



# MARSH MATTERS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 62

SPRING 2024

*Thank you for your interest in the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.*

*Our seasonal newsletter, "Marsh Matters," will keep you up-to-date on what is happening at the Wye Marsh!*

Celebrating  
Earth Day & Global Big Day



Spring has sprung at the  
marsh! Check out our  
upcoming events!



Volunteer Spotlight...  
and more!



## SWEETWATER HARVEST FESTIVAL

MARCH 23 & 24 | 9 AM - 5 PM

LAST ADMISSION AT 2:30 PM

Wye Marsh is open daily at 9:00 AM.

Our trail systems close at 4 PM and the Visitor Centre at 5 PM.



16160 Highway 12 East, Midland, ON L4R 1K6



705-526-7809



info@wyemarsh.com



www.wyemarsh.com



wyemarshwildlifecentre



@wyemarsh

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After an unusual winter, we are eagerly looking forward to spring.

March is an exciting month at Wye Marsh because it brings not only our annual Sweetwater Harvest Festival, but also March Break Camp! Counsellors Fisher, Ducky, Fox and Raven are ready for some March Break fun with Sugar Shack exploration, Bannock making, animal tracking, shelter building, crafts, and so much more! (We can't promise any snowshoeing... but we can make up for it in other ways!)

Our Sweetwater Harvest Festival is once again being held in conjunction with our neighbours at Sainte Marie Among the Hurons and is happening on ONE WEEKEND ONLY – March 23 and 24. Tickets are on sale through our website, with early bird pricing available until March 18. Membership does not allow entry to the festival; however Members will receive special gift bags upon arrival that will not be available to the public.

This year's festival brings maple taffy at the Cookhouse, new family-friendly activities in the Pavilion, a Kids' Zone in the classroom, and, of course, the volunteer Sapsuckers holding court at the Sugar Shack, teaching young and old about the amazing process of maple syrup production!

April brings showers... and workshops on stone carving, crocheting and environmentally responsible investing, as well as our Annual General Meeting, and Earth Day. And May brings flowers – as well as the start of our public invasive species pulls, and weekend canoeing, kayaking and other public programming. It also brings workshops on watercolours and how to build turtle nest cages, along with Global Big Day and Mothers' Day (on which all mothers are admitted free).

We look forward to seeing you at Wye Marsh this spring!

Kim Hacker,  
*Executive Director*

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

Seems some fellow in times past wrote something about Beware the Ides of March. Alas, this gentleman never had the pleasure of visiting Wye Marsh. If he had the famous line would have been *Hello the Ides of Marsh*.

Yes good reader, we are starting on the magical time to observe and enjoy nature awakening in all her glory. During the next few months visitors here to Wye Marsh will enjoy so much in the way of the birds, the animals, the trees, the bushes and all will have awakened from a very long, and strange, winter.

We have had a warmer than normal winter, and one with not nearly enough sun. Some of our natural residents are somewhat confused about just what they should be doing right now. Nevertheless, they are all still with us and are all ready to embrace spring. As are we all.

March can provide us with snow and cold, but also sun and warmth. Our trails can be clear or snowy, icy, or slushy. Nothing the right footwear and proper clothing cannot fix.

Along comes April and May, and with it the return of our migrating birds and other winged friends. The trees and plants begin to bloom and blossom, and reptiles and mammals step out and look to the sky and say Hello Spring!

Come out and enjoy the Trumpeter Swans, the walks along the trails, the sightings of muskrats, otters, beavers, the return of the Ospreys. The peace and joy we obtain by enjoying the outdoors cannot be beat. Over the next few months, you can look forward to a number of wonderful programs and the return of some favorites, like canoe and kayak voyages through the wetlands. Keep an eye on the bulletin board inside the Visitor Centre and the postings on our website and social media of the events available for you to enjoy.

The staff and volunteers of Wye Marsh look forward to having you visit with us. Enjoy this very special place as much as all of us involved with Wye Marsh do.

