

URBANATURE EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Word from the President

For 2021-2022, I really was not expecting that much. There was a lot of uncertainty regarding COVID restrictions and I was reluctant to go out and seek contracts which might consequently simply have to be cancelled. Imagine how surprised I was when groups and organizations started asking us to do both online and in-person events! Apparently, all the COVID restrictions and closures made people hungry for nature, whether it was an online Earth Day with the *Table de Concertation de l'Ouest de l'Île* or an in-person activity in the falaise or anything in between.

Many simply wanted to know about nature, get outside, and forget about COVID for a while.

We started what is growing into a long-term partnership with Emma Despland of the biology department of Concordia University thanks to Margaret Guest of Marc Garneau's office (MP: NDG-Westmount). In this vein, we are currently looking at our second summer of co-mentored students from Canada Summer Jobs.

UrbaNature is taking its place in the community. I am sitting on the Community Service Initiatives round table established by Concordia professor Dave McKenzie for some of the organizations which benefited from his MBA students. I really felt honoured to be included. It is a great mixture of groups large and small, new and old; all the members are the directors. UrbaNature has also become a member of the NDG Community Council's *Table de Quartier* and we had a great meeting with the new mayor of CDN-NDG, Gracia Kasoki Katahwa, and with Despina Sourias, the new city councillor for Loyola. UrbaNature has also taken its place on the table of the West end Intergenerational Network (WIN), which has a huge number of partners, many of whom are partnering with us on a Canadian Heritage grant.

I have been working on the philanthropic part of UrbaNature and was chosen to receive a bursary from the Association of Fundraising Professionals. This led to me acquiring Laureen Bardou, Senior Director, Philanthropy at *Fondation du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal*, as a mentor. Her first piece of advice was that UrbaNature needs to become a registered charity. I had heard all kinds of horror stories about this process and had been procrastinating, but also recognized that, as an organization, we cannot go further in our fundraising without the ability to issue tax receipts.



So, in late summer 2021, we submitted our application. From what I understand, the Charities Directorate should start looking at it this month! And UrbaNature has gone national! I was asked to give a talk for the retired teachers association RTOERO (Retired Teachers of Ontario/les enseignants retraités de l'Ontario) on Earth Day 2021 which was broadcasted Canada-wide!

If you would like to see it you can find it at this link: <https://rtoero.ca/webinar-our-earth-our-responsibility/>. An article about UrbaNature and Sauvons la falaise! will be also appearing in *Beside Magazine's* spring 2022 edition!

Last and best, I was chosen from many worthy candidates across Canada for the Nature Inspiration Award, given out by the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa. It was awarded for my part in helping create the 7th *grand parc* on the Island of Montreal, *grand parc de l'éco territoire de la falaise*. This award not only got UrbaNature into the news, but it also comes with a \$5,000 prize which UrbaNature intends to use to subsidize activities with worthy underserved organizations on all sides of the falaise St. Jacques. I really feel that I have gone up a level! On a sad note, my cousin Erna Paris, who nominated me for the Nature Inspiration Award, died early in 2022 of breast cancer.

So, despite initial uncertainty, 2021-2022, has materialized as our best year yet! We have now started an amazing spring season in 2022 with spring break snowshoeing in the falaise. This activity is with a new partner in the Walkley Center and our ongoing partner, the St. Raymond Center. I would like to thank Kathleen Weil (MNA: NDG) for her ongoing support of UrbaNature through the SAB (support for volunteer action program) grant which has funded this. We are also continuing our relationships with the YMCA's C-Vert and WWF's Wild Outside programs. We are looking forward to hearing from Canada Summer jobs about this year's students and our further partnerships with Concordia. And there is a Heritage Canada grant in the mix!



About UrbaNature

Our Mission:

We teach environmental education in urban and suburban settings. We facilitate the human connection with Nature, wherever it is found, ensuring our programs are available to all, especially vulnerable populations.

Our Vision:

For nature-based learning to be a normal part of education throughout life; for everybody to experience and recognize the benefits of connecting with Nature on a daily basis for their minds, bodies and souls.

Activities, programming & curriculum

- Nature discovery and connection programming
- Day camp programming
- Yoga & Meditation
- Teambuilding and leadership training for groups of all ages
- Teacher & School staff professional development
- Outdoor Council of Canada accreditation.

