

WELCOME TO THE MARSH MATTERS NEWSLETTER, A MONTHLY PUBLICATION TO KEEP OUR VALUED MEMBERS, VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE LOOP ABOUT THE HAPPENINGS OF THE WYE MARSH!

The trail system at Wye Marsh is **open** from 9:00am– 4:00pm.

Learn more on page 2.

Thank you for your understanding.

Happy Canada Day! 

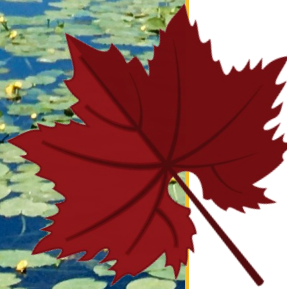
We hope everyone had a wonderful and safe Canada Day. Make sure you get outdoors and enjoy our beautiful country!

DID YOU KNOW?

Canada is an incredibly biodiverse country, ranging in habitats from wetlands to tundra, freshwater lakes to oceans, fields to forests. Canada has the most wetlands (by area) in the world - approximately **1.29 million km²**, which is **14%** of its land area.

Ontario is roughly **1/3 wetlands**. There are 4 types of wetlands: bogs, fens, marshes, and swamps. Each of these wetlands are home to thousands of species and are crucial to Canadian biodiversity.

There are over different **80,000** species of plants and animals found in Canada. **308** of them are **endemic**, meaning they can only be found in our wonderful country. Just another thing to make us proud of Canada!



VISITING WYE MARSH DURING COVID-19:



The Wye Marsh trail system is open daily from 9:00am-4:00pm.

Wye Marsh staff have been working with Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) on a plan to safely reopen in phases. During the first phase, admission will be by donation in the parking lot as we build an outdoor admissions booth. Check-in will be at the booth and reduced rates will apply for the time being. The booth is nearly constructed, and is located outside the front entrance of the Visitor Centre.

While on the trails, please keep the following in mind:

- Be mindful of wildlife who have become accustomed to the trails and boardwalks being unused by humans. Please give them space and do not attempt to approach or feed them, especially on the boardwalk.
- Respect social distancing guidelines while on the trails, especially at intersections and narrow sections.
- The gates will open daily at 9:00am and close at 4:00pm.
- Paper copies of the trail maps will not be available during this phase. Please see the page 5 of this newsletter or our website for a digital copy of the trail map, noting the one way entry and exit trails.
- Respect one way trails where signage notes it at the entry and exit points on the map.
- For your safety, the safety of wildlife, and the conservation of the marsh, please stay on the trails.

The Visitor Center remains **closed** to the public. There is access to portable washrooms. There is no access to the Birds of Prey Field during this time. Programming remains suspended at this time. If the parking lot is full, we respectfully ask that you visit again at another time, please do not park on the road.

Memberships to Wye Marsh will be extended to account for time that the facility was closed according to the following:

- Winter Memberships expired on April 30, 2020 will be **extended to July 31, 2020**
- Annual memberships that expired between March 17 and May 1, 2020 will be **extended 2 months from date of expiry**
- Annual memberships that expire(d) between May 2, 2020 and March 16, 2021 will be **extended 3 months from date of expiry**

Thank you to everyone for your support during this time. It is through your generosity and ongoing appreciation for Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre that we are able to continue to educate and spread awareness about the importance of wetlands.

We are very excited to welcome you all back to Wye Marsh - see you soon!



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

We are certainly glad to see people back on the trails, it is, after all, the main attraction at Wye Marsh. Like King Street in Midland, Wye Marsh will be starting its own 'Big Dig' very soon to replace the water pipe. The main road and much of the parking lot will be gravel for the next 18-24 months. Please watch out for construction personnel. The timing of this is probably good, get everything out of the way at once! We continue to work on our virtual programming, please watch this space for more details in the months to come.

- Mary Ann Milne, Executive Director



A sleepy Trumpeter Swan takes a nap in the shade by the water's edge.

