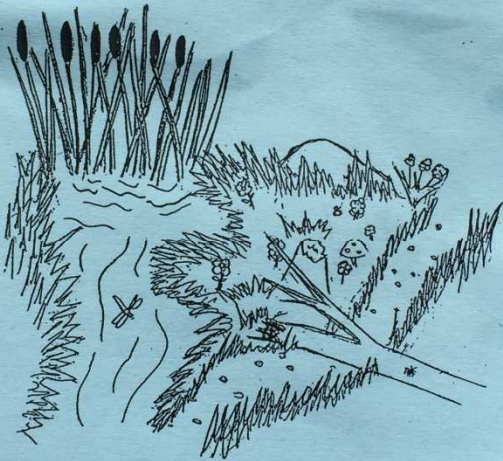


# Habitat 2000

## The Water's Edge Ecosystem



Sponsored by the  
Canadian Wildlife  
Federation.

Located at the Binscarth  
Park & Pool.

## HABITAT 2000 "THE WATER'S EDGE ECOSYSTEM"

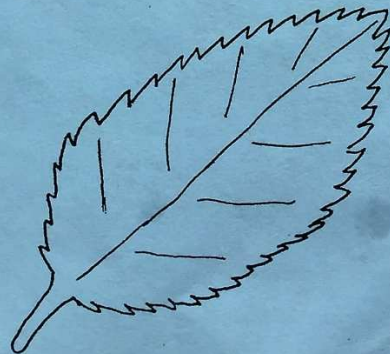
Despite its quiet appearance, this marsh is a busy place.

This environment refers to everything in an organism's surroundings. All organisms, including humans, must interact with their environment in ways that are beneficial to all.

We hope that by hiking "the water's edge" your curiosity will be peaked and an awareness that all living things are precious will be realized.

This is a moderate to difficult trail. It is wet on occasion.

Please do not disturb anything on the trail. There is a picnic area at the conclusion. Total distance, approximately 4.5 km's.





## (1) FAUNA

Rabbits live wherever they can find bushes or clumps of tall grass to hide in. Off the main trail, one would find evidence of rabbit droppings and several rabbit hutches.

Rabbits here may grow from 8 to 14 inches (20 to 30 cm.) and weigh from 2 to 5 pounds (1 to 2 kg).

Deer have no permanent homes. They may spend their lives moving about in an area called a home range. They roam this area in search of food, to find mates, and to avoid any enemies. Deer may live alone or in groups, depending on their age, sex, and species. There are many deer living in this park area.

Squirrels scamper about the ground and in trees. The squirrel family is one of the largest rodents to ever exist. Their diet consists mainly of acorns from the oak tree. While on the trail, be sure to watch for these friendly creatures.

Many other animals live in and around the park. They consist of:

- raccoons
- porcupines
- lynx
- weasels, and
- mink, just to name a few.

Many other organisms are not seen unless one looks more closely. Decomposers such as micro-organisms, moss, and fungus are at work in rotting logs.

## (2) FLORA

Both coniferous and deciduous trees exist in this region, such as Maple, Elm, Oak, and Pine.

The leaves of conifers may be scale-like or needle-like. They stay on all year round. The leaves of deciduous trees are usually broad and fall off at a certain time each year.

Some plant species that exist in this area are:

- lily pads
- cranberry and chokeberry bushes
- poison ivy
- clover leaf
- mosses
- cattails



### (3) ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTIONS

To understand ecosystem interactions, ecologists use the concepts of communities and populations.

A single community may include many different populations of different species of organisms living in an ecosystem. It consists of producers (green plants), consumers (rabbits), and decomposers (mushrooms).

Symbiosis can be used to describe any interaction between different species that live in close association.

A community is made up of many interactions plus, the most important, the interaction between a producer (those who make their own food), and a consumer (an organism that cannot provide its own food so it feeds on a producer).

