

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?

Originally, Trumpeter Swans would have been a migratory species. However, as their population reached extirpation in Ontario (extinction in the wild) and were then re-introduced, much of the current population isn't aware of this behaviour. Migration in Trumpeter Swans is taught generation by generation as opposed to instinctual. Since the first re-introduced wild swans to Ontario, the decedents of Pig Pen, never knew about migration as they were hatched in rehabilitation facilities, the current populations mostly stick around in the winter. They tend to group in social flocks around areas of open water - like at Swan Landing at Wye Marsh!

When they gather together during these colder months, it makes the monitoring of the population much easier. Volunteers are able to record tag numbers, note any new pairings or cygnets, and monitor the general health of the population. Volunteers are particularly watchful for signs of lead poisoning. Lead poisoning from ingested fishing tackle or spent shot, power line collision and human encounters remain the leading causes of adult swan death.

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre is **open daily**,
from **9:00am-4:00pm**.

Updated safety precautions are in place.
For more information, [please click here](#).

CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAILS:
GROOMED & OPEN!



ON THE WILD SIDE:

With the warming weather both spring and love are in the air! We are approaching the time of year where many animals become more active and are looking for a mate. While this activity can be great to spot wildlife, it's also important to give the wildlife their space as many species can be particularly territorial and protective of their den, mates, and families. Be watchful on the trails of Wye Marsh exploring - there may be some amazing photographs and sighting of wildlife to be had. Please make sure you remain at a distance out of respect for the wildlife and your own safety.

Season for Skunks

February and March is skunk breeding season. During these months skunks are more commonly sighted than the rest of the year as they are looking for a mate, a den, and establishing territory.

Skunks are active all year long, they tend to just stay out of sight as they are very docile animals who do not like confrontation. In the winter, skunks will sleep for days at a time as a form of torpor. Once spring rolls around and love in the air they sleep less and are more active, especially at dawn and dusk.

Food is hard to come by for skunks in the early spring so they have to roam further to find something to eat. As the weather warms, skunks will retreat further back into the territory and become largely unseen once again.

Skunks are actually great to have around! They will eat mice, rats, grubs, moles and other critters that you might not want in your garden. If you see a skunk passing through your yard, or crossing the road, please be mindful of these sweet creatures. Skunks are non-confrontational, and will not spray unless harassed or feel threatened.

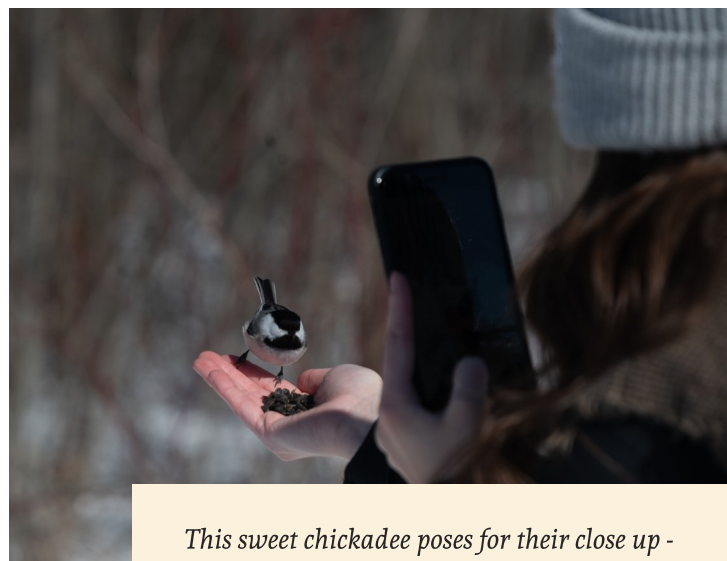
Skunks generally live in the abandoned dens of foxes or other mammals of similar or larger size and only occasionally create their own dens. They will also use stumps or rock piles for shelter. To bring leaves to their den for insulated bedding, skunks will gather the leaves, place them under its body and then shuffle along with the leaves held between their legs!



A porcupine was spotted and photographed at Wye Marsh this month by Brian Webster Photography - what a lucky sighting!



Kenny, the American Kestrel enjoys soaking up the sunshine - this small bird has a BIG personality!



This sweet chickadee poses for their close up - making sure to get it's good side!

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MARSH?

Please note that workshops will resume at the end of February based on public health recommendations. Stay tuned on the website and social media for announcements.