Our Team

Lisa Mintz



Lisa Mintz is an environmentalist, fundraiser and community organizer. In the past 8 years she has been part of many important undertakings to save greenspaces in Montreal. She is a founding member of Sauvons l'Anse à l'Orme which has succeeded in creating the largest municipal park in Canada, the Grand Parc de l'Ouest, in the West Island. Lisa also spent several years working to save the Technoparc St. Laurent wetlands, a project which is now bearing fruit.

Most notably, Lisa, with her silent partner John Symon created Sauvons la falaise! This group has worked very hard to create the 7th grand parc on the Island of Montreal, grand parc de l'éco territoire de la falaise St. Jacques, currently under construction in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) and the Southwest of Montreal. Lisa received the Nature Inspiration Award in 2021 for her work on this important project. This is a Canada-wide award presented by the Canadian Museum of Nature, and comes with a \$5,000 award to be donated to an environmental organization.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHC9oK-j4ZI>

Lisa was mentored as a fundraising professional by Helen Fortin, then Executive Director of the Fraser Hickson Library, now retired, while she was working as a librarian. She has been working in the capacity of fundraiser and events organizer for the past 7 years at Parkinson Canada.

Lisa has brought the partnerships she started while saving the falaise to UrbaNature. She has led many educational walks, citizen science activities, cleanups and more, in green spaces. Delighting in introducing people of all ages to the joys of nature, Lisa is currently teaching environmental education programs in the falaise St. Jacques and other urban green spaces. She believes in experiential learning and feels that nature is the best classroom a person can have!

Lisa is a certified Kundalini Yoga teacher and sees yoga and meditation as a fantastic way to connect to ourselves and to Nature. As a passionate volunteer and implicated community member, she is a past board member of NDG Community Council, presently on the board of Green Coalition, and a regular member of several other groups. She is also an avid stone carver and a passionate birdwatcher.

Lisa is the Executive Director of UrbaNature Education.

Holly McIntyre



Holly McIntyre is an educator with over 15 years of experience in outdoor and experiential education. She is a certified elementary teacher in Ontario and Quebec, and has taught at all levels of education, particularly at the CEGEP level. Her passion in education is creating opportunities for place-based and contextual learning that allows students to connect to their environment and community.

Holly is also an outdoor instructor and a trainer with the Outdoor Council of Canada. Her experience teaching outdoor and adventure education, combined with her

experience as an educator, allows her a unique perspective into the needs of teachers and schools wishing to incorporate more outdoor learning into their programs.

Returning to Montreal after 12 years in Gaspé, Holly is excited about helping people discover and appreciate the Nature that we find all around us, even in the city! Holly's research for her Master's of Education explored how the use of outdoor learning can contribute to the well-being of teachers.

Holly is a co-founder of UrbaNature Education.

John Symon



John grew up on Vancouver Island and backpacked around the world as a young adult before coming to Montreal for his university education in the 1980s.

After earning diplomas from l'Université de Montréal (geography) and Concordia (MBA), John stayed in Montreal to found a family (today he has three adult children).

John also wrote a series of best-selling guidebooks for places to take kids in Montreal and Ottawa. He also wrote a book about bicycling in Montreal in collaboration with Robert "Bicycle Bob" Silverman, and worked for many years as a freelance journalist.

John has been involved with the environmental movement since the early 1970s and twice ran as a candidate for the Quebec Green Party. Today, John works as a school bus driver and is writing a biography of Robert Silverman.

John is the treasurer of UrbaNature Education.

Jean-Pierre Duford



Jean-Pierre is a resident of LaSalle, a professional horticulturist employed by the South West Borough as a gardener. He is also a very involved citizen and a member of Sauvons la falaise!, Projet Montréal and the Green Party of Quebec. Jean-Pierre also cultivates a community garden and makes his compost there. For all these reasons he supports UrbaNature, a community action which sensitizes people to environmental issues.

Jean-Pierre is the secretary of UrbaNature Education.

David Gamper



David Gamper grew up in London, later moving to Geneva in the early 1990s and has lived in Montreal for the last ten years, a city which he loves.

David has always been interested in nature, which he learnt to admire through hill and mountain-walking.

Advocating for nature in urban areas is close to his heart both in London and Montreal where it is both under threat and surprisingly healthy when given a little help!

David has always loved outdoor activities and observing nature. He was interested in nature from an early age through hill and mountain-walking, an interest encouraged by his grandfather who was a climber and which he continued when he had his own family.

