

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!



DID YOU KNOW?

Ospreys are Raptors found throughout most of North America. They feed primarily on fish and can be found along the shorelines of rivers, bays, and inlets. They catch their prey using their long hooked talons as they swoop down to the water. They catch fish on roughly 1/4 dives—talk about skilled anglers!

Ospreys are migrators and spend their winters in Florida, Mexico, or South America. Amazingly, young Ospreys make their first migration alone—without the guidance of their parents—based on instinct.

Along Georgian Bay, including at Wye Marsh, you may have noticed the platforms atop tall poles. These are Osprey Nesting Platforms. The mating pair at Wye Marsh can be seen in their nest from the Boardwalk (below) if you are lucky!



Photo: Eric Nisbet



Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre
is **open daily**, from
9:00am-4:30pm.

Updated safety precautions are in place. For more information on Wye Marsh's reopening & visiting Wye Marsh during COVID-19, [please click here.](#)

CAMP @ HOME KITS ON SALE!

Wye Marsh Camp @ Home Kits bring all the fun of camp to your yard. Filled with eco-games and activities they are perfect for a weekend away, at home in the backyard, or to do with friends!

To order [click here.](#)



ON THE WILD SIDE:

Sunny summer days mean you are more likely to spot some wildlife at Wye Marsh, especially turtles, frogs, or snakes on the boardwalk.

Reptiles, including the turtles and snakes found in Ontario, will often lay out in the open on a warm sunny day. This behaviour is called basking or sunning. While we may all enjoy some warmth, it is especially important

for them because it regulates their body temperature.

Mammals are warm blooded, meaning that our body temperature is regulated internally—regardless of the outside temperature. Reptiles are exothermic or ‘cold blooded’ meaning their temperature is regulated by their surroundings. Warming themselves through basking can help improve their digestive rate and overall health.

How well do you know your Ontario reptiles? Here is a quick guide to the turtles and snakes that you may see while visiting Wye Marsh or around Georgian Bay!



Midland Painted Turtle

ID by dark shell and body with bright red & yellow markings that appear “painted on”. Will often bask in groups. Grows 12-14cm long. This is the most commonly seen turtle at Wye Marsh.



Snapping Turtle

Largest turtle found in Ontario, growing up to 47 cm long. ID by size, ridged shell, and long spiked tail. Named for their quick bite, do not approach/ threaten this turtle.



Spotted Turtle

ID by yellow spots on their dark shell, and orange markings on their body. Spotted Turtles are one of Ontario’s smallest turtles, growing 9-12 cm long.



Northern Watersnake

ID by dark brown, tan, or gray coloring with square markings or bands. Colouring is more vivid when wet. Most commonly found in the water or directly nearby. Grows 60-110cm long.



Blanding’s Turtle

ID by their bright yellow throat and highly-domed shell. Blanding’s Turtles also have a hinged shell that helps protect them from predators. Grows 18-23 cm long.



Garter Snake

ID by dark body with three light yellow toned stripes down their back and sides. Found in grassy/ woodland areas. Grows roughly 60 cm long. Similar to Ribbon Snakes who are more slender and have white facial markings.



Northern Map Turtle

ID by contour markings on their shell and body that resemble a topographic map. Grows 10-20cm. Often mistaken for a Midland Painted Turtle, Northern Map turtles do not have red markings.



Eastern Foxsnake

ID by orange/ copper-toned head for which snake is named, and yellow/light brown body with dark markings. Prefers unforested habitats like plains, rocklands, or wetlands. Grows up to 170 cm long.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

As most of you are aware my last day at Wye Marsh is July 23. Though I am telling people that I am retiring it is more of a much needed break after 40 years in the labour force. My career took me down many roads that I had never considered until opportunities presented themselves, but none of the roads were as exciting, wonderful, fast-paced and sometimes as nail-biting as my time at Wye Marsh. After so many years in the defence and oil and gas industries I couldn't have imagined being given an opportunity to work in such beautiful surroundings; Wye Marsh is stunning in all four seasons, and every time I am on the trails I see or learn something new.

