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It's autumn again in Ottawa but this long weekend turned out really warm and nice and dry - for this time of year. With it being Thanksgiving weekend it was busy everywhere with people walking their dogs, children, parents, uncles, and more distant relatives. Still we decided to join the masses of Ottawans who always go for weekend walks along the many marked paths in the Gatineau Park.

Here is a link to the park website so you can see more about where the park is and also more professional photos!

[Link to Gatineau Park](#)

Gatineau Park



It was a beautiful day - nice and warm around 25 celsius - in Gatineau Park. We parked at Lac Meech (P12) and slogged our way up the relatively steep escarpment to the old Ridge Road. The leaves had many colours although most were yellow and light green. We'd missed most of the deep red maple leaves which now lay rotting on the ground.



Make room for the mushrooms! It is always fun to look for mushrooms even if we are not the brave types that try to pick and eat any of them. They're just fun and "crazy-looking" (to quote Jake Harper and his view on anteaters). Here are some little mushrooms, a couple of stern white ones, and one really pretty one - at least pretty from a toad's eye view.

By the way, we didn't see any anteaters... it was all squirrels, squirrels, squirrels. Not even a deer or a bear.





We came across this fun looking plant. It turns out that it is a common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*). It was very well organized for photos because there were multiple plants nearby at different stages of development. From a nice green pod through flowers poking out and then cotton-like seeds bursting to fly away and do their job.



Some of the trees we saw appeared to be in some distress. One was just pecked through by Woody Woodpecker and another one seemed to have exploded from within - like in the Alien movies? And many had just given up and fallen over. Nice for the bugs though. Plenty to munch on in this forest.



At one point along the Ridge Road path there is a nice bench with a view over the Ottawa Valley from the Eardley Escarpment. We enjoyed the view and our packed lunch consisting of peanut butter sandwiches, yoghurt, chocolate milk, and nuts and raisins. Yum.

Around Town



Since we're lazy and don't always feel like driving across the Ottawa River to Gatineau Park, we often end up walking around town. There is plenty to see with a loop past the locks connecting the Rideau Canal to the Ottawa River (middle photo)... and then slogging up the many stairs from the Ottawa River path to Parliament Hill (left and right photo).

In the photo below we are taking in the sun in Major's Hill Park with the Parliament buildings in the background. We often take our garden chairs to this spot in the park and read our books. Sometimes we even bring lunch. It is a nice spot to relax and watch people going for walks with and without dogs.



**Hild
October 2011**

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