

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!

The trail system at Wye Marsh is **open** from 9:00am– 4:00pm. The Visitor Centre remains **closed**, and programming remains suspended. Learn more on page 2. **Thank you for your understanding.**



*Bald Eagles are considered of Special Concern on the Species at Risk in Ontario list.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

June 20 is World Eagle Day.

There are over 50 species of Eagles across the world, mostly in Asia and Africa. Eagles are further classified into: Fish/ Sea Eagles who primarily hunt fish; Snake Eagles who primarily hunt snakes and other small reptiles; and Hawk Eagles and Buzzard Eagles, both of which are smaller and named for their resemblance to hawks/ buzzards.

There are two species of Eagles found in Canada: the Golden Eagle, and the Bald Eagle. Bald Eagles can be identified by their white head and tail feathers in contrast to the full brown plumage of Golden Eagles. Juvenile Bald Eagles can often be mistaken for Golden Eagles, as they do not get their white feathers until they are 5 years old.

## THE PHASES OF WYE MARSH'S RE-OPENING:



**Wye Marsh is excited to announce that the trail system has is open in a limited capacity daily from 9:00am-4:00pm.**

Wye Marsh staff have been working with Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) on a plan to safely reopen, which will be done in phases. During the first phase, from June 1 - 14, admission will be by donation in the parking lot as we build an outdoor admissions booth. Once the booth is constructed, reduced admission rates will apply until we are back up and running 100%.

While on the trails, please keep the following in mind:

- Be mindful of wildlife who have become accustomed to the trails and boardwalks being unused by humans. Please give them space and do not attempt to approach or feed them, especially on the boardwalk.
- Respect social distancing guidelines while on the trails, especially at intersections and narrow sections.
- The gates will open daily at 9:00am and close at 4:00pm
- Paper copies of the trail maps will not be available during this phase. Please see the following page or our website for a digital copy of the trail map, noting the one way entry and exit trails.
- Respect one way trails where signage notes it at the entry and exit points on the map.

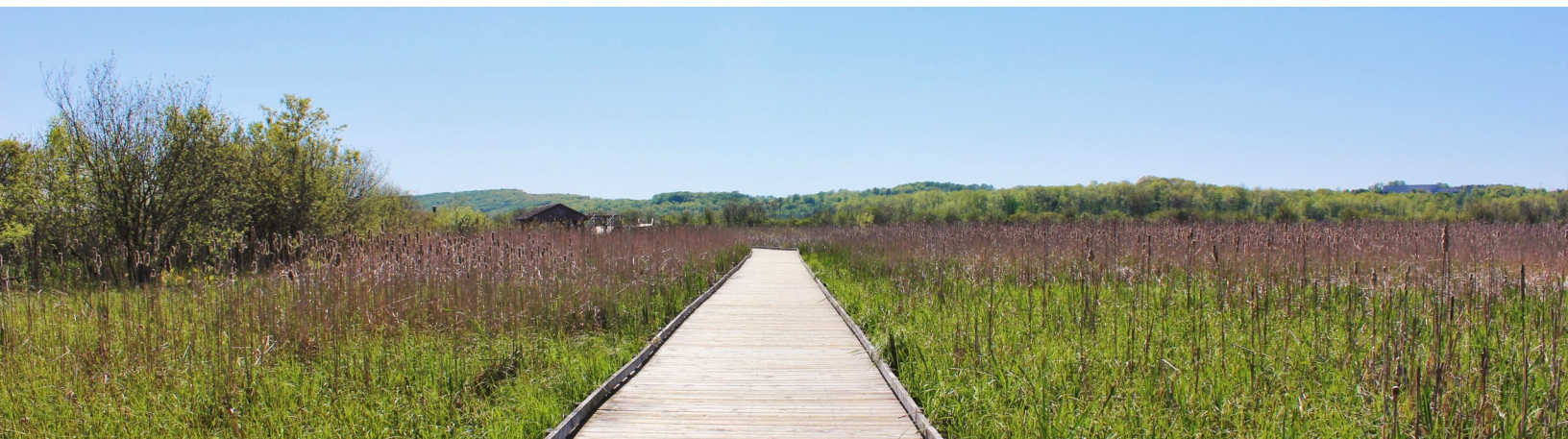
The Visitor Center remains **closed** to the public. There is access to portable washrooms. There is no access to the Birds of Prey Field during this time. Programming will remain suspended at this time. If the parking lot is full, we respectfully ask that you visit again at another time, please do not park on the road.