Rick Brady  
*President, Friends of Wye Marsh*



# WYE MARSH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

APRIL 13, 2024

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! All Members of Friends of Wye Marsh are cordially invited to the organization's Annual General Meeting, which is set to take place:

**Saturday, April 13, 2024**

**10:30 am - 12 noon**

**Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre**

**16160 Highway 12 E, Midland, ON**

Please RSVP by April 8. Call: 705-526-7809 ext 217 or email [hkeery@wyemarsh.com](mailto:hkeery@wyemarsh.com)

For more information please visit:  
[www.wyemarsh.com/AGM](http://www.wyemarsh.com/AGM)

# TURTLE NESTING SITE PARTY

MAY 18, 2024

Enhancing wildlife habitats is a top priority at Wye Marsh! Please join us as we celebrate the restoration of a popular turtle nesting site for our Snapping Turtles, Painted Turtles, and other Species of Concern on May 18th .

Turtle Nursery Shenanigans start at 11 am and will include a Grand Opening, Storytelling with Troy, Seed Bombs and making leather medallions on the berm. Turtle safety and Sonic's Birthday party will take place in the Display Hall at 2:15 pm. Plus we will have Open-Air Concerts near the boardwalk by Pete Moss, Bay Sound Children's Choir & Little Treble Makers, and Nick Howell.

Set times and details at:  
[www.wyemarsh.com/turtle-nesting-site-party](http://www.wyemarsh.com/turtle-nesting-site-party)



## MEET SPEEDY THE PAINTED TURTLE

AGE: 23+

REASON FOR LIVING AT WYE MARSH:  
Illegal Pet Trade

FUN FACT:

Painted turtles are one of the most common turtle species in North America. Their colourful markings are unique to the individual like a fingerprint and are heavily influenced by the chemical makeup of their ancestral wetland.



Calling all Birders and  
Citizen Scientists!

GLOBAL

BIG DAY!

Join us at Wye Marsh, on May 11th ~ and be part of an EXTRAORDINARY INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL BIRD SURVEY. Last year, 62,390 people around the world took part in “Global Big Day” ~ and recorded seeing 7,746 different species of birds in 253 countries.

How many species do you think we will see at Wye Marsh? How about ONE HUNDRED?

Are you ready to take on the challenge?

Experienced birders and novices familiar with Wye Marsh trails are invited to sign up on or before May 8th by contacting Anna Bolliger by email at [abolliger@wyemarsh.com](mailto:abolliger@wyemarsh.com) or phoning 705-526-7809 ext. 205.

For more information visit:  
[www.wyemarsh.com/search-results?q=global+big+day](http://www.wyemarsh.com/search-results?q=global+big+day)

## Days to CELEBRATE & COMMEMORATE

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

March 3  
World Wildlife Day

March 22  
World Water Day

April 3  
Aquatic Animal Day

April 7  
International Beaver Day

April 15-20  
Earth Week

April 22  
Earth Day

May 11  
Global Big Day

May 16  
Love a Tree Day

May 17  
Endangered Species Day

May 20  
World Bee Day

May 22  
International Day of Biological  
Diversity

May 23  
World Turtle Day

May 29  
World Otter Day

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WYE MARSH THIS SPRING



## SPRING STONE CARVING

Sunday, April 7, 2024 from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Take in a Wye Marsh Birds of Prey Show at 1 pm. Find your inspiration. Let your imagination soar like an eagle. Hold ancient stone in your hands, and carve away the excess, to reveal the beauty within. All materials provided for this intro workshop. \$75 - Price includes admission to our interpretive centre and trails for day following the workshop. Artists of any ability, aged 14+. Must register in advance: [www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh](http://www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh)



## FREE EARTH DAY WORKSHOP

Sustainability... Environmentally Responsible Investments | Sat. April 20, 10-11 am  
Join us for a FREE workshop investigating “responsible investing” that factors in environmental, social, and governance considerations like carbon emissions, human rights, good working conditions, employee diversity, and more. Learn about sound financial strategies that can yield many rewards, and support efforts to achieve net-zero green house gas emissions by 2050. Limited Space. Save your spot by preregistering: [www.wyemarsh.com/sustainability-investments](http://www.wyemarsh.com/sustainability-investments)



