

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?

Migration is the annual travel of wildlife, normally driven by food source. For birds, migration generally means south in the fall and north in the spring. **May 8 is World Migratory Bird Day and Global Big Day.**

Both of these celebrations are meant to highlight the journey birds undertake and to promote citizen science initiatives to record their travels through sites like **eBird** or **iNaturalist**. Recording bird sightings help monitor population movements and health.

- Over 40% of birds, or **roughly 4,000** species migrate.
- The **Arctic Tern makes the longest migration** of any bird, travelling nearly 80,000km/ year.
- The **Great Snipe is the fastest migrating bird**, travelling at consistent speeds up to 95 km/h for nearly 7,000km.
- Migration is a great feat meaning birds need to bulk up. The **Blackpool Warbler doubles its weight before flying 86 hours** straight for its migration.
- Not all bird migrations mean flight - **Emus migrate great distances on foot**, and **penguins migrate by swimming** to follow fish populations.



Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre
is temporarily closed.

Updated safety precautions are in place. For more information on Wye Marsh & COVID-19, [please click here](#).

ON THE WILD SIDE:

When planning your garden this year, consider including native wildflowers. Not only are these plants suited to Ontario's growing conditions, they are beautiful, fragrant, vibrant, and they help the bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds thrive! Talk about a win-win-win.

Seeds for native plants can be purchased from [the Wye Marsh Wildlife Gardeners by clicking here](#), or from [Hidden Habitat by clicking here](#).

Along with the blossoming plant life, the water is warming, turtles and frogs are out enjoying the sun and warmth, Snapping Turtles have been laying their nests in the sandy shoulders of the trails, and Canada Geese goslings follow behind mom and dad dutifully around the marsh.

Trumpeter Swans have dispersed to hopefully nest successfully throughout Wye Marsh and other wetlands. If you spot a Trumpeter Swan nest, or any wildlife nest, be sure to give it lots of space so as not to disturb the residents at a delicate time in their life cycle.



Are you looking to add some new native plants to your garden this year?

Here are a few recommendations!



Common Milkweed

Monarch Butterflies exclusively breed and feed on Milkweed. Having some of these beautiful pink flowers in your garden can help Monarch populations thrive. Common Milkweed does well in full sun.



Scarlett Bee Balm

The tubular flowers of Scarlett Bee Balm hold lots of nectar which is great for hummingbirds and bees alike. These are a low maintenance perennial that prefers moist soil conditions.



Smooth Blue Aster

Smooth Blue Asters bloom in late summer to early fall—ensuring your garden stays beautiful for longer, and that pollinators have a food source in the shoulder season.



Black-Eyed Susan

Black-Eyed Susans are a hearty wildflower, able to grow in most environments. They grow best in bunches, and produce beautiful yellow blooms.



Wild Bergamot

Wild Bergamots are another easy to grow wildflower. The flowers and leaves have a sweet fragrance which attracts different butterflies, and are even edible to humans. Wild Bergamots do best in partial shade to full sun, and bloom mid-to late summer.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre will be closed until May 20 in accordance with the Provincial Stay-At-Home Order. Wye Marsh recognizes visitors and members miss being able to walk the trails and feed the chickadees. Please know that the decision to close the Centre was made based solely on the safety considerations of patrons, staff, and volunteers, and that staying open makes it extraordinarily difficult for everyone to stay socially distant. A number of staff are working from home on stewardship initiatives and summer programs. While there are limited opportunities for Wye Marsh volunteers, some dedicated folks continue to work on the swan monitoring program and we were able to conduct a frog population survey as well.

About 50% of the available spots for Wye Marsh Day Camp have been filled and the Counselors are hired and eager to get started. It will be great to see the Campers return, we missed them last year. The Program and Education Department are developing some activities for visitors, these will be included in the price of admission. Keep watch for the Wye Marsh Ambassadors, these volunteers will be out on the trails later this spring and summer and are here to answer your questions and give directions as needed.

The Annual General Meeting took place April 24, 2021, and overall it was very positive considering everything that has happened in the past 12 months. While the decrease in revenue was quite substantial, staff worked hard to decrease expenses and take advantage of the offered government programs. The Board and I are very confident that Wye Marsh will weather this storm and return to normal operations as soon as the situation allows.

Thanks to everyone who attended the Invasive Species seminar with Bob Bowles. Bob brings many years of knowledge to this important topic, and overall feedback was very positive. Wye Marsh is planning on offering additional virtual workshops in the future, stay tuned to our social media pages and the events section on our website.

- Mary Ann Milne, Executive Director



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

It has been a busy month for the Board of Directors. First, I'd like to thank Dave Robertson for his contributions as a Director and as President. Dave will be missed by the Board, but I know we will continue to see him visiting the Marsh.

The Board of Directors would like to welcome new members Allan Grant, Stephanie Zoschke, and Allan Marion. We are incredibly excited to have them join our team.

The Board has also finalized the Endowment Fund and continue to look for other fundraising initiatives.

As Mary Ann mentioned, the AGM was held April 24. It was a great meeting and highlighted all the hard work the Wye Marsh employees have done over the last year. I am confident that when we get to our new normal the Wye Marsh will be stronger than ever with the foundation Mary Ann and team have created.

Stay safe and get out and enjoy the beautiful outdoors!

- Nicole Horbatiuk, President of Friends of Wye Marsh Inc. Board of Directors



A female Red-Winged Blackbird among the cattails. Females do not share the same vibrant plumage as the males that the species is named for. Their brown colouring helps them blend in among the cattails where they nest.

2021 CAMP REGISTRATION NOW 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. Camps run in July & August with various themes.

Please note that the safety of campers, visitors, staff and volunteers is top priority for Wye Marsh. We are taking every precaution to ensure the best, and safest, experience possible for everyone!



WYE MARSH ENDOWMENT FUND

The Wye Marsh Endowment Fund was announced at the Annual General Meeting on April 24, 2021.

Created in partnership with and managed by Huronia Community Foundation, the Wye Marsh Endowment Fund ensures the stewardship of the 1,600 ha of vibrant wetlands and woodlands which comprise Wye Marsh for future generations.

To learn more or contribute, please visit: www.wyemarsh.com/donate or [click here](#).