Words cannot express my gratitude and appreciation for Wye Marsh staff. Never have I seen a group of people work so hard and dedicate themselves so fully to their job. Their innate ability to take a complex idea and turn it into reality, whether it be a school program or a major event, with sometimes just the most basic of resources, is only overshadowed by their adeptness to carry on with day-to-day activities regardless of weather, changing schedules, or any other disruption that may come their way. It has been my honour and privilege to work with all staff members, and I thank them from the bottom of my heart for their forbearance, expertise, sense of humour, and dedication.

To the volunteers who come into Wye Marsh to do everything from sewing dip-nets, to tapping maple trees, to running guided canoe tours, to working at the Bingo Hall, where would we be without you? No job seems too big or too small, and you do it all for free. You are amazing!

I will always treasure the memory of working at Wye Marsh, and am thankful for everything I have learned and experienced during my 3+ years as Executive Director. I have met so many wonderful people, and I am inspired by their commitment to Wye Marsh's continued success. All the very best to everyone and thank you for making my time at Wye Marsh a truly life altering experience.

- Mary Ann Milne, Executive Director



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MARSH?

Wye Marsh is thrilled to have the trail system and Birds of Prey Field open daily from 9:00am– 4:30pm..

We are working to resume programming as we are able to do so safely!

Daily
9:00am– 4:30pm

Explore the Trails + Visit Birds of Prey

With over 25km of trails to explore, enjoy a hike out onto the floating boardwalk to search for turtles and frogs, through the woodlands listening for song birds, up the Observation Tower for panoramic views, or to Birds of Prey to meet the Raptors.

Updated safety precautions are in place. For more information, [please click here](#).

July & August
Mornings Daily

Kayak Ecotours

This 3 hour guided tour will take you well beyond the limits of our walking trails to fully explore the beauty of Wye Marsh. This is an exciting opportunity for those looking for a unique and active outdoor experience.

Tours must be pre-booked and run with start time between 8:30am - 11:30am daily. Group sizes of 3-6 people. For more information, [please click here](#).

On Sale Now!

Camp @ Home Kits

Bring Wye Marsh Camp home to *escape* the boredom, *explore* the amazing lessons from nature and *experience* the fun and spirit of camp. Camp @ Home is a kit filled with activities, crafts, and links to virtual components that can help your camper connect to nature, learn, and stay occupied right at home! To order your kit, [please click here](#).

DONATION IN SUPPORT OF MARSH SCHOOL & DAY CAMP

Thank you to our friends at Bayles Deschamps Holloway Wealth Management!

This donation will purchase new weather resistant picnic tables and help improve the Pavilion for Marsh School and Day Camp programming, extending the season of our outdoor classroom to 9 months. We are so grateful for the support!

L-R: Wye Marsh Director Richard Leavens, Jeff Holloway, Michelle Deschamps, Wye Marsh Executive Director Mary Ann Milne, and Cathy Bayles.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: — — — —

As I write this, the Province of Ontario is preparing to move into Stage 2 of the reopening. As you read this, hopefully we will be gearing up for Stage 3. Nevertheless, despite the ongoing vaccination effort, it will probably be a long time before we can totally relax our vigilance and recapture the carefree days of yore. Therefore I ask your continuing patience as we at the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre continue to implement the provincially-recommended guidelines that help to keep us all safe.

It is also my privilege, on behalf of the Board of Directors, to thank our outgoing Executive Director, Mary Ann Milne, for all her hard work and commitment during the time that she has been with us at the Wye Marsh. Despite the COVID pandemic, with all the uncertainties that it brought in its wake, her dedication and diligence have been invaluable in leaving the Marsh in much better shape to face the challenges of the future, than we could ever have hoped for. Hers will be very difficult shoes to fill; and we wish her well in all her future endeavors.

