



## **Introduction to the Second Marsh**

**By: Peter Taylor, President, Friends of the Second Marsh**

The Second Marsh covers 137 acres on the shore of Lake Ontario, between Darlington Provincial Park and the Port of Oshawa. It has been designated as a Provincially Significant Wetland, a Provincially Significant Area of Natural and Scientific Interest, and is a part of Ontario's Greenbelt. The Marsh is also designated under the Ontario Heritage Act for its Cultural Heritage Value.

This is the first in a series of monthly articles that will be written by staff and Board members of Friends of Second Marsh (FSM), a registered not-for-profit charity. FSM's mandate is to provide education, interpretive programs, and watershed stewardship. We believe the best way to protect the Second Marsh is by connecting people to the value of this wetland and its watershed.

These articles will give you an opportunity to learn more about this fabulous local natural resource, and how it can enrich your life and that of your family.

Today's organization began in 1972, when a group of local citizens lead by Jim Richards and Bob Mills became concerned that this amazing area might be lost if it was not actively protected. Their efforts led to the City of Oshawa gaining ownership of the area in 1993.

In 2022, FSM has a volunteer board of nine community minded citizens and two part-time staff. As our community begins to be less affected by Covid 19, we are again offering more outdoor activities such as this spring's *Discover the Magic of the Marsh*. Participants were able to learn about the rich and deep history of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, how wetlands are a key part of our natural ecosystem, discover who lives in the marsh, and how humans can ensure that wildlife thrives there. Some visitors also participated in a Forest Bathing Experience.

On the environmental front, FSM is battling invasive species, such as Phragmites, Woodland angelica, Garlic mustard and Wild parsnip. These non-native plants threaten to take over native species that provide food and habitat for the hundreds of insects, birds and other species that call the Second Marsh home.

One of FSM's long-term goals is to establish a Great Lakes Centre for Natural Heritage and Climate Change. To date, we have received support for this ambitious project from local governments and such prominent Canadians as Roberta Bondar, Ed Broadbent, Robert Bateman, Stephen Lewis, and world-renowned environmentalist Dr. David Suzuki.

On the drawing board are more educational programs, hikes and learning opportunities to showcase this marvelous marsh.

We are also excited about what is happening with the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve. General Motors of Canada is donating this stunning area to the City of Oshawa. Friends of Second Marsh anticipates that it will be tasked with expanding its education, interpretive and stewardship services to include these 41 hectares.

For more information about our activities, to volunteer, or to provide financial support, please visit [www.secondmarsh.ca](http://www.secondmarsh.ca)