Advocating for nature in urban areas is close to his heart from experience in central London where it is both under threat and surprisingly healthy when given a little help!

Lianne Barnes



Lianne Barnes is a recent graduate of a Public Relations certificate at McGill University, in addition to her Bachelor's degree in Communication Studies from Concordia. Lianne has always committed her professional career to Montreal-based start-ups, now working at an online marketplace, supporting the movement of plant and tree materials.

In her free time, Lianne enjoys yoga and cycling. Travelling is also an important aspect of her life, having travelled to over 37 countries! She's always been passionate about climate issues, now more than ever. With a heartfelt mission to make a better future for our younger generations, and contribute to climate change, being a part of UrbaNature is a perfect first step.

Samantha D'Urbano

A recent graduate of the MBA program at the John Molson School of Business, I have had the opportunity to work on a semester-long course project consulting for UrbaNature Education in 2020. The project spoke to me as the stressful events of the year had led me to truly appreciate the soothing effects of the nature that surrounds us all. Having professional experience in Human Resources, the mandate was a perfect fit: to review and recommend a governance structure that would enable UrbaNature to support and achieve its mission. As I continue to work in an HR capacity for a fast-paced e-commerce business, I look forward to getting more involved in my passion project, by contributing to my community and supporting a goal that speaks volumes.



Activities 2021- 2022

St. Raymond Community Centre Collaboration

UrbaNature's collaboration with the St. Raymond's Community Centre involved three 1.5-hour workshops per day, at two-week intervals, from July to August 2021. This collaboration allowed us to provide nature-based programming to 54 local youth between the ages of 6 and 12.

Two UrbaNature staff designed and ran the programs, assisted by the two counsellors.

Objectives of the program

- To encourage the kids to:
- Explore and engage with nearby nature and the pollination process
- Spend the day outside, actively exploring their environment
- Work together and interact with different natural organisms

Benefits of the program:



- Meeting with groups on more than one occasion allowed for continuity and reinforcement of learning.
- The Pollinator Scavenger Hunt and Soil Exploration activities allowed the kids to explore the diversity of organisms in the urban park.
- Planting bean seeds and caring for their plants allowed the kids to consider the pollination process, and encouraged responsibility.
- Tree Identification and Age Estimating engaged kids with trees the characteristics that make them so different and intriguing. The kids were quite interested in trying to find the youngest and oldest trees in the park.

Temple Emmanu-El Beth Sholom and Ruelle Shul



Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in Westmount, is the oldest reform synagogue in Canada, having been incorporated in 1883. The partnership with

the Temple has been ongoing since 2020 and is continuing to grow. In the fall, a second teacher training was held in order to support Torah School teachers in developing an outdoor learning curriculum. This training was appreciated by all and allowed teachers to bring many of their Torah teachings outside in the fall.

In February, to celebrate Tu B'shevat, the "birthday of all trees", an in-program was planned for the whole Torah school. Due to COVID, we adapted the program to an online version. We had planned both in person and online versions, this being the new normal for event planning. Tu B'shevat was the biggest event we have done (50 students) and we were able to pay 4 educators to run it.

We also did a Tu B'shvat activity with our new partners with Ruelle Shul, a very interesting Jewish group which is not connected with a synagogue and creates fun and entertaining activities for their members. Cantor Heather and a group of 15 members did a walk in the falaise with a moving Tu B'shvat seder which consisted of prayers and contemplations at different parts of the path along with the consumption of the appropriate fruit. Lisa and Louise Chenevert led the walk, Louise being our resident tree and flora specialist.

Rabbi Ellen Greenspan from the Temple also joined Lisa and Marc Antoine to see a murder on the falaise. This popular activity gathered 15 people and 5 kids on a very cold day. There is a large group, or murder, of crows which roost on the falaise in the winter and we went to see if we could find them. Lisa talked about crow behaviour and winter birds and we had a great day of winter fun.

We are looking forward to ongoing collaboration with both the Temple and Ruelle Shul!



Cleanups with Sauvons la falaise

This summer, UrbaNature Education and Sauvons la falaise held two cleanups of the falaise St. Jacques.