## BEGINNER CROCHET WORKSHOP

Washcloth Waves | Sunday, April 28, from 10 am - 12 noon

Embrace a traditional folk art, and benefit from the mindful practice of crocheting your own dish and wash cloths. Learn basic techniques, right from the first knot through to the last stitch, in this 2.5 hour workshop at Wye Marsh. All materials will be provided, no experience needed. Plus everyone gets some yarn and a crochet hook to take home! \$40 per person + HST. Ages 12 and up. Children must be accompanied by a paid adult. Registration is required: [www.wyemarsh.com/crochet-washcloth-waves](http://www.wyemarsh.com/crochet-washcloth-waves)



## ADVANCED CROCHET WORKSHOP

Take a Leap: Crochet a Frog | Sunday, April 28, from 1:30 - 4 pm

Sign up for this advanced crochet workshop and make an adorable pocket-sized frog to give as a gift - or keep - for plenty of smiles this spring! Skills Level: Participants must be able to read a pattern and execute basic single and double stitches. All materials included! \$35 per person + HST. Ages 16 and up. Children must be accompanied by a paid adult. Registration is required: [www.wyemarsh.com/crochet-frogs-advanced-workshop](http://www.wyemarsh.com/crochet-frogs-advanced-workshop)



## WATERCOLOUR PAINTING

Saturday, May 4, 2024 from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Celebrate Spring. Be inspired by the blossoms and new life all around us at Wye Marsh. Learn basic watercolour techniques, plus a few tips and tricks, to spark your creativity. No matter your level of skill, you are welcome to share in this afternoon of discovery. Materials provided - but you are welcome to bring your own if you wish. \$75 - Price includes admission to our interpretive centre and trails for day following the workshop. Artists of any ability, aged 14+. Registration required: [www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh](http://www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh)



## ADVANCED CROCHET WORKSHOP

Crochet Blossom Earrings | Sunday, May 19, from 1:30 - 4 pm

Crochet joyful set of earrings to welcome Spring. Join us for this “advanced” 2.5-hour workshop. Browse through a variety of designs. Select one. Make and take home a pair of blossoms for you or a loved one to enjoy. Skill Level: Experience with basic stitches required. All material included. \$35 per person + HST. Ages 16 and up. Children must be accompanied by a paid adult. Register at: [www.wyemarsh.com/crochet-blossoms-intermediate-workshop](http://www.wyemarsh.com/crochet-blossoms-intermediate-workshop)

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WYE MARSH THIS SPRING



## HAND PRINTMAKING

June 9, 2024 from 1-3 pm

Mimic rhythmic patterns, found in nature, to create wonderful dynamic prints under the tutelage of Lisa Harpell. All materials are provided, and no experience is necessary. \$65 - Price includes admission to our interpretive centre and trails for day following the workshop. Artists of any ability, aged 14+.

Register at [www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh](http://www.wyemarsh.com/art-in-the-marsh)



## EMBROIDER A MOTH: BEGINNER WORKSHOP

Sunday, June 30, from 10 am - 12 noon

Adopt a new pastime to create beautiful, nature-inspired, functional art. Let your fingers flutter with thread over linen to reveal a symbol of transformation. Welcome the new season, and embrace change in life. Embroider one of three designs in this two-hour workshop. Take home your mounted creation and display with pride. No experience needed. All materials included. \$40 per person + HST. Ages 12 and up.

Register at: [www.wyemarsh.com/embroider-a-moth-beginner-workshop](http://www.wyemarsh.com/embroider-a-moth-beginner-workshop)



## FASCINATING FUNGI WORKSHOP

Sunday, June 30, from 1:30 - 3:30 pm

Dead Man's Fingers? Jelly Club Coral? Turkey Tails? Some decomposers have such dramatic names! Join us for a two-hour guided hike to see which spectacular (and sometimes deadly) seasonal fungi are flourishing at Wye Marsh this Spring. Their colours and shapes will amaze you! \$25 per person + HST. Ages 12 and up. Children must be accompanied by a paid adult.

