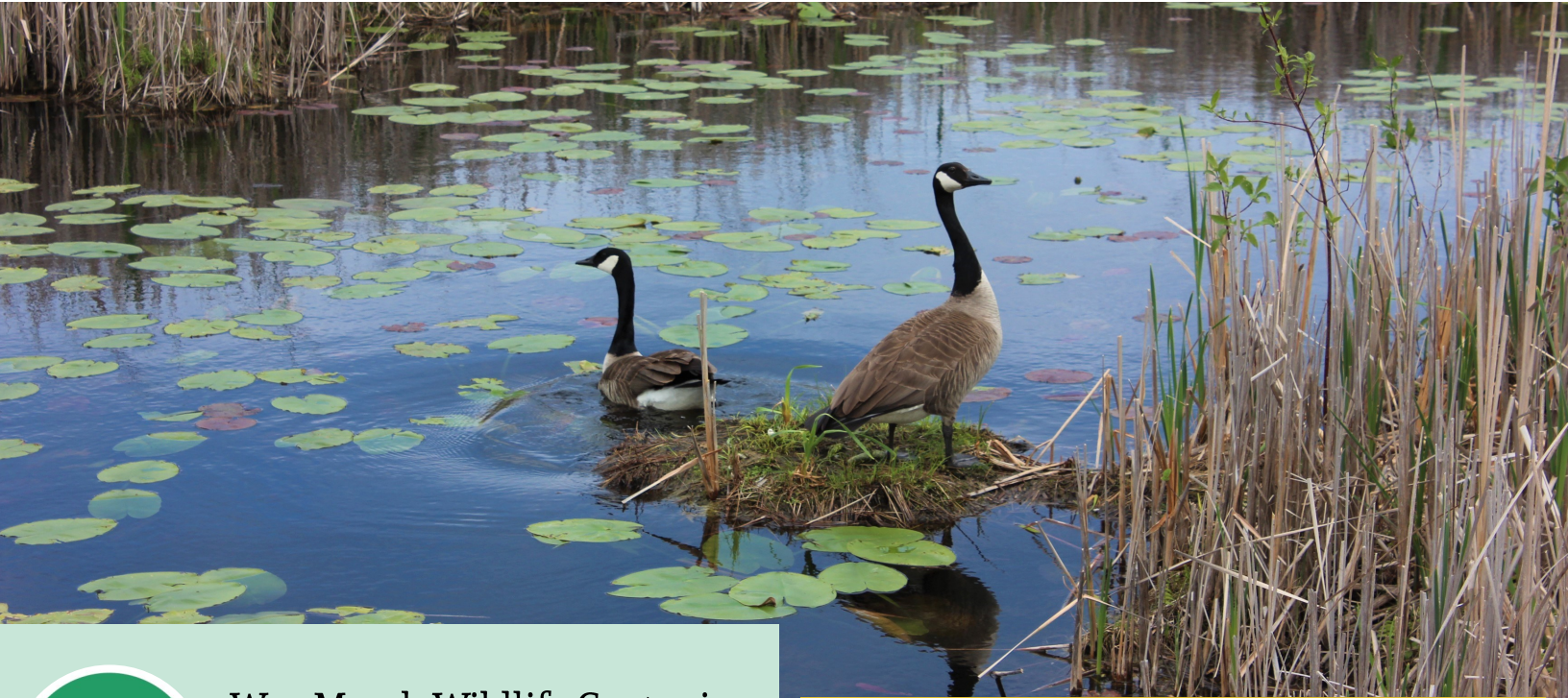


WELCOME TO THE MARSH MATTERS NEWSLETTER, A MONTHLY PUBLICATION TO KEEP OUR VALUED MEMBERS, VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE LOOP ABOUT THE HAPPENINGS OF THE WYE MARSH!



Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre is **temporarily closed**, with plans to **reopen the week of June 14, 2021**.

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

2021 DAY CAMP REGISTRATION OPEN



To learn more or register, visit www.wyemarsh.com/camp or [click here](#).

Wye Marsh Day Camps are exciting, safe, and well loved for ages 4-16. Immerse your camper in fun and nature this summer!

DID YOU KNOW?

Canada Geese are some of the most common waterfowl to be spotted around Simcoe County. While most people can recognize these iconic birds, here are some lesser known facts about Canada's favourite goose:

- While many people call them "Canadian Geese", they are actually called "Canada Geese" or a single "Canada Goose".
- Canada Geese are found not only in Canada, but all across North America and even in Europe.
- There are 11 subspecies of Canada Geese. They do not differ greatly in appearance, but generally the further north they are found, the smaller they are; and the further west, the darker their plumage.
- As well seasoned migrators, Canada Geese can travel over 2,400 km in one day. Their V formation helps reduce wind drag making flight more efficient.
- Canada Geese will mate for life, which is generally 10 to 25 years.

