



MARSH MATTERS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 61

WINTER 2023/24

Thank you for your interest in the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.

Our seasonal newsletter, "Marsh Matters," will keep you up-to-date on what is happening at the Wye Marsh!

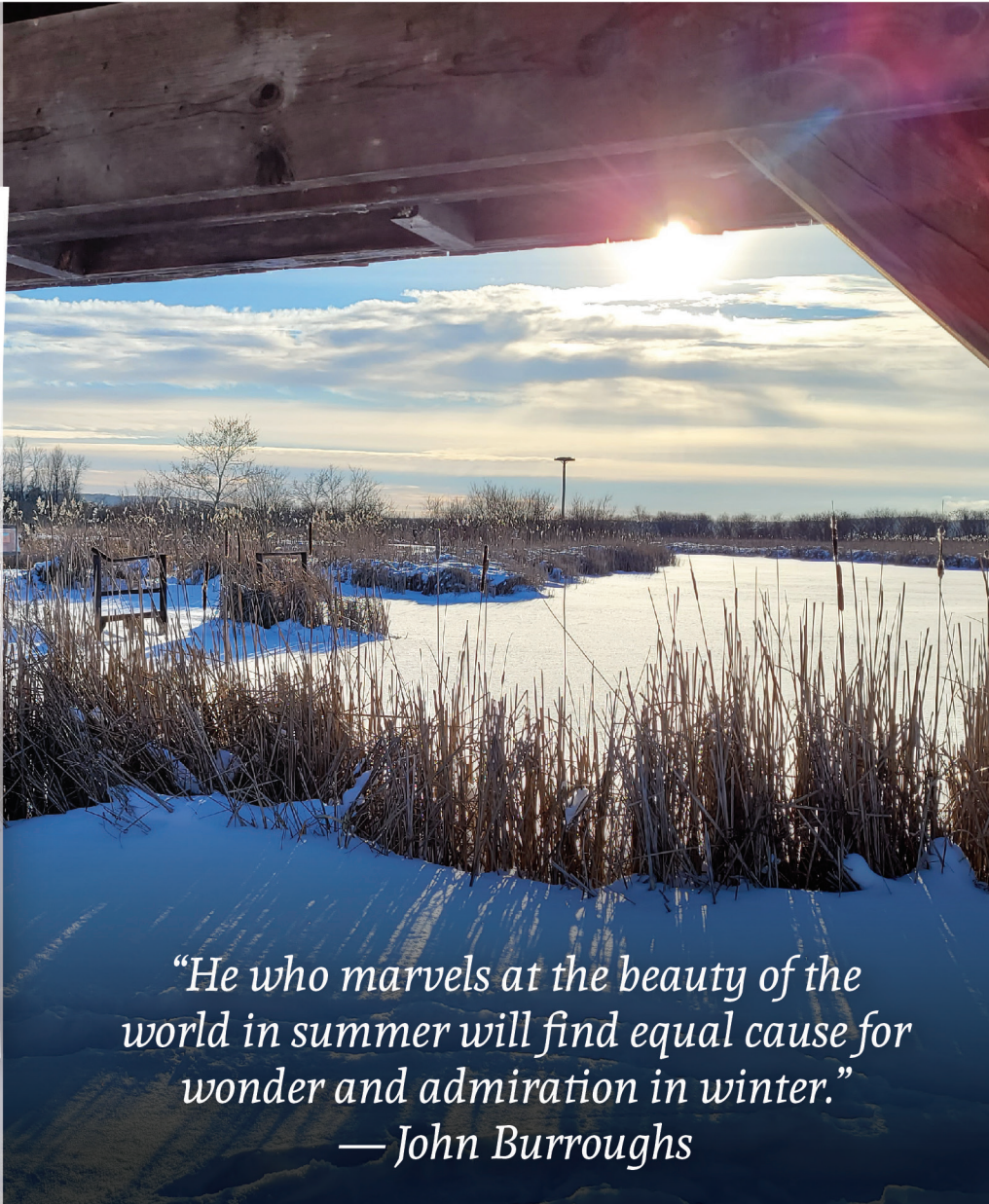
National Bird Day! Help Our Feathered Friends This Winter



Explore, Experience & Enjoy Winter at the Marsh



Volunteer Spotlight... and more!



