



Deer Creek Marsh WMA A Unique and Intriguing Resource Enjoyed by All

Eastern Lake Ontario Dune Stewards are responsible for public education and outreach throughout the 17-mile stretch of the Eastern Lake Ontario Dunes and Wetlands Area (ELODWA). The Stewards promote sound recreation use of the fragile dune resource, help

maintain the area through fencing installations and beachgrass plantings, and increase the overall public appreciation of the area through the development and distribution of educational materials.



One of the sites monitored by the Dune Stewards is Deer Creek Marsh Wildlife Management Area (WMA) - 1,195 acres owned by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The site contains freshwater sand dune habitat, cobble beach, productive wetland, and more.

To stress its importance and uniqueness to the local ecosystem, the Steward Program

offered a guided dune and wetland tour in mid-August 2007. During this tour, participants learned about the resources of Deer Creek Marsh WMA, such as its cobble beach, one of the few such beaches found along Southeastern Lake Ontario. Its inner-dunal trail meanders through the dunes filled with plentiful stands of Beach Pea, eventually leading visitors to the mouth of Deer Creek at Lake Ontario.

Tour participants learned about threats to the resource, including trash left behind by visitors. The Stewards encourage visitors to Deer Creek Marsh WMA and other properties along ELODWA to remember to "Carry-in, Carry-out." The signs posted along the resource areas are a friendly reminder for people to take out what they brought in with them in order to preserve the health and safety of the resource and the enjoyment of others.



Another threat to the area is the trampling of fragile vegetation, which could ultimately lead to a dune blowout -- a steep-sided valley formed when wind blows through an area and carves out a channel in the dunes that is void of vegetation. When visiting ELODWA, visitors are advised to stay off the dunes and to use designated trails and walkways.

For More Information on the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune Steward & Salmon River Program, contact 315-312-3042

Did You Know...?

Interesting Facts & Figures

Making Deer Creek Marsh WMA Unique



Deer Creek Marsh WMA is home to one of the few cobble beaches located along Southeastern Lake Ontario.

The cobbles found along the shoreline of Deer Creek Marsh WMA are the heavier remains of glacial till left by the retreat of the glaciers.

Deer Creek Marsh WMA includes a productive wetland habitat for more than 55 bird, 11 mammal, 6 reptile, and 6 amphibian species.

This WMA is a popular spot for recreation, including walking, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.

New York State Threatened bird species such as the Pied-billed Grebe, Northern Harrier, and Caspian Tern can all be found here. The Black Tern, a New York State Endangered Species, has recently been documented nesting at Deer Creek Marsh WMA.

Rice Creek Biological Field Station at SUNY Oswego calls Deer Creek Marsh “*the most important breeding and feeding grounds for birds in the Oswego County Coastal Zone.*”



New York State Threatened flora here include Houghton’s Sedge and New York State Endangered flora include Champlain Beachgrass, Sand Dune Willow, and Sand Cherry.

The dunes are so fragile that if they were to be damaged in some way, it is unlikely they could be returned to their current, healthy state. The Eastern Lake Ontario Dune Stewards Program is helping to protect this vital area and its resources for future generations.

The Eastern Lake Ontario Dune Steward & Salmon River Steward Program is managed by New York Sea Grant in partnership with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Parks, and The Nature Conservancy.

