

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?

The Perseid Meteor Shower is an annual meteor shower that takes place in July and August. It lasts for a little over a month and every night there is a little more activity until the peak night, where it begins to slowly decrease thereafter.

The Perseid Meteor Shower occurs when Earth flies through the cosmic trail of the comet Swift-Tuttle. As the comet travels around, pieces fall off and enter the Earth's outer atmosphere and produce a light trail that can be viewed from Earth.

HOW TO WATCH THE METEOR SHOWER:

This year, the peak dates to see the Perseid Meteor Shower are August 11 & 12 though it will be taking place until the 3rd week of August. During the peak, you could see up to 40-50 meteors per hour.

For your best chances of seeing the Perseid Meteor Shower, head out to a place where there is little to no light pollution, and face west. The best times to go would be after midnight on the peak nights. It takes about 20 minutes for your eyes to adjust to the dark, so plan for enough time to enjoy the shower!



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](#).

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](#).

Daily

Nature Nook Self-Guided Discovery Activities

The Wye Marsh Nature Nook has scavenger hunts, birding booklets, the Great Tree Challenge and other *FREE* activities to compliment your exploration of Wye Marsh and prompt you to experience nature in different ways. The Nature Nook is located at the entry to the Display Hall. Ask Wye Marsh staff upon checking in at the Visitor Centre for more information.

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](#).



A juvenile Snapping Turtle camouflaged in the cattails, basking on a warm July day.

ON THE WILD SIDE:

While the Perseid Meteor Shower will capture all of our gazes nocturnally this month, the Wye Marsh is teeming with life in the sun as well. Particularly in the early mornings, one can spot turtles, frogs, water snakes, and waterfowl from the boardwalk. In the afternoons, pollinators thrive as the wildflower gardens host bees and butterflies in search of nectar. Seeing the species who we share Wye Marsh with is a reminder of the many reasons it is so important to preserve and protect this vibrant wetland habitat.



Green Heron

Photo: Eric Nisbet



Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly

Photo: Patrick Jackson



Northern Water Snake

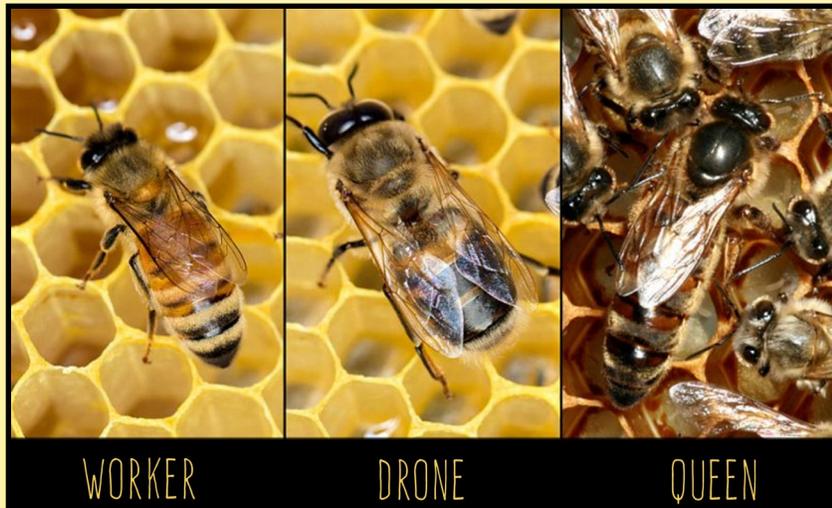
Photo: Eric Nisbet

What's the *Buzz*?

August 17 is **World Honey Bee Day**, which highlights the importance of this small but mighty species.

Honey Bees are regulated by order and their jobs. There is the queen, who is responsible for laying eggs; the drones (males) who are responsible only for impregnating the queen; and the worker bees (females) who make up 95% of the hive's population. These ladies do everything from caring for new larva, to tending to the queen, to guarding the hive, to collecting nectar to feed the hive.

There is only 1 queen per hive, and she is noted by her larger abdomen. Drones, the males, are larger than workers, with much larger 'googly' eyes.



WORKER

DRONE

QUEEN

Did you know?

- ◆ A queen Honey Bee lays 1,500-2,000 eggs per day in the summer.
- ◆ Queen Honey Bees live 3-5 years; worker bees live 6 weeks in the summer and longer if they are the cycle to hunker down over winter; drones live 3-5 weeks, and do not survive through the winter with the rest of the hive.
- ◆ Bees typically fly 2-4km away from their hive to forage, up to a maximum of 10km.
- ◆ Honey Bees need to visit about 2 million flowers to collect enough nectar to make 500ml of honey.
- ◆ Honey Bees can fly at speeds up to 25km/h, flapping their wings 12,000 beats/minute.

