



MARSH MATTERS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 60

AUTUMN 2023

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

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

MARSH BY MOONLIGHT
IS BACK THIS AUTUMN!

Conservation at the Marsh



Exciting Upcoming Events!



Volunteer Spotlight...
and more!

Wye Marsh is open daily from 9:00 AM- 4:30 PM.

Following Thanksgiving, 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

We're taking a bit of a different direction with the newsletter with this edition. Instead of reporting monthly on the natural and human happenings at Wye Marsh, we are moving to a seasonal approach. Much of what we do here cycles seasonally, so we thought this was a more holistic view to reporting what's coming up at Wye Marsh.

After a wonderful summer of camp, public canoeing and kayaking, guided hikes, workshops, offsite presentations, and invasive plant removal, we are saddened to say goodbye to our amazing summer students and wish all the best to Mackenzie, Josh, Owen, Ava, Emmett, Tyler, Cameron, Talia, Raegan, Kate, John-Michael, and Taylor as they return to school or work this fall. And we are thrilled to share that Céleste and Ede will be joining us on a permanent basis this year supporting our Education, Animal Care and Program departments!

Autumn is a wonderful time of year to rediscover Wye Marsh. Our trails are at their best this time of year – lots of beauty to see as birds migrate through and swans return, leaves change, and animals work to ready themselves for winter; fewer crowds mean more sightings; the trails are dry and well-packed; and the nuisance insects have moved on for the season! We also have new and favourite nature-themed items in the gift shop such as books, games and puzzles for those who prefer time indoors.

We are also a wonderful place to host birthday parties, gatherings, meetings, holiday events, and even weddings! If you are interested in learning more, please give us a call or check out our website.

We look forward to seeing you at Wye Marsh this autumn!

*Kim Hacker,
Executive Director*



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Okay, so fess up. Who snuck in and grabbed summer! Seems like whoosh, the summer is about to move on. But what a great summer it has been here at the marsh. And I hope a great summer for all, wherever your adventures took you. But never fear, the staff and volunteers here at the marsh have great plans for the fall. And speaking of the fall, another great season. The beauty of the fall colours, experiencing wild life migration, welcoming back the swans. Another great reason to come out and experience all that the marsh provides.

A very special event is occurring September 23rd from 7 – 9 pm. Come along and enjoy “Music in the Marsh”. Walk through the marsh and enjoy performances by ARIKO (Lefaiwe Family), Chas Laurie, Emma Reynolds, Nick Howell and the Northern Mockingbirds.

On weekends from September 8th to October 7th come out and enjoy guided kayak or canoe tours, Meet the Naturalist and of course the Birds of Prey shows on Sundays. And don't forget our marvelous Marsh by Moonlight expeditions happening the 29th and 30th of September and the 6th and 7th of October. For experienced birders, and those who wish to learn and experience the thrill of bird watching, join us October 14th for our fall bird count.

Another great event occurring October 29th for Halloween. On arrival children will be given a passport, and as they meander the paths and trails, costumed staff and volunteers will be situated along the way and will provide a stamp for each passport. Every child that collects all of the stamps for their passport will receive a goody bag! And guess what – arrive in costume and entry to the marsh is FREE! Great fun indeed.

And last, but certainly not least, Connecting for Conservation Online Auction - Nov. 16-26. Friends of Wye Marsh is gearing up for another exciting online auction, set to take place November 16-26, 2023. Thanks to the generosity of our wonderful auction item donors, bidders, event sponsors and fundraising partners we managed to raise \$13,096 last year. Help us raise another \$10,000 this year as an auction item donor or bidder!

Check out this year's exciting offerings when our "Givergy" website goes live Nov. 16th. Visit www.wyemarsh.com/annual-fundraiser

Rick Brady
President, Friends of Wye Marsh



MEET CASPER THE BARN OWL

AGE: 17

REASON FOR LIVING AT WYE MARSH:
Human Imprint

FUN FACT:

- Barn Owls have the best hearing of any animal in the world.
- They can be found on every continent except for Antarctica.
- Although Barn Owls only have a life expectancy of 4 in the wild, Casper has lived an impressive 17 years; he is the oldest Barn Owl in Ontario!