- Alasdair MacLean, President of Friends of Wye Marsh Inc. Board of Directors



HURONIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SMART & CARING GRANT

Friends of Wye Marsh Inc. gratefully acknowledges the financial support of Huronia Community Foundation, a public foundation serving the people of Huronia. The Foundation builds permanently endowed charitable funds for the changing needs and opportunities of the Southern Georgian Bay Community and provides grants to eligible charitable organizations in support of: the arts & culture, community services, environment, healthcare & mental health, seniors, sports & recreation and youth and scholarships. **Thank you!**



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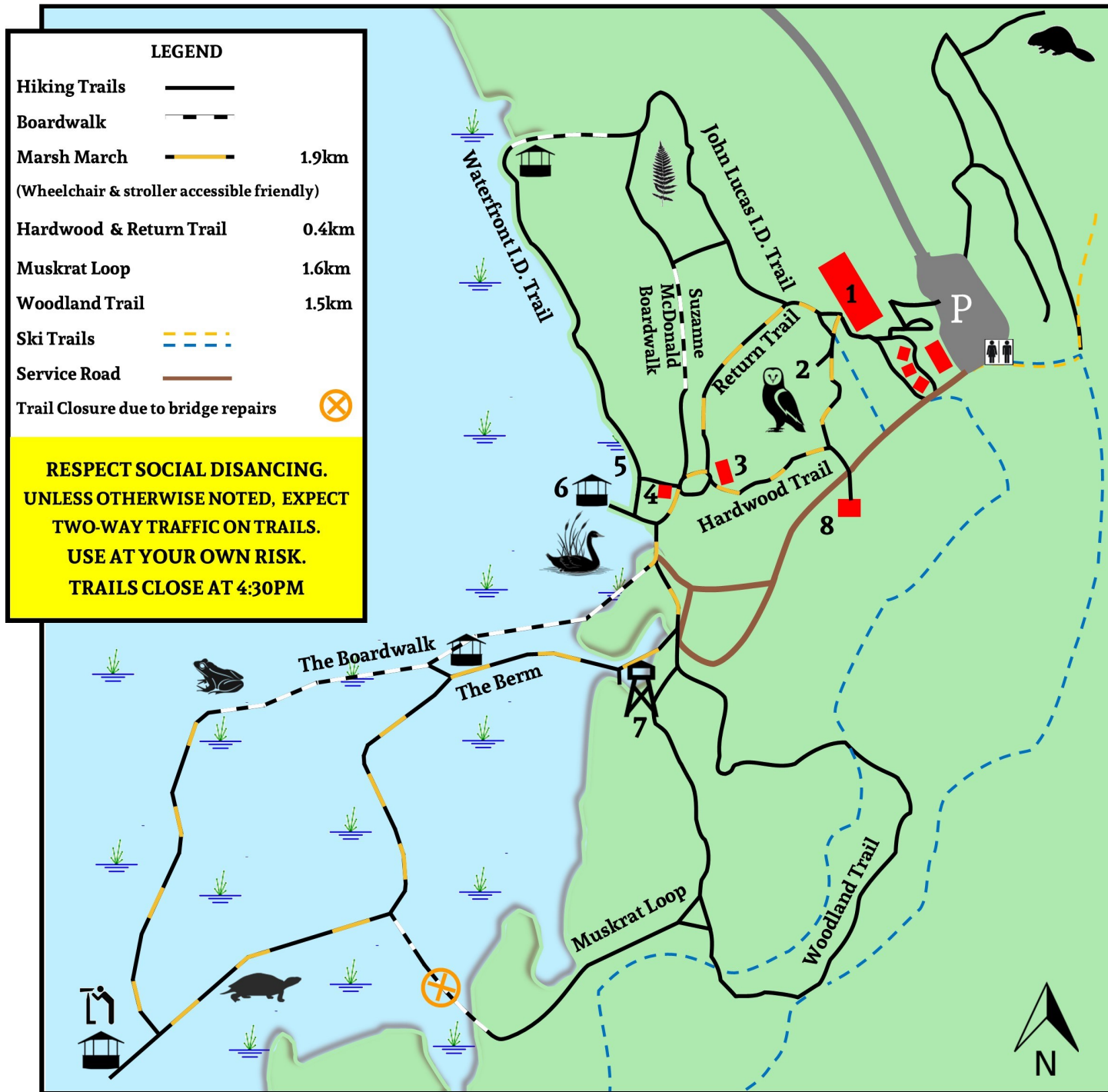
VISITING WYE MARSH DURING COVID-19:

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre is open to explore 7 days a week, in all seasons!
Trails are open daily from 9:00am –4:30pm.

- 1 Visitor's Centre
(Masks or face coverings required)
- 2 Birds of Prey Field - OPEN
- 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.