

ISSUE 65
WINTER 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 Wye Marsh!

National Bird Day January 5th



Explore the trails this winter with our rental snowshoes!



Volunteer Spotlight...
and more!

ESCAPE... EXPLORE... EXPERIENCE
WINTER AT THE MARSH!




FAMILY DAY

February 17th 10 am - 3 pm

Step out onto the trails, enjoy the beauty of nature, and make new memories together this Family Day!

Wye Marsh is open daily at 9:00AM. Our Trail Systems close at 4:00PM and the Visitor Centre at 5:00PM.

 16160 Highway 12 East, Midland, ON L4R 1K6  705-526-7809  info@wyemarsh.com

 wyemarsh.com

 [wyemarshwildlifecentre](https://www.facebook.com/wyemarshwildlifecentre)

 [wyemarsh](https://www.instagram.com/wyemarsh)



A message from the Executive Director

Another winter is upon us and there are so many things to be excited about!

This fall we had the pleasure of having one of our summer students join us in a full time capacity – we welcomed Dimitri Pantis to the team as our Education Coordinator and he has hit the ground running, travelling all over Simcoe County providing educational programming to Grade 4 students.

We are gearing up for Winter Camp, which will run for one week this year from Dec 30 to Jan 3. Registration is currently open and spaces remain available.

The Bird Barn renovation project has been so exciting to watch this fall! It has been a challenge for all humans and birds involved to adapt to the sights and sounds of a construction zone; however, we know it will be worth it in the end. More information on this project is covered later in this newsletter.

And finally, if you are looking for a little holiday gift shopping inspiration, as a reminder our gift shop is open from 9 – 4:45 seven days a week, and we have it stocked with both the usual favourites, as well as some new and exciting items – all of which cost less than \$40. And our Individual, Joint and Family memberships also make great gifts!

We look forward to seeing you at Wye Marsh this winter.

Kim Hacker,
Executive Director



GARRAWAY'S

ELECTRICAL SERVICES

**Supporting habitat restoration and
environmental education at Wye Marsh.**



A MESSAGE FROM the President of the Board of Directors

“The time has come the Walrus said to talk of many things:” So wrote Lewis Carol in his epic poem. And as good Canadians, we know that one of the many things we always talk about is...the weather! So once again we are experiencing a new season! One of the great constants for all of us is the changing seasons, and the various weather patterns that come with these changes. And as much as we always wish for the very best weather, we all know that decision rests elsewhere. And as a side note, Mother Nature does not tune in to the Weather Network!

But really, not anything for us to worry about. Because here at Wye Marsh, there is always something new to experience. During your visit you could see Trumpeter Swans, woodland critters out and about, birds and who knows what else. Being out and about in the middle of nature brings so many benefits, making it well worth the walks along the trails.

Due to the somewhat unpredictability of snowfalls, this year we are not going to be offering cross country ski rentals, or grooming the trails. However, if there is a good snow fall and you have your own skis, then you are most welcome to come and ski the trails. And if in doubt about trail conditions call us at 705-526-7809 x 200.

And even if you cannot ski or snowshoe, there is still the beauty of walking the trails.

Join us December 21st for our Open House, at which time we are planning an official celebration of the reopening of the renovated Birds of Prey home!

Always a great time for the children is our Winter Camp, being held December 30th to January 3rd, 2025! As well, there is the Xmas Bird Count 4 Kids January 4th, 2025, which is a fun event for families and learn about birds. We are hoping to hold Marsh by Moonlight Snowshoeing January 31, February 1, 7 and 8, all dependent on snow of course. Enjoy an incredible experience by taking part in Forest Bathing February 5th. And please come visit us on February 17th for Family Day.

I wish to extend a big THANK YOU to you, our members. Your on-going support to the Wye Marsh is appreciated more than you know! Just ask any of our birds, or staff or volunteers, and they will tell you how much your support means to them.

Rick Brady,
President, Friends of Wye Marsh



We would like to welcome aboard
to the Wye Marsh Staff...

