



# Delta Marsh Wildlife Management Area

## Land Description

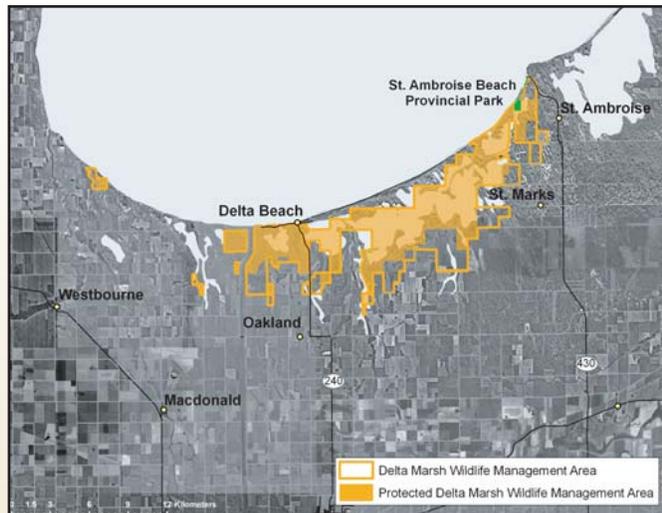
Delta Marsh is an extensive freshwater coastal wetland at the southern end of Lake Manitoba. It stretches from Lynchs Point in the west to St. Ambrose in the east. The protected portion of the Delta Marsh Wildlife Management Area encompasses 8,125 hectares. These protected lands are free from logging, mining, hydroelectric, oil and gas development as well as other activities that could significantly and adversely affect habitat. The total size of the wildlife management area is 11,000 hectares.

## Outstanding Features

The Delta Marsh in south central Manitoba is one of the largest and most important marshes in the Canadian prairies, occupying approximately 18,000 hectares at the south end of Lake Manitoba. In 1982, the Delta Marsh was listed as a wetland of international importance under the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Ramsar Convention. It is recognized provincially as a “Manitoba Heritage Marsh” and nationally as an Important Bird Area due to its significance for waterfowl and neotropical migrants.

The marsh formed between 2,500 and 4,500 years ago when the ancient Assiniboine River flowed into Lake Manitoba. It is composed of a network of interconnected shallow bays separated from Lake Manitoba by a wooded barrier beach.

White-tailed deer are common on the lands bordering the marsh, with gray partridge and sharp-tailed grouse seen year round as well. Common furbearers include coyote, red fox, beaver and muskrat. Western grebes, pelicans and cormorants are found in the marsh.



Although traditionally noted for its abundance of waterfowl, such as canvasbacks, lesser scaup and mallards, Delta Marsh is also a critical site for migrating songbirds. The Delta Marsh Bird Observatory monitors the spring and fall migrations of warblers and other passerine birds, often recording the greatest number and variety of these birds in Canada.

People have been drawn to the wildlife of the marsh for countless generations. Spear points, arrow heads and other evidence of early use by First Nations exists throughout the area. In the early 1900s people came by train from Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg to Delta Beach to enjoy the sandy beaches on Lake Manitoba. Since the turn of the century, many cottages have been built on the forested ridge overlooking the lake, and the marsh has been used for hunting, trapping, and fishing.

The Delta Waterfowl Research Station was established in 1938 east of Delta Beach to carry out waterfowl research. In 1966, the University of Manitoba leased lands at the west end of the marsh from the Province of Manitoba and developed the Delta Marsh Field Station (University of Manitoba) as a teaching and research centre.

The Delta Marsh Wildlife Management Area was established to protect and enhance natural habitat, conserve biodiversity, and provide opportunities for compatible recreational activities requiring little or no development. Hunting, trapping, fishing and existing agricultural uses will continue as they have in the past. The protected area is categorized as an IUCN (World Conservation Union) protected area management category IV, that is, a protected area managed mainly for conservation of habitat and species through management intervention. The remaining unprotected wildlife management area is categorized as an IUCN category VI, that is, an area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems.