched in fall 2015, this pilot project has enabled us to diversify the offering made available to cyclists from near and afar.



Sunrise concert by Martha Wainwright

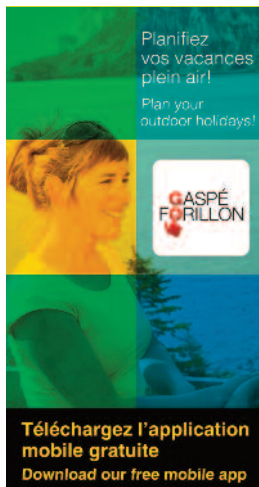


Back on August 9, the singer-songwriter Martha Wainwright captivated her audience (and a bald-headed eagle!) with her poignant voice and deeply-rooted folk music. Intimate and spectacular at the same time, this early morning concert at Cap-Bon-Ami, has become a star attraction in the Festival Musique du bout du monde's program of events and a must-attend gathering for music-lovers from eastern Quebec.

The sunrise concert is a bold, intensely inspiring way to immerse oneself in the majesty of Forillon and the Gaspé Peninsula.

Photo : Charles Bilodeau - FMBM Ricochet

More visibility



New mobile application and promotional campaign: Go Gaspé-Forillon

The campaign known as Go Gaspé-Forillon, created and deployed in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce of and Tourism of Gaspé, is designed to promote the Gaspé-Forillon destination and its numerous attractions.

The Go Gaspé-Forillon campaign was rolled out in a variety of forms, including: a new mobile app, adverts, video clips, Website, social media, video display in the Montreal metro, ad displays in vehicles operated by Taxis Fortin et Fils Inc., participation in numerous trade shows and special events. So doing, Go Gaspé-Forillon contribute to positioning the region as a must-visit outdoor recreation destination in Quebec.



Other actions in 2015 include:

- Adoption of a niche approach via targeted promotional **actions in specialty magazines**: young families (Destination famille), outdoor recreation enthusiasts (Découvertes), foodies (Gaspésie Gourmande), bird-watchers (Québec Oiseau), etc.
- VIP tours provided to more than **25 specialist journalists/bloggers** from Quebec, the United States and Europe.
- Collaboration on **six TV shoots** for such shows as *Fou des oiseaux*, hosted by the actor Pierre Verville, and *Canada plus grand que nature*, hosted by the Olympic champion Jean-Luc Brassard.
- A strong presence on **social media**, in particular the park's Facebook pages – Follow us! In French: www.facebook.com/PNForillon or in English: www.facebook.com/ForillonNP
- Online deployment of a virtual park tour on **Google Street View**, thanks to a partnership between Google and Parks Canada. For people planning a visit to Forillon, it's the perfect tool, offering a glimpse of trails, campgrounds and main attractions.
- An information stand at **festivals and public gatherings in Montreal**, thus showcasing Forillon's treasures and activities to **more than 50,500 people**.



Photo : Jane Hung

Conclusive results!

- The total number of park visitors (estimate established using traffic counters) rose a hefty 19% (145,678 in 2015 visitors vs. 122,840 in 2014).
- The number of people greeted at our Penouille and L'Anse-au-Griffon Visitor Centres surged 29% (37,300 in 2015 vs. 28,909 in 2014).



- The occupancy rate at our campgrounds bumped up 12% (17,149 sites occupied in 2015 vs. 15,315 in 2014).
- There was also a noticeable increase in the visitation levels at our heritage sites (5%) and the attendance levels at our interpretation activities (15%).
- In co-operation with Escale Gaspésie, the park played host to a total of 1,324 cruise ship passengers (498 of whom took part in a guided tour) in 2015.



News from our concession-holders



- **Croisières Baie de Gaspé** launched a new product in 2015 – namely, the private cruise. Clients may now choose between three different types of charter trips. The company enjoyed a good season – and there were plenty of whales for the watching!
- Though the weather was not exactly sunny in July, **Plongée Forillon** attracted a sizeable clientele all the same. (Besides, rain or shine, you can't help but get wet when you go diving!) The 2015 season turned out to be a busy one!
- This year, the **Recreation Centre** snack bar offered a **new menu** featuring a bigger selection of **local and regional products**, including: shrimp roll, lobster club sandwich, cod fitters, yak burger, goat cheese poutine, etc. A true people pleaser!
- For its first season at Forillon, **Écorécréo** offered a **discount to greater Gaspé area residents**. “20% of our clients are from Gaspé. That’s really positive. Our sense is that local people have re-appropriated Penouille,” businessman Marc Cudia exclaimed. What activity was the most popular this summer? Stand-up paddling – hand’s down! Have you given it a try?
- In collaboration with the Forillon Park team, the **Recreation Centre** partnered with the **Écorécréo** snack bar at Penouille to launch **L’Éveil de Forillon**, an exclusive blend of traditionally roasted fresh coffee, created and locally prepared by the Brûlerie du Café des Artistes in Gaspé. Great for enjoying on location or taking home as a souvenir!
- On August 19, 2015, the adventure tourism outfit known as **Cap Aventure** played host to Olivier Pierson, a contributor to the French magazine known as Québec le Mag. Here’s an excerpt from his blog: (translation) “[...] *My sea-kayaking outing in Forillon Park was magical in many ways. Everything came together just right that day: the weather, which was fantastic; the outing structure – thank you Cap Aventure and our guide Vincent Gaillard; and the particular greeting we received from that curious, moustachioed creature we gaped at each time it surfaced. Initially, seal heads emerged here and there but then could be seen bobbing in greater number over time. (...) And then, to cap off our outing, there was that sunset in the middle of the bay (Gaspé Bay) – one of the world’s most beautiful – our eyes riveted on this truly stunning spectacle. I can assure you that at moments like that, nothing else exists around you – nothing but the present moment in all its splendour, something like “happiness on steroids [...]”*



3. Engaging with you

Operation Spring Cleaning

On June 6, 2015, Forillon National Park partnered with the Green Brigade and the City of Gaspé to encourage local citizens to take part in the “Operation Spring Cleaning.” Not only did this day enable Gaspé to “primp for its coming visitors,” it also served as a reminder of the importance of disposing of our trash responsibly. Several volunteers made a family activity of this day, using it as an opportunity to develop respect for nature in their children.