*"He who marvels at the beauty of the world in summer will find equal cause for wonder and admiration in winter."
— John Burroughs*

Wye Marsh is open daily at 9:00 AM.

During the winter season, our trail systems will close at 4 PM and the Visitor Centre at 5 PM.

16160 Highway 12 East, Midland, ON L4R 1K6 705-526-7809

info@wyemarsh.com www.wyemarsh.com [wyemarshwildlifecentre](https://www.facebook.com/wyemarshwildlifecentre) [@wyemarsh](https://www.instagram.com/wyemarsh)

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As always, there are a lot of exciting things happening at Wye Marsh – even as we head into a traditionally quieter season.

This fall, we were able to remove more invasive plant species, focusing on buckthorn on the berm. We also made some repairs to our cookhouse – adding vinyl siding and replacing the soffit and fascia means that we will have fewer unwanted animal visitors. We have also removed the old sleeping cabins, making more space for tenting in fall and spring, and camp activities in summer!

We are also excited to announce that we have received permission from Canada Wildlife Service to hang bird feeders once again on our back patio – which means we can participate in Project Feeder Watch! Thanks to our many birdwatching volunteers for your support with this Citizen Science initiative. We are still not allowed to hand-feed chickadees, but we are grateful for the return of bird activity out our back windows!

Our biggest project this winter is raising funds for a new home for many of our bigger Birds of Prey – Ziibi the Bald Eagle, Becker the Great Horned Owl, Darwin the Turkey Vulture and Scarlet the Red-tailed Hawk would all benefit from improved enclosures, and the biggest item on our holiday wish list this year is assistance in helping us meet our goal of raising \$250,000 for this renovation. If you'd like to learn more about this exciting project, please reach out to us – we're happy to answer questions and provide information.

And in the excitement of the holiday season, please don't forget that we will be closed on December 24, 25 and 26 – but we look forward to seeing you at Wye Marsh this winter!

*Kim Hacker,
Executive Director*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ah yes, as a song goes, All Good Things Come to an End! Goodbye fall – and HELLO Winter. See, all good things are not coming to an end, as we are approaching another season with many things to do here at the Marsh. The fall was really fine, with the magnificent colours, overall great weather and watching the migrations occurring.

Winter offers so much to see and enjoy – the return of the Trumpeter Swans, testing your skills identifying animal tracks, bird watching and so many outdoor experiences to enjoy. The joy of walking along our trails when the sun is shining and the snow glistens is not to be missed. When we dress for the weather, then there is no stopping the beauty of being outdoors.

Please come join us December 2nd for our Open House, or sign up for a Wreath Making Workshop, also being held December 2nd & 9th. On December 30th we will be holding a Christmas Bird Count 4 Kids. This is a fun event for families and children to learn about birds. We also offer Snowshoe Eco tours; sign up on our website. And keep an eye on the website for other events and workshops.

*Rick Brady
President, Friends of Wye Marsh*



BECKER'S NEW HAVEN

Our three-year-old Great Horned Owl could live to be 35 at Wye Marsh.

While her current home suits her for 10 months a year, she really needs a little more privacy each spring. While we put up cedar bows across the front of her enclosure to reduce stress when she is "brooding," we would love to enhance her quality of life by building a new home that's better than 'good enough'!

Scan the QR Code & Donate to Our New "Animal Embassy" Today

Give a gift greater than \$1,000 to be recognized in longevity!

Let's Give Becker
Some Space



MEET WILLOW

THE
BROAD-
WINGED
HAWK

AGE: 5

REASON FOR LIVING AT WYE MARSH:

Permanent Wing Injury – Vehicle Collision

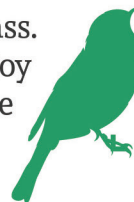
FUN FACT:

A Broad-winged Hawk's diet consists mostly of snakes, frogs, and mammals. They migrate in large groups called 'kettles' to Central and South America during our wintertime. These 'kettles' can sometimes reach tens of thousands of individuals!

