



Forillon  
National Park

2017

# YEAR IN REVIEW



Parks  
Canada

Parcs  
Canada

Canada

# Getting it right

After an outstanding 2016 season, Forillon National Park had high expectations for 2017. Even so, we beat attendance records, reinvested in infrastructure, enhanced our interpretation activities, maintained conservation efforts, held community-building events, and renewed numerous partnerships with local organizations.

The free park admission offered to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation helped us promote our wonderful park worldwide. Forillon is reaching more and more people and providing an ever growing array of unforgettable experiences. It is a destination not to be missed. Our mandate is to continue to protect our heritage, celebrate our history, and encourage the public to explore, discover, and imagine the future.

Thanks for supporting us year after year and for being as committed as we are to protecting and showcasing our natural and cultural treasures.

We are pleased to present the highlights and main projects from Forillon National Park's 2017 season.

Happy reading!



Stéphane Marchand, Superintendent

## Did you know that from 2018 admission is free for youth 17 and under?

By offering free admission to youth 17 and under, Canada is celebrating families and the importance of our protected spaces. We know that when young people connect with nature, they better understand why it needs not only to be protected, but also preserved for future generations. Parks Canada will continue to offer enriching, high-quality experiences to visitors from Canada and across the globe. We hope to welcome even more young people to these special Canadian places.



## Priorities for 2017

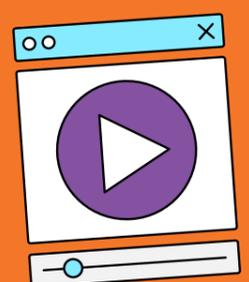
# 1. Protecting the treasures we share

## Natural treasures

### Restoration of the Cap-des-Rosiers beach

Restoration of the Cap-des-Rosiers beach is one of the projects we initiated to address climate change. Conducted in partnership with Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR), this innovative project allows locals and visitors to Forillon National Park to enjoy a healthy coastline and create lasting memories as they commune with nature.

The project is now in its second year, and the bulk of the work at the site is almost complete. Thus far the Route du Banc and the protective riprap were dismantled, the adjoining beach restored and the Carricks monument moved. In cooperation with our partner, teams of park employees continue to monitor the condition of the beach over the entire project area in order to document how the coastline is responding to our restoration work. We are already seeing positive effects, including expanded spawning habitat for capelin.



## QUESTIONS FOR AN EXPERT

To learn more about coastal erosion, we interviewed Christian Fraser, an expert at Université du Québec à Rimouski. In a series of three videos, he talks about the factors that weaken the coastline, infrastructure that can accelerate the erosion process, and steps the public can take to adapt to coastal erosion. Visit our website to watch these videos: [parksCanada.gc.ca/forillon](http://parksCanada.gc.ca/forillon)



## Ecological restoration of white pine and red oak

Studies on fire ecology show that fire is a natural element that plays an essential role in how forests function, just like wind and insect epidemics. Eliminating fire is like going against the natural balance of ecosystems. This is why the Parks Canada conservation team has been conducting prescribed burns throughout Canada for over 30 years.

We started the year with a prescribed burn in the sector of La Grande-Cavée stream. This project will continue in 2018. One of the objectives is to ecologically restore white pine and red oak, two species that are becoming scarce in the park. Why a prescribed burn? Because it creates good conditions for tree growth by reducing competition with other species.



## Monitoring species at risk

### Bat population survey

This year the bat population survey concentrated on the heritage buildings in Grande-Grave and service buildings under renovation. The survey identified which species were present and assessed the activity level. Protection measures were taken as necessary, including the purchase of bat houses to increase resting sites for these endangered species. We are working in close cooperation with Contact Environnement to help restore these declining populations.

## Ecological Integrity Monitoring Program

### Watercourse crossing inventory

Watercourse crossings, like drainage culverts, can prevent the free movement of aquatic species in certain cases. The inventory, which will continue in 2018, is essential to maintaining the health and connectivity of our hydrographic network, the species that live in it, and our freshwater aquatic ecosystem as a whole.

