

Congratulations on your new wetland! Wetlands are an essential component of the water cycle. They help to protect and filter water, improving its quality, and play a key role in helping to store and regulate water levels both in terms of flooding and low flow. Additionally, wetlands are home to a number of species of plants, insects, reptiles, and mammals.

Don't worry about planting

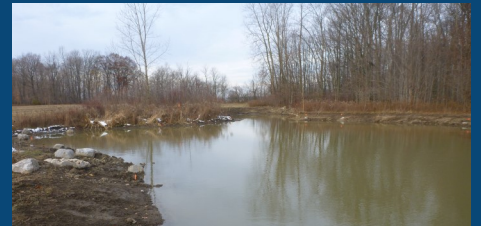
Vegetation will come naturally! Given time, plants will establish from the native seedbed as well as from seeds carried through wind, water and wildlife. If you want to establish vegetation quickly, you can buy native plants and seed from nurseries. Do not transfer soil from other properties; the soil may contain seeds from invasive species. Invasive species are detrimental to wetlands as they establish quickly forming dense monocultures, which prevent native plant growth. Do not plant decorative invasive plants such as Water soldier, Lotus flower, Water hyacinth, and Water lettuce. If planting is required.



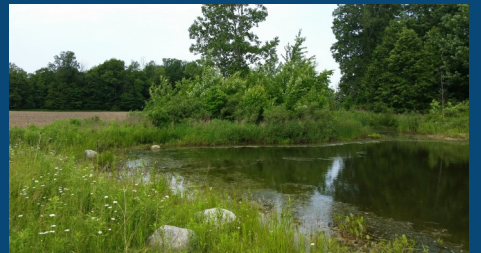
Vegetation comes naturally!



Marginal land before construction



A newly completed wetland



Two years after construction



Let the grasses grow

Now that you have a wetland, you may be keen to mow right to the edge so you can see the water up close. We totally understand! The wetland is awesome! We recommend however, to establish a single viewing area and let the rest of the shoreline naturalize. Wetlands can

be enhanced by not mowing a 20m buffer zone around them. The buffer strip will aid in filtering pesticides and nutrients prior to runoff reaching the water, as well as help stabilize banks and deter unwanted geese! Buffers strips also provide food, habitat and shade for animals. Shade from overhanging trees and shrubs reduces the sunlight entering the water, keeping the temperatures lower and reducing algae growth. Shrubs such as dogwood and shrub willow can grow quickly and stabilize banks. SCRCA's tree planting program can help you enhance and manage your buffer zone.

Preventing algal growth

- ⇒ **Shade** from trees, shrubs and herbaceous and aquatic vegetation will reduce algal growth.
 - ⇒ **Barley straw** releases natural chemicals as it decays, these chemicals inhibit the growth of algae.
 - ⇒ **Aerators** add dissolved oxygen to the water and increase beneficial bacteria which out-compete algae for food and nutrients.
- Every wetland will have algae at some point, it is natural. Please do not use water dyes to prevent algae.



FOR MORE INFO CONTACT:

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Habitat Structures

Please do not introduce any wildlife, fish or plant species to your wetland, they will come naturally. There are many habitat structures that you can make yourself to help attract desirable species.



Wood Duck Box

Photo: Gary Ramert.Net

Wood ducks were once one of the most abundant waterfowl in North America. Artificial nesting boxes help fledging success.



Basking Logs

Photo: Rick Battson

In Ontario, 7 of 8 native turtle species are listed as at risk. Basking structures are crucial for regulating their body temperature.



Nesting Box

Photo: Emma Biancolin

Eastern Blue Birds and Tree Swallows are both desirable species which benefit from artificial nesting boxes.



Mallard Hen House

Photo: Delta Waterfowl

According to Delta Waterfowl, in intensely farmed regions hen house eggs are 12 times more likely to hatch.



Hibernaculum

Photo: Larry Eifret

A Hibernaculum provides a place where snakes can safely overwinter below the frost line. Lack of natural hibernaculum can be a major factor limiting the snake populations.



Wildlife Trees

Photo: Rick Battson

Birds and small mammals and other wildlife use dead trees for nesting, foraging, storage areas, roosting, and perching.

Invasive plants

Many invasive plants thrive with soil disturbance. Soil disturbance from pulling or digging up roots brings the seeds to the surface, allowing them to germinate. Roots and stems left in the soil may also start a new plant. It is important to use proper removal and disposal techniques. Please see the following link to MNRF's resources for more information: www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/resources/best-management-practices



Phragmites



Sweet white clover



Purple loosestrife

Photo: Elizabeth Czarapata

Species to look for!



Blanding's turtle (threatened)

Photo: David Bourne



Prothonotary warbler (endangered)

Photo: Rick Battson

Turtles

- Blanding's turtle
- Eastern musk turtle
- Painted turtle
- Northern mapping turtle
- Snapping turtle
- Spiny softshell
- Spotted turtle
- Wood turtle

Birds

- American coot
- Black tern
- Common yellowthroat
- Great blue heron
- Hooded merganser
- Least bittern
- Marsh wren
- Pied-billed grebe
- Prothonotary warbler
- Swamp sparrow
- Wood duck
- Yellow rail

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A well-functioning wetland will support wildlife with the ability to limit disease vectors, such as mosquitos!