HELP BIRDS GET THROUGH THE WINTER & PREVENT WINDOW STRIKES



It is the time of year when we begin hanging bird feeders to help our resident birds get through the winter, and at the Wye Marsh we have recently started Project FeederWatch. As much as we love watching birds flutter to and from the feeders, with this comes the threat of window strikes. In Canada, window collisions kill 16 to 42 million birds per year and is one of the leading human causes of bird mortality. The highly reflective nature of glass causes birds to think that there is a continuation of their natural environment that they are able to fly through, leading to collisions. However, there are several ways we can help prevent window collisions and still enjoy watching the birds at feeders. The key is to make windows look like a barrier by applying window markings to the outside of windows. Markings should form a high contrast, dense pattern that covers the entire surface of the glass. This could be in the form of decals, ribbons, tape, decorative window films or drawings. Feeders should be placed within 1 metre of windows so that birds are less likely to be flying at high enough speeds to injure themselves if they do fly into the glass. By taking these precautions you can continue to enjoy feeding and watching the birds all winter long, while keeping their safety at the forefront.



DID YOU KNOW? JANUARY 5TH IS NATIONAL BIRD DAY!

The Wye Marsh is a designated Important Bird Area, as well as an Important Biodiversity Area (IBA). Wye Marsh provides habitat for a number of species including Cardinals, Black-capped Chickadees, along with significant species like provincially threatened Least Bitterns, Species of Special Concern Black Terns, and the famous Trumpeter Swans (with the Wye Marsh population representing approximately 10% of the Trumpeter Swan population in the province).



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WYE MARSH THIS WINTER



SNOWSHOE ECOTOURS

Can run daily - 3 hours, 4 kilometers, woodlands & wildlife! Experience areas of the Wye Marsh that are otherwise not open to the general visiting public! After a brief lesson on snowshoeing, you'll head out on the trails. Warm up by the fire for a snack break with hot chocolate and tea along the route. No snowshoeing experience required, but please note that the trail conditions are considered moderate. *To register please contact cleblanc@wyemarsh.com or 705-526-7809 ext. 218. Cost varies depending on group size.*



WINTER OPEN HOUSE

December 2 from 10 am - 3 pm

Escape, explore and experience Wye Marsh! Roast Bannock, hike the trails or finish up your holiday shopping in our gift shop. *All activities included with admission. Admission by donation. See details at <https://www.wyemarsh.com/winter-events>*



WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

December 2 & 9 @ 1 pm - 2:30 pm

Just in time for the holidays - create and hang a homemade wreath this year! Enjoy an afternoon creating evergreen wreaths with cedar, blue spruce, and painted pine cones. Price includes admission to our interpretive centre and trails for day following the workshop. All materials are provided. *\$55 per person. Participants aged 13+. Sign up for our December 9 workshop at: www.wyemarsh.com/Wreath-Making-Workshop?*



CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

December 24, 25, 26

Visitor Centre and Trails CLOSED for the holidays.



WINTER BREAK CAMP

December 27-29 & January 2-5 from 9 am - 4 pm

Get your nature lovers outside this winter break! Campers will be given so many opportunities to connect with nature – they'll forget all about connecting to their devices! Open to inquisitive spirits, ages 6-12. *Registration opens November 28th at www.wyemarsh.com/winter-break-camp*



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FOR KIDS

December 30 from 10:30 am - 1 pm

Bring in your kids and join us for a fun-filled winter birdwatching event. Learn about birds, connect with nature, and become Citizen Scientist! Kids 12 & under are FREE (and must be accompanied by an adult.) *Find fun at-home activities at: www.wyemarsh.com/christmas-bird-count*

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WYE MARSH THIS WINTER



NOT QUITE... DEAD

January 13 from 1:30 - 3:30 pm

Torpor. Brumation. Diapause. Aestivation. Fun words to play for Scrabble. Super cool ways for animals to survive dark times. Join us for a fascinating look at how species make it through the winter at Wye Marsh, as well as how others make it through tough times in tropical climates. *\$30 per person. Book your spot at www.wyemarsh.com/winter-events*



BADGE DAY

January 20 from 10 am - 4 pm

Struggling to find ways for your small pack of Girl Guides or Scouts to earn badges? No worries! Our Wye Marsh Badge Day is specially designed for you. Participants can earn up to FOUR (4) badges in ONE (1) day. This year's activities include: Shelter Building, Compass Orienteering, Intro & Intermediate Snowshoeing, Advanced Animal Tracking, Birding Introduction, and Intermediate Firecraft. *Must register at least two weeks in advance at: www.wyemarsh.com/badge-days*



MARSH BY MOONLIGHT

January 26 & 27, February 2, 3, 9 & 10 from 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Snowshoe through the marsh on a frosty night, under sparkling stars and moonlight. Warm up by a cozy fire. Sip some cedar tea. Take home memories that will last a lifetime, plus a unique Marsh by Moonlight souvenir. *\$75 per person. For tickets please visit: www.wyemarsh.com/Marsh-by-Moonlight-Snowshoe*



CLAY SCULPTING

February 3 from 1 - 3 pm

There is something special, healing, and fun about molding clay with your hands. Discover the gratification that comes when imagination takes shape in physical form. This a great class for artists of all skill levels. Materials provided.

