



Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre

Reeder

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MARSH HAPPENINGS

2007 Science Achievement Award

The Interpretive Centre is the winner of the 2007 Science Achievement Award. It was presented by the Science Teachers' Association of Manitoba (STAM). The award recognizes "an extraordinary and sustained contribution to the field of science teaching." It was presented at the provincial in-service for teachers. Michele Kading received the award for the Interpretive Centre. She thanked the teaching community for its support over the years. She highlighted the Centre's programs that focus on Science, Technology, Society, and Environment. The Centre has specialized in this area of science education. It began with a program on radio-telemetry. Later, a water quality testing program was added. The Centre's latest programs feature two exciting new tools. Students learn to use hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) units. They use their new skills to find hidden treasures and mark the location of important features in their community. They also learn to use Geographic Information System (GIS). By adding their features to an interactive watershed map, they see how society and environment connect. Teachers were invited to contact the Centre about any of these programs.

The award included a \$500 donation. Undoubtedly, this will be used to buy more hands-on equipment to teach science! The award is on display in the lobby.

Kiteboarding at Oak Hammock Marsh

The kiteboarder stands on a snowboard or skis — waiting. The wind picks up and a large controllable kite rises up into the air. Pulled by the kite the kiteboarder sails past the snow-covered cattails and muskrat lodges at Oak Hammock Marsh.

This simplicity also makes kiteboarding challenging. The kiteboarder's body is the only connection between the kite and the board. The kiteboarder must control them both at the same time — piloting the kite in the sky and steering the board on the snow.

The sport, still in its infancy, is rapidly growing in popularity. In 1998, there were probably fewer than 30 kiteboarders worldwide. In 2006, the number was estimated to have grown to 150,000 to 200,000.



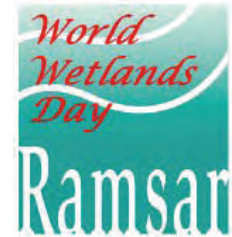
Back by popular demand, the Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre, in partnership with Boost Kiteboarding, is offering lessons to novice kiteboarders every Saturday morning from 10 a.m. to noon. The course is limited to six participants per day and costs \$59 per person.

The marsh offers a perfect setting for kiteboarding. It features a large ice and snow covered surface. Best of all, the Interpretive Centre is open for shelter, food and facilities.

Secure your place by calling the Centre at 467- 3300 at least three days before the course.

World Wetlands Day

Join us at Oak Hammock Marsh on February 2 to celebrate World Wetlands Day. It marks the date of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2nd, 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar. Oak Hammock Marsh was officially designated as a Ramsar Site (wetland of international significance to wildlife and people) in 1987.



Visit the Centre to learn why wetlands are one of the most productive and diverse ecosystems on the planet. Special presentations, demonstrations, films, slideshows, and puppet shows on wetlands will be offered throughout the day. You can also take part in a colouring contest to win great prizes. Copies of the colouring contest can be downloaded from our website or picked up at the Centre. Lots of outdoor activities are planned including skating on the duck pond, snowshoeing, and animal tracking. Join us for free cake at 2 p.m.

Hope to see you there!

MARSHY QUIZ

- How many species of North American insects cause galls to form in plants?
 - Less than 50
 - 100
 - 150
 - 1,000
 - More than 1,500
- True or False. The Tamarack is a deciduous coniferous tree.
- What activity occupies most of a bird's daytime during the winter?
 - Defending territories
 - Feeding
 - Breeding
 - Sleeping



- What adaptations do woodpeckers have to reach insects from beneath tree bark?
 - Strong, sharp bills to remove the bark.
 - Long tongue (that wraps all the way around their skull) to reach under the bark.
 - Barbs at the end of their tongue that pick up insects.
 - A and C
 - All of the above.

- True or False. The Black-capped Chickadee lowers its heart and breathing rates as a way to survive severe winter nights.

- What percentage of a Lynx's winter diet is composed of Snowshoe Hare?
 - 10%

- 30%
- 50%
- 70%
- 90%



- White-tailed Deer deal with winter conditions by,
 - Wearing snowshoes
 - Changing their main diet
 - Hibernating
 - Packing down a network of trails
 - B and D
- True or False. White-tailed Jackrabbits grow white fur to help them hide from predators in winter.

Answers: 3. b 4. e 5. true 6. d 7. e 8. true

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For More Information

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Website:
www.oakhammockmarsh.ca

Hours of Operation

July to October
10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
November to June
10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Call ahead for Café hours.

Extended hours during the fall.

The Interpretive Centre is open beyond its public hours for group bookings and meetings.

ASK THE NATURALIST

Why don't bird's feet freeze?

While on a cold surface, birds often stand on one leg, drawing the other under them into a protective blanket of feathers. This action reduces heat loss in the foot by close to 50%. Or, they can sit on their lower legs to reduce heat loss from the body by 40%.



These actions help but other adaptations are still needed for survival.

Most birds that live in cold climates also reduce the amount of warm blood flowing to their feet. This reduces heat loss to the air, water, snow, or ice. This

is done using counter current heat exchange. Blood vessels going to the feet carry warm blood from the body. They lie right beside the vessels returning cold blood from the feet. As blood pass through the leg, the heat moves from the warm "outgoing" vessels to the cold "incoming" vessels. This cools the outgoing blood before it reaches the feet and less heat is lost to the environment.

In addition, a bird's lower legs and feet contain higher amounts of polyunsaturated fats than other parts of the body. These fats freeze at a lower temperature and prevent the feet from freezing.

TELE-TEACHING

October 21st, 2007 marked a first for the Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre. Thanks to a very generous equipment loan from the Grande Yellowhead Regional School Division in Alberta, the Centre was able to reach students, live, at Jasper National Park in our first ever tele-teaching session. Students from throughout the division were gathered at the park to learn more about GPS (global positioning systems)

and GIS (geographical information systems) technologies. The weekend-long course featured a presentation on how GIS is used in the Centre's Community Mapping Project and Bird Sightings Kiosk. Following the presentation, the students completed a GIS lesson and map using data from bird sightings at Oak Hammock Marsh. The student's final maps were critiqued by staff via SMART Board technology.