

Aquatic Bed



Open Water

Shallow Open Water

Open Water wetlands have water depths less than two metres, yet are too deep for emergent marsh vegetation to establish. Visually, these wetlands appear to be shallow lakes, although floating-leaved and submerged aquatic vegetation are common in more nutrient-rich settings.

Ecological Benefits

- * Retain and store water helping to moderate flooding, recharge groundwater and maintain stream flows
- * Productive for many plants and animals in nutrient-rich environments

Types of Open Water Wetlands

- * *Open water*: <25% aquatic vegetation on the water
- * *Aquatic bed*: >25% aquatic vegetation on the water
- * *Mudflat*: a temporary condition when water levels are low (drawdown)



White-winged Scoter



Pond Lily





Identifying Characteristics

Vegetation

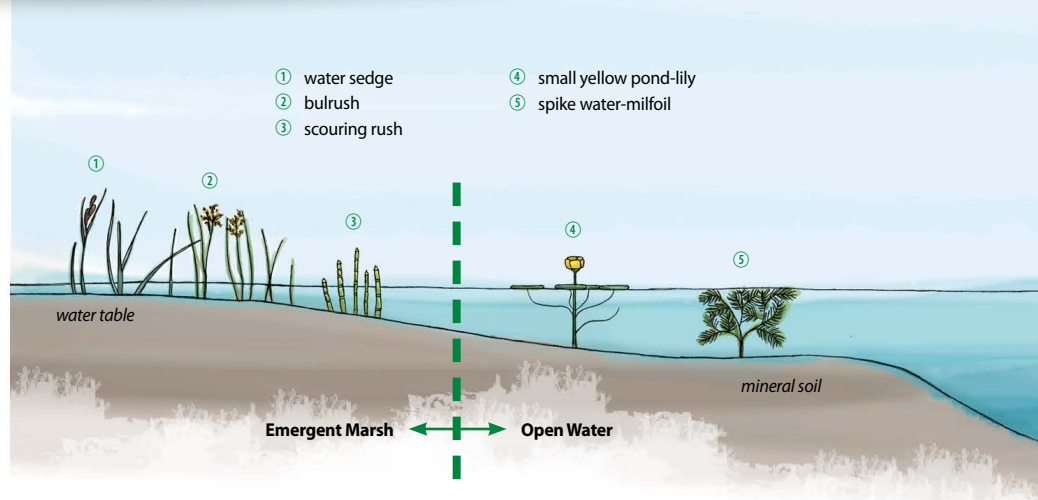
- * Submerged aquatic (