### (4) BEAVER

The beavers play an important part in the ecosystem along this trail. They make the water level rise from their dams and lodges.

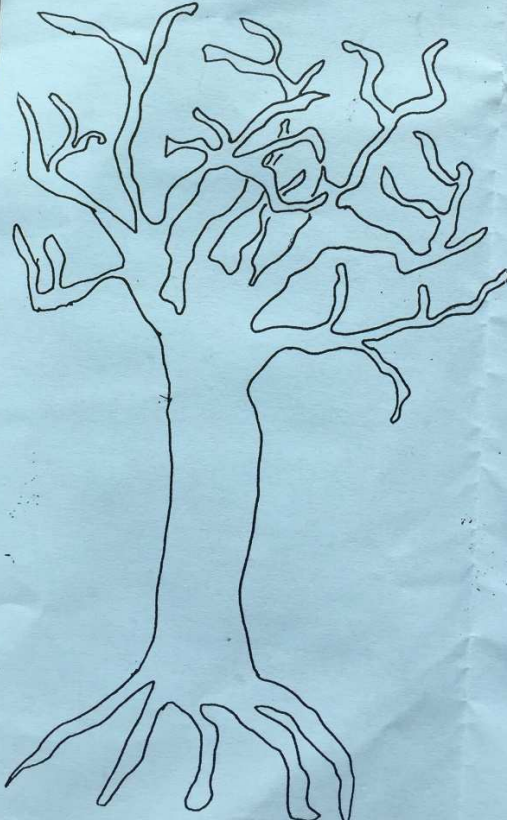
As you walk along the trail, you will find many trees cut down and dragged into the water. Without these busy workers, our park and hiking trail would look very different.

### (5) COMPETITION

Competition often occurs in the same community, when two populations must share the same resource that is limited in supply.

By having competition, two populations may then act in a way that affects their growths and perhaps even their survival.

Whether it occurs between the same or different species, competition sometimes leads to displacement of one population by the other.





### (6) TREE CANOPIES

Tree canopies occur when the crowns of trees form a covering of leaves high above the ground. This covering is known as the upper canopy. The crowns of smaller trees form one or two smaller canopies. Together the canopies shade the forest floor so that it receives less sunlight than the upper canopy. Most areas of the floor receive so little sunlight that few bushes and flowering plants can grow there.

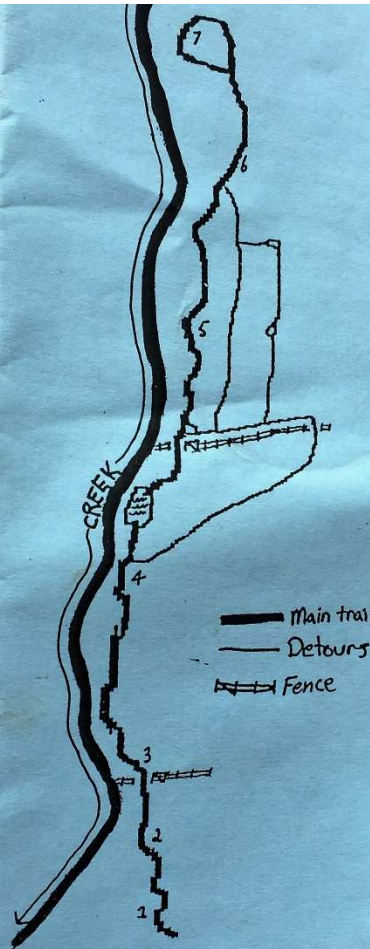
### (7) SUCCESSION

Succession is the natural process of change in a community of living things.

There are two types of succession, primary succession and secondary succession.

Primary succession begins on bare rock or any other lifeless surface. Primary succession takes many hundreds of years to reach its climax.

Secondary succession starts on bare soil. Succession continues until a stable, self-sustaining community arises, which is called a climax community. Secondary succession does not take as long as primary succession.



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