

Science North's Animal Ambassador, Kash the beaver, to move to new beaver community

Later this month, Science North will permanently relocate one of their most recognized Animal Ambassadors Kash (Kashkuanashku-Innu for "it is foggy/cloudy") the beaver to a CAZA (Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums) facility where he will join other beavers under human care.

Kash came to Science North in 2016, born under human care at Le Zoo Sauvage de St. Félicien. The decision to relocate Kash to a new home where he could join a social group of fellow beavers in a more expansive environment was driven by the evolving social needs he experienced while transitioning into his adult life stage.

Science North has had the privilege of being a part of Kash's development since he joined Science North's Animal Ambassadors as a 4 month old kit. Science North visitors, both in person and online, have enjoyed being a part of the journey of Kash's daily life, growth, and development, while learning about beavers and their incredible skills and adaptations. You can watch highlight videos of Kash here: <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMjTXBCmn/>

As Kash matured and continued his path to adulthood, his needs changed. Beavers are naturally sociable animals, and Kash's needs for socialization and interaction with other beavers have increased. The Science North animal care team has closely monitored his behaviours and needs and determined that a change in environment and social aspects of animal interactions are required. Science North staff will move Kash to a new facility where he will have the opportunity to socialize with other beavers and have access to additional outdoor spaces. At this time, due to confidentiality, Science North cannot disclose the exact facility where Kash will be moving to. However, the new facility is another CAZA accredited organization ensuring his continued professional care. We will share more information in the near future.

"This is a bittersweet moment", Science North's CEO Ashley Larose explains. "Although our Bluecoats and visitors will miss Kash dearly, we know his new home will provide for a wonderful new experience and social aspects to meet his needs. We take our responsibility as a CAZA accredited facility seriously and the wellbeing of our animals is our top priority. Just like humans, as we grow, we change. At this time in his life, Kash has demonstrated that he has outgrown his habitat at Science North. We look forward to hearing updates on his progress in his new habitat and seeing him continue to grow into an adult beaver".

In the immediate future Science North will house other aquatic animals such as turtles and fish in Kash's aquatic habitat on the third floor. The team will continue to explore new opportunities

for the expansion and renewal of the habitat that could potentially facilitate the future housing of new beavers or other Northern Ontario species.

“We have had beavers as a part of our animal experience since 1985, and they have been a beloved and iconic part of our visitor experience. We recognize that not having a beaver experience at Science North will be an adjustment for both our visitors and our Bluecoats”, says Science North’s Science Director, Julie Moskalyk. “Our skilled and passionate animal care team will continue to create new and exciting ways to provide our visitors with animal interactions, and most of all learning experiences, that showcase the incredible diversity and stories of the animals that are part of our everyday lives across Northern Ontario.”

In 2013 Science North joined CAZA as a Certified Educational Affiliate facility that adheres to strict animal care protocols and commitments. CAZA’s accreditation standards are designed to promote professionalism in all aspects of zoo and aquarium management. They ensure CAZA members provide the best possible care for the animals they are entrusted with, and that visitors benefit from impactful and safe learning experiences about animals and nature. CAZA is committed to the advancement of accredited zoos and aquariums as humane agencies of animal welfare, conservation, science and education.

To read our FAQs visit sciencenorth.ca/kash

About Science North

Science North is Northern Ontario’s most popular tourist attraction and an educational resource for children and adults across the province. Science North maintains the second – and eighth- largest science centres in Canada. Science North’s attractions include a science centre, IMAX® theatre, digital Planetarium, butterfly gallery, special exhibits hall, and Dynamic Earth: Home of the Big Nickel. Science North, in partnership with Laurentian University, offers North America’s first and only comprehensive Science Communication program, a joint master’s and graduate diploma program. As part of its mandate, Science North provides science experiences throughout Northern Ontario including outreach to schools and festivals, summer science camps and more, and has a permanent base in Thunder Bay providing outreach to the Northwest. Science North is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For information, visit sciencenorth.ca.

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