Photo: Makenzie Soden

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Hello all. Hope you are all enjoying the start to summer. The Marsh trails have been open to the public, on a donation basis, for about a month now. Visitor attendance has been a bit lower than I had anticipated. While we are not doing any headcount I would estimate an average of about 30 - 40 people per day.

I personally walk the main trails and boardwalk about 2-3 times per week with my grandkids. It is very easy to do so and respect the 2m social distance guidelines. We wear a mask and ensure it is in place on the rare occasion that you get closer than 2m to another group, usually when passing on a narrow trail. It is great to get out in nature and see all the animals moving about.

If you haven't already been back to the Marsh come out and renew what you have been missing. Tell your friends and share on Social Media that the Marsh trails are open and it is an uplifting experience. I especially enjoy watching the young children getting reacquainted with all the little creatures. We recommend bringing water. It gets pretty warm out on the trails and there is no access to the center at this time.

The Board is continuing to support in any way we can and we are focusing on Governance documentation and fundraising. As I have requested before, the board could really utilize some advisor expertise in the areas of Finance, Fundraising and Legal. These roles can be purely advisory without a commitment to be on the Board or a committee. If you know of anyone willing to contribute, have them contact me, Dave Robertson at 705 245 0529. Thank you and keep safe.

- Dave Robertson, President of Friends of Wye Marsh Inc. Board of Directors

ON THE WILD SIDE: SPECIES AT RISK SPOTTED AT WYE MARSH

The Species at Risk in Ontario (SARO) list contains over 230 species of plants and animals that are in danger of disappearing from the Ontario wild.

Wetlands, like Wye Marsh, provide valuable habitats to many of these species. We have been lucky to spot a number of these listed species at risk at Wye Marsh already this year like Blanding's Turtles (Threatened), Snapping Turtles (Special Concern), Least Bitterns (Threatened), Barn Swallows (Threatened), Golden-Winged Warblers (Special Concern) and an Eastern Foxsnake (Endangered). These are only some of the numerous reptiles, birds, amphibians, mammals, and insects who call Wye Marsh home.

We are grateful to provide a safe habitat for these species, and hope to see an improvement in their populations!

Special Concern- species lives in the wild in Ontario, is not endangered or threatened, but may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

Threatened- species lives in the wild in Ontario, is not endangered, but is likely to become endangered if steps are not taken to address factors threatening it.

Endangered- species lives in the wild in Ontario but is facing imminent extinction or extirpation.

Extirpated- species lives somewhere in the world, and at one time lived in the wild in Ontario, but no longer does.



Golden-Winged Warbler
(Special Concern)

Photo: Makenzie Soden



Snapping Turtle
(Special Concern)



Barn Swallow
(Threatened)



Least Bittern
(Threatened)



Blanding's Turtle
(Threatened)



Eastern Foxsnake
(Endangered)

Photo: Kevin Cascagnette

LEGEND

Hiking Trails ———

Boardwalk - - - - -

One Way Trail  (Trail System Entry/ Exit Points)

Marsh March  1.9km
(Wheelchair & stroller accessible friendly)

