

Country	Canada
Region/Province/ or State	Quebec
Web Address	<a href="http://www.centrenature.qc.ca">http://www.centrenature.qc.ca</a>
Date Founded	1978
Size (hectares)	1100
Distinguishing Features	Monteregien hill
Main Industries (in terms of employment)	Tourism, Agriculture

A non-profit conservation organization, the Nature Center seeks to inspire and encourage people and organizations to invest with it in the conservation of the natural habitats of Mont Saint-Hilaire and the Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO) . Since 1972, the Nature Center has been working with McGill University to host and offer the 300,000 visitors to the Gault Nature Reserve a network of 25 kilometers of trails, as well as a wood bridge accessible to people with limited mobility. In any season, there is hiking and in winter, there is snowshoeing. Thanks to the participation of many partners, volunteers and donors, the Nature Center has increased the protected area of Mont Saint-Hilaire by almost 50%. Click here to know the composition of the board of directors.

Reference:<http://www.centrenature.qc.ca/informations/informations.html>

This large quiet hill with rounded contours, lying on the edge of the Richelieu River, bears the prestigious title, granted by Unesco in 1978: “First Biosphere Reserve in Canada”. It deserves this distinction because of the exceptional quality of its forest and the plants and animals that live there. As you set foot on the trails of the mountain, you find the same rich and quiet forest that Samuel de Champlain contemplated while sailing in a rowboat on the Richelieu in 1609 en route to the rapids of Chambly. He had then called the mountain “Mount Fort”.

But between the passage of Champlain and today, the mountain has had a turbulent history. For 150 years, from 1745 to 1900, a village buzzing with energy lodged on its southern flank. For 50 years, between 1840 and 1890, its trails and peaks echoed the prayers of pilgrims and the voices of tourists. It was then put on sale as a woodlot between 1890 and 1913, to finally be “saved” and find peace in 1913, thanks to the generosity of a rich young soldier, in love with nature.

In other words, she missed it beautifully, our mountain. After long adventures, she found the beauty and peace of her beginnings. It took little if it became, like other coveted mountains, a development of luxury housing, where opulent houses and prestigious condos replace the greenery. One hundred years ago, we almost lost the last vestige of the magnificent forest that covered the area when Champlain arrived. Today, this mountain gives energy and pleasure to some 300,000 visitors of all ages.

Reference: <http://www.centrenature.qc.ca/montagne/histoire.html>