Registration required: [www.wyemarsh.com/spring-fungi-workshop](http://www.wyemarsh.com/spring-fungi-workshop)

# WEEKEND PROGRAMMING BEGINS MAY LONG WEEKEND!



## GUIDED KAYAK TOURS

Join our Naturalist on a 1.5-hour guided kayak tour and discover wildlife amongst the water lilies and cattails. Tours leave our docks promptly at 10am. Must be at least 8 years of age. Please sign up for a kayak upon your arrival. Admission+\$10+HST / person



## GUIDED CANOE TOURS

Join our Naturalists on a 1-hour guided voyageur-style canoe tour of the Marsh channels. Tours are first come, first served basis - no preregistration. Tours leave our docks promptly at 10:30am, 1:30, 2:30 & 3:30pm. Admission+\$8+HST / person



## MEET THE NATURALIST

Join one of our naturalists for a guided experience of one of their favorite Wye Marsh activities! Meet at the Visitor Centre promptly at 11:45am. Tours are subject to change.



## FEATURE CREATURE

Join our Animal Care team for an opportunity to meet some of our Educational Ambassadors. Learn about their personalities, favourite foods, natural habitats, and much more at a 45 minute demonstration at 1:00pm.

Get your tickets for the 2024

# SWEETWATER HARVEST FESTIVAL

MARCH 23 & 24 | 9 AM - 5PM

Last admission at 2:30 PM

ONE  
TICKET,  
TWO  
SITES!

Celebrate a uniquely Canadian tradition in a distinctively Canadian landscape. Experience our history and explore nature at its best.

- Wander through the Sugar Bush
- Visit the Sugar Shack to see how sap is turned into liquid gold
- Warm up by an open fire (weather permitting) and roast some Bannock on a stick
- Play traditional games
- **NEW:** Join in some "Barefoot" fun
- Listen to an Indigenous Storyteller
- **NEW:** Make 'N Take Crafts Station
- Visit the Birds of Prey Field
- Explore forested trails or head out on the boardwalk
- Purchase your supply of local maple syrup and honey
- **NEW:** Scavenger Hunt to enjoy during your walk between Sainte-Marie and Wye Marsh!

**PLUS, more to see at Sainte-Marie!**

Save \$5/ person and get your Early Bird Tickets online from March 1-18.

Get tickets and details at:  
[WyeMarsh.com/Sweetwater](http://WyeMarsh.com/Sweetwater)



# EARTH DAY



9 am ~ 10 am.....  
9 am ~ 11 am .....  
10 am ~ 11 am .....  
11 am ~ 1 pm.....  
  
11 am ~ 12 pm.....  
1 pm ~ 1:30 pm .....  
2 pm .....  
9 am ~ 3 pm .....

Wye River Clean Up... Meet at Sainte-Marie Park  
Periwinkle Challenge: Pull 10 pounds to restore habitat health!  
Sustainable Investments Workshop with Meridian  
Recycling Goodness in the Garden:  
Make pop bottle terrariums. Plant seedlings in the Classroom  
Rubber Boot Hike... Meet us at the back door to hike the ski trail  
Wet'N Scaly: Climate Change & Turtles in the Display Hall.  
Pollinator Seed Bombs: Make one in the classroom to take home!  
Visit our Special Guests in the Display Hall!

**FREE ADMISSION - Sat, April 20, 2024**

VOLUNTEER  
SPOTLIGHT

## Evelyn Roberts



Ever look at something and wonder “why” or “why not?” They’re common questions constantly popping up in the mind of Evelyn Roberts, as she is the woman behind our “Wonder Wye Wednesday” posts on Facebook. From hibernating groundhogs to the physical realities of freezing ice and the spectacular showy aurora borealis, her curiosity and passion for nature are constantly being fueled by her volunteer experiences at Wye Marsh.

With a background in finance and banking, Ave was ready to take some time for herself and connect with nature on a deeper level when she retired to Waubaushene a few years ago.

“Wye Marsh was the perfect solution,” she says. Ave started as a Trail Ambassador, pointing out interesting sights to visitors as they walked our trails in the summer. Then she helped out with a few special events... and became a Swan Monitor! “Swans are such beautiful birds,” she says. “I love watching their behaviours and antics and trying to understand their language.”

