

# Whitemouth Island Ecological Reserve

## Backgrounder

### Land Designation

Ecological reserves play a key role in Manitoba's Protected Areas Initiative by protecting unique, rare and representative examples of plants, animals, geological features and ecosystems. They are the most protected of the provincially designated sites within Manitoba's network of protected areas.

### Landscape Description

The 613 hectare Whitemouth Island Ecological Reserve, partially within the Northwest Angle Provincial Forest, is the largest island in Whitemouth Lake. It is located approximately 25 kilometres north of Sprague. Situated in the Lake of the Woods subregion of the Manitoba Lowlands Natural Region, this island supports eastern deciduous forest.



### Outstanding Features

The Whitemouth Island Ecological Reserve protects one of the westernmost examples in Canada of mature, largely undisturbed deciduous forest of the St. Lawrence - Great Lakes forest region (rainy river section). It contains at least eight species of eastern deciduous forest plants considered rare in Manitoba including: Dutchman's breeches, blue cohosh, bottle-brush grass, green adder's mouth, New Jersey tea and enchanter's nightshade. Near record specimens of trees, shrubs and vines have been observed here. Amphibians and reptiles seen here include: the red sided garter snake, wood frog, northern spring peeper, and American toad.

The Whitemouth Island Ecological Reserve will be maintained for the preservation and protection of the unique St. Lawrence - Great Lakes eastern deciduous forest and several rare plant species. Passive non-consumptive recreation on foot is permitted. Indigenous people are permitted to carry out their treaty and aboriginal rights within the ecological reserve. All other activities require prior ministerial approval.



This area is categorized by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a protected area under the management category Ia – a protected area managed for strict nature protection available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental monitoring. These protected lands are free from logging, mining, hydroelectric development, oil and gas development, and any other activities that could harm habitat.