

Biodiversity of Chelsea

"... we must protect species because they are working parts of our life-support system."

Renown American Ecologist, Paul Ehrlich



Photo: Suzanne Gibeault

The Municipality of Chelsea is comprised of approximately 30,000 acres. Chelsea is bordered by Gatineau River to the east, Gatineau Park to the west, Wakefield to the north, and the city of Gatineau to the South.

Chelsea exists within the Mixedwood Plain Ecozone and the St. Lawrence lowlands Ecoregion. The ecoregion is characterized by warm summers and cold snowy winters. Average annual precipitation ranges from 800-1000 mm. Elevation in the region rarely exceeds 152 m above sea level. The region's geology is underlain by flat-lying Paleozoic strata that lie upon the crystalline rocks of the Canadian Shield. The dominant soil type is Gleysolic, which occurs on level, poorly drained, clayey deposits.



Photo: Suzanne Gibeault

Mixedwood forests comprised of sugar maple, yellow birch, eastern hemlock, and eastern white pine dominate the region. American beech occurs on warmer sites, and on dry sites, red pine, eastern white cedar, and red oak occurs. Wetter sites support red maple, black ash, white spruce, tamarack, and eastern white cedar.

Rare and Threatened species

Chelsea is in Qu**e**bec's most temperate south, where many southern species reach the northern limit of their range. They are rare and imperilled due to the fact that they are confined to relatively small area in Canada, and are significantly affected by human activities. Click on the links below for a list of rare and threatened species that exist in Chelsea.

Wildlife Movement Corridors

Many kinds of wildlife require connected corridors for movement. A wildlife corridor is a landscape linkage between natural areas that facilitates movement of animals between these natural areas. Here are several wildlife movement corridors in Chelsea, particularly between Gatineau Park and the Gatineau River. The habitat within and adjacent to Chelsea Creek and Meech Creek are examples of wildlife movement corridors.

Wildlife corridors facilitate juvenile dispersal, seasonal migration, and movement within an animal's home range. These roles enhance population survival. Animals that use corridors include species that can easily move through a corridor in a day, such as a red fox or a white-tailed deer, as well as species with limited dispersal ability that take several days to several generations to pass through a corridor. These species must be able to live in the corridor for extended periods. Therefore, the corridor must provide most or all of the species needs. Such corridor dwellers include most plants, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and small mammals.

In addition to facilitating movements, wildlife corridors allow some animals to avoid predation, provide a fire escape route, and help to accommodate for changes in habitat due to climate change.