### Forest stand inventory

Since the 1990s we have been monitoring the evolution of forests and their dominant species every ten years. The inventory allows us to sample species based on their characteristics (diameter, general condition, height, etc.) and provides an overview of forest health.

### Surveying and monitoring of medium-size carnivores

This study monitors marten and fisher numbers inside and outside the park. Population density of these species inside the park seems to be below capacity for the habitat. Collecting data from outside the park helps us verify the efficiency of our collection method and assess the health of these species inside the park.



## Monitoring the spruce budworm epidemic

In recent years the epidemic has been spreading more rapidly everywhere in Quebec, particularly in the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine region. However, this insect native to our forests is essential for the renewal of the fir forests of the park. We are monitoring the epidemic in partnership with the Canadian Forest Service.



Photo credits : Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service



## Bicknell's thrush population survey

Because the Bicknell's thrush population is declining, we have conducted a number of surveys in recent years to monitor changes. We will continue the project in 2018 by searching new study sites. The Bicknell's thrush was listed as an endangered species in 2009 and could serve as a long-term indicator of forest health.

## Cultural treasures



### Commemorating the shipwreck of the Carricks

Donated in 1890 by the parish of Saint Patrick in Montreal, the Carricks monument had been left in a vulnerable position due to coastal erosion aggravated by climate change. As part of the Cap-des-Rosiers beach restoration project, the monument was moved to a safe spot to ensure its long-term preservation. The public will be able to visit the monument in its new location this summer.

Université de Montréal is continuing its analysis of human bones found on the beach in the summer of 2016. The bones are likely to be from victims of the Carricks shipwreck. The Cap-des-Rosiers community was consulted and it was agreed that the bones would be buried alongside the monument at its new location. A multi-use trail is also being built between the parking lot near the village and the Interpretive Centre to showcase the coastal ecosystem and the rich history of this sector of the park. Work continues until summer 2018.

### Fort Peninsula gets a facelift

Did you know that Fort Peninsula is the only fully preserved Second World War shore battery open to the public in Quebec? As part of the renovations completed this year, wood and concrete walls were reinforced, surfaces were touched up, and trails near the battery were upgraded. Some of the trees at the site have been cut down, which has relieved pressure on the underground structures and restored the breathtaking view of Gaspé Bay. Did you come here as a child? Discover it again!

### Major work at L'Anse-Blanchette

L'Anse-Blanchette bears witness to the bygone lifestyle of artisanal fishing families in a small cove along the Gaspé Peninsula, and for this reason we are renovating the heritage buildings at the site, a park attraction since the early 1980s. The house, barn, and fish shed are currently getting a major face lift. Repairs are being made to foundations, structures, roofs, siding, doors, windows, hallways, interior walls, floors, and ceilings. A true icon at Forillon, this heritage site will once again feature prominently in the park's cultural and historical activities starting in summer 2018.



## 2. Giving visitors an experience to remember

### New experiences

#### Weekly Mi'kmaq events

In cooperation with the Gespeg Mi'kmaq Nation, we created an Indigenous cultural interpretation program as part of the "Indigenous Tourism, Experience and Story-Telling at Parks Canada Places" initiative. From June through August, visitors of Forillon had the opportunity to learn more about Mi'kmaq culture.



#### Chloé Sainte-Marie sings at dawn

For the seventh year in a row, Festival Musique du Bout du Monde's dawn concert was held at Cap-Bon-Ami. Chloé Sainte-Marie and fifteen chorus singers warmed the spirits of everyone who came to listen at the lookout. The sell-out crowd is proof that early morning is a magical time of day, when the light perfectly showcases the majestic cliffs.

