



Alice Margaret MacMillan Natural Area

The *Alice Margaret MacMillan Natural Area* is 9.1 acres located in Wood Islands, Kings County, Prince Edward Island. The natural area is home to rich plant and wildlife communities, and contributes to the connectivity of woodland habitat in the area.

Acquisition and Legal Status

The *Alice Margaret MacMillan Natural Area* was generously donated by Alice Margaret MacMillan on June 28th, 2001 and was designated under the *PEI Natural Areas Protection Act* in 2004.

Landscape Context

The *Alice Margaret MacMillan Natural Area* is divided into two sections, east and west, by a paved road, MacMillan Lane. Both sections of the natural area are surrounded, on their remaining boundaries by forest, creating an excellent wildlife corridor. A provincially-owned bog, the *Wood Islands Bog Natural Area*, lies inland and just a few kms away on Greys Road (Rte 201). A Northumberland Ferries Limited ferry terminal, with service to Caribou, Nova Scotia, is located less than a kilometre west of the natural area. The boats' whistles can be heard from the natural area when they are entering and leaving the port. A few residential properties also lie along MacMillan Lane.

Plant Community

The *Alice Margaret MacMillan Natural Area* has an interesting mix of habitats. On the western side of MacMillan Lane, the northern part of the property is a swampy area with alders throughout and the southern section is dry coniferous forest dominated by white spruce and balsam fir. The eastern section of the natural area is also wet forest, with the northern portion being swampy and dominated by alders, and the southern section being boggier and dominated by black spruce and sphagnum moss.

A few rare plants and exceptional specimens exist in this natural area. An unusually large mountain ash tree can be found on the eastern side of MacMillan Lane. Mountain ash tends to grow as a small tree or shrub. This specimen, however, is over 10 metres in height with a diameter of over 40cm at breast height. Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*), a beautiful spring-flowering woodland plant, also known as bakeapple, is also present in the eastern section. Cloudberry is ranked as S2, or imperiled, in PEI because of rarity due to a very restricted range in the province.



Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*)

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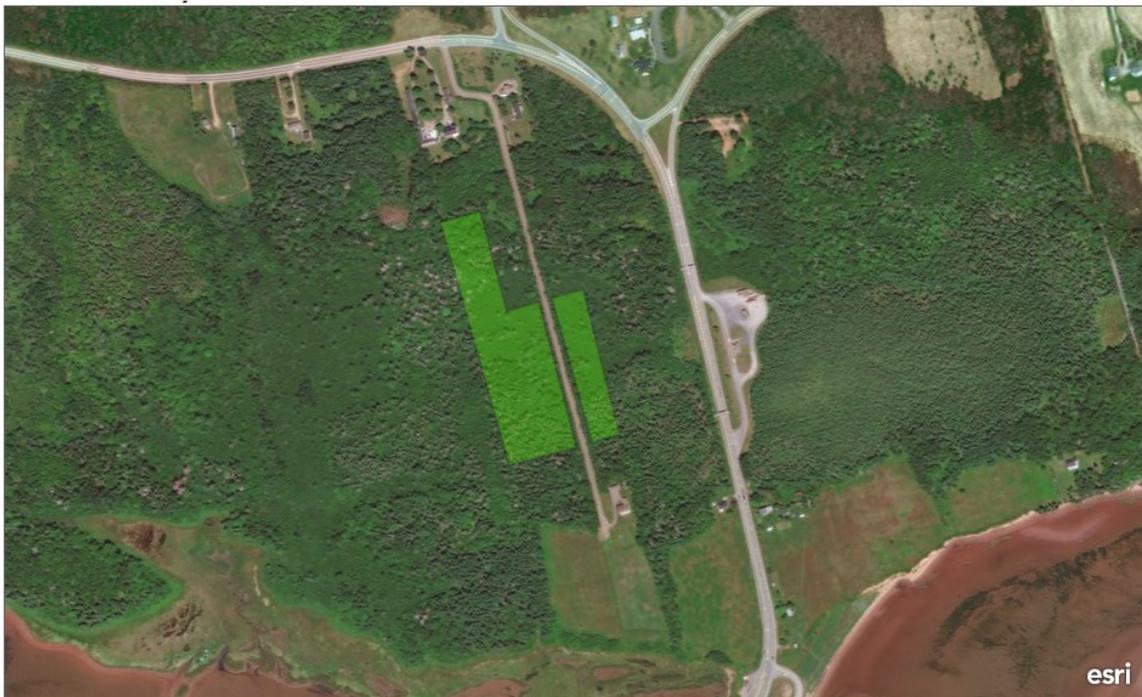
Wildlife Community

The *Alice Margaret MacMillan Natural Area* provides habitat for a rich bird community. In 2017 and 2018, the natural area was included in Island Nature Trust's Forest Bird Program. Two point count stations were established, one in the eastern section and one in the western section. Birds detected during the surveys include rose-breasted grosbeak, northern parula, red-eyed vireo, mourning warbler, Nashville warbler, downy woodpecker, yellow-bellied sapsucker, and golden-crowned kinglet. Two forest-nesting species-at-risk have also been observed using this natural area, the Threatened Canada warbler and the eastern wood-pewee, a species of Special Concern. Other wildlife that have been observed in the natural area include ruffed grouse and snowshoe hare.

Access

There are no marked trails in this natural area. Although it is a relatively small property, it forms part of a larger, contiguous forested area. Therefore, we suggest anyone accessing the natural area use a GPS unit or a map and compass to navigate.

Both the east and west sections are accessible via MacMillan Lane. MacMillan Lane is located 0.2 km west of the Wood Islands ferry terminal, on the south side of the Trans-Canada Highway. Once on MacMillan Lane, travel approximately 0.5 km and the natural area will be located on both the east and west sides of the road.



The *Alice Margaret MacMillan Natural Area* is represented in green.

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