ON THE WILD SIDE:

While walking on the boardwalk you may have noticed the tall tower in the middle of the marsh. This is an Osprey Tower. The platform allows for a mating pair of Osprey to nest safely. We are happy to report that the tower is occupied!

Osprey are raptors who feed mostly on fish. These swift hunters are often seen on the shores of Georgian Bay and can be identified by their plumage which is brown from above and white from below. This helps them camouflage while hunting.



Ziibi, the Bald Eagle, soaking up some sun.

In the Birds of Prey Field all the feathered friends are doing well! Ziibi the Bald Eagle (above), is molting beautifully into her white head and tail feathers. By the time she is 5 years of age she will have the iconic plumage Bald Eagles are known/ named for. Edgar & Allan, the Ravens, remain closely bonded. Edgar is working on his etiquette on a glove with Animal Care Staff, while Allan is still acclimatizing before beginning training. Darwin, the Turkey Vulture, is enjoying his newly renovated enclosure that allows for more sun exposure and misses greeting new people to the field. Animal Care staff have continued to work on ensuring the best enrichment possible for the animals in our care throughout the facility closure.

National Trails Day is June 5, 2021.

As Wye Marsh plans to reopen the trails and boardwalks this month, we thought we should share why it is so important to stay *on* the designated trails while exploring for your safety and the health of the environment you are enjoying:



- New, budding growth can be very delicate and could be damaged or killed by treading on it. You could be compressing the new underground root systems.
- Veering off the trail could disturb underground burrows in the ground, amphibians hiding under foliage, nests, or other wildlife refuges you may not notice.
- You could unknowingly introduce an invasive species from your shoes or clothing to the environment.
- There may be greater risk of injury due to uneven terrain – slips, trips, or falls.
- Staying on a marked trail helps you avoid getting lost.



Its important to respect our environment to ensure its conservation. This is why it is important to stay on the trails when exploring at Wye Marsh.

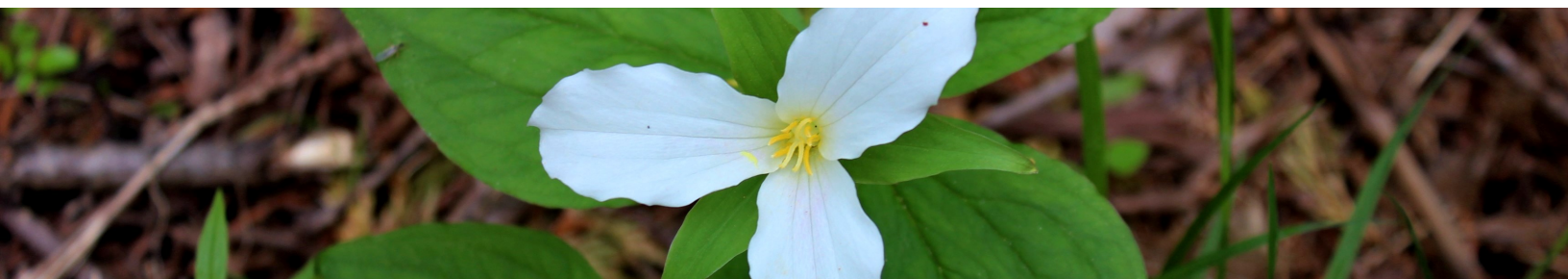
A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Staff and Volunteers are excited by the Province of Ontario announcement regarding the Roadmap to Reopen, and we anticipate opening the Main Gate and doors to the Centre the week of June 14. The same restrictions that were in place before the latest lockdown will be in effect for the first 21 days of re-opening; that is, face masks are to be worn and one family at a time when inside the Centre, and the number of visitors will be restricted to the number of parking spaces. Staff are busy developing family-friendly programs that will be included in the price of admission, including Trail Sign Scavenger Hunt and Story Walk, and the Wye Marsh Trail Ambassadors will be starting this spring. It will be great to see everyone again, but a note of caution – the Canada Geese have taken over the Boardwalk!

Enrollment in Wye Marsh Day Camp has been very steady and there are already waiting lists for some of our camps. Staff continue to revise the operating procedures in accordance with the Ontario Camps Association and Province of Ontario COVID-19 guidelines as they become available to ensure the health and safety of Campers and Staff remains a top priority. We are all really looking forward to welcoming the Campers back this year, last summer wasn't the same without them.