FRONT DESK VOLUNTEERS WANTED



- Welcoming visitors
- Answering phone calls
- Processing admissions & gift store purchases
- Performing basic opening or closing tasks
- Being part of a fun, friendly, engaging team
- Fostering environmental stewardship at a grass roots level
- ONE SHIFT PER WEEK (Mon-Sun): 9 am - 1 pm or 1 - 5 pm.

Contact Heather at 705-526-7809 ext.217 or email hkeery@wymarsh.com



WHEN IS IT "OKAY" (OR NOT) TO FEED THE BIRDS

Learn more about feeding the birds at:
<https://www.audubon.org/news/when-its-okay-or-not-feed-birds>

Ask yourself these questions:

1. Is this species at risk?
2. Is the food appropriate and safely provided?
3. Is feeding this bird likely to change its behavior in harmful ways?

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WYE MARSH THIS AUTUMN



SATURDAY GUIDED KAYAK TOURS

Saturdays @ 10 am

Pick your way through the water lilies, and discover wildlife hiding among the cattails, when you join our Naturalist for 1.5-hour guided kayak tour of Wye Marsh. Must be 8 years of age or older. If under 13, must be accompanied an adult. Tandem & single kayak options available. No advanced reservations. *Book at Front Desk, at least 15 minutes before departure from the tower docks. Cost is the price of general admission PLUS \$10 per person + HST.*



MEET THE NATURALIST

Weekends 'till Oct 7 @ 12:30 pm

There are so many fascinating stories to tell, and experiences to be had, at Wye Marsh! "Meet the Naturalist" and let them introduce you to a different intriguing topic every day, when you meet in the Visitors Centre at 11:45 am. All ages and abilities welcome. *Included with price of admission!*



FEATURE CREATURE

Weekends @ 1 pm

Join our Animal Care team for an opportunity to meet some of our Educational Ambassadors. Learn about their personalities, favourite foods, natural habitats, and much more at a 30 minute demonstration. *Included with price of admission!*



GUIDED CANOE TOURS

Weekends 'till Oct 7 @ 2 pm

Take a 45-minute guided canoe tour through the marsh in one of our voyageur canoes! No advanced reservations. Book your spot when you arrive at Front Desk, at least 15 minutes before departure from the canoe docks. *Cost is the price of general admission PLUS \$8 per person + HST.*



KAYAK ECOTOURS

September

For a unique outdoor experience that fits your schedule and interests, book a private guided Kayak Ecotour in English or French. Access remote parts of the marsh, well beyond the limits of our walking trails, and fully explore the beauty of Wye Marsh during this three-hour adventure. \$ 65 / person. *Please book at least 2 weeks in advance: www.wyemarsh.com/canoe-kayak-ecotours#*



MARSH BY MOONLIGHT

Sept. 29 & 30 and Oct. 6 & 7 @ 6:30 pm

Bathe in moonlight. Take in the stars. Paddle through inky waters as our guides introduce you to the night life at Wye Marsh. This two hour experience includes all equipment - plus a unique gift to take home. Must be 13 years of age or older. Participants under 16 years must be accompanied by a participating adult. *\$75 per person.*

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS



WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

With Richard Vandermeer - Sept. 23 @ 9:30 am

Grab your camera, and get ready to play with lighting, composition and depth-of-field to create artistic wildlife images. Invest three hours with Richard Vandermeer, and learn how to approach skittish birds and other shy critters to get that perfect shot. Please bring a digital SLR with 200 mm lens or greater.

\$75 per person. Register online at www.wyemarsh.com/Fall-Events



MUSIC IN THE MARSH

Sept. 23 @ 7 pm

Let the sweet sounds of acoustic guitars, fiddles, and ukuleles lead you along the trails for a magical night at Wye Marsh. See Ariko, Chas Laurie, Emma Reynolds, Nick Howell and the Northern Mockingbirds. Concurrent concerts run from 7 - 9 pm. Tickets available at Front Desk or online.

\$25 per person <https://www.wyemarsh.com/music-in-the-marsh>



KIDS CROCHET WORKSHOP

Kids Crochet an OWL with Emmett - Oct. 15 from 1:30 - 4 pm

Feed your child's creative spirit and their love of nature. This afternoon workshop will introduce everyone to basic crochet stitches, and end with a cuddly owl - plus TWO FREE patterns for a cute frog and sweet bumble bee to take home! Great for children ages 12 and up. All materials included.