Hardwood & Return Trail 0.4km

Muskrat Loop 1.6km

Woodland Trail 1.5km

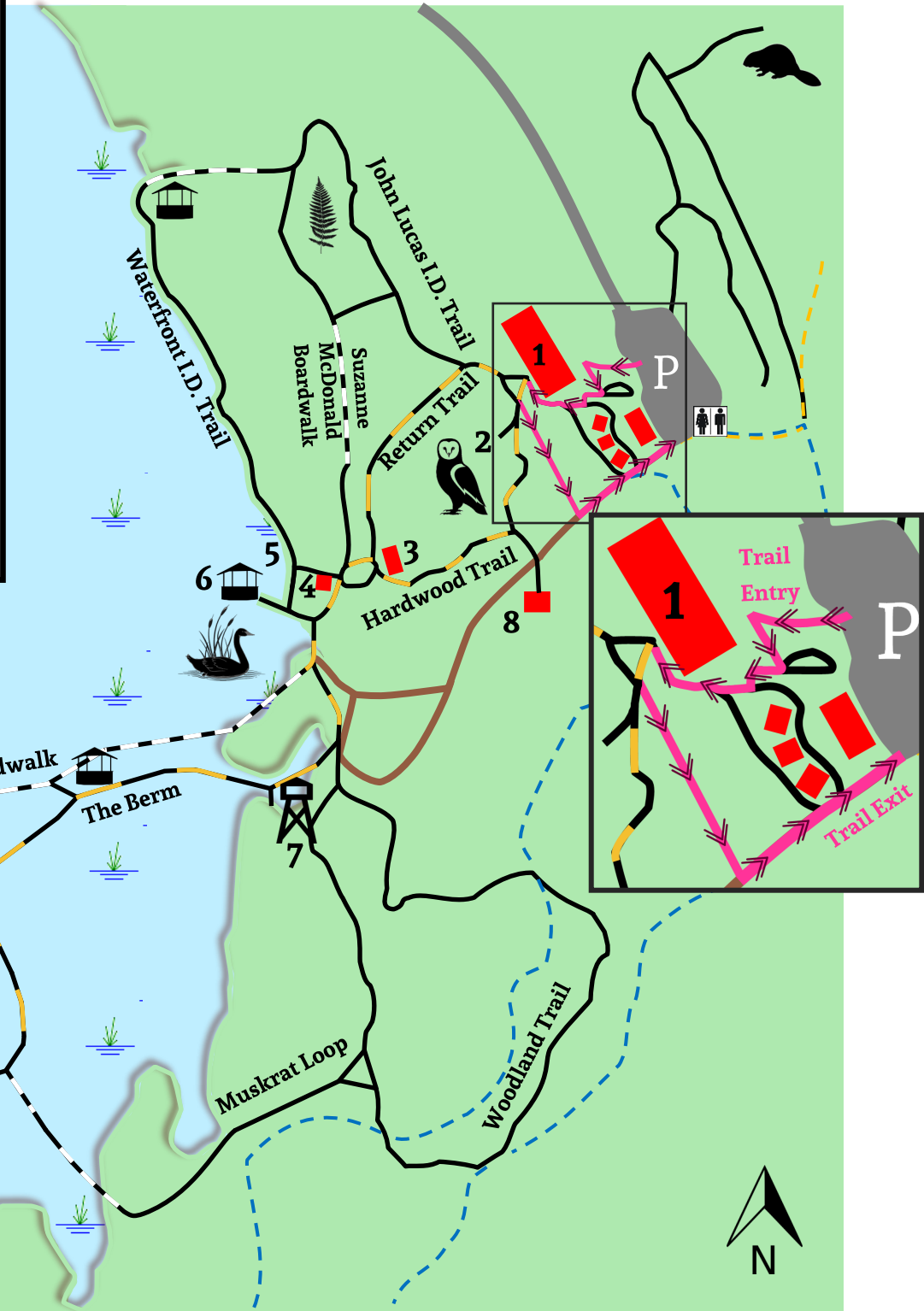
Ski Trails 

Service Road 

PLEASE RESPECT SOCIAL DISANCING.
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, EXPECT TWO-WAY TRAFFIC ON TRAILS. USE AT YOUR OWN RISK. GATES LOCK AT 4:00PM

- 1 Visitor's Centre - Closed
- 2 Birds of Prey Field - Closed
- 3 Sugar Shack - Closed
- 4 Log Cabin - Closed
- 5 Canoe Dock - Closed
- 6 Waterfowl Monitoring Station - One Family at a time
- 7 Observation Tower - One Family at a time
- 8 Bee House - One Family at a time

 Open Land/ Forest  Wetland/Open Water  Building



Please use caution on all trails, walkways, boardwalks, waterways and property of the Wye Marsh. Appropriate hiking footwear is recommended. Slippery conditions exist when wet. Be aware that plant roots and loose rocks can create natural trip hazards when extending above paths. Immediately exit the trails if foul weather conditions threaten.