STEWARDSHIP AT WORK: FIGHTING PHRAGMITES

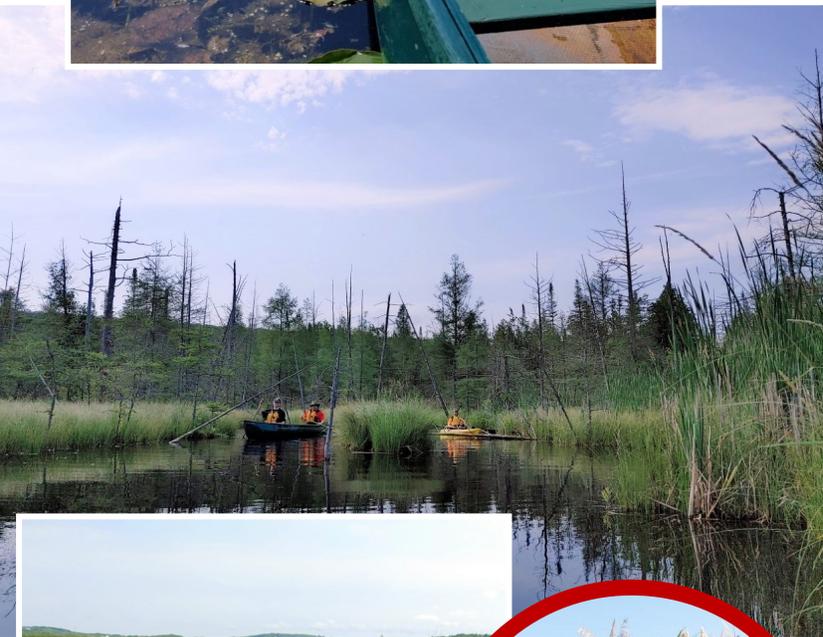
The Wye Marsh Stewardship Department has been hard at work surveying the 3,000 acres of Wye Marsh for invasive species—namely phragmites.

These surveys take them in canoes and kayaks, occasionally joined by volunteers and other environmental groups like our friends at Severn Sound Environmental Association and Canadian Wildlife Services. These surveys take the group far beyond the trails and boardwalk to acreages of the Wye Marsh that are not regularly seen by visitors. These untouched areas are protected as valuable habitat to diverse species, and this is why it is so important to survey and remove harmful invasive species from them.

Invasive species are often highly adaptable, have few predators, and are able to reproduce quickly. This often gives them dominance in their new environment as they outcompete native species for food, habitat, or growing space by disrupting the food webs which have been established over long periods of time. Some invasive plants can cause changes to the soil that make it difficult for native plants to thrive.

Invasive Phragmites grow around wetlands and beaches and can grow to 15ft tall. They are a tall grass-like plant that crowd out native vegetation resulting in decreased diversity in plant-life that is relied on for food and habitat by different wetland species. Phragmites itself is not a good source of food/ habitat which causes a ripple effect in different species. Invasive Phragmites can be identified by stems that are tan or beige in colour with blue-green leaves and large, dense seed heads.

This invasive species survey and removal project is graciously funded in part by the Eastern Georgian Bay Initiative (EGBI).



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

First and foremost, I am thrilled to be the new Executive Director for Wye Marsh. It is an honour and a privilege to be working alongside the Board of Directors to lead this incredible organization, and I am excited to be working with such a hard working and knowledgeable group of staff and volunteers.

Being from Midland, one of my favourite things to do as a child was spend a day at Wye Marsh. My dad would drop my sister and I off for the afternoon, and we would explore to our hearts' content. In the early 1980s, when the future of Wye Marsh was unclear, I took my first political action as an elementary school student and worked with Bob Whittam and the committee to save the Wye Marsh. Little did I know then that I would be here in this role today!

I am grateful for the work my predecessor, Mary Ann Milne, has done over the past few years for Wye Marsh, and I am committed to building on our mission as a centre of excellence for wetlands research, interpretation and education based on the principle of stewardship and the importance of environmental awareness.

Next time you are at Wye Marsh, please make sure to say hello! I can't wait to meet you.

- Kim Hacker, Executive Director



ABOUT KIM:

"I have deep roots in the Midland area. Born to one of Midland's Founding Families, I attended Parkview Public and Midland Secondary Schools, and worked at Midland Public Library, Huronia Museum, and Discovery Harbour.

I hold a diploma in Advertising from Georgian College, an Honours BA in English and Native Studies from Trent University, and a B.Ed in Secondary Education from Mount Saint Vincent University.

I made the move back to Midland last November after 30 years away, having lived in Halifax, Toronto, Muskoka, Peterborough, and Durham Region. My work background is in education; I am a certified teacher, guidance counsellor and former private school principal.

I live with my artist partner and our two cats, Turkey and Bear. I have a passion for nature and the outdoors and enjoy spending time at our Georgian Bay cottage with my extended family."

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my privilege to welcome to the Wye Marsh our new Executive Director, Kim Hacker. She has recently moved back to her home town of Midland, and she brings with her a wealth of experience, especially in the field of education, which of course is one of the major mandates of the Wye Marsh. I know that you will all join with me in wishing her every success.

