

# ERIE MARSH PRESERVE

Erie Marsh represents 11% of the remaining marshland in southeastern Michigan and is one of the largest marshes on Lake Erie.



Birdwatching and photography are popular activities at the preserve. © Deb Allen



Wetlands at Erie Marsh Preserve. © Jason Whalen

Located on western Lake Erie's North Maumee Bay, this sprawling preserve plays a huge role as a migratory stopover and nesting site for shorebirds, waterfowl, land birds and, in the fall, raptors.

## A WETLAND RECONNECTED

When The Nature Conservancy (TNC) acquired this preserve in 1978, it was essentially 2,200 acres of highly altered, degraded wetland habitat that had been divided by barrier dikes and separated from Lake Erie since the 1950s.

That all changed in 2011, when TNC embarked on a **multi-year project to restore 946 acres of high-priority coastal wetlands**. Over the past decade, we have refurbished extensive marsh and wetland habitat, rehabilitated degraded levees, and installed a fish passage structure that reconnected the marsh to Lake Erie's North Maumee Bay.

Native fish and other aquatic life are now **accessing new breeding and spawning areas** for the first time in more than 60 years. The reconnection between wetland and lake has also helped control invasive Phragmites, allowing some of Michigan's few remaining colonies of the state-threatened American lotus and swamp rose-mallow to thrive.

## WHERE MIGRATORY BIRDS REST AND NEST

No matter the time of year, Erie Marsh Preserve offers refuge to **tens of thousands of migratory birds** that touch down to rest, refuel and sometimes nest here.



Green-winged teal. © Ken Salzman



Trumpeter swan. © Ken Salzman



Osprey. © Trisha Seelman



American lotus. © Ariana Lindquist

When you stop by, bring binoculars and you might see:

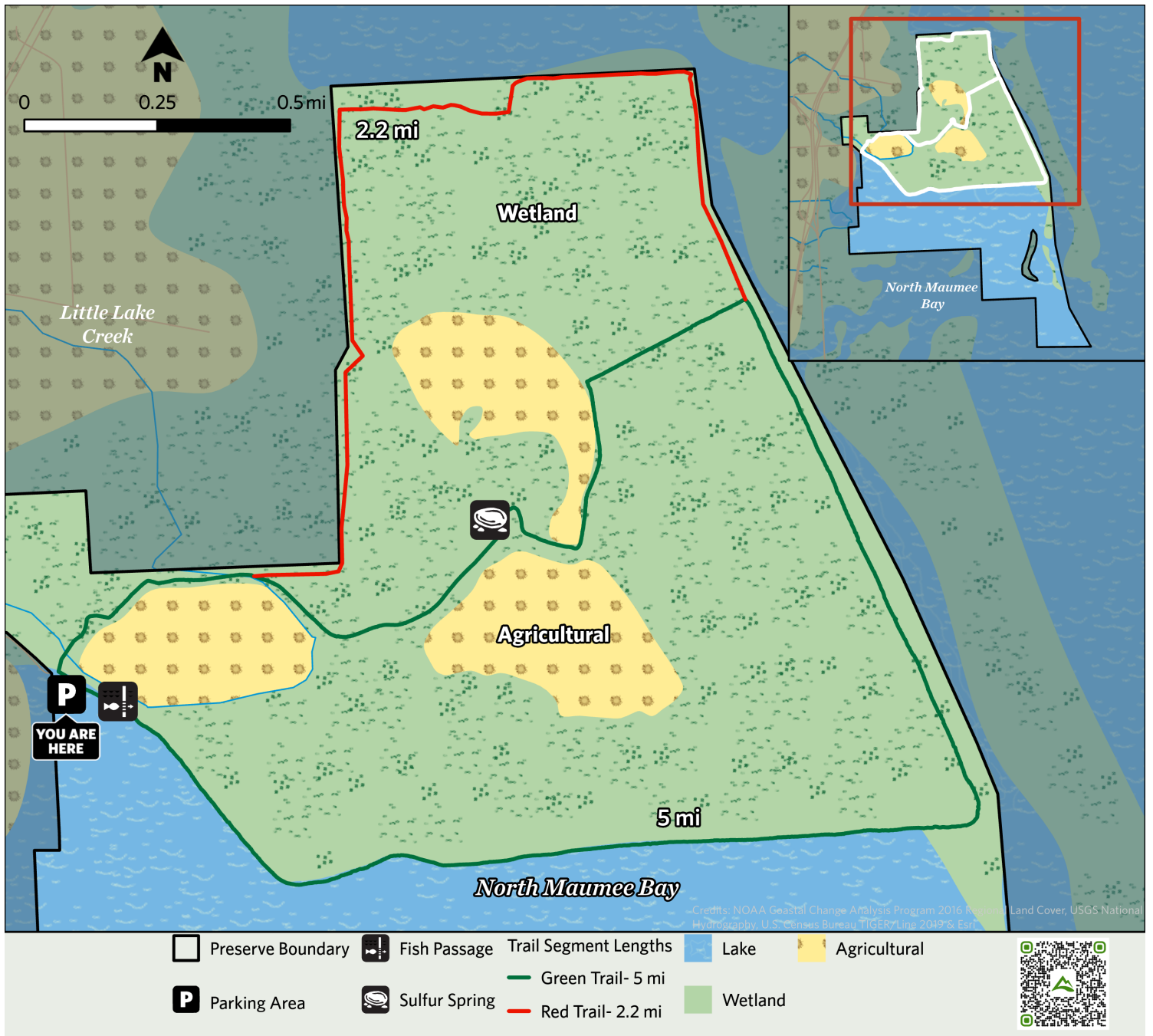
- Bald eagles,
- Great egrets,
- Great blue herons,
- Black-crowned night herons,
- Blue- and Green-winged teals,
- Mute and Trumpeter swans,
- Osprey,
- Double-crested cormorants,
- Purple martins,
- Sandpipers,
- and many other duck, shorebird, warbler, and wren species!



Marsh wren. © Ian Adams



Black-crowned night heron. © John Absher



### TIPS FOR A GREAT VISIT

TNC works with the Erie Shooting and Fishing Club and other partners to manage the site and protect its wetlands. **The preserve is open to the public from January through August**, when it closes for waterfowl hunting season. Dress warmly for spring hikes and birdwatching at the preserve, as the wind from Lake Erie can be cold.

**Trail:** A 5-mile loop trail follows a series of dikes that divide the wetland types present at Erie Marsh. Be prepared for muddy and uneven terrain walking along the dikes. Closure of certain trails is possible during eagle nesting periods. Please watch for and respect any posted closure signs.

**Located in Monroe, Michigan:** Visit Google Maps (search Erie Marsh Preserve) for specific directions. Park next to the Erie Shooting and Fishing Club cottages and head north on the trail to access the dike-area trails.

#### Nearby:

- Ives Road Fen Preserve, 35 mi ([nature.org/miexplore](http://nature.org/miexplore))
- Nan Weston Nature Preserve At Sharon Hollow, 60 mi ([nature.org/miexplore](http://nature.org/miexplore))
- William C. Sterling State Park, 16 mi ([michigan.gov/dnr](http://michigan.gov/dnr))
- Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, 30 mi ([www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov))
- Lodging, food, and more: [monroecountychamber.com](http://monroecountychamber.com)

**Rules:** You can help us protect this preserve by enjoying only **low-impact, non-motorized recreation**. Please stay on the trails and observe permitted and prohibited activities posted at the kiosk in the parking lot. Thank you for respecting the land, water and wildlife!

