

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!

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre and the trails are **closed to the public**. This is a precautionary action with the best interests of our staff, volunteers, and patrons in mind. Staff will be at the Centre to provide animal care and building and trail maintenance only. **Thank you for your understanding.**

DID YOU KNOW?

May is Migration Month, and May 9 is World Migratory Bird Day.

Arctic Terns have the longest migration of any animal. They migrate from their Arctic breeding grounds to Antarctic wintering grounds each year, just over

40,000km! Arctic Terns nest on the ground, and can live up to 30 years.

They have a wingspan of 65-75cm. Arctic Terns are identifiable by their long, angular wings and pointed wingtips, as well as their round, black head.

Arctic Terns can be seen in Ontario on a stop along their migration!



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

On behalf of the Wye Marsh staff and Board of Directors, I hope you are all well and adjusting to these uncertain times as best you can. We know that all of you are anxious to come back to Wye Marsh and we are working to ensure that we will be able to open our doors as quickly as possible when the time comes. There are three staff members attending to Centre and trails on a daily basis. The Facilities Manager is ensuring the trails are clear and in good shape, and the Animal Care Staff are feeding and caring for all the birds, turtles and snakes. I myself am at the Centre twice a week to ensure we are compliant with health and safety regulations that require a minimum of two staff at the Centre, especially when one of them is on the trails, and to complete those tasks that can't be done from home, such as payroll. Other staff members are working from home and like a lot of businesses we are adjusting to teleconferences and lots of emails!

After the Centre and trails were closed we were determined to help people keep their connection with the natural world. We developed a new page on our website called At Home Activities and Resources, which has lots of DIY projects and links to organizations across the country. We are posting entertaining and informative posts on our social media pages and a lot of people are engaging with us and each other. When checking the trails we are using the opportunity to use our phones to film our walks, and hopefully you enjoy taking a virtual hike with us. We are working on virtual events, stay tuned for our World Migratory Bird Day Experience on May 9.

We know that everything we are doing is not the same thing as actually being at Wye Marsh. We understand, and as soon as we have information as to when we can re-open we will share it with you. Some of you have asked about memberships, we are reviewing that now and will make an announcement in the near future. We are proceeding with Summer Day Camp Registration and have expanded our program to include Leadership Camp. We re-launched an old favourite, Junior Naturalists! Registration for summer camp as well as Junior Naturalists is available on our website. Check out our camp page on our website for dates and times and registration information for all the camps. We understand that circumstances may change regarding government mandated closures and we will ensure to keep all registrants updated in a timely manner as information becomes available.

If you have any questions or suggestions for something we can post please contact us at info@wyemarsh.com. We are working on responding to your emails within 3 days of receipt. All the very best to you and your families during these uncertain times. We hope you are connecting with nature wherever you are and in whatever way you can. Please remember that nature is always all around us and even in its simplest form can bring peace of mind.

- Mary Ann Milne, Executive Director



ON THE WILD SIDE:

Well it seems that no one gave the wildlife at Wye Marsh any notice that times are a little different right now - they are as active as ever!

Trumpeter Swans have been hanging around the boardwalk enjoying the sunny days and feeding on aquatic vegetation. They seem to be enjoying the peace and having the boardwalk all to themselves. Along the group of Trumpeter Swans around the boardwalk is five cygnets (top).

Beavers have been busy as well as evident by the trees they leave behind. One ambitious beaver started on this large tree (middle) before it had to be cut down for safety reasons. How impressive!

The Osprey tower is once again occupied (bottom), as a pair begin to build a nest.

A chorus of frogs can be heard later in the day, and Red-Winged Blackbirds are chirping to one another from the cattails. There haven't been any turtle sightings yet, we expect they will be around soon.

As the weather warms, we will get to see more and more spring blooms and the return of pollinators. If you are looking for a project while social distancing, consider building a bee hotel, planting milkweed, or designing a pollinator friendly garden with native flowering plants—it's the perfect time of year for it!



Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre is continuing to tend to the trails and care for the animals so everything is ready for you to visit us when we open our doors again.