Register at www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh



FAMILY DAY

February 19 from 10 am - 3 pm

Step out onto the trails, enjoy the beauty of nature, and make new memories together this Family Day! Experience the best of winter fun by learning all about animal tracks, scats & signs. See some of our raptors & reptiles up close and learn what makes them unique, and SO MUCH MORE! All activities included in the price of admission.

For details visit www.wyemarsh.com/winter-events



MICROGREENS WORKSHOP

February 25 from 1:30 - 3:30 pm

Join us for an intriguing afternoon examining the wonderful ways you can grow and use microgreens at home. Pick up a list of local seed providers, plus a few fun recipes. Then make and take a tray of seeds home to sprout in your kitchen!

Register at visit www.wyemarsh.com/winter-events



WAYFINDING
IN THE
WILDERNESS

March 9 from 10-11 am

What do Bear Grylls, "Mac" MacGyver, and Wye Marsh Staff have in common? The uncanny ability to read signs in nature to get where they are going, and problem solve. Find out how to read clues in the wilderness to navigate your way North, East, South or West - day or night. *Claim your spot at: www.wyemarsh.com/spring-events*



SPRING BREAK
CAMP

March 11-15 from 9 am - 4 pm

As the seasons change, kids are itching to get out of the classroom and back out of doors! Our Spring Break Camp will teach them about wilderness survival, making maple syrup, animal tracking and more. Great for ages 6-12.

Register this January at www.wyemarsh.com/march-break-day-camp



SWEETWATER
HARVEST
FESTIVAL

March 23 & 24 from 9 am - 5 pm

The Sweetwater Harvest Festival is the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre's biggest special event of the year – and ONE ticket gets you access to TWO fantastic sites in 2024! Join the Friends of Wye Marsh and Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons for an awesome maple syrup experience this spring. *Save up to \$5 per person – Purchase an "Early Bird Ticket" online in February at: www.wyemarsh.com/sweetwater*



THANK YOU

**Burrison
Hudani
Doris** LLP

generous supporters of
Friends of Wye Marsh &
Music in the Marsh
Sponsor



**WYE
MARSH**

WINTER OPEN HOUSE



Sat., Dec. 2, 2023 Admission by Donation! Sponsored by:

- 10:00 am ~ 12 noon..... **Bannock Roasting**
- 10:30 am ~ 11:00 am.... **Raptor Selfie (Donations Appreciated)**
- 11:00 am ~ 2:00 pm **Nature Craft**
- 11:00 am **Guided Discovery Hike ~ Animal Tracking!**
- 1:00 pm **Feature Creature in the Display Hall**
- 2:30 pm **Guided Discovery Hike ~ Winter Trees**
- 3:00 pm **Raptor Selfie (Donations Appreciated)**
- 9:00 am ~ 3:00 pm.... **Vendors & Meridian Info Booth**
- All Day..... **Trumpeter Swan Viewing at Swan Landing**

16160 Highway 12 East, Midland, ON L4R 1K6 705-526-7809

Email: info@wyemarsh.com

Web: www.wyemarsh.com

 [wyemarshwildlifecentre](https://www.facebook.com/wyemarshwildlifecentre)

 [wyemarsh](https://www.instagram.com/wyemarsh)

VOLUNTEER
SPOTLIGHT

Susan Molenda

Friends of Wye Marsh Board of Directors




Board member Susan Molenda gives generously to Wye Marsh with both her time and her creative energy, and we are grateful for it! Susan joined the Friends of Wye Marsh board of directors in 2020. After retirement she was looking for a volunteer opportunity where she could contribute gifts honed over 35 years of working in Marketing for a major corporation and felt that as a member of the board she could continue to lead, inspire and leverage her skills. As an outdoor enthusiast who fondly remembered nature-based childhood experiences at Wye Marsh, it was a natural fit.