March 19 & 20

Sweetwater Harvest Weekends

March 26 & 27

April 2 & 3

At Sweetwater Harvest Weekends, families can escape to a time when maple syrup was made over an open fire, experience our history and explore nature at its best! Trails are open from 9:00am - 4:00pm, with activities running from 10:00am - 2:00pm. **Timed entry tickets must be purchased online in advance here: www.wyemarsh.com/sweetwater.**

March 5
1:00pm - 3:00pm

Waterfowl Migration Workshop

Dive into the theory and mechanics of waterfowl migration with Mak Soden. Learn about navigation strategies, destinations, and then explore the trails in search of migratory species! \$20pp, learn more and register at: www.wyemarsh.com/waterfowl-migration

March 6
1:00pm - 2:00pm
2:00pm - 3:00pm

Winter Wetlands Workshop

Learn about all the wonders of a winter wetland from some experts on a guided hike exploring the hidden treasures of our winter wetlands with the inspiring Bob Bowles & Patrick Jackson. \$25pp, learn more and register at: www.wyemarsh.com/winter-wetlands

April 9
1:30pm - 3:30pm

Owl Card Making Workshop

Create an awesome customized owl greeting card under the guidance of Master Crafter Janet Dorion. All materials are provided to unleash your artistic side! \$25pp, learn more and register at: www.wyemarsh.com/card-making

April 9
10:00am

Friends of Wye Marsh Annual General Meeting

The Friends of Wye Marsh Annual General meeting will be hosted virtually on April 9, 2022. Any interested parties are welcome to view the meeting. Valid Annual Membership holders are able to vote. Interested parties should email info@wyemarsh.com for the Zoom invitation.

April 23
1:30pm - 3:30pm

March Winds Sign Painting Workshop

Welcome guests to your garden, home, or cottage with a handcrafted sign featuring a joyful frog among cattails. All materials are provided to unleash your artistic side! \$25pp, learn more and register at: www.wyemarsh.com/marsh-sign

April 23

Earth Day - *Save the Date!*

Save the date for Wye Marsh's Earth Day Celebrations! More event details to come as we plan to celebrate our wonderful planet!



SWEETWATER HARVEST WEEKENDS

March 19 & 20, March 26 & 27, April 2 & 3, 2022

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre



**Celebrate a uniquely Canadian tradition
in a distinctively Canadian landscape!**

Sugar Shack Tours · Kid's Activities · Interpretive Guided Hikes · Artisan Vendors

Advance ticket purchase required.
Get your tickets at: www.wyemarsh.com/sweetwater



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien



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 volunteers.

Thank you to all!

CLH VOLUNTEER TEAM

Snowsqualls or blue skies – we can always count on our friends from the CLH Volunteer Team to fill our bird feeders at the Wye Marsh. They make their weekly treks to the back porch and trail, all winter long, armed with sunflower seeds and smiles.

Thanks to Scott Thorough, Richard Boulard and Ryan Dumais (pictured above from left to right), plus Armond DesRoches, Zac St. Amant, Chris Lamont and Mark Dubbin – there is always a flood of chickadees ready to greet people at the Visitors Centre.

The full feeders also attract a wide range of species for our Project FeederWatch Volunteers to report!

According to Support Worker, Rose Quesnelle, the periods of isolation during COVID were very challenging for our volunteers.