Patrick Jackson, who joined us in February, has transitioned from Events and Volunteers to Stewardship. He will be working on invasive species management programs as well as developing a multi-year stewardship operations plan. Kim Hacker joins Wye Marsh on May 31 as the Senior Customer Service Coordinator, which will include events, volunteers, managing the gift shop, and public programs such as weddings and birthday parties. Kim is originally from Midland and moved back after a number of years in the GTA, we very much look forward to working with her. Some of the summer students have begun their respective assignments and more will be joining us in the coming weeks. We are very thankful for the support from the Métis Nation of Ontario and Canada Summer Jobs that has allowed us to hire a group of very talented and hardworking young people.

- Mary Ann Milne, Executive Director



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Truly, we are living in interesting and tumultuous times! Hopefully, however, there is now light at the end of the tunnel, as our vaccination rates continue to climb. It would be nice to think that everyone's patience will have been rewarded by the time our July newsletter goes to press.

On behalf of the new Board of Directors, and of course on my own behalf as the newly-elected President of the Board, I would like to thank all of our staff who have continued to work through some very erratic and trying conditions; and also I would like to thank all our donors and sponsors whose ongoing generosity has contributed so much to our staying afloat.

As we start to reopen in accordance with the Provincial guidelines, we do ask for your forbearance. I know that everyone will be keen to cram as much outdoor experience as possible into our short Canadian summer; but we do have a limited number of parking spaces, and some of our programs and projects may take a little longer than others to restart.

Having said that, it will give me great pleasure, on behalf of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre and its dedicated staff and volunteers, to welcome you all back just as soon as the Provincial reopening permits.

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

THE STORY OF BRUTUS & AMAZON

Wye Marsh is sad to announce the passing of Brutus, Trumpeter Swan E84, at the end of April.

Brutus, hatched in 1998, was the grandson of Pigpen, who was the female half of the original breeding pair of Trumpeter Swans at Wye Marsh. He was from the first big family that was hatched at Wye Marsh.

There were 7 other cygnets in the clutch, and the group was affectionately known as the 'Brat Pack'. The 'Brat Pack' stayed together for two years and made a habit of making other Trumpeter Swans move out of their way.

Brutus eventually got together with Amazon (Trumpeter Swan H34), a bird from Pigpen's second clutch born in 1994. Brutus and Amazon earned their names by clearing out 3 breeding pairs from their territories in various ponds near the Wye Marsh Observation Tower.

While it is generally the male who tends to be the aggressive bird in any pair of Trumpeter Swans, it became clear over the years that Brutus was a gentle soul and was largely a fan of standing upon the Wye Marsh's berm or islands preening his feathers while Amazon did the heavy lifting. Not only was Amazon in charge of sitting on the nest and protecting the eggs, she was also in charge of clearing other Trumpeter Swans out of their territory, which seemed to be an entertaining pastime of hers.

Meanwhile Brutus generally sat idly by, making sure all of his feathers were in place. Swan Monitors suspected this was the reason Brutus and Amazon did not have the greatest nesting success, raising only 7 cygnets from 2002 to 2016.

Sadly, Amazon disappeared in 2018. She was last spotted at Wye Marsh.

Brutus was found on the bank not far from the Swan Landing at Wye Marsh on April 30. He will be very much missed by all who knew him.



Photos: Ontario Trumpeter Swan Restoration

FRIENDS OF WYE MARSH INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2021 Board Executive was determined at the May meeting, with the results as follows:

President – Alasdair MacLean

Vice President – Nicole Horbatiuk

Treasurer – Allan Marion

Secretary – Melanie Dupuis

Director - Debbie Lovas

Director - Richard Leavens

Director - Tim Martin

Director - Susan Molenda

Director - Natalie Majer

Director - Allan Grant

Director - Stephanie Zoschke

Director - Rebecca Cowie

Director - Jana Luker

Please join us in welcoming the new members, and congratulating Alasdair, Nicole, Allan, and Melanie on their new roles! To read the bios of the Friends of Wye Marsh Inc. Board of Directors, [please click here](#).



\$11,700 OTF Grant Helps Wye Marsh

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre received an \$11,700 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for projects and equipment to assist with turning the Pavilion into an Outdoor Learning Centre, and to upgrade its technology to provide virtual programs.

Currently the Pavilion is used for Wye Marsh Day Camp and Marsh School through late spring to early fall. The grant funds will be used to upgrade the building to make it useable for 9 months of the year. Not only does an Outdoor Learning Centre significantly reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, it provides a unique setting for Marsh School participants to explore the natural world through outdoor, experiential inquiry-based learning.

Funding will also be used to purchase equipment such as microphones and cameras, which will allow our experienced Outdoor Naturalists to share their knowledge and appreciation of the natural world and environmental stewardship virtually. The 60 minute programs are designed to bring nature to participants when they can't come to Wye Marsh.

Wye Marsh wishes to take this opportunity to thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation and looks forward to working on these projects.