The first, funded by Park People, was held in April and 75 participants came over 2 days. Groups were scheduled for blocks of time due to COVID regulations and all precautions were taken to make this a safe and inclusive event. Participating groups included: the Boys and Girl Scouts of NDG -Westmount, C- Vert of NDG & the Sud Ouest, the Montreal Bicycle Club, the Rotary Clubs of Westmount & Montreal Ouest as well as many individual volunteers. Everyone showed their love for this hidden jewel, the Falaise St



Jacques. Our efforts help this urban forest recover from the environmental damage caused by neglect and reconstruction of the Turcot. Cleanup also instill an appreciation of the creatures and plants who inhabit this precious natural space. In all we collected:

- 130 tires
- 1 electric stove
- 3 mattresses 2 sofas, 1 of which was burnt
- 2 computers
- 3 car bumpers
- 1 golf club
- 1 propane tank
- Innumerable!!! bags of debris

The weight of the tires alone equaled 1.75 tons or slightly more than the weight of an average midsize car. People left the event with a renewed sense of community spirit, which like the falaise included representatives of several boroughs and towns.



Saturday October 23 and Sunday October 24, from 9-5pm, a group of about 30-40 people headed into the St Jacques Falaise for the fall cleanup. As this was just before the municipal elections, NDG and the Southwest borough candidates joined the team of hard-working volunteers, along with Global TV and CTV News cameras.



Holly Heidinger, Joe Ortona and others represented Ensemble Montreal, and Despina Sourias, Anne-Marie Sigouin and Peter McQueen represented Projet Montreal. Romeau Alam, independent candidate for the Loyola district and several others were present. All commented on the state of the St Jacques Falaise. Lisa provided an in-depth tour and information session to the potential borough leaders on the progress of Dalle Parc and Parc de l'écoterritoire de la falaise. The clean up day received a media segment on CTV News on October 23rd, by videographer Iman Kassam, featuring our very own Lisa Mintz.

According to a Sauvons la Falaise tally, the team collected 219 tires, 5 shopping carts, and countless bags of garbage. The city has started to slowly but surely remove the garbage and tires stacked on the Western and Central access roads.

Summer Students

For the first time, UrbaNature applied for and was granted, funding to hire 2 summer students through the Canada Summer Jobs program.

Caroline Lesage was hired as a program coordinator and used her time at UrbaNature to create lesson plans and full programs on a wide variety of topics. These lessons can now be used by UrbaNature educators to deliver programs in schools, day camps, and other venues.



Caroline also had the opportunity to teach some of her programs to the St. Raymond's day camp kids during three days of nature-based programming over the summer. UrbaNature would like to thank Caroline for her contribution to our teaching resources and for providing a solid foundation for future programming from UrbaNature.



Marc-Antoine Poulin, a student in biology from Concordia, was originally hired to do a butterfly and moth survey of the falaise St. Jacques but it turned out that he wanted to deliver programming as well. In the spring he developed and delivered events on his own such as night time firefly and moth walks in the Falaise. These were very popular and appreciated! Marc-Antoine also assisted Holly and Caroline doing programming with the St. Raymond's and Explorations day camps. He also helped Lisa out with programming for the C-Vert and Wild Outside environmental leadership programs, among others.

Marc-Antoine discovered many hidden treasures in the falaise. He found that there were bats by the access road and that there was the same abundance of butterflies in the falaise as you would find in a much larger forest like Mount Royal. Link to MA's report Marc Antoine has continued to deliver programming with us during the year, and is slated to be the student supervisor for the Canada Summer Jobs students in the summer of 2022.

Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) & Sustainable Youth Canada (SYC)



Twenty teens from CWF's Wild Outside Program and staff members from CWF, SYC and UrbaNature met in September in the falaise St. Jacques for a full day of programming.

This included a walk in the falaise with many stops to introduce new flora and fauna to the participants of the Wild Outside Program. Marc Antoine had all the participants enthralled with his knowledge and

interesting stories about different insects we found on the way.

After the walk and a stop at the Falaiseasaur to have lunch, we split up and did a teambuilding exercise with Sustainable Youth Canada. The winning team was the one who built the tallest free- standing structure out of found materials.

To end, there were two talks about how the teens could make a difference. Lisa presented her 10 steps to saving the world and the members of Sustainable Youth talked about different programs they had implemented in various schools. It was a super fun day and everyone left feeling inspired and satisfied.