Photo credit : Roger St-Laurent



#### VIP excursion: All About Black Bears

A new awareness and education activity was launched in 2017. Visitors had the opportunity to learn more about how to behave around bears, debunk certain myths, and gain new knowledge. The activity is part of our efforts to protect black bears and visitor's safety.



#### Public digs at Penouille

With its diverse flora and fauna, numerous activities, and rich cultural heritage, the Penouille peninsula is a must-see destination at Forillon. To mark the Archaeology Month, Parks Canada archaeologist Martin Perron led public digs from August 7 to 10. The digs provided information about on the human occupation of Penouille, from the first Indigenous communities in the Woodland period, to the first fishing establishment and Euro-Canadian settlers. Since the 1970s, digs have provided thousands of artifacts.

#### Capelin on the Cape exhibit

We partnered with the World Wildlife Fund to install interpretive panels along the Prélude-à-Forillon trail in order to make residents and visitors aware of the importance of capelin and other prey species. The exhibit coincides with the Cap-des-Rosiers beach restoration project, whose objectives include encouraging species to return to the region. The primary species targeted is the capelin, which had largely disappeared from the beach due to coastal erosion. The results are encouraging. This year we saw an increase in capelin numbers during the spawning season.



#### Other events in 2017:

- New discovery modules on the history of geology: Geological Survey of Canada
- "Rencontres internationales de la photographie en Gaspésie" exhibitions
- BioBlitz 2017: Identifying 150 species to mark Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary

## More visibility

### Putting Gaspé and Forillon on the map

We continued the Go Gaspé–Forillon campaign, designed and rolled out with the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism of Gaspé (CCTG) to promote Gaspé–Forillon and its attractions as a travel destination. This strategic collaboration, together with partnerships with Gaspésie Tourism, Québec maritime, and Escale Gaspésie, will really add to the area's appeal.

The campaign allows us to use more platforms and promotional tools and extend their reach: print and TV advertising, videos, Web, social media, mobile apps, participation in numerous trade fairs and special events, etc.

## Conclusive results

Traffic at our visitor centres was much higher than in previous years, with a substantial 30% increase in the number of visitors (45,018 compared to 34,839 in 2016).

Our campground occupancy rate rose 24% (24,327 sites occupied compared to 19,654 in 2016).

We also logged big increases in the number of people taking part in interpretive activities (26%), an increase in traffic at our interpretive centre (16.6%) and heritage sites (36%). Record numbers!

A total of 4,294 cruise ship passengers visited Forillon in 2017, compared to 1,511 in 2016. That's quite a jump!

## Reaching out in new ways

Our urban outreach brigade took part in 106 events, festivals, and public gatherings in the Greater Montréal Area, spreading the word about Forillon's marvels to over 85,000 people!

It was an outstanding year, one which saw 29 travel journalists, reporters, and bloggers from Quebec, the United States, and Europe visit the park, along with 10 film crews who came to shoot movies, documentaries, TV shows, and video capsules. In all, more than 50 articles promoting Forillon National Park were published.

We genuinely enjoy interacting with our 14,000-plus followers on social media. So follow us and share your own greatest hits of 2017!



## News from our concession holders

With passenger numbers up by 18% in 2017, Croisières Baie de Gaspé had its best season in 19 years! Great weather and numerous marine mammal sightings made for a spectacular summer.

Our partners Écorécréo, Plongée Forillon (freediving), Cap Aventure (sea kayaking) and the Petit-Gaspé recreation centre all had great seasons as well.



*Wow! A fantastic kayak excursion at sunset. And the seals were curious to see us. A big thank you to our guide Francis! We learned a lot about the wildlife and he gave us helpful information for the rest of our trip!*

- Roxanne M., Cap Aventure, via Facebook

*The best activity you can do, by far. We even got to see a calf as energetic as my five-year-old son having a great time breaching, plus a blue whale! It's as if the whales know we are watching them and love giving us something to marvel at!*

- Sabrina M., Croisières Baie de Gaspé, via Facebook

*The team was great at kitting us out from head to toe. The experience itself is incredible, but so are the staff! We saw seals, lobsters, crabs, whelk, and more. A must-do activity at Forillon National Park.*

- Léonie G., Plongée Forillon, via TripAdvisor

### The Trudeau family visits Forillon

Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau and his family visited Forillon National Park on July 18 while touring the Gaspé Peninsula and Bas-Saint-Laurent. They discovered the highlights of the northern sector and learned more about the coastal erosion problem we are dealing with. The Trudeau family's visit was an opportunity to showcase the exceptional work of our employees and promote our region as a vacation destination.

Did you know that Sophie Grégoire Trudeau has a special relationship with Parks Canada? As an Honourary Guide, she helps more Canadian families to connect with Canada's nature and culture through Canada's national parks and national historic sites.



## 3. Working with you

### Partnership with the Gespeg Mi'kmaq Nation

As part of the "Indigenous Tourism, Experience and Story-Telling at Parks Canada Places" initiative and in cooperation with the Gespeg Mi'kmaq Nation, we created an Indigenous cultural interpretation program and held our first Mawiomi, which means "gathering" in Mi'kmaq. Visitors enjoyed activities showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the Mi'kmaq.

The event was held on August 9 to mark the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. More than 125 people attended the sunrise ceremony as the sun's orange glow illuminated the spectacular cliffs of the Bon Ami Cape. Traditional dancers then made a flamboyant entrance to the sound of drumbeats and songs, kicking off the day's festivities. Many different activities took place: typical pow-wow performances, a look inside an authentic tepee, traditional basketmaking, drum painting, etc. Over 800 participants were lucky enough to enjoy these unique experiences and be captivated by a Mawiomi at "Land's End."



## Winter partnership with Le Griffon Cultural Centre

For the past few years, the Greater Gaspé community has been able to enjoy winter in Forillon, thanks to our partnership with Le Griffon Cultural Centre.

The Centre and its team of volunteers have been maintaining the Le Portage and La Vallée ski and showshoe trails for a number of winters now. This year you can try a new 5 km loop in a mature maple grove located half way long the Le Portage trail. The loop is in addition to the existing 20 km trail.

Under the agreement the park provides free access to its trails, lends out trail grooming equipment, plows parking lots, and maintains service buildings and washroom facilities for skiers and snowshoers.

Our trails await you! For pricing information, visit the Le Griffon Cultural Centre's Facebook page.



## 4. Upgrading our park



Forillon National Park is investing in the future! Since 2009, nearly \$80 million have been invested to protect our shared treasures, upgrade our infrastructure, and enhance your park experience. A real facelift!!

Here are the main projects completed or underway:

Projects	Scheduled completion
Improvements to Route 132	Completed
Fort Peninsula Restoration	Completed
Campsite upgrades (Loop A, Petit-Gaspé)	Completed
Road bridge and footbridge inspections	Summer 2018
Restoration of the natural dynamics and the coastal ecosystem enhancement of at Cap-des-Rosiers	Summer 2018
Inspection of wastewater treatment systems and related repairs	Fall 2018
Cap-des-Rosiers harbour improvements	Spring 2019
Repairs to the Cap-Bon-Ami stairs and lookout	Spring 2019
Road resurfacing	Summer 2019
Interpretive centre renovations and upgrades	Winter 2020
Restoration of heritage buildings used by visitors	Winter 2020
Operational centre refurbishment	Winter 2020
Refurbishment of service buildings	Fall 2020

We make every effort to keep all this work from adversely affecting your Forillon experience. Temporary interruption of certain services and activities may however occur. For more information, visit our website : [parkscanada.gc.ca/forillon](http://parkscanada.gc.ca/forillon).

## Operation clean sweep

For the third consecutive year Forillon National Park partnered with the Green Brigade and the Town of Gaspé to get the public out for Operation clean sweep on May 27, 2017.

In total, 3,112 pieces of trash of all kinds were picked up in the park and elsewhere in the Greater Gaspé area. It's a great feeling when everyone works together to keep our community healthy!



## Stronger partnerships in 2017:

- Special events and athletic challenges in partnership with local organizations, including the Gaspé Festival Musique du Bout du Monde, Ultra-Trail du Bout du Monde and Traversées de la Gaspésie (TDLG) on skis, snowshoes, and on foot.
- Help with preparation of the Côte-de-Gaspé RCM 2017–2018 family planner.
- Ongoing collaboration with numerous local organizations: Town of Gaspé, Gespeg Mi'kmaq Nation, Chamber of Commerce and Tourism of Gaspé, Escale Gaspésie, Gaspésie Tourism, Musée de la Gaspésie, Rencontres internationales de la photographie en Gaspésie, Route de la Morue, Committee of People Expropriated From Forillon and Their Descendants, Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, Université du Québec à Rimouski and more. These partnerships help Forillon strengthen its ties with the community and provide the public with a wide range of unique and inspiring experiences.

# Brought to you by the Forillon dream team!

Day in, day out, Forillon's dedicated staff put their expertise and passion to work to protect and showcase our common heritage.

Forillon National Park's 104-member team is bolstered by an additional 63 students during the high season. Together they are the cornerstone of our organization and our most important asset.

Hélène Beaulieu • Luc Beaulieu • Olivier Bellemare  
Claude Bilodeau • André Blanchette • Anne Bouchard • Sylvain Bouchard  
François-Marie Boulay • Sophie Boulay • Steven Boulay • Ubald Boulay • Anthony Bourgaize  
Louise Braun • Josée Breton • Marie-Ève Briand • Nadia Brodeur • Serge Brodeur  
Maxime Cabot • Claudie Carignan • Jean-François Caron • Bobby Carrier • Anne-Marie Cauvier  
Marianne Chouinard • Stéphane Chouinard • Chantal Chrétien • Marise Cloutier  
Roxane Cormier • Antonin Côté • Josiane Côté • Mathieu Côté  
André Couture • Gratien Curadeau • Nancy Cyr • Norbert Denis • Émilie Desbois  
Mylène Després • Émilie Devoe • Josée Dion • Simon Dubois • Valère Dufresne  
Collin Dumaresq • Jean-David Dupuis • Geneviève Durocher • Luc Élement  
Maude Faulkner-Gendreau • Kerry Foley • Mathieu Fournier • Yvon Fournier • Benoit Gagnon  
Hélène Gagnon • Alain Gallant • Lucie Gallant • Rose Gervais • Daniel Guay  
Félix Guay-Vachon • Anaïs Houde-Tremblay • Solange Huard • Louise Huet  
Steve Jean • Laurent Jeannotte • Pierre Jeannotte • Charles Labbé  
Yves Lacasse • François-Olivier Lalonde • Catherine Lamoureux • Claire Lebel • Éric Leblanc  
Mario Lemieux • Geneviève Leroux • Serge Lucas • Richard Malouin • Julie Mercier  
Sébastien Nadeau • Danie Noël • Bruce O'Connor • Hugues Packwood  
Pierre Paradis • Karine Parenteau • Pierre Pelletier • Gerry Pipon  
Jeannot Preston • Cléo-Véronique Prince • Steve Pronovost • Michel Queenton  
Lorraine Rabey • Gilles Raymond • Marc-André Raymond • Lucie Roy  
Frédéric Sainte-Croix • Daniel Sigouin • Michelle Sinnott • Martin Smith  
Frédéric Ste-Croix • Kim-Ann Ste-Croix • Eliane Synnott • Isabelle Tailleux • Katry Tapp  
Danielle Tremblay • François Tremblay • Yannick Tremblay • Marie-Claude Trudel  
Marion Trudel • Igor Urban • Joseph Vignola



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