\$30 per child. Register online at www.wyemarsh.com/Fall-Events



HALLOWEEN IN THE MARSH

Oct. 29 from 10 am - 2 pm

Put on your Halloween finery, pick up a "passport" then explore our trails at Wye Marsh. Meet a variety of well dressed woodland "spirits". Collect five or more stamps, and use them to claim a special treat in the Visitors Centre.

Free admission to everyone in costume!



STONE CARVING

November 12 @ from 1 - 3 pm

Breathe life into soapstone or alabaster under the guidance of Lisa Harpell, from Creative Madness Studies. Learn how to use tools and techniques to sculpt a small pendant - or sculpture - inspired by the biodiversity of Wye Marsh. Materials provided by Creative Madness Art Studios. *\$70 per person. Register online at www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh*



ONLINE AUCTION FUNDRAISER

Connecting for Conservation Online Auction - Nov. 16-26

Thanks to the generosity of last year's auction item donors, bidders, event sponsors and fundraising partners we managed to raise \$13,096 for habitat restoration projects, environmental education programs and trail maintenance at Wye Marsh. Check out this year's exciting offerings when our "Givergy" website goes live Nov. 16.

Visit <https://www.wyemarsh.com/annual-fundraiser>



WINTER
OPEN HOUSE

Dec. 2 from 10 am - 3 pm

Pay what you wish - and welcome winter in style at our Wye Marsh Open House. Meet our Birds of Prey. Hike the trails with a Naturalist. Go on a Scavenger Hunt. Warm up beside a crackling fire and enjoy some toasted Bannock. *All activities included with admission. Admission by donation. See details at <https://www.wyemarsh.com/winter-events>*



CONNECTING FOR CONSERVATION
ONLINE AUCTION

BID NOV. 16-26
www.wyemarsh.com/annual-fundraiser

- * Luxury Experiences
- * Outdoor Adventures
- * Festival Tickets
- * Fabulous Food
- * Art & more!

BID HIGH for the chance to WIN a 1-Year Family Membership!

Funds raised support vital conservation projects, environmental education programs & trail maintenance.



Our
Wye Marsh
CIT Youth **ROCK!**

All together – our wonderful summer camp Counsellors-in-Training (CITs) invested about 1,800 volunteer hours in the Wye Marsh. That is **AMAZING!**

Thank you for helping enrich our day camp participant experience by being great team players, and:

- Being a Hike “Caboose” helped keep everyone safe and together;
- Encouraging Campers helped kids build confidence, try new things, and grow;
- Facilitating Washroom Breaks meant that group programs could run smoothly, while one or two people took a much needed break;
- Being a Role Model. They have already inspired some of this year’s summer camp participants who want to CITs next year!

We thank our 2023 CITs for all of their positivity and enthusiasm this summer. Well done!

SPONSORED BY



THE LATEST IN CONSERVATION AT THE MARSH



The Stewardship and Conservation department has been working hard to map and remove invasive *Phragmites australis subsp. Australis* (European Common Reed) throughout the spring and summer. This has been made possible through funding provided by the Eastern Georgian Bay Initiative, and by working with partnered contractors Severn Sound Environmental Association and Cambium Inc.

Phragmites is a large invasive grass which has been disturbing native marsh ecosystems all along the eastern coast of North America for decades. This species of phragmites is especially damaging to native species as it grows several meters tall and disperses up to 2000 seeds per plant each year. In 2020 the Wye Marsh received funding to aid in the mapping and removal of invasive phragmites on the Wye Marsh property. Since then, 34 distinct sites have been located ranging in size from 100m² to 4500m². Due to the sensitive nature of the Marsh, pesticides are not being used in management, therefore all removal has been manual, stem by stem! We have made some great progress this summer and have completed over 400 person hours of assessment and management with the assistance of our partners and volunteers. We would like to extend a big thank you to everyone who has been involved in making phragmites and other invasive plant removal possible this season.