Photo : Désirée Valadares

Université Laval summer school

In May 2015, the Cap-aux-Os community and Forillon National Park played host to a group of students from Université Laval’s School of Architecture and a team of professionals within the framework a summer school program on “built heritage and in situ cultural landscapes.” The objective of this group was to study heritage buildings in the Grande-Grave area and explore opportunities for projects and collaboration centring on the presentation of these buildings in a way that satisfies community needs (social, commercial, or other). Check back for further developments!



Other accomplishments in 2015

- Partnership with the Centre culturel Le Griffon for the maintenance of **cross-country ski trails**;
- **Classroom learning** kit about the animals at Forillon National Park, designed for greater Gaspé area kindergartens and available in municipal libraries;
- **Summertime radio** features about Forillon's flora, fauna and history, on Radio-Gaspésie;
- Participation in establishing the **City of Gaspé landscape charter initiative** (Charte des paysages);
- Pursuit of collaboration with the **Mig'maq community of Gespeg** (participation in National Aboriginal Day at the Micmac Interpretation Site, etc.);
- Pursuit of collaborations with several **regional organizations**: Chamber of Commerce and Tourism of Gaspé, Escale Gaspésie, Association touristique régionale de la Gaspésie, Festival Musique du Bout du Monde de Gaspé, Association of Persons Expro-

priated from Forillon and Their Descendants, Centre culturel Le Griffon, Traversée de la Gaspésie, Festival cycliste Bouette et Bitume, Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, etc. Thanks to these partnerships Forillon was able to strengthen its ties with the surrounding community and was able to offer the public a broad range of original, inspiring experiences.

- **Inauguration of the GR-A1**, the first long hiking trail GR® approved in North America, in collaboration with the International Appalachian Trail (IAT-Quebec), the French Hiking Federation and the Traversées de la Gaspésie.

4. Upgrading our infrastructures



Major **investments** confirmed in 2015!



Last August, Parks Canada announced infrastructure investments on the order of \$9.5 M at Forillon National Park. These new amounts bring the total of infrastructure investments for the last five years to more than \$35 M.

Certain projects are currently in the planning and preparation stages. In the case of others, the work is already well under way. We will keep you posted on the progress of these various projects throughout the coming year.

Projects begun and/or in progress in 2015:

- Restoration of Fort Peninsula
- Reconstruction of Route 132
- Dredging of the Cap-des-Rosiers harbour
- Coastal restoration of the Cap-des-Rosiers beach
- Sustainable management of Penouille
- Inspection and repairs of roadway bridges and footbridges
- Redevelopment and electrification of Loop A at the Petit-Gaspé campground

For further details about our various projects, visit our Website at www.pc.gc.ca/forillon

All of these accomplishments were made possible by a **fantastic team!**

Be they an ecologist, carpenter, guide-interpreter, park warden or administrative assistant, each day, park employees pool their knowledge, expertise and passion with the goal of protecting and presenting our collective heritage. The staff at Forillon National Park numbers 89 employees, with an additional forty-some students joining their ranks during the peak tourist season. For our organization, these people represent both its cornerstone and its most valuable resource.

Luc Beaulieu
Hélène Beaulieu Claude Bilodeau
André Blanchette Anne Bouchard
Diane Boulay Sylvain Bouchard
Sophie Boulay François-Marie Boulay
Louise Braun Ubald Boulay Dany Boutin
Josée Breton Nadia Brodeur Serge Brodeur Maxime Cabot
Jean-François Caron Bobby Carrier Anne-Marie Cauvier
Stéphane Chouinard Marianne Chouinard Jean-Martin Chamberland
Chantal Chrétien Marise Cloutier Denis Comeau Roxane Cormier
Antonin Côté Mathieu Côté André Couture Gratien Curadeau
Nancy Cyr Norbert Denis Mylène Després Mylène Després
Sandrine Desrosiers-Gaudreau Émilie Devoe Lina Dufresne
Valère Dufresne Collin Dumaresq Jean-David Dupuis Geneviève Durocher
Luc Élément Christian Ferland Kerry Foley Mathieu Fournier Yvon Fournier
Benoît Gagnon Hélène Gagnon Alain Gallant Lucie Gallant Solange Huard
Candide Jalbert Steve Jean Laurent Jeannotte Pierre Jeannotte
James-Alexander Keays Charles Labbé Yves Lacasse Claire Lebel Éric Leblanc
Mario Lemieux Serge Lucas Richard Malouin Stéphane Marchand
Julie Mercier Sébastien Nadeau Bruce O'Connor Hugues Packwood
Pierre Paradis Murielle Pichoir Gerry Pison Cléo-Véronique Prince
Steve Pronovost Michel Queenton Gilles Raymond Marc-André Raymond
Lucie Roy Frédéric Sainte-Croix Daniel Sigouin
Michelle Sinnett Frédéric Sainte-Croix Éliane Synnott
Isabelle Tailleux Danielle Tremblay François Tremblay
Yannick Tremblay Marie-Claude Trudel Marion Trudel
Joseph Vignola