Memberships to Wye Marsh will be extended to account for time that the facility was closed according to the following:

- Winter Memberships expired on April 30, 2020 will be **extended to July 31, 2020**
- Annual memberships that expired between March 17 and May 1, 2020 will be **extended 2 months from date of expiry**
- Annual memberships that expire(d) between May 2, 2020 and March 16, 2021 will be **extended 3 months from date of expiry**

**Thank you to everyone for your support during this time. It is through your generosity and ongoing appreciation for Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre that we are able to continue to educate and spread awareness about the importance of wetlands.**

*We are very excited to welcome you all back to Wye Marsh - see you soon!*



**LEGEND**

Hiking Trails ———

Boardwalk — — — — —

One Way Trail  (Trail System Entry/ Exit Points)

Marsh March  1.9km  
(Wheelchair & stroller accessible friendly)

Hardwood & Return Trail 0.4km

Muskrat Loop 1.6km

Woodland Trail 1.5km

Ski Trails 

Service Road 

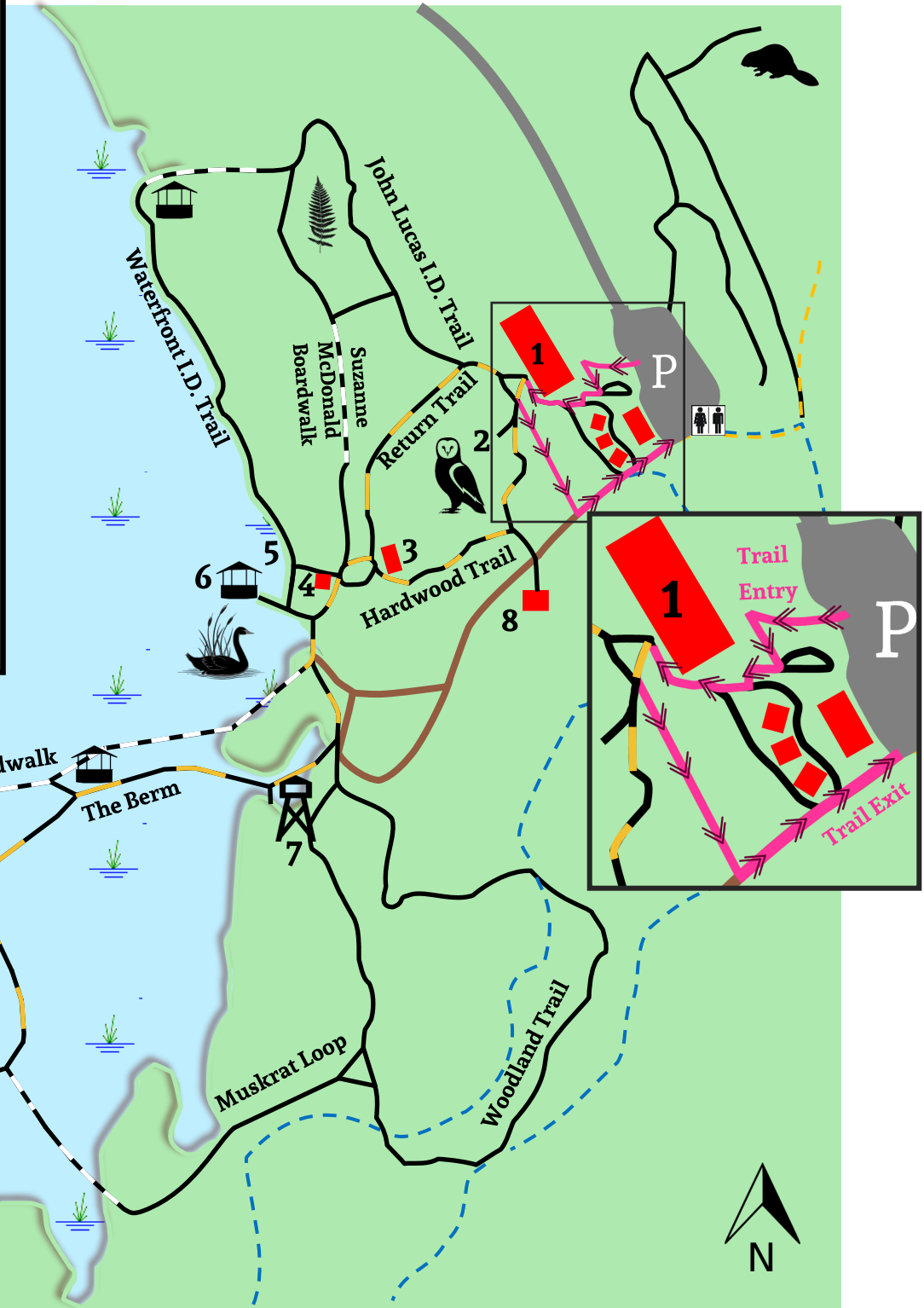
**PLEASE RESPECT SOCIAL DISANCING.**

**UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, EXPECT TWO-WAY TRAFFIC ON TRAILS. USE AT YOUR OWN RISK.**

**GATES LOCK AT 4:00PM**

- 1 Visitor's Centre - Closed