While you are walking the trails this fall, you may notice some work being completed along the berm. In September and October, we will be removing invasive buckthorn in order to complete restoration work in the spring to create improved habitat for our Species at Risk turtles. Once removal is completed, native trees and shrubs including sumac, elderberry, dogwood and serviceberry will be planted in their place. Restoration Artists will be joining us for mechanical removal, followed by precise herbicide application to combat the spread of this invasive species. Please be aware of machinery and adhere to posted signs while hiking.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Willemien Brummelhuis-Knol



Every volunteer contributes to the success of Wye Marsh, and helps foster environmental stewardship at a grass roots level by investing their time and talents in us. We are grateful to everyone for your ongoing support, and would like to take a moment to shine our spotlight on: Willemien Brummelhuis-Knol.

With a generous smile and heartfelt laugh, Willemien creates a warm friendly atmosphere wherever she goes. An active member of the Royal Canadian Legion's Branch 80's Ladies Auxiliary, and Askennonia Senior's Centre Volunteer Team, we are most fortunate to have her squeeze us into her very, very busy schedule!

After decades of bringing smiles to people's faces in their Midland bakery, Willemien and her husband sold their very popular shop, and were ready to enjoy retirement. Then, everything was locked down because of COVID. It was a dramatic changed. While she enjoyed having time to cross stitch, crochet, do jigsaw puzzles, read books and cycle... she really, really missed the hustle and bustle of customer service!

Fortunately, with her Wye Marsh Membership in hand, she could still hit the trails and take her dog for a walk to keep physically and mentally active. When she realized she could volunteer on the Front Desk, she couldn't resist the temptation. "I started behind the cash register when I was 15 years old," she says. "It's the best job ever!"

"I love nature and interacting with people... I tell them about the Birds of Prey, Bee House, Swan landing, Boardwalk, and Muskrat Trail," she says. And, as Willemien says, "Volunteering keeps you involved. There's no need to be lonely."

Whether you have lived in North Simcoe all your life, cottage on Georgian Bay, or recently moved to the area, volunteering at Wye Marsh is a great way to meet kindred spirits. To join Willemien and our other wonderful team of nature enthusiasts, give us a call at 705-526-7809 ext. 217 or swing by Front Desk and ask for Heather.

Our six-year-old Bald Eagle could live to be 50 or even 70 years old! While her current home surpasses regulation standards, Ziibi is such an intelligent and social bird, we would love to enhance her time with us by building a new enclosure that's taller, longer and better than 'good enough'!

Scan the QR Code & Donate to Our New "Animal Embassy"! Give a gift greater than \$1,000 to be recognized in longevity!



ZIIBI'S NEW PAD

Help Ziibi Spread Her Wings





Northern Mockingbirds



Nick Howell



Emma Reynolds



Chas Laurie

ARIKO



MUSIC IN THE MARSH

OPEN-AIR CONCERT

September 23, 2023 7-9 pm \$25 per person

Let the sweet sounds of acoustic guitars, fiddles, and ukuleles lead you along the trails for a magical night at Wye Marsh.

Funds raised support trail maintenance, conservation projects and environmental education programs at Wye Marsh!

Tickets: www.wyemarsh.com/music-in-the-marsh

**Burrison
Hudani
Doris LLP**



PURE
COUNTRY★RADIO



'80s '90s & '00s
BOUNCE
RADIO ◀ 104.1

**KEY MORTGAGE
PARTNERS**

Brokerage #12235



Mega Mindful

LIVING

OCTOBER
FUNDRAISER

Proceeds from every
Gingerbread Latte
Gingerbread Cookie

NOVEMBER
FUNDRAISER



25%

of all gift card sales
made Nov 16-26
support Wye Marsh!