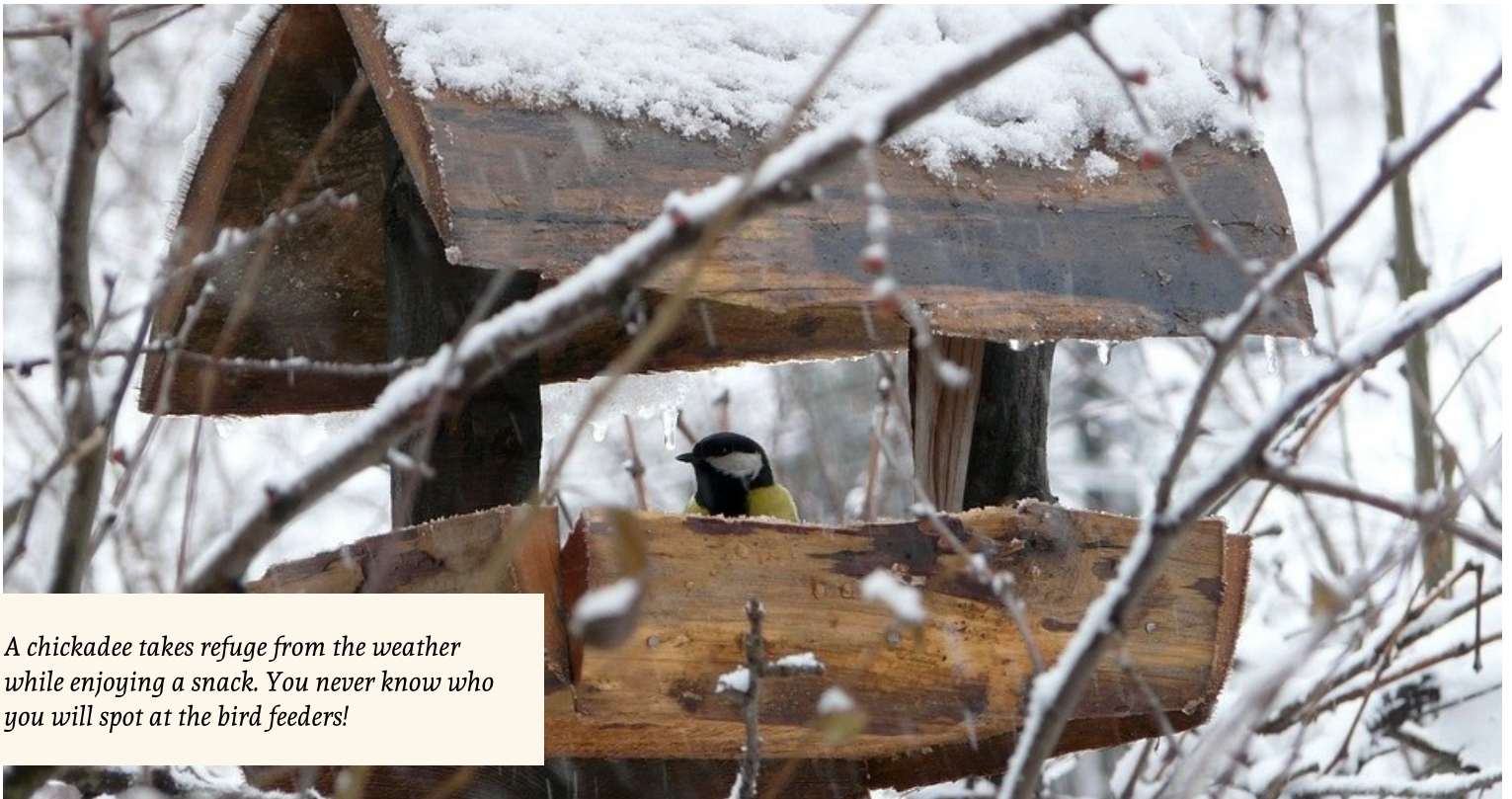


They really missed being part of the community.

Now, they are very happy to be back at Wye Marsh.

“There is so much to see and explore,” says Rose. And life’s tensions seem to melt away as each team walks the trails. “They slow down,” she said.

Feeling at home in nature is a common theme among our volunteers. From chickadees to blue jays, juncos and red poles, each flutter of wings reminds us that we are all not alone. We are all connected. We are all part of a larger community and part of the web of life.



A chickadee takes refuge from the weather while enjoying a snack. You never know who you will spot at the bird feeders!

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Recently I had the pleasure of speaking at the Midland Rotary Club. Within the presentation I shared my directional goals for Wye Marsh and I want to share those goals with our members and greater Friends of Wye Marsh community as well.

Wye Marsh's mission statement positions us as, "a centre of excellence for wetlands research, interpretation and education based on the principle of stewardship and the importance of environmental awareness". In order to meet this mission, we will focus on the following goals in the year ahead:

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - To refocus on our environmental initiatives and responsibilities: to build our standing and make new relationships in the academic and scientific communities.

EDUCATION - To be the best at what we do: to continue to provide exciting experiential educational opportunities for learners of all ages and abilities.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS - To take care of our own: to offer public events, workshops, rental space, and programs for the local community.

I have always believed that spring is the best time to set goals. Nature is waking up all around us and inspiring us into action. With the first day of spring only weeks away as I write this, what better time than now to bring our mission to life?

- **Kim Hacker, Executive Director**



Be sure to dress for the weather when exploring the trails - rain, snow, ice, or clear skies!

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Spring is in the air, but unfortunately not yet underfoot. March can be a fascinating month at the Marsh, as the ice starts to break up, and open water and running streams start to return. Be aware of snow, ice, slush, mud, and water (frequently more than one on the same trail). For everyone's comfort and safety, I urge you to come prepared for all trail condition eventualities. As always, please stay off the ice!

As I walk the trails, I not uncommonly see face masks lying on the ground. I am sure that they are accidentally dropped rather than deliberately discarded, but any form of litter can be very injurious to all forms of wildlife. Discarded face masks are amongst the worst because of the extra hazards posed by

the ear loops or head straps. Please make sure that, when not on your face, your face mask stays in your pocket!

All the staff are working very hard on the events which we are planning for March and April, to help celebrate the light at the end of the tunnel; so please check out our website and social media.

As always, enjoy the wonderful and unique Wye Marsh.

