

# Hon. Lloyd G. MacPhail Natural Area

The *Hon. Lloyd G. MacPhail Natural Area* is a 31 acre woodland located in Milton Station, Queens County, Prince Edward Island. This natural area protects important wetland habitat and is a refuge for wildlife in an area that is largely used for agriculture and residential development.

## Acquisition and Legal Status

The property was donated by Helen MacPhail in memory of her late husband, the Hon. Lloyd George MacPhail on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Lloyd MacPhail was a long-serving Island politician who sat as an MLA for 24 years as well as serving as Lieutenant Governor of PEI from 1985-1990. In 1994, he was made a Member of the Order of Canada. Lloyd also had a long-standing passion for nature conservation.

The donation was made through the Government of Canada's Ecological Gifts Program. Land designated as an Ecogift is considered important to the preservation of Canada's environmental heritage. The land was also designated under the *PEI Natural Areas Protection Act* on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Both designations protect the land from development in perpetuity.

## Landscape Context

This natural area is bordered to the west and south by the Sleepy Hollow Road, to the east by two residential properties and a section of regenerating forest, and to the north by a mixture of young forest and field habitat. It lies near the North (Nemtaqaaq) River and its small stream helps to feed spring water to the larger river system. The proximity of this natural area to urban development and car traffic necessitates frequent, ongoing roadside cleanup efforts.

## Plant Community

The *Hon. Lloyd G. MacPhail Natural Area* has a variety of habitats, including a freshwater stream and marsh, a regenerating field dominated by speckled alder, a maturing white spruce and eastern larch stand, and a dense shrubby wild raspberry patch. There are a number of mature trees dispersed throughout the property including white birch, red maple, yellow birch, and trembling aspen. Other tree species present include eastern hemlock, white cedar, eastern white pine, red pine, and gray birch. In the older forest stand, the ground is covered in bunchberry, sarsaparilla, and twinflower. The regenerating field bordering the freshwater marsh contains speckled alder, serviceberry, wild rose, highbush cranberry, and wild raisin.

In 2016, 126 trees and shrubs were planted in the southern portion of the natural area to diversify the forest community: red pine, white pine, red oak, sugar maple, yellow birch, common elder, staghorn sumac, winterberry, and sweet gale were added to the species mix. Some were caged with wire mesh to prevent grazing by meadow voles and snowshoe hares.

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## Riparian Zone

The vibrant freshwater habitat on the property is comprised of cattails, marsh marigolds and various mosses; it stretches from the northeast to southwest corners of the property. The water level of the stream that meanders the property varies greatly throughout the year, and can run dry during the summer. This area is bordered by mature trees and often provides glimpses of wetland birds like the red-winged blackbird or common yellowthroat.

## Wildlife Community

Although this property is in an urban setting and very close to Charlottetown, it is still being used by a large and varied wildlife community. Bird species observed in the natural area include; ruffed grouse, black-throated green warbler, northern parula, American goldfinch, black-and-white warbler, yellow-rumped warbler, and white-throated sparrow.

## Access

The *Hon. Lloyd G. MacPhail Natural Area* can be accessed from the Sleepy Hollow Road just outside Charlottetown. Travelling north from Charlottetown on the Lower Malpeque Road, turn right onto the Sleepy Hollow Road. 1 km down is an Island Nature Trust sign. A further 0.5 km down the road there is an access point directly across from the Miltonvale Community Park. The property boundary is marked with flagging tape but there are no trails in this natural area and visitors should go equipped and able to navigate with a compass or GPS.



The *Hon. Lloyd G. MacPhail Natural Area* is represented in green