- 2 Birds of Prey Field - Closed
- 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

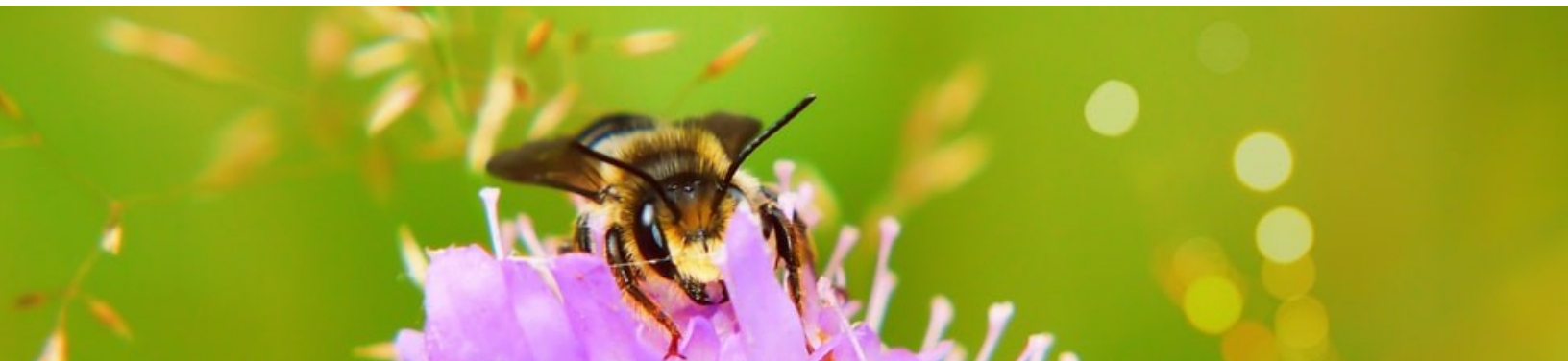


Please use caution on all trails, walkways, boardwalks, waterways and property of the Wye Marsh. Appropriate hiking footwear is recommended. Slippery conditions exist when wet. Be aware that plant roots and loose rocks can create natural trip hazards when extending above paths. Immediately exit the trails if foul weather conditions threaten.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

We continue to adjust to the new normal as we head into the third month of the Covid-19 pandemic. I want to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre for the amazing way in which they quickly adapted to ever changing circumstances. As noted we are opening under a phased approach and will do our best to keep you informed of any future changes. We are working on a number of new initiatives such as virtual events and on-line public and school programs. Our goal is to work within whatever parameters are in place to ensure you are able to experience all that Wye Marsh has to offer, whether virtually or in person.