“The Marsh attracts very interesting and dedicated people,” says Susan. “Everyone I meet there has been so passionate about what they do and love being in a team environment. It honestly feels so different from my corporate days that felt somewhat competitive. I always feel welcomed, appreciated and I get back far more than I give with my time and energy.” Susan’s favourite part of Wye Marsh is the trail experience. She and her puppy go for long walks, enjoying the quiet soothing sounds of nature and the views from the boardwalk all year ‘round. This past summer, she had the opportunity to participate in a Marsh by Moonlight paddle. “I met wonderful people and we saw two shooting stars and could hear so many sounds of nature around us [including] the sound of beaver tails slapping the water as we glided by.”

Susan is a doer. Whether it’s taking minutes at board meetings, conducting volunteer surveys, selling 50/50 tickets at events, or giving up her weekends to talk to Wye Marsh visitors about the power of Memberships, she is well-organized and steps in where action is needed. As lead of the board fundraising group, Susan has introduced a new event for us this past September – Music in the Marsh. In her words, it was a “magical night at the Marsh with so many happy faces enjoying the combination of music and the marsh at night.” Staff, volunteers and the public welcomed this unique opportunity, and look forward to another event in 2024.

She always looks for ways to support Wye Marsh by sharing her unique talents. “Before joining Wye Marsh,” Susan says, “I truly did not have any experience with non-profits. I have used my strategic planning skills to look at the business and our sources of income to develop some fundraising strategies to guide us. I find my contributions are so appreciated and people are interested in learning and using the knowledge to build plans together”.

If you are interested in volunteering for Friends of Wye Marsh, or would like to learn more about joining our Board of Directors, please contact us at info@wyemarsh.com, or 705-526-7809.

THANK YOU
MegaMindful
LIVING 

Thoughtful “Connecting for Conservation” fundraising partner!



JOIN US FOR SNOWSHOE ECOTOURS

3 Hours, 4 Kilometres, Unforgettable Moments in Nature

Access remote areas of our National Wildlife Area by snowshoe. No experience necessary ~ Snowshoe Tutorial included!

Take a private tour through a winter wonderland with our experienced Wye Marsh Outdoor Educators. Listen to bird calls. Search for animal tracks. Piece together the clues around you to unravel the mysteries of life in this glorious frozen space. Take a snack break. Warm up by a fire. Enjoy some hot chocolate or tea before heading back to the Visitors' Centre

Must be 13 years of age or older. Guests under 16 must be accompanied by a participating adult.

\$170 + HST for 2 Guests | \$450 + HST for group of six

Call 705-526-7809 ext. 218 to book your Snowshoe Ecotour at least two weeks in advance - or email: cleblanc@wyemarsh.com



THANK YOU

HGR GRAHAM
PARTNERS LLP

LAWYERS • MEDIATORS

your sponsorship supports education programs, trail maintenance & stewardship @ Wye Marsh!

TRACKS ON THE TRAILS

Here are some common animals tracks you may see this winter on the trails at Wye Marsh!



Fox



Raccoon



White-tailed
Deer



Hare



Squirrel



Chipmunk



MARSH BY MOONLIGHT WINTER EDITION

January 26 & 27 and
February 2, 3, 9 & 10 @ 5:30 pm

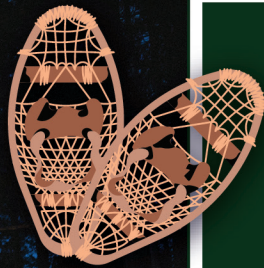
Snowshoe through the marsh on a frosty night, under sparkling stars and moonlight. Warm up by a cozy fire. Sip some cedar tea. Take home memories that will last a lifetime, along with a unique Marsh by Moonlight souvenir. These small group outings are lead by experienced Outdoor Educators.

Must be 13 years of age or older. Participants under 16 years must be accompanied by a participating adult.

\$75 per person

For tickets please visit:

www.wyemarsh.com/Marsh-by-Moonlight-Snowshoe



THANK YOU
**KEY MORTGAGE
PARTNERS**

proud sponsors of
Music in the Marsh!

