



LAKE
WINNIPEG
FOUNDATION

World Wetlands Day 2016

News

LWF

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Tuesday, Feb. 2 is World Wetlands Day. It marks the date of the 1971 adoption of the United Nations' intergovernmental [Convention on Wetlands](#) in the Iranian city of Ramsar. Every year on Feb. 2, people around the world raise awareness about the importance of wetlands and take action in their own communities to protect these special areas.

A wetland is any area that holds water – either temporarily or permanently. They may more commonly be known as sloughs, swamps, ponds or marshes.

We here at LWF love wetlands: for their biodiversity, for their ability to mitigate the effects of flooding and droughts, and for the many recreational opportunities they offer us. (Plus, they're beautiful natural places!)

Wetlands help keep our water clean. The vegetation in these ecosystems filters out nutrients like phosphorus from the water that eventually ends up in lakes such as Lake Winnipeg, helping to control the growth of harmful algae blooms.

Did you know that 25 per cent of the world's remaining wetlands are found in Canada?

Despite their many benefits, wetlands are one of the earth's most threatened ecosystems. In the last century, 50 per cent of the world's wetlands have disappeared – drained because of industry, urbanization and agriculture. Significant losses of wetlands have occurred in Manitoba, too; approximately 75 per cent of our province's original wetlands have been drained since industrial development began on the Prairies.

Keeping Water on the Land is [Action 1](#) of our [Lake Winnipeg Health Plan](#), in recognition that protecting Manitoba's remaining wetlands will help protect the health of Lake Winnipeg.

On Feb. 2, we encourage you to celebrate World Wetlands Day by:

- Reading [Nature's Wealth](#), the four-page feature LWF created in collaboration with [Ducks Unlimited Canada \(DUC\)](#) and the [International Institute for Sustainable Development \(IISD\)](#). This [publication](#) delves into the ecological and economic value of wetlands and contains lots of fun facts.
- Watching *Wetlands Matter*, a 15-minute video created by EKOS Communications, a recipient of LWF's [Stewardship, Research and Education Grants Program](#). *Wetlands Matter* explores the dynamics that drive wetland drainage, the impacts and costs of this practice, and some possible solutions to the problem. It will air on [Shaw TV Winnipeg](#) on Feb. 2 at 3:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., and again on Feb. 3 at 8 p.m.
- Visiting the official World Wetlands Day [website](#). It has lots of information and resources.
- Exploring a wetland near you! Here in Manitoba, there are lots to choose from, including [Oak Hammock Marsh](#), one of Canada's Ramsar sites!

Tags:

[Wetlands](#)

[World Wetlands Day](#)

[Keeping Water on the Land](#)