C-Vert

Our relationship with C-Vert predates even the creation of UrbaNature. We have been partners in bringing future environmental leaders to the falaise St. Jacques since 2015, when the first group read their declaration for the environment at the crow rock in the falaise. You can find the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LN6jhoSq5Kg> Gianni, featured in the video came back as a staff member in 2021! Big thanks to Patrick Barnard for this video!


During the summer of 2021, C-Vert Sud Ouest and NDG both participated in the falaise Cleanup, and Lisa Mintz gave online talks about the falaise and UrbaNature to both groups. 15 youths from C-Vert NDG did a bird walk with Lisa as a guide and Marc Antoine led a butterfly walk, a firefly walk, and other activities on the falaise.




We are looking forward to a great spring/summer season and introducing a new crop of teens to the falaise in 2022!

FINANCIAL REPORTS

COMPARAISON DES FLUX DE TRÉSORERIE 2020 vs. 2021 CASH FLOW COMPARISON

 COMPARAISON DES FLUX DE TRÉSORERIE 2020 vs. 2021 CASH FLOW COMPARISON				
		3/1/2020- 2/28/2021	3/1/2021- 2/28/2022	INCREASE/DECREASE
				AUG./DIM.
ENTRÉES DE FONDS	INFLOWS			
FRAIS FACTURÉS	FEES CHARGED	\$ 250.00	\$ 1,185.81	\$ 935.81
DONS REÇUS	DONATIONS RECEIVED	\$ -	\$ 901.00	\$ 901.00
SUBVENTIONS	GRANTS	\$ 5,561.65	\$ 11,643.85	\$ 6,082.20
REVENUS DES MEMBRES	MEMBERSHIP REVENUES	\$ 335.00	\$ 121.00	\$ 1,286.00
ÉVÉNEMENTS SPÉCIAUX	SPECIAL EVENTS	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
ENTRÉES TOTALES	TOTAL INFLOWS	\$ 6,146.65	\$ 15,351.66	\$ 9,205.01
SORTIES	OUTFLOWS			
FRAIS BANCAIRES	BANK CHARGES	\$ 35.00	\$ 27.50	\$ 7.50
DIVERS	MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 64.00	\$ 12.80	\$ 51.20
ABONNEMENTS	SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$ 264.50	\$ 330.00	-\$ 65.50
FOURNITURES	SUPPLIES	\$ 951.04	\$ 329.95	\$ 621.09
SALAIRES	WAGES	\$ 3,840.00	\$ 11,031.30	-\$ 7,191.30
SORTIES TOTALES	TOTAL OUTFLOWS	\$ 5,154.54	\$ 11,731.55	-\$ 6,577.01
TOTAL GLOBAL	OVERALL TOTAL	\$ 992.11	\$ 3,620.11	\$ 2,628.00

OPERATING BUDGET 2022-2023

 Operating Budget fiscal 2022		
Description	Total	Notes
Expenditures		
Salaries and Wages	24000	Summer students, teachers
administration	4000	
First Aid training	1000	For teachers and board members
Insurance	1900	
Marketing Expenses	5000	Website, flyers, facebook, zoom
Professional Fees and Service	1000	Translation
Website	500	Wix, Go Daddy
Travel	1000	Automobile travel expenses for teachers
Training	1000	
Bank, membership and other fees	100	
Professional Membership Fees	900	AFP, Outdoor Council of Canada
Misc	1100	
Total Expenses	41500	
Income		
Federal Government Grants	20000	Canadian Heritage
Municipal, Quebec Grants	1000	SAB
Foundation Grants	5000	Nature Inspiration Award
Revenues from Programming	3000	
CSJ Grant	10000	2 students
Special Events	1000	5km swim - Lisa,
Private Donations	1000	
Membership fees	500	
Total Income	41500	

Coming in 2022

- City Nature Challenge with Canadian Wildlife Federation's Wild Outside Program
- Programming with C-Vert
- 6 summer students (TBD)!
- Papa et moi in the falaise
- Charitable Status for UrbaNature!
- Activities with underserved NDG organizations funded by SAB
- Activities with underserved organizations in areas on all the borders of the falaise funded by the Nature Inspiration award money and possibly Arc'teryx
- Canadian Heritage Grant to create an intergenerational audiovisual history of the falaise St. Jacques

If you have some programming you would like us to help you with or partner with you in please let Lisa or Holly know!



A big thank you to our partners:



Programme
Plein Air
Interculturel

COALITION
CLIMAT
MONTREAL



Les amis du
parc Angrignon

Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Québec