Dimitri Pantis Education Coordinator

Dimitri's Wye Marsh journey began this past summer as an outdoor educator, where he shared his passion for connecting others with the natural world. Now, as Education Coordinator, he brings his biology background and a dedication to preserving and passing on knowledge that sparks curiosity and respect for nature. Having called Midland home since he was four, Dimitri hopes to help others notice the beauty in life's details, whether at the Marsh or beyond. Outside of work, he is also a musical artist, bringing purpose and creativity into everything he does. Dimitri is excited to play a part in the Marsh's story and looks forward to inspiring future generations.



MEET SONIC **Common Snapping Turtle**

AGE: 27

When Sonic was a hatchling, he was taken out of the wild to be kept as a pet. Unfortunately, because he did not grow up in the wild, he does not know how to take care of himself and must remain in captivity for the remainder of his life. It is illegal to have native wildlife in your possession without a permit.

We wish Sonic could live in the wild where he belongs, but we are very grateful to have him in our care. He is a wonderful teacher and ambassador for his species and has taught THOUSANDS of people about the importance of wetlands - and why wildlife should be kept in the wild.



VOLUNTEER REFLECTION

Prepare for a really cold winter with lots of snow.

How do I know this? Not from the TV weatherman or the experts or professionals, but from an even more reliable source.

I have a clear plastic feeder that with suction cups fastened to my big kitchen window. It holds about two cups of sunflower seed. In the past few years, both winter and summer, we have to refill about every third day.

This year, however, the birds go through the two cups in about 8 hours.

The birds in question are the chickadees. We have a bunch of cedars about 40 feet away and the chickadees flock to the feeder constantly this year.

Normally, they have a feed and then a break of an hour or so, but this year, there is not a minute without one coming and getting a seed. I know they eat some, but save others in the bark for the future.

Because there were so many, I decided to count them. I set my timer for 5 minutes and counted 54 birds and when you expand that to one hour, it is over 600 visits and to a 10 hour day, these tiny birds come our feeder over 6000 times.

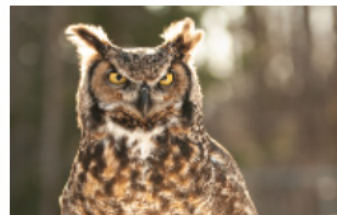
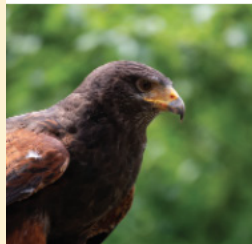
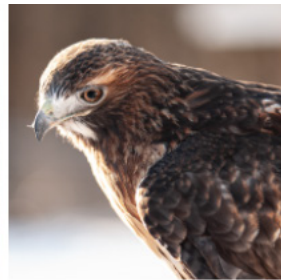
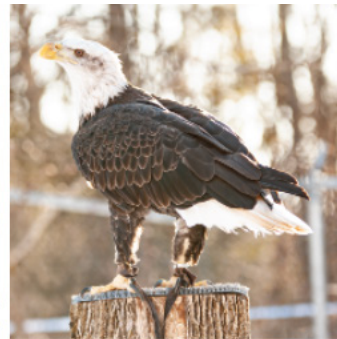
So get your long woolies out for this winter, bundle up because the real weather indicators have spoken.

By Wye Marsh Volunteer Bob Coryell



WE ARE CLOSE TO OUR GOAL!

With your help, we can make it to the finish line



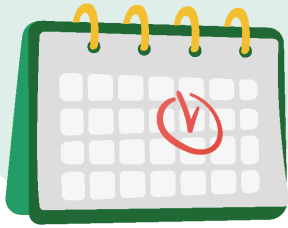
Scan the QR Code to Donate to our Animal Embassy

Be part of rebuilding a welcoming new home for our Birds of Prey!



DAYS TO CELEBRATE & COMMEMORATE

MARK YOUR
CALENDARS!



Wildlife Covervation Day
December 4th

International Volunteer Day
December 5th

National Maple Syrup Day
December 17th

Winter Solstice
December 21st

National Bird Day
January 5th

World Snow Day
January 21st

Groundhog Day
February 2nd

**International Day of
Women & Girls in Science**
February 11th

Darwin Day
February 12nd

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE WYE MARSH THIS WINTER



December 21, 2024 10am - 3pm

Join us at Wye Marsh to escape, explore and experience our beautiful winter wonderland. Admission is BY DONATION and includes the chance to enjoy some roasted Bannock, hike the trails, or finish up your holiday shopping in our gift shop!