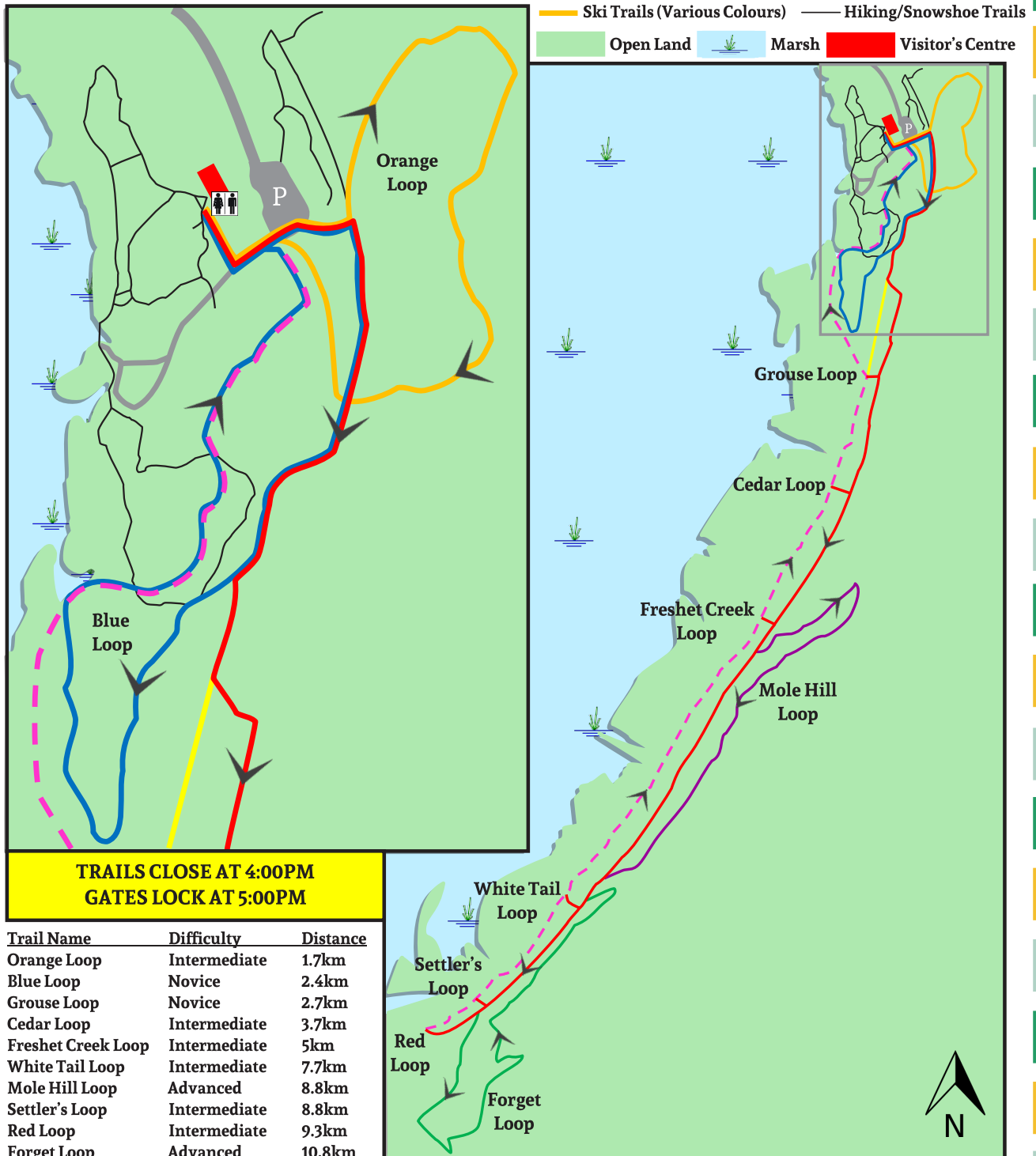


Happy
Holidays
FROM WYE MARSH



WYE MARSH SKI TRAILS

16160 HIGHWAY 12 EAST, TAY, ON | (705) 526-7809



Please do not snowshoe on track set. Please sign in and out at the front desk. No dogs allowed on ski trails. Please use caution on all trails, walkways, boardwalks and property of the Wye Marsh. Appropriate outdoor wear is recommended. Be aware that plant roots and loose rocks can create natural trip hazards when extending above paths. Immediately return to the Visitor's Centre if foul weather conditions threaten.