Please consider a donation or animal adoption. Your continued support means so much to us and we hope to see you out on the trails again soon!

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Hello from the Friends of Wye Marsh Board and from our hardworking staff. I trust you are all safe and in good health. We are living in a new reality but have to keep it up for a while longer. None of us know exactly when we can meet again but we are taking all steps we can to stay connected and be ready when that day comes. As Mary Ann has explained the staff is taking care of the essentials on site. Keep in touch with the website. I took the virtual trail walk the other day and thoroughly enjoyed it. Kudos to the producers.

Thanks to the many sources of help from the various governments we will be able to carry on with no revenue for much longer than originally thought. The board is continuing to seek new members to fill some gaps in our knowledge base. We are also taking this time to try and educate ourselves to the many facets of the Marshes operational requirements. There are a myriad of regulations, government requirements and commitments that must be maintained and managed.

Large donor fundraising, which had become the boards focus in February, has been put on hold. So many organizations are hurting and those that are not are focusing their donation efforts on COIVD-19 needs. We are working on preparing a strategy so that when the time is right we can reactivate our efforts. It will surely be required.

Because things are so dynamic the board will be meeting, remotely, every two weeks for the time being so we can more quickly adapt to changing requirements. We are looking at possible scenarios for opening at some level when it is okay to do so. We will keep you informed of our intentions when we know what they are. In the meantime follow the guidelines and keep yourself and your loved ones safe. Hope to see you sooner than later.

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



2020 SUMMER DAY CAMP REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

Join us for exciting outdoor fun in July and August 2020! Campers aged 4-17 will take part in age specific and weekly themed programming including Survival Camp, Leadership Camp, Art Critters, and more! Register online at www.wyemarsh.com



WYE MARSH IS BRINGING NATURE TO YOU!

www.wyemarsh.com/at-home-activities



We are working to develop a growing list of activities and resources to keep you and your family connected to nature and exploring while social distancing.

Please visit our website for activities like how to **build a biosphere**, making **bannock at home**, live **zoo cams**, **science projects**, **eco-crafts**, **nature journaling tips** and more!

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MARSH?

Please note there may be additional changes to these workshops and events as our current situation unfolds. Please check our website and social media for the most up to date information. Thank you for your understanding.

May 9 **World Migratory Bird Day - Online Activities and Birding Workshop!**
Visit Wye Marsh's website and social media for online activities to celebrate work Migratory Bird Day like a virtual birding workshop, learning about bird calls, creating a bird mask, and more! Of course the best way to celebrate is to get out and see what species you can spot!

MAY DATES POSTPONED
June 6, 13
+ Additional Dates TBD

Marsh by Moonlight Spring Paddle Series
Experience a guided canoe tour through the sparkling moonlit waters of the Wye Marsh. Twinkling canoes and boardwalk, night noises, some yummy bannock and lots of laughs will make for spectacular photo-ops and an unforgettable night! \$50.00 pp.
Marsh by Moonlight is generously sponsored HGR Graham Partners & Tourism Simcoe County.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Each of our volunteers is invaluable to the success of Wye Marsh, and we appreciate every role that is taken up. This monthly volunteer spotlight is meant to highlight some of the great work done by our team of volunteers.

Thank you to all!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There are 8 volunteer members of the Friends of Wye Marsh Inc, Board of Directors currently, and they all bring something unique to the table to help Wye Marsh move forward and be the best that it can be.

While all year long the Board of Directors are a vital part of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre's operations, right now things have kicked into over drive.

Amid these uncertain and unprecedented times, the Board of Directors has been working on a plan for Wye Marsh as we are all social distanced, and for once we can resume regular operations. This means a lot of phone calls and time spent on Zoom, navigating different granting programs, and adapting to the changing situation.

Wye Marsh is lucky to have the insight of these 8 wonderful Directors, many of whom volunteer in other roles as well.

Thank you to Dave, Nicole, Melanie, Ashlea, Debbie, Janna, Lucie & Richard!