Trumpeter Swans were missing from the landscape for more than 200 years, and it took about 30 years for the Wye Marsh and Trumpeter Swan Restoration Group to work together to re-establish a self-sustaining wild population in Ontario. Seeing these magnificent creatures gliding along the channels at Wye Marsh – and on the waters of Georgian Bay – means a lot to Ave. “It makes my heart happy to see a population respond so successfully to reintroduction,” she says. “To me they represent the possibility of what can be achieved in the natural world if we make the effort.” She adds, “That this effort is mainly volunteer based just shows that no effort is too small, no person is too small!”

Ave recognizes that taking care of Wye Marsh is a true labour of love. “Wye Marsh has limited funding and limited staff and truly relies on its volunteers to help maintain a special place.” To her, the organization is “a lovely reflection of community in action.”

Thank you, Ave. We couldn’t have said it better ourselves! You are so right!

VOLUNTEERS MAKE ALL THE  
DIFFERENCE AT WYE MARSH!

From our Front Desk Volunteers to the Outreach Team, Trail Ambassadors, Canoeists, Hike Assistants, Photographers, Phragmites Fighters, Wildlife Monitors, Special Events Volunteers, Fundraisers, Wildflower Gardeners, Summer Camp Counselors-in-Training, and more - YOU make the difference at Wye Marsh, for which we are so grateful!

If you know someone who would like to share their passion for nature and join our fabulous team, please have them connect with [hkeery@wyemarsh.com](mailto:hkeery@wyemarsh.com) or call 705-5826-7809 ext 217. There’s always so much to do at Wye Marsh! Download an application at [www.wyemarsh.com/volunteer](http://www.wyemarsh.com/volunteer).



# HABITAT RESTORATION ACTION DAYS



As pretty as some exotic plants look, they can have devastating impacts on our local environment!

Help restore wildlife habitat at Wye Marsh.

Learn how to safely remove invasive plants from the area. Join us for just two hours on any of the days listed below - and you will make a difference!

**Registration preferred. Drop-ins welcome. Please call Anna at 705-526-7809 ext. 205, or email [abolliger@wyemarsh.com](mailto:abolliger@wyemarsh.com).**

If possible, bring your gardening gloves, drinking water, and bug spray.

**Garlic Mustard, Periwinkle, and Spotted Knapweed Dates:  
SATURDAYS from 9 am - 11 am**

- May 25
- June 1
- June 8
- June 15 &
- June 22



## PERIWINKLE

It is native to the Mediterranean basin and was introduced to North America as an ornamental plant. It easily escapes cultivation and is considered highly invasive. Periwinkle poses a threat to biodiversity because it spreads over large areas and competes with native plant species in a number of habitats. Periwinkle is still sold at some plant nurseries, so this is an existing source contributing to the invasion of this plant across the province.



## GARLIC MUSTARD

It is a herb native to Europe that was brought to North America in the early 1800s for use as an edible herb. Since its arrival in North America it has escaped into the wild and is now one of Ontario's most aggressive forest invaders. Garlic mustard can invade relatively undisturbed forests. Once established it can displace native wildflowers like trilliums. It hinders other plants by interfering with the growth of fungi that bring nutrients to the roots of the plants.



## SPOTTED KNAPWEED

It was accidentally introduced into North America from Western, Central and Eastern Europe in the later 1800s in contaminated alfalfa and clover seed and in soil used for ship ballast. Before it was considered a serious weed, it was spread in domestic hay and through human activities. It is a highly competitive weed that invades disturbed areas and degrades native plant communities.

# WYE MARSH TRAILS SYSTEM

16160 Highway 12 East, Tay, ON (705) 526-7809

- |                    |                                |  |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 Visitor's Centre | 2 Birds of Prey Field          |  Open Land/Forest |
| 3 Sugar Shack      | 4 Log Cabin                    |  Wetland          |
| 5 Canoe Dock       | 6 Waterfowl Monitoring Station |  Building         |
| 7 Kayak Dock       | 8 Tenting Field                |  |



**LEGEND**

Hiking Trails 

Boardwalk 

Marsh March  1.9km  
(Wheelchair & stroller accessible friendly)

Hardwood & Return Trail 0.4 km

Muskrat Loop 1.6 km

Woodland Trail 1.5 km

Beaver Trail 1.0 km

Arboretum Trail 0.6 km

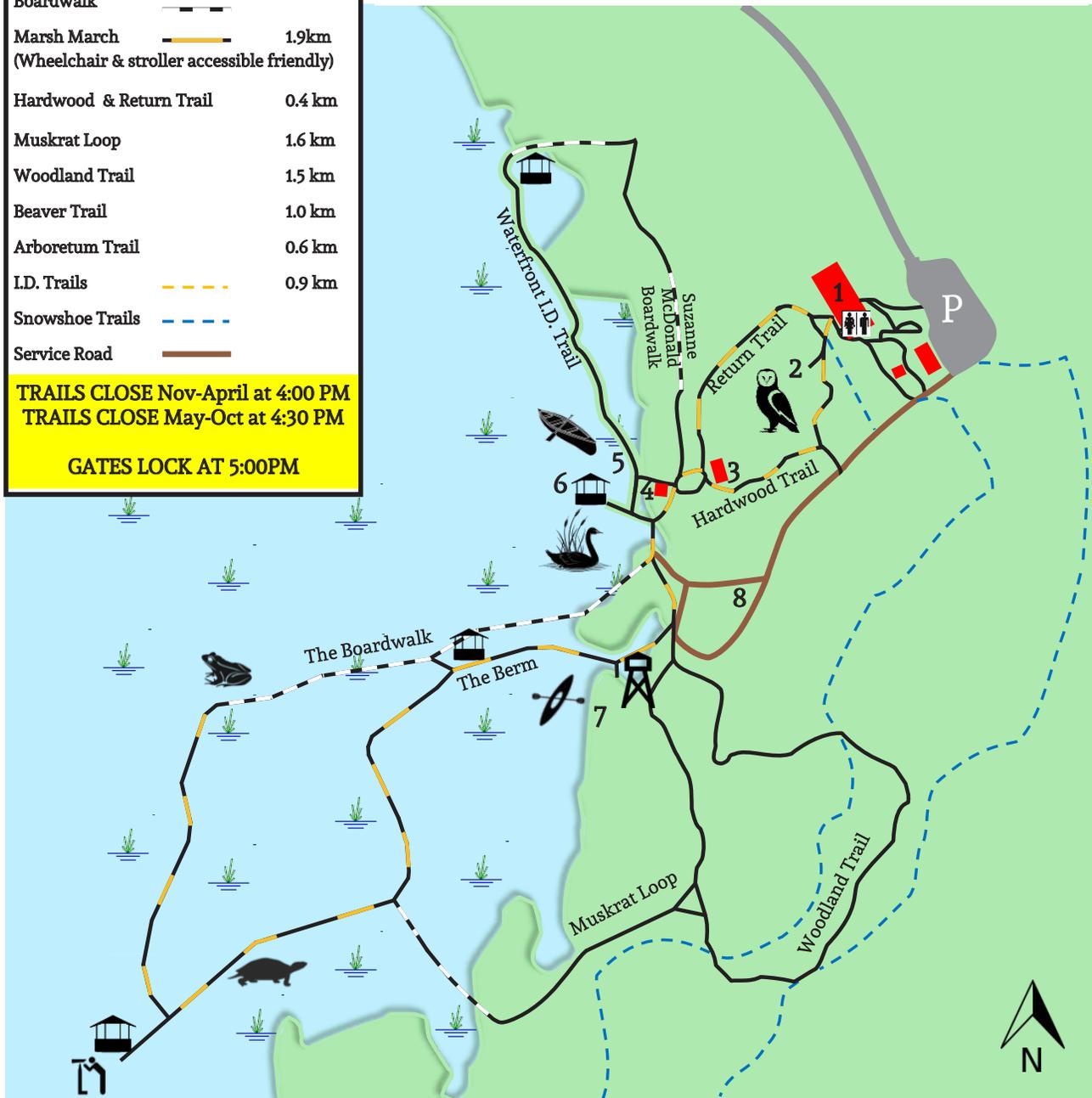
I.D. Trails  0.9 km

Snowshoe Trails 

Service Road 

**TRAILS CLOSE Nov-April at 4:00 PM**  
**TRAILS CLOSE May-Oct at 4:30 PM**

**GATES LOCK AT 5:00PM**



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 return to the Visitor's Centre if foul weather occurs.