See details at: www.wyemarsh.com/Open-House



January 4th, 202 10am - 2pm

The Christmas Bird Count for Kids is a fun winter birdwatching event for kids and families. Join us to learn about birds and become a Citizen Scientist!

Learn more at: www.wyemarsh.com/christmas-bird-count



January 20, 2024

Struggling to find ways for your small pack of Girl Guides or Scouts earn badges? No worries! Our Wye Marsh Badge Days are specially designed for you. Participants can earn up to FOUR (4) badges in ONE (1) day!

Registration required at: www.wyemarsh.com/badge-days



January 25th 1:30 - 3:30 pm

While snapping turtles brumate deep in the muck of the marsh - get your fingers busy fashioning "Turtle Nest Protectors" to increase hatchling survival rates this spring. Designs, tools, materials and guidance provided by Wye Marsh Staff. Families welcome. Space is limited.

\$35 per kit to be assembled on site by one or more people.

Registration required at: <https://www.wyemarsh.com/winter-events>



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE WYE MARSH THIS WINTER



January 31st, February 1st, 7th and 8th 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Snowshoe through Wye Marsh on a frosty night, under sparkling stars and moonlight. Warm up by a cozy fire. Sip some cedar tea or hot chocolate. Take home memories that will last a lifetime, plus a unique souvenir. Snowshoes included.

\$75 per person.

Registration required at: www.wyemarsh.com/Marsh-by-Moonlight-Snowshoe



February 1st 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Under The Ice: Survival Techniques of Wildlife and Plants at Wye Marsh.

When the ice cuts off the upper world, how do the living survive underwater at Wye Marsh?

What are the unique adaptations of our turtles, frogs, fish, insects and crustaceans to survive weeks of oxygen deprivation? How do wetland plants manage to wait it out until the spring melt? Do wetlands just 'shut down'?

Join naturalist/writer David Hawke for a presentation and guided hike at the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.

Best suited to ages 16 and over. Limit of 15 participants. Register in advance, for \$35 per person.

Registration required at: www.wyemarsh.com/winter-events



February 5th 1:30 - 3:30 pm

Pause. Breathe. Unwind. Immerse yourself in the beauty of Wye Marsh when you join Karen Chaplin, a Certified Forest Therapy Guide, for a transformative walk along frosty winter trails.

\$30 per person.

Please register at: www.wyemarsh.com/forest-bathing



February 17th 10am - 3 pm

Step out onto the trails, enjoy the beauty of nature, and make new memories together this Family Day!

Experience the best of winter fun by learning all about animal tracks, scats & signs. See some of our raptors & reptiles up close and learn what makes them unique. There's so much more to explore at Wye Marsh!

All activities included in the price of admission.

See details at www.wyemarsh.com/family-day



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE WYE MARSH THIS WINTER



March 10th-14th 9am - 4pm

As the seasons change, kids are itching to get out of the classroom and back out of doors!

Our Wye Marsh Spring Break Camp will teach them about wilderness survival, making maple syrup, animal tracking and more. Great for ages 6-12.

Register this January at www.wyemarsh.com/march-break-day-camp



March 22nd & 23rd 9am - 5pm

The Sweetwater Harvest Festival is the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre's biggest special event of the year – and ONE ticket gets you access to TWO fantastic sites in 2025!

Join Friends of Wye Marsh and Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons for an awesome maple syrup experience this spring.

Save up to \$6 per person – Purchase an “Early Bird Ticket” online March 1st at: www.wyemarsh.com/sweetwater

MARSH BY MOONLIGHT

**January 31st, February 1st, 7th and 8th
5:30 - 7:30 pm**

Snowshoe through Wye Marsh on a frosty night, under sparkling stars and moonlight. Warm up by a cozy fire. Sip some cedar tea or hot chocolate. Take home memories that will last a lifetime, plus a unique souvenir.

Book your tickets at: www.wyemarsh.com/Marsh-by-Moonlight-Snowshoe



\$75 per person. Snowshoes included.

WINTER BREAK CAMP



December 2024 - January 2025 | Ages 6-12

Get your nature lovers outside this winter break! Campers will be given so many opportunities to connect with nature that they will forget all about connecting to their devices!

- Non-Member \$325.00/week
- Annual Family Membership..... \$245.00/week
- Annual Joint Membership..... \$295.00/week

More details at: www.wyemarsh.com/winter-break-camp



We are so excited to share an update on the Bird Barn Renovation currently underway at Wye Marsh!



Almost two years ago, Friends of Wye Marsh assessed all buildings onsite, and realized there were some difficult decisions to be made. Every outbuilding required significant work to make it safe and secure. As most know, many buildings were beyond the point of saving and were demolished or permanently closed in fall 2023.

We made the decision to invest where it made the most sense to do so, and began fundraising for a new building for our bigger Birds of Prey. Over the past year we have continued to raise funds, and work with our federal landlords, Environment and Climate Change Canada, to develop plans for the new building.

We are grateful to so many for helping to make this magic happen. Firstly, we are grateful to our funders. We recognize that people from all over have helped with donations to this project, and we are thankful for every cent. We are particularly grateful to Reinhardt Weber of the Weber Foundation for the significant endowment received this past summer as a portion of that endowment has gone towards this project. We are also deeply grateful to Wye Marsh Volunteer Jeff McMurdo and visitors Peg Albrecht and Sig Rannem for their generous donations.

We also want to thank our Animal Care team, Johanna, Jenny and Jake, for making the birds their priority during construction. We appreciate that this project has created additional stressors, including longer workdays, and are grateful to each of you for your time and energy.

In late October the original building was torn down, and since then, we have excitedly been watching as day over day a new and beautiful building has started to emerge. We are excited to share it with you on Saturday December 21 at our Wye Marsh Welcomes Winter event, and hope to see you there!





**WYE
MARSH**

WINTER OPEN HOUSE

Sat., Dec. 21, 2024 Admission by Donation!

10:00 am ~ 3 pm..... **Bannock Roasting ***

10:30 am ~ 11:00 am..... **Raptor Selfie (Donations Appreciated)**

11:00 am ~ 2:00 pm **Nature Craft***

11:00 am **Guided Discovery Hike ~ Winter Trees**

1:00 pm **Feature Creature in the Display Hall**

2:30 pm **Guided Discovery Hike ~ Animal Tracking!**

All Day..... **Bird Seed Sale & Vendors**

* Weather permitting
**While supplies last

16160 Highway 12 East, Midland, ON L4R 4K6

705-526-7809

Email: info@wyemarsh.com

Web: www.wyemarsh.com



[wyemarshwildlifecentre](http://wyemarshwildlifecentre.com)



[wyemarsh](https://www.instagram.com/wyemarsh)

STEWARDSHIP PROGRESS REPORT



The Stewardship Department has been busy this fall and has some exciting project updates to relay.

We are nearing the final steps of converting a seldom used field into a “Monarch Meadow” filled with milkweeds and other pollinator friendly wildflowers. The seeds are being spread mid-November and we are anticipating the meadow to begin blooming in 2025, however, some of the flower species require a few years of plant development before they will flower. The meadow should get better and better with time!

Bird collision deterrent markers have been installed on the windows of the back patio to help protect our birds during the 2024-25 Project FeederWatch season and year round.

Buckthorn treatments will be continuing into the winter to help reduce our invasive species populations and to make room for replanting treated areas with native species in the 2025 planting season.



Bird collision deterrent markers

3 HOURS, 4 KILOMETRES, UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS IN NATURE

**Access remote areas of our National Wildlife Area by snowshoe!
No experience necessary! Snowshoe tutorial included!**

Take a private tour through our winter wonderland with our experienced Outdoor Educators at Wye Marsh. Listen to bird calls. Search for animal tracks. Piece together the clues around you to unravel the mysteries of life in this glorious frozen space. Then, take a snack break. Warm up by a fire and enjoy some hot chocolate or tea before heading back to the Visitors Centre.

Must be 13 years of age or older. Guests under 16 must be accompanied by a participating adult.

\$170 + HST for 2 guests | \$450 + HST for group of six.

Call 605-526-7809 ext. 218 to book at least two weeks in advance -
or email: cleblanc@wyemarsh.com

SNOWSHOE ECOTOURS

WYE MARSH TRAILS SYSTEM

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



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 |
| I.D. Trails | | 0.9 km |
| Snowshoe Trails | | |
| Service Road | | |

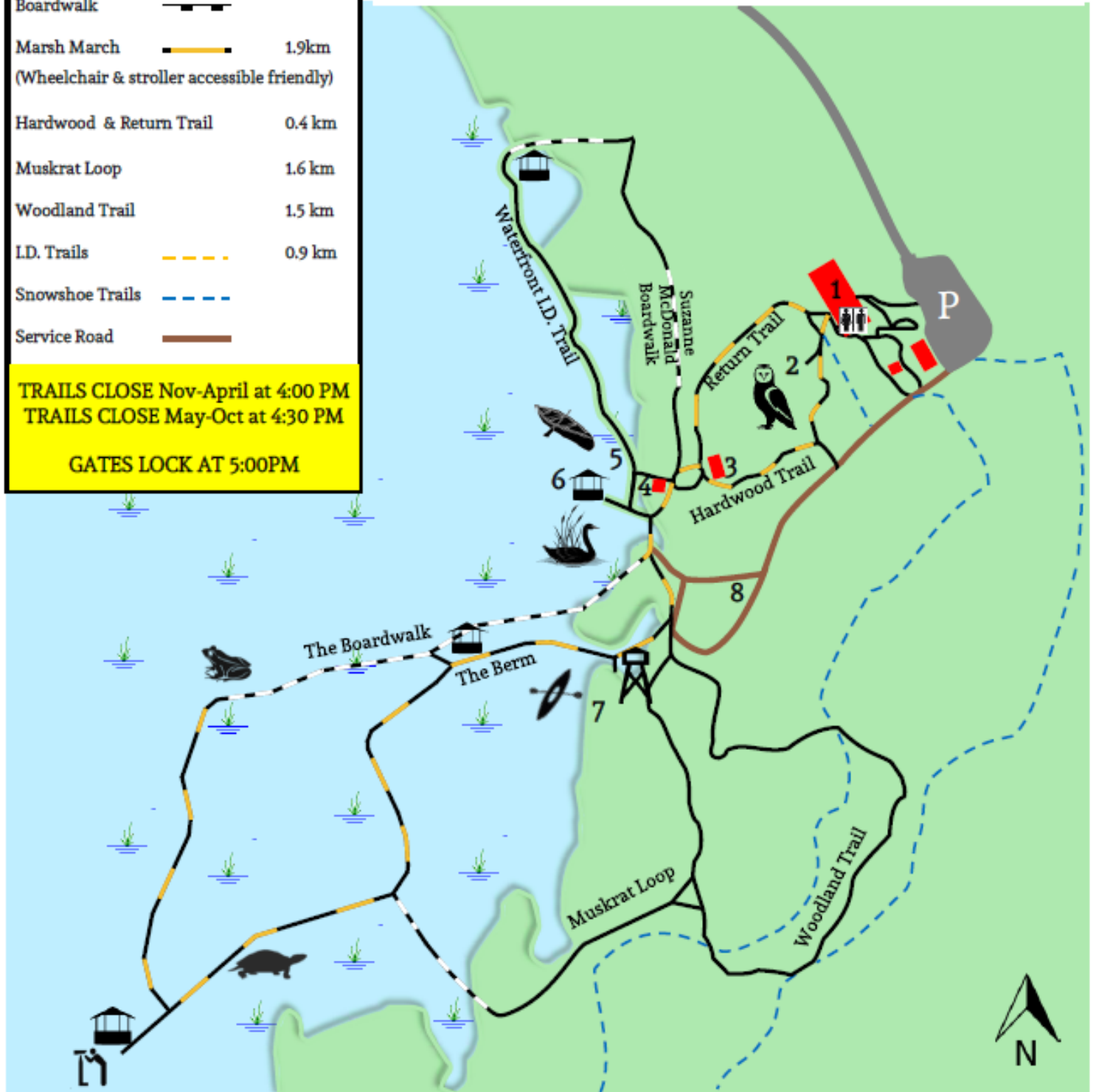
- 1 Visitor's Centre
- 3 Sugar Shack
- 5 Canoe Dock
- 7 Kayak Dock

- 2 Birds of Prey Field
- 4 Log Cabin
- 6 Waterfowl Monitoring Station
- 8 Tenting Field

| | |
|--|------------------|
| | Open Land/Forest |
| | Wetland |
| | Building |

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.