

# GENÈVE - LA PARADE DU VIVANT

Europar 18

**La Parade du Vivant** is a traveling urban spectacle that brings together ecological imagination and civic ritual. Over the course of 16 weeks, a procession of mobile landscape trailers transforms 15 sites across Geneva into temporary spaces of nature, encounter, and celebration. Each week, the parade halts at a different underused or mineralized urban location, where it unfolds into a lush and inviting environment — part garden, part forum, part ecological performance. But more than the sum of its installations, *the act of moving* becomes a ritual in itself: a slow, festive procession that links neighborhoods, fosters public participation, and celebrates our relationship with the living world.

Rooted in the long tradition of civic parades that shape urban identity and collective memory, the Parade places **non-human life** at its symbolic and physical center. The plants, animals, and ecosystems that quietly inhabit Geneva are now brought into view — proudly paraded through the streets. These mobile interventions reveal the transformative power of vegetation and the latent potential of public space to become more alive, more inclusive, and more climate-adaptive. Each trailer becomes a miniature ecosystem, offering shelter, nourishment, and water to birds, insects, and other urban fauna — while inviting residents to rest, play, and gather.

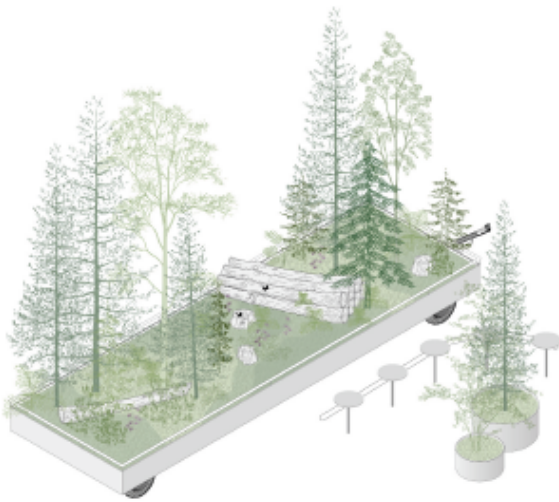


Figure 1 The parade route crosses the entire city, linking key mobility nodes and segments of the urban green network

## TEN LANDSCAPE TRAILERS

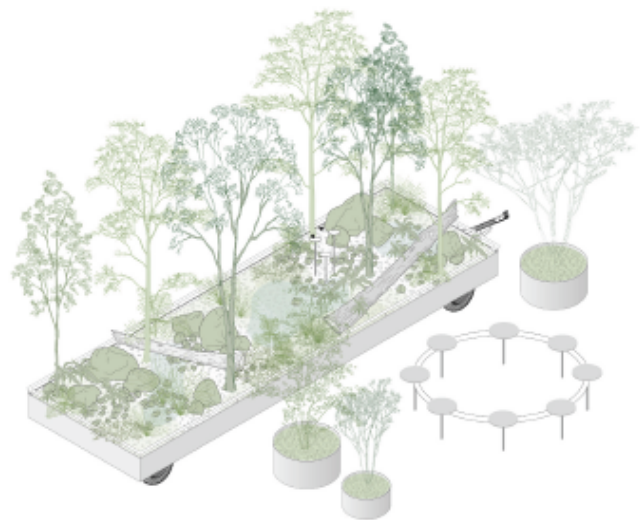
The parade consists of ten mobile trailers. Eight of them are designed as moving biotopes, each representing a characteristic landscape from the Geneva region. We call them ‘**bioramas**’ — mobile ecosystems that showcase local biodiversity and invite public interaction. These bioramas are conceived as self-sustaining living communities, resilient to urban stressors such as drought, wind, and human activity. Each of the four landscape types is represented by two distinct trailers. Other elements — the aqueduct, water basin, stack of tree trunks, climate station, urban furniture, planting containers, and information panels — foster public engagement and raise ecological awareness.

The aqueduct system collects rainwater from nearby rooftops and channels it into a water basin, which is then used to irrigate plants during dry periods. The integrated climate station provides real-time data on temperature, humidity, and wind, helping monitor microclimatic effects in each location. In addition to the eight green trailers, we propose two “**podium trailers**” — social stages for encounter and activation. These serve as platforms for relaxation (with hammocks), play (swings, TikTok backdrops), or events (talks, performances, and workshops). During transit, they double as transport units for the mobile planting containers and modular furniture.



**biorama 1. Versoix forest landscape**

*English oak, European hornbeam, Silver birch, Common hazel  
Lady fern, Tall fescue, Purple lettuce, Dog's mercury*



**biorama 2. the Allondon Valley landscape**

*Sweet chestnut, Black locust, Willow species, Black alder  
Wild orchids, Himalayan balsam, Stinging nettle, Giant goldenrod*

Figure 2 Example of two landscape trailers or ‘bioramas’ representing two characteristic landscapes from the Geneva region

## A LANDSCAPE-BASED APPROACH

The parade includes ten trailers. The design of the trailers draws from four characteristic biophysical landscapes of the Geneva region: the forests of Versoix, the Allondon valley, the Rhône plain, and the slopes of the Salève. These familiar regional ecologies are reimagined as “bioramas” — curated, living fragments of nature mounted on industrial trailers. Historically, urban greenery has often followed ornamental or standardized planting schemes. La Parade du Vivant instead reclaims landscape as a site-specific, meaningful, and ecologically grounded practice — reconnecting the city to its own bioclimatic context.

## MOVING TO THE RHYTHM OF SUMMER

The hyper-mobile nature of the installation allows it to reach 15 locations over the summer season. Each Friday afternoon, the parade departs for a new site — a performative journey that invites citizens to walk, cycle, or observe along the route. These weekly movements become moments of civic imagination, tracing a path that connects green corridors, neighborhood centers, and dense urban intersections. The journey begins and ends at **Plaine de Plainpalais**, where the full fleet of trailers gathers in a festive opening and closing event. Citizens can follow the parade's itinerary online, encounter it in their daily routes, or join the program at any point.



Figure 3 Installation of the parade at Plaine de Plainpalais. The parade unfolds in a vibrant urban oasis with plant containers, urban furniture etc.

## THREE URBAN SCENARIOS

To demonstrate the flexibility of the design, we propose tailored interventions for three contrasting sites. At **Place des Charmilles**, a traffic-dominated node is reimagined as a pedestrian square, with the podium trailer at its center and green trailers buffering the surrounding streets — creating space for open-air concerts and spontaneous social use. At **Carrefour du Bouchet**, a lane closure transforms a busy junction into a linear park connecting cultural anchors and everyday amenities, from the School of Vocal Arts to a neighborhood tea-room. Café terraces, nature zones, and play areas line the route, culminating in a shaded stage for community events.

These scenarios show how the modular system of *La Parade du Vivant* can adapt to various urban conditions — reclaiming space for people and non-human life, one site at a time.



*Figure 4 The place des Charmilles is transformed into a vibrant urban space including pockets of shade and greenery and a central stage for events, play and encounter.*