I am also pleased to say that, despite the ongoing Stage 3 restrictions, and the somewhat erratic weather, our summer activities at the Wye Marsh are proving very popular, and I am gratified that we continue to welcome visitors from far and wide. Thanks to the dedicated work of Paul Beauchamp and his team, much of the wear and tear to the infrastructure of the trail system has been made good; unfortunately for our guests, the major work needed to the Muskrat Trail boardwalk may have to be deferred until next season, because of the scale, complexity, and environmental sensitivity of the project. Despite that, I encourage all our visitors to explore the beauties of our more outlying trails, and as always our roving Trail Ambassadors will be more than happy to assist with suggestions and advice.

Have a great summer at the Wye Marsh!

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

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Each of our volunteers is invaluable to the success of the 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!

DOROTHY HARPER

This month we would like to celebrate Dorothy Harper. Dorothy has been an important volunteer at Wye Marsh for several years, and she works tirelessly to lead the Trail Ambassador (formerly Guided Walker) and Feeder Watch programs.

Along with setting schedules and training and mentoring new volunteers, Dorothy spends hours weekly at Wye Marsh providing tours, answering questions, and sparking children's curiosity along the Boardwalk and throughout the trails. We are so grateful to Dorothy for sharing her knowledge of plants and birds, and her passion for the area with our volunteers and visitors. **Thank you Dorothy!**



A Blanding's Turtle basks in the grass along the shoreline on a sunny day at Wye Marsh.



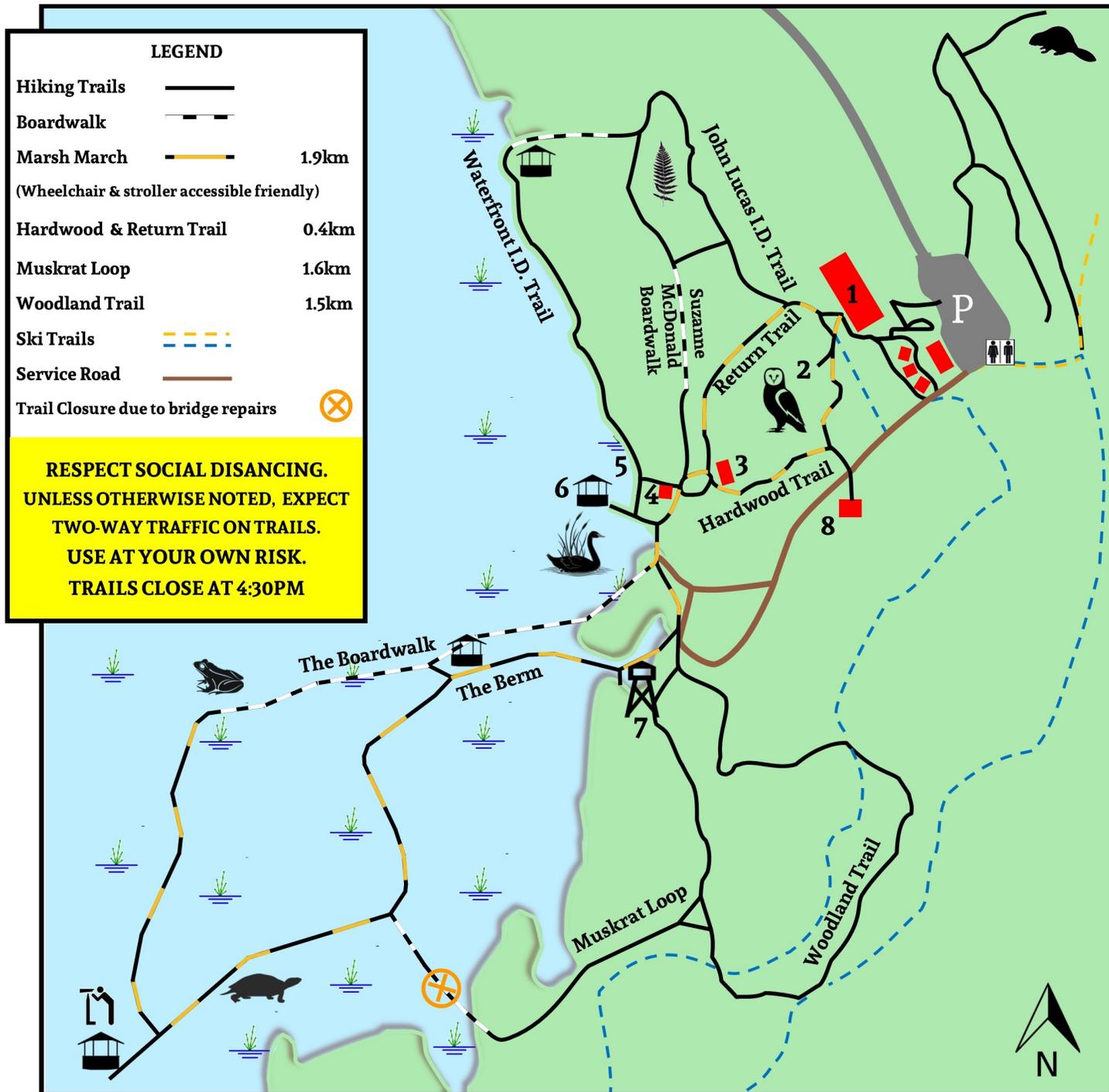
VISITING WYE MARSH DURING COVID-19:

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.