



ÎLES DE CONTRECOEUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE AREA



Îles de Contrecoeur National Wildlife Area in Spring

What makes Îles de Contrecoeur NWA so special?

Îles de Contrecoeur National Wildlife Area (NWA) was created in 1981 to conserve a remarkable network of breeding habitats for waterfowl in the Montréal area. This 300-hectare protected area is located in the St. Lawrence River near the city of Contrecoeur, about 50 kilometres northeast of Montréal. The NWA consists of 22 low-lying islands and alluvial islets surrounded by marshes and grassbeds, most of which are fully submerged during spring flooding. With its grassy plains, the NWA is

- a resting and feeding area for the **Canada Goose**, **Common Goldeneye** and many other bird species during migration;
- the most important nesting site in Quebec for the **Gadwall**, and frequented by other breeding species such as the **Northern Pintail** and **American Wigeon**;

- home to other birds such as the **American Bittern**, **Marsh Wren** and **Wilson's Snipe**, as well as a colony of **Ring-billed Gulls**;
- habitat for over 200 plant species, 80 bird species and a dozen mammal species.

Situated in a metropolitan area, this wildlife area faces increasing challenges such as land development, water pollution, island erosion, and invasion by alien plant species. Environment Canada is protecting this natural environment and the species that depend on it.

What are Environment Canada Protected Areas?

Environment Canada establishes marine and terrestrial NWAs for the purposes of conservation,

research and interpretation. NWAs are established to protect migratory birds, species at risk, and other wildlife and their habitats. NWAs are established under the authority of the *Canada Wildlife Act* and are, first and foremost, places for wildlife. Migratory Bird Sanctuaries (MBSs) are established under the authority of the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, and provide a refuge for migratory birds in marine and terrestrial environments. The current Protected Areas Network consists of 54 NWAs and 92 MBSs comprising more than 12 million hectares across Canada.

What can I do at Îles de Contrecoeur NWA?

Access to this wildlife area is prohibited to protect birds nesting in the archipelago from disturbances caused by human activity. However, the hunting of migratory birds in the NWA is permitted in the fall in accordance with current regulations.



Gadwall



American Bittern

Who can I contact?

Environment Canada – Quebec Region
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Where is Îles de Contrecoeur NWA?



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