



# Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre

# Reeder

July/August 2010  
Volume 18, Issue 4

## MARSH HAPPENINGS

### Dragonfly Festival

July 24 and 25



An adult dragonfly is a formidable hunting insect and a fly's worst nightmare. Dragonflies dart and dash through the air in search of food in a similar fashion to a fighter jet ready for battle, stalking their prey at every turn. Incredibly agile, they use their legs to form a basket and catch insects in midair. They can instantly change direction, hover, turn while hovering and accelerate to full speed in a split second, and then glide effortlessly.

Dragonflies are eating machines and must consume up to 20 per cent of their body weight per day to power their flight. A "fully fuelled" dragonfly can only fly for eight hours before depleting its fat reserves. Oak Hammock Marsh is an ideal location to spot, catch, and identify dragonflies during the summer months. Over 15 species have been regularly spotted at the marsh zipping through the cattails and grasses.

Wetlands are crucial to the larval stage of dragonflies (nymphs). Wetlands provide much needed food for these voracious aquatic predators that eat many types of invertebrates and have even been known to consume tadpoles and small minnows.

If you are fascinated by these creatures and would like to learn more about them, then the upcoming Dragonfly Festival is for you. On July 24 and 25, come to Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre to get a close up look at

dragonflies and nymphs as you venture out on a dragonfly safari or critter dipping. There will be a dragonfly food art contest where you can create an edible dragonfly (all supplies provided) and many other fun family activities.



Enter to win a one-year family membership and other great prizes with our new dragonfly colouring contest. It is available at the Centre or you can download it from the website.

### Canada Day



July 1

Canadian Confederation occurred on July 1, 1867. On June 20, 1868, then Governor General Lord Monck issued a proclamation that called on all of her majesty's subjects in Canada to celebrate the formation of the Dominion of Canada on July 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. May 15, 1879, saw Royal Assent given to have July 1<sup>st</sup> become an official public holiday by the name of "Dominion Day." "Dominion Day" became "Canada Day" on October 27, 1985. Over the years, the custom of holding large, federal government organized events did not always exist. Special years, such as the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Confederation in 1917 warranted celebration. It was not until 1958 that the federal government struck a committee to oversee the coordination of events each year across the country. Come be part of the event at Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre this year on July 1, when we celebrate our great nation with films, flags, cake and more!

### Prairie Picnic

August 28

A picnic can be defined simply as a pleasure excursion at which a meal is eaten outdoors. Ideally picnics take place in a beautiful landscape such as a park, beside a lake or at a place with an interesting view. Many picnics take place during a public event during the summer.

Picnics are often family-oriented gatherings but can also be an intimate occasion between two people, or a large get-together such as company picnics and church picnics. On romantic and family picnics a picnic basket and a blanket (to sit or recline on) are usually brought along.

Oak Hammock Marsh provides the perfect setting for a picnic with large areas of open grassland, numerous trails winding their way throughout the wetland and picnic tables and shelters.

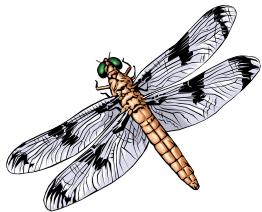


Please join us on Saturday, August 28 for some fun activities at the marsh including a visit to the tall-grass prairie to view the prairie flowers in bloom, a canoe excursion to explore the watery side of the marsh and other fun outdoor games for the family.

Don't forget to bring your picnic or let our Café prepare a fresh delicious sandwich or salad to go.

## MARSHY QUIZ

1. In ancient mythology, which country was called *Akitsushima*, "land of the dragonflies"?
2. True or False? The dragonfly nymph's compound eye has an overlapping field of view, giving it depth perception to catch its prey.



3. Some fossilized ancestors of the dragonflies were the largest insects that have ever been discovered. Some had a wingspan of:
  - a. 5 cm (2 in.)
  - b. 25 cm (10 in.)
  - c. 48 cm (19 in.)
  - d. 71 cm (28 in.)



4. True or False? Captive dragonfly nymphs have learned to associate food with the appearance of a person.

5. How many species of dragonflies and damselflies can be found at Oak Hammock Marsh?
  - a. 37
  - b. 27
  - c. 17
  - d. 7

6. How many species of dragonflies and damselflies can be found in Manitoba?
  - a. 108
  - b. 98
  - c. 88
  - d. 78
7. What animals are among the most important predators of damselflies and dragonflies?
8. True or False? Some species of damselflies and dragonflies establish and defend territories.

**Answers:**  
 1. Japan  
 2. True  
 3. d  
 4. True  
 5. a  
 6. B  
 7. Other dragonflies  
 8. True

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### For More Information

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 www.oakhammockmarsh.ca

### Hours of Operation

September & October  
 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
 November to August  
 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 are Canada Geese flying north in large flocks at this time of year?

At this time of year we begin to see large flocks of geese flying over heading north. These geese are failed breeders or birds that simply did not breed. They are on their way to large bodies of water, like Lake Winnipeg, where they will moult their feathers in a safe location. Birds need to replace all of their feathers about once a year so that the feathers stay strong and provide adequate protection.

Birds moult in many ways. Geese lose their flight feathers all at once

and become flightless for a period of time. Breeding geese moult when their young are small and cannot fly. The adults would do leave the young unattended and so not being able to fly at the same time is ideal.

Geese that have not bred or failed to breed seek out safe places to moult. The marshes on the large lakes of Manitoba offer the perfect combination of food and safety from predators.



## SUMMER CAMPS

### Spend a week this summer at Oak Hammock Marsh!

Have fun exploring a wetland this summer. Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre is offering weeklong day camps in July and August. A variety of age-appropriate activities including

cool crafts, scavenger hunts and canoe adventures will keep campers aged 5 to 13 entertained as they learn all about wetlands. For more information about camp dates and themes or to register a camper, please call the Centre or visit our website.