

BPQ to Host Nature Canada Conference

"St. Lawrence Rendezvous"

12 - 15 June 2008

It's only six months away, so it's full-steam ahead for the conference steering committee, as we arrange comfortable accommodations, book first-class speakers, plan exciting field trips, and try to anticipate the many details that go into creating a well-organized, satisfying conference.

The theme, St. Lawrence Rendezvous, gives us lots of scope and a focus that is close to the hearts of all Montrealers, indeed all Canadians. We'll explore the natural and social history of the river, gateway to the country for most Canadian families of this and earlier generations.

It's an exciting opportunity for members of Bird Protection Quebec to meet and get to know enthusiastic naturalists from British Columbia to Newfoundland, introducing them to our best birding spots and encouraging them to explore our vibrant, colourful city.

Plan on spending the mid-June weekend at the conference. And pray for good weather!

Nature Canada AGM

The focus of the conference is the Annual General Meeting of Nature Canada, which will be held on Sunday morning, 15 June. Mark Dorfman, Chair, and Julie Gelfand, President, will bring us up-to-date on Nature Canada's activities and the Douglas H. Pimlott Award will be presented to a renowned conservationist. And, as at all AGMs, Directors will be elected.

A Green Conference

In keeping with BPQ's mission and nature-friendly goals, we'll be making the conference as "green" as we can, with fair trade coffee, reusable china and linens and recycling bins everywhere and buses instead of multiple cars for the field trips. Have you any other ideas? Please let us have them.

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you keen and eager? Want to help with this exciting conference? We will definitely need people to do specific jobs as time goes by. Here are some ideas:

- ◆ help with the silent auction;
- ◆ help with the registration/hospitality;
- ◆ help with field trips (we want a ratio of one leader per eight participants);
- ◆ sign-making, table decorating for banquet, other artistic talents;
- ◆ work on printed program;
- ◆ other.

If you want to be part of the action, email Eve Marshall at: eve.george@sympatico.ca.



ST. LAWRENCE RENDEZVOUS



A First Look at the Program

The location we have chosen for the conference is McGill's New Residence Hall, a very high-class, but affordable student residence, formerly the Renaissance Hotel on Park Avenue at Milton. Visitors can stay in the comfortable guest rooms, and participants from Montreal will find it very convenient to the metro and bus. There's a parking garage right next door. The meeting rooms will suit our size of conference very well.

The program for the conference has already been set in outline. We'll start on Thursday evening, 12 June, with a reception and registration for all participants - cash bar and free tasty goodies.

Friday is Speakers' Day. It will begin with an early morning trip to see the birds at Mount Royal Cemetery. After breakfast, we'll have two plenary speakers, in English, with instantaneous translation. Afternoon plans call for two sets of concurrent speakers, with some talks in English, some in French. The plenary speakers will be established experts on the natural and social history of the River; the concurrent speakers will be able to explore smaller, more specific subjects in greater depth. With three speaking at once, in different rooms, of course, the choice may be agonizing - whales, birds, or plants; amphibians or geology?

Saturday is Field Trip Day and the people in charge have come up with several intriguing variations on the theme of Our Favourite Birding Spots. For instance, we'll take a boat from Lachine to Châteauguay (pelagic birding?) and Île St. Bernard, and we'll combine several destinations such as

Huntingdon and Dundee to give us full day trips of excellent birding and botanic exploration.

On the social scene, Friday night offerings will include a delicious dinner on a boat from the Old Port, Le Festin du Gouverneur and a barbecue supper on campus. The closing banquet will be held on Saturday night, with entertainment and a fine speaker.



New Residence Hall, site of the 2008 Nature Canada conference.

Alphabet Soup What's in a Name?

BPQ/PQSPB - NC/CNF

By whatever name or acronym we call them, Bird Protection Quebec and Nature Canada have a long mutual history and thus it is fitting that the two organizations join together once again to celebrate nature at the 38th annual conference and AGM of Nature Canada in Montreal in June 2008.

Bird Protection Quebec (operational name of the Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds, founded in January 1917) was one of the founders of Nature Canada (NC), formerly Canadian Nature Federation. The two organizations have similar missions and have had many links over the years. With George Montgomery (BPQ President 1950-54) leading the charge, BPQ supported NC during its early precarious days with moral and financial support. BPQ was honoured to host NC's 9th AGM at Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue in 1979, for which Fraser and Muriel Cliff (long keepers of BPQ scrap-books) baked muffins, and for which Bob Weeds (then a rookie BPQ member) drove and drove for Mabel McIntosh, BPQ field-trip leader par excellence.

BPQ was further honoured to participate in NC's 21st AGM in Quebec City in 1992, hosted heroically and most successfully in both French and English by *Nature Quebec*, formerly *Union québécoise de la conservation de la nature*, formed in 1981.

We are proud of our members who have served NC as officers and Directors since its inception: **Bob Carswell**, BPQ President 1976-79 and honorary Vice-President *sine die*, a founding director of NC in 1971 for which, amongst his many other conservation achievements, Bob received the Douglas H. Pimlott Award in 1999, Nature Canada's highest conservation award; **Lance Laviolette**, BPQ immediate past Vice-President, long NC secretary; **Richard Yank**, BPQ President 1990-92, twice elected to serve on the board of NC; **Ken Thorpe**, BPQ President 1992-95, and Treasurer for many years, current Treasurer of Nature Canada.

Nature Canada traces its beginnings back to a small local Toronto organization in the late 1930s. It evolved into a proactive national organization in 1971. In its immediate future - its June 2008 conference in Montreal. Bird Protection Quebec looks forward to welcoming Nature Canada and all its constituent members to its 38th conference and AGM in Montreal next June.

For More Information

Details and costs of the conference and trips will be posted on the website, as they are settled. Visit the website: www.pqspb.org/NCconf_2008/nc08_home.htm or go to BPQ's website and click on *Other News Items* to find the link to the initial flyer. Bookmark it today.

