

Good practices for biodiversity

Wildlife passage in the urban environment



Denis Fournier

Habitat quality and connectivity

Maurice-Duplessis Boulevard has been extended over the past few years. It runs through a green corridor associated with the city's eastern green belt, which includes the upper portion of Pinel Creek. This corridor houses significant natural environments including a wooded border and wetlands.

To restore connectivity between habitats and ensure the safe movement of small wildlife, a 26-metre-long, culvert-type, two-level wildlife passage was created under the boulevard. A raised walkway allows species that prefer it to stay out of the water.

The common reed, a particularly invasive species, occupies a good part of the construction site. Approximately 600 native shrubs have been planted to block the incursion of reeds and enhance the area's biodiversity.

Visitors captured in action

The effectiveness of the passage has been demonstrated with the help of intelligent infrared cameras: many animals use the culvert (including the long-tailed weasel and the eastern milk snake, a species of Special Concern in Canada and likely to be designated threatened or vulnerable in Quebec. The cameras have also demonstrated the use of vegetation added at the entrances to the passage by, among others, the gray catbird, the chipping sparrow and the eastern chipmunk.



Tips for project success

- Promote upstream consultation among experts to integrate diverse concerns (accessibility, security, engineering, conservation, aesthetics, etc.);
- Document wildlife movement inside the passage to confirm its effectiveness;
- Take advantage of opportunities offered by construction work to green up nearby degraded spaces and combat invasive species.

This initiative contributes to the 2030 biodiversity objectives, particularly:

- land management to promote connectivity and environmental integrity (target 1);
- the control of invasive alien species (target 3);
- the integration of biodiversity protection into planning processes (target 13); and
- the availability of reliable and up-to-date information for effective management (target 18).

* 2030 Action Targets set in the Zero Draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework