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Forillon National Park



Year in review — 2021

What an exceptional year! Forillon National Park has had a very successful 2021 season. Some 50 conservation projects, involving both nature and culture, were carried out. Over 181,000 visitors, a 20-year high, enjoyed the natural and cultural treasures. Discover the highlights of Forillon National Park in four seasons.

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Forillon in a virtual classroom

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives and how we communicate and learn. [École en réseau and Parks Canada](#) (English is at the bottom of the page.) got innovative by offering a variety of virtual programming to Quebec schools for several months. Over 75,000 students experienced the world of Parks Canada first-hand. A resounding success!

For Forillon National Park, public outreach education officer Andrée-Anne Rouleau and ecologist Daniel Sigouin presented "Forillon Facing Coastal Erosion" and "Seabirds" in collaboration with the Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve. As a result of their active participation in the project, Andrée-Anne and Daniel, along with 13 Parks Canada colleagues, received the Parks Canada CEO Award of Excellence in the category *Protect, Present and Commemorate*.

Winter offer: what a season!

Thanks to the Centre culturel le Griffon and its dynamic team of volunteers, close to 8,560 cross-country skiers, snowshoers and cyclists on bicycles with oversized tires practised their respective sports on the [park's three groomed trails](#): Le Portage, La Grande-Cavée and La Vallée. With the total sales of the various access fees increasing for the fifth year in a row, there is no doubt that the Gaspé winter is tamed indeed! This extraordinary season is the result of some 370 hours of volunteer work. Thank you.



Cross-country skiers were out in full force in 2021.

Restoring a heritage masterpiece

In accordance with accepted practices, Jean-François Bond repaired five sash windows (1864) on the northern façade of the Hyman & Sons general store. These windows are so large and heavy that they were once operated by pulleys. With patience, precision and meticulousness, the cabinetmaker carried out this restoration, which is comparable to the creation of a large 3D historical puzzle.

The Hyman & Sons general store ([Radio-Canada Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine report, in French only](#)) is the oldest preserved building in Forillon National Park.

Spring

Campaign Fall into Forillon this autumn – Plan ahead!

Enjoy ideal hiking conditions and take in the great outdoors with fewer crowds. With these words,

the spring promotion was launched in 2021; the promotion is one of the strategies adopted by the park to effectively manage visitor numbers.

This message was driven home earlier than usual to adapt to the high numbers experienced in the summer of 2020. Most of the annual promotional efforts were directed toward the fall to better distribute traffic over the entire operational period.



Autumn backcountry camping.

Fast start to reservations

The popularity of Forillon National Park was demonstrated on April 21, the opening day for reserving a campsite. No fewer than 6,230 reservations were recorded, nearly 5,400 more than in 2020. A dazzling launch of reservations!

Sharing scientific knowledge

Through a collaboration with the Université du Québec à Rimouski, Forillon National Park tested a camera-based wildlife inventory technique. The study, which was published in the journal Ecology and Evolution, suggests that this method may be a more affordable and equally effective inventory solution for some species, including bear and moose, than certain traditional inventory techniques.

In addition to being very useful within the park, this study will undoubtedly help other protected areas and territories, which can now use it as a model. The Parks Canada Agency is recognized as a leader in conservation.

Forillon on screen

Forillon National Park has become more popular for film permit applications, which increased from a select few applications in 2019 to 30 in 2021. The park's stunning scenery and rich history are among the reasons why it is immortalized on screen. Among the highlights was the episode Dans nos eaux (in French only) of the documentary series *39–45 en sol canadien*, hosted by Claude Legault, which tells the story of Fort Peninsula's role in the Second World War. In 48 well-spent minutes, Dans nos eaux reveals a little-known part of Canadian history.

Visitor Information and Discovery Centre: a hub of activities and services

After a one-year postponement of the opening because of COVID-19, the Visitor Information and Discovery Centre in Cap-des-Rosiers, became the official gateway to the northern sector of Forillon National Park on May 28, 2021. It is a true hub of exciting activities and indispensable services.

With its unique concept, the centre focuses first and foremost on welcoming its valued visitors by

bringing together everything they need under one roof. It is also designed for the local communities, which can, among other things, find testimonials in the exhibition, so they do not forget. Forillon is rich in human history strewn with natural and cultural treasures. The Visitor Information and Discovery Centre is a reflection of this, the beginning of memorable adventures.



The first visitors to the Visitor Information and Discovery Centre

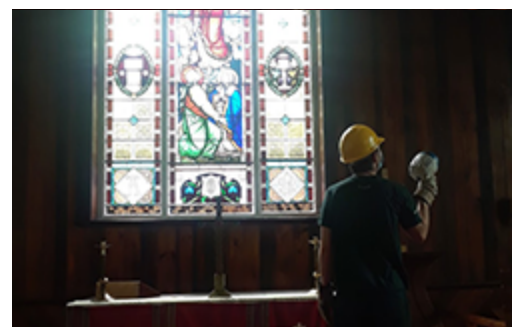
Summer

In search of content for to the "Gaspesians from Land's End" exhibition

In search of content to enhance the permanent exhibition "Gaspesians from Land's End", the Board of Directors of the Association of Persons Expropriated from Forillon and their Descendants, in collaboration with Parks Canada, is calling on the participation of families expropriated from Forillon National Park. The "Gaspesians from Land's End" exhibition, presented at the [Dolbel-Roberts House](#), tells the story of, among other things, the episode of the expropriation through the testimonies of people who were expropriated. As material is accepted on an ongoing basis, expropriated families wishing to share photos or videos can still do so.

