

Meadow Marsh



Green-winged Teal



Muskrat



Tundra Swan

Marshes

Marshes in the western boreal forest are often found as a transition between open water and shorelines.

Water levels fluctuate seasonally and water sources come from precipitation and associated run-off, groundwater and stream inflow.

Ecological Benefits

- * Most biologically diverse but the least common boreal wetland
- * Marshes moderate flooding and minimize soil erosion
- * Filter and trap nutrients and neutralize a number of contaminants
- * Vital habitat for many wildlife such as waterfowl, moose, beaver and muskrat

Type of Marshes

- * *Emergent marshes*: dominated by flood tolerant cattail and rushes; located between deeper open water and meadow marshes
- * *Meadow marshes*: dominated by sedges and grasses; less flood tolerant and occupy shallow water areas





Cattail

Identifying Characteristics

Vegetation

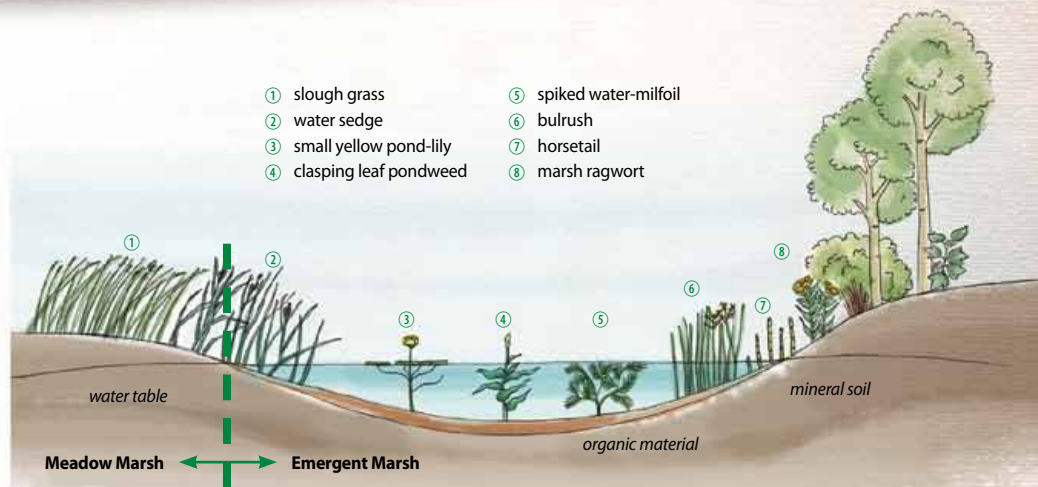
- * Emergent vegetation (e.g. cattail, bulrush and sedges) occupies more than 25% of the area interspersed with open water
- * Floating vegetation (e.g. pondweeds and milfoil) occupies open water

Hydrology

- * *Water levels:* fluctuate seasonally and can periodically dry out
- * *Water sources:* precipitation, run-off, groundwater and streams

Soil

- * Mineral based soils with shallow organic deposits (< 40 cm)
- * Nutrient rich soils resulting from periodic drying out and exposure to oxygen



Hard-stem Bulrush



Sedge



Resources

- * Ducks Unlimited Canada Natural Values Fact Sheet Series (ducks.ca/naturalvalues)
- * Field Guide to the Wetlands of the Boreal Plains Ecozone of Canada (ducks.ca/boreal-field-guide)
- * Ducks Unlimited Canada Western Boreal Program (borealforest.ca)