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



WYE MARSH WINTER TRAIL SYSTEM

16160 HIGHWAY 12 EAST, TAY, ON | (705) 526-7809

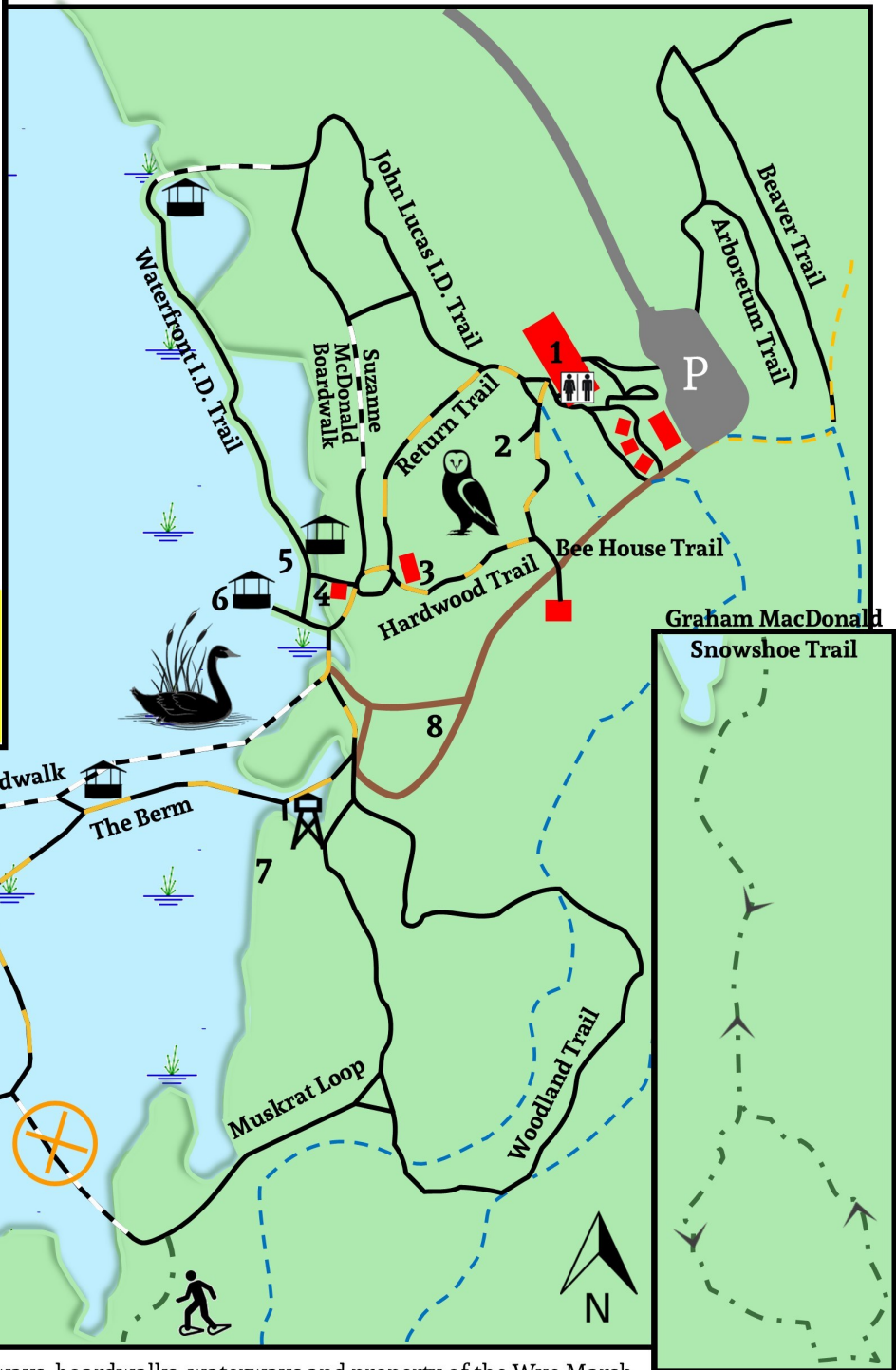
- 1 Visitor's Centre
- 2 Birds of Prey Field
- 3 Sugar Shack
- 4 Log Cabin
- 5 Canoe Dock
- 6 Swan Landing
- 7 Kayak Dock
- 8 Tenting Field

- Forest
- + Wetland/ Open Water
- Building

LEGEND

Hiking Trails		
Boardwalk		
Marsh March		1.9km
Hardwood & Return Trail		0.4km
Muskrat Loop		1.6km
Woodland Trail		1.5km
Beaver Trail		1km
Arboretum Trail		0.6km
I.D. Trails		0.9km
Ski Trails		
Service Road		
Snowshoe Trail		2.72km
Bridge closed due to maintenance		

TRAILS CLOSE AT 4:00PM
GATES LOCK AT 5:00PM
DANGER
STAY OFF ALL ICE SURFACES



Please use caution on all trails, walkways, boardwalks, waterways and property of the Wye Marsh. Appropriate outdoor wear 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.