Studying bats

Like detectives, the conservation team began an extensive investigation in 2021 into the park's bats. No evidence of their presence was detected in the heritage buildings. Ultrasound recording devices have been installed throughout the park. The recordings will be analyzed to provide information on the status of bat populations in the park. We hope that they will show a lot of bat activity.



Inspection of St. Peter's Church

Bats are ecologically important, especially because they consume a huge number of insects. Several of them are classified as species at risk, such as the tri-coloured bat and the little brown bat. These species are severely affected by white-nose syndrome, a disease present in the park, which drastically reduces their chance of survival.

Ilam captivates Cap-Bon-Ami

For the 10th edition of the iconic sunrise show, the Festival Musique du Bout du Monde could not have hoped for more. Ilam, with his voice that goes straight to the heart, literally captivated the spectators assembled in the early morning at Cap-Bon-Ami.

Thanks to La Fabrique culturelle, (re)experience one of the highlights of the show: the touching Ilam sings the great Gilles Vigneault (in French only). One morning where a baobab tree was growing peacefully next to an oak tree. Emotions guaranteed. Be sure to have tissues handy.

Sound experiments on historical canvas

Fort Peninsula is a moving remnant of the Gaspé naval base, one of the main Canadian military posts of the Second World War. During the Battle of the Atlantic, 23 ships were sunk.

As part of the Festival Musique du Bout du Monde, Fort Peninsula received one of the sound installations (in French only) created during the residency by internationally renowned electronic music artist France Jobin. As a tribute, she designed 23 audio loops representing each of the sunken ships and the soldiers who died in them. The work was created in collaboration with Gaspesian visual artist Jonathan Desjarlais aka VJ Ubiquity.

Fall

Battle of the St. Lawrence: From Gaspé to the Netherlands

More
than
70



Dijkman-Kool, her husband, and their two children, Benno and Monique, and their son-in-law, Ton.

years after the Battle of the St. Lawrence, in 2015, five wrecks, including that of the Dutch ship S.S. Saturnus, were discovered off Cap-Gaspé and Cap-des-Rosiers. This important discovery has aroused great interest in the Gaspé Peninsula. It also changed the life of a family from the Netherlands: that of Pieter Kool, who died in the torpedoing of the S.S. Saturnus in 1942.

In 2021, the family came to gather on the water just above the wreck off Cap-des-Rosiers. Emotions filled the air. For a moment, time seemed to stand still. The sun was shining brightly. Humpback whales swam around the boat in a long, breathtaking choreography. A moment of indescribable beauty. Monique de Keijzer, Mr. Kool's granddaughter, exclaimed: "No one has ever had such a funeral."

Banding and bird trips!

Thanks to a collaboration with the Observatoire d'Oiseaux de Rimouski, the Forillon banding station has banded 9262 birds of 77 species in its second year of operation.

Interesting observations at the station include:

- 1,921 Cape May warblers, the most abundant species in catches, enjoying the buffet provided by spruce budworm epidemics,
- 6 Canada warblers, a species at risk,
- 6 clay-coloured sparrows, a difficult species to observe north of its range,
- 1 Baltimore oriole and 2 Carolina wrens, rarities for the region.

The banding station also monitors migrating birds that are not caught in nets. Therefore, 732 small buzzards were counted on the site.

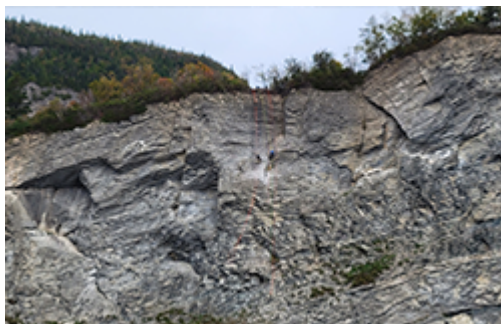
The brand new bird migration interpretation activity at the banding station was a great success. Visitors had the chance to experience the fascinating world of ornithology.

For experienced or aspiring ornithologists (Radio-Canada Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine report, in French only)

- [Range of birds at Forillon](#)
- [Assessment of the bird banding season in Forillon National Park](#)

Focus on climate change

The Cap-Bon-Ami sector has to deal with a major erosion phenomenon caused by climate



Climbing a cliff as part of a research project on the evolution of the cliffs of Cap-Bon-Ami.

change. A research project with the Université du Québec à Rimouski on the evolution of the cliffs of Cap-Bon-Ami is underway. The measuring instruments are in place and data collection has begun.

Shine together!

We are privileged to work with Destination Gaspé, Tourisme Gaspésie and Québec maritime. Our collective promotional efforts considerably increase the visibility of Forillon National Park at the regional, provincial, national and international levels.

A year in the news

- 420 mentions in the media from January 1 to December 31.

On the Web

- 265,500 visitors from January 1 to December 31.

Facebook : keep following us!

We have the constant renewed pleasure of exchanging with our subscribers on our Facebook pages. There are nearly 3,000 more this year, for a total of 24,641. Continue to follow us and share your own 2021 highlights!

ForillonNP

- ↑ of nearly 3000 subscribers
- Total: 24,641 subscribers from January 1 to December 20.
- Your favorite publication: [Parks Day at Forillon National Park \(video\)](#).

Even more activities!

A particular thanks to our tourism products and services provider, Cap Aventure, Croisières Baie de Gaspé, Havre de Forillon and Le Petit Café de la Traverse, the already wide range of activities available at the park are multiplying and enhancing the visitor experience. Thanks to these companies for creating such unforgettable experiences with us!

An incredible season thanks to...

The 124 employees as well as the 63 students and youths (during the high season) share their knowledge and passion for protecting and showcasing our heritage. They are both the foundation and the greatest asset of our organization.

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