**- Mary Ann Milne, Executive Director**



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

Hello to all of our Wye Marsh supporters. We hope you are all well. Activity at the Marsh is increasing as the staff and Canadian Wildlife Service work towards a phased reopening. By the time you read this Wye Marsh should be open on a limited basis. Basically it will be open for access to the trails only. Access the website regularly for updates to the Marsh's status. Be assured that the facilities and animals in our care continue to be well cared for by our excellent staff.

The Board is spending considerable time and effort to better understand and document our various roles and responsibilities. The result will be a Governance Handbook which will define specific actions required by the Board. The Wye Marsh has always required a revenue stream through donations and Corporate Partnerships and has benefited from strong support from a number of individuals and organizations over the years. As time marches on some of those benefactors are no longer available to us. The Board, therefore, is initiating a program of identifying and developing new Corporate Partners. The hope is that this initiative will result in not only some much needed funds now, during the COVID-19 restrictions, but also some long term partnerships that will sustain us into the future.

The Board currently has 8 Members, each having their own unique skill set that is beneficial to our function. We are always in search of more members that can add their own expertise and passion for what the Wye Marsh stands for. We would be very interested in talking to any interested party, and in particular those that could provide expertise in Financial, Fundraising or Legal matters. They could become board members or committee members. If you know of someone who may be interested please provide their contact info or have them contact me, Dave Robertson, at [drobertson@wyemarsh.com](mailto:d Robertson@wyemarsh.com) or call me at 705-245-0529.

Please keep safe and we hope to see some of you again soon, at 2m distance of course.

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



*While exploring the trails, please respect physical distancing and stay 2 metres (or 1 Trumpeter Swan) apart.*

## ON THE WILD SIDE:

The marsh is brimming with wildlife activity lately - it seems that they have taken over in the absence of visitors!

The trails are once again green and vibrant, with wildflowers popping up and birds chirping. Canada Geese waddle along the trails with their goslings in tow, especially out on the Berm. Some Trumpeter Swans lay in the sun on the trail around the canoe dock and Swan Monitoring Platform, while others can be seen paired up in the banks of the cattails, and a group of cygnets swim around the boardwalk. Red-Winged Blackbirds are very vocal swooping in and out of the cattails, while the frogs sit quietly on the lily pads soaking up the sun's rays. On floating logs and mud clumps around the boardwalk and at the far blind you can see basking Midland Painted Turtles. The sandy section of the Bern trail is host to at least one Snapping Turtle nest so far. If you see a turtle nest, or by luck a turtle laying her eggs, please avoid the area.

Seeing the diversity of wildlife that call the Wye Marsh home really makes us proud of the work we are able to do to educate visitors about the importance of wetlands, and conserve this vital habitat.

As wildlife has become accustomed to having the run of the trails while we were closed, please be mindful and give them their space. Do not approach or try to feed the wildlife.



# MEET ~~ERNIE~~ WILLOW!

## Wye Marsh's Broad-Winged Hawk has been renamed Willow!

It turns out, "he" is a "she". Birds of Prey are incredibly difficult to gender because many species have the same feathers and coloring, like Broad-Winged Hawks. Generally the rule of thumb is to go by size. DNA testing is also an option. Based on the size and provided info from the rehab Wye Marsh assumed Ernie to be a male.

But then she laid an egg, and then another, and another! The eggs are infertile. Wye Marsh does not breed or promote the breeding of captive birds. The laying of an egg does indicate that she is happy, healthy, and feels safe in her environment. This can take years for birds in captivity, so we are thrilled that she has felt so at home in a matter of months. She has been renamed Willow, a nod to the willow trees in which Broad-Winged Hawks typically nest.

Willow has been adopted by Huronia LeisureScapes. Since coming to Wye Marsh, she has begun molting a beautiful and healthy new set of feathers and has been exploring her custom-built enclosure which suits her inability to fly due to injury. Quite the inquisitive bird, Willow also enjoys her daily enrichment routines!



*Spring is turtle nesting season! Keep a watchful eye out for turtles crossing the road. Brake and them the pass, or if it is safe to do so, help them across!*