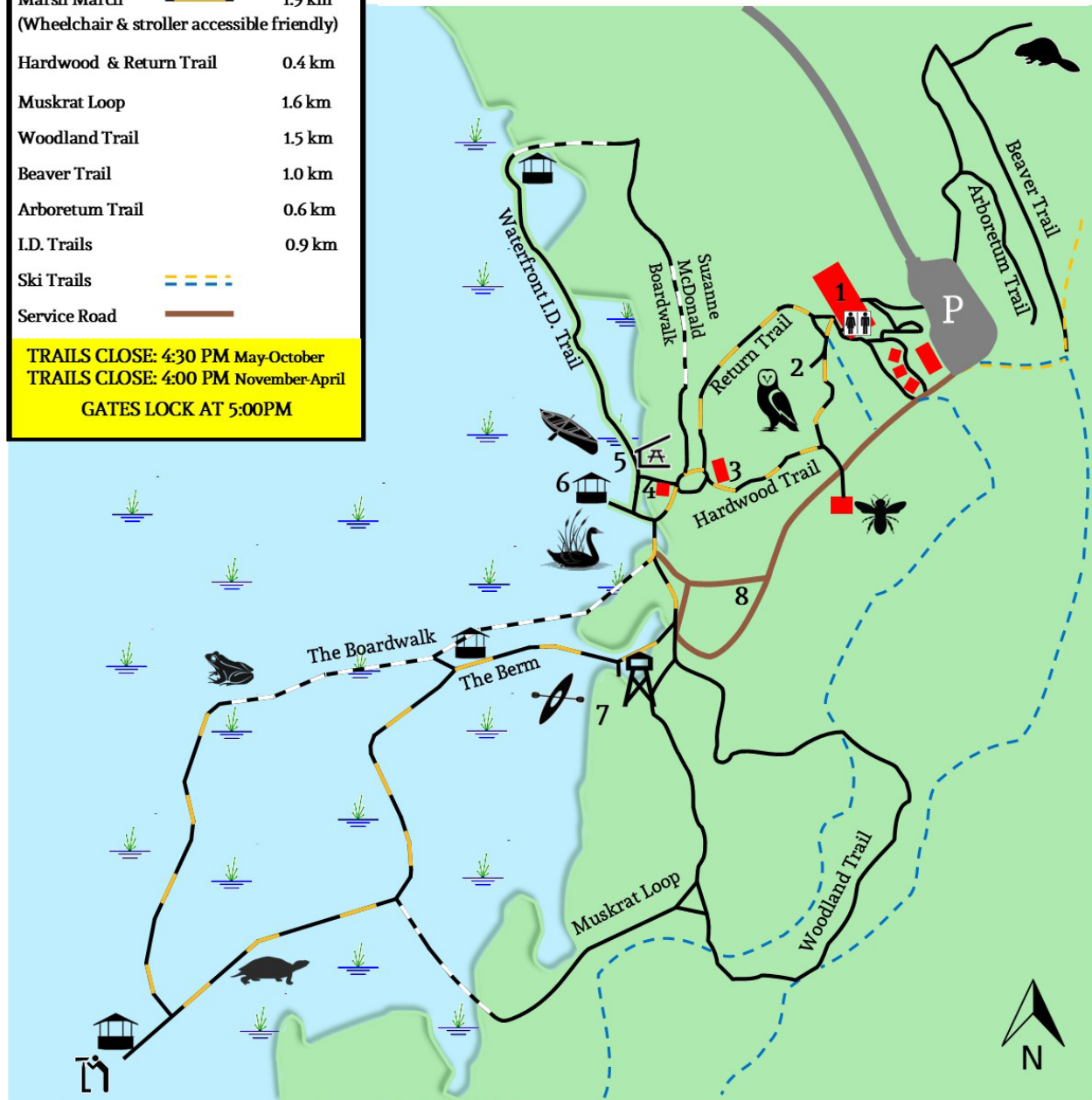
Wye Marsh Trails System

16160 Highway 12 East, Tay, ON | (705) 526-7809

LEGEND	
Hiking Trails	—
Boardwalk	- - -
Marsh March (Wheelchair & stroller accessible friendly)	— 1.9 km
Hardwood & Return Trail	0.4 km
Muskrat Loop	1.6 km
Woodland Trail	1.5 km
Beaver Trail	1.0 km
Arboretum Trail	0.6 km
I.D. Trails	0.9 km
Ski Trails	— — —
Service Road	—

TRAILS CLOSE: 4:30 PM May-October
TRAILS CLOSE: 4:00 PM November-April
GATES LOCK AT 5:00PM

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 Visitor's Centre | 2 Birds of Prey Field | Open Land/Forest |
| 3 Sugar Shack | 4 Log Cabin | Wetland |
| 5 Canoe Dock | 6 Waterfowl Monitoring Station | Building |
| 7 Kayak Dock | 8 Tenting Field | |



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 return to the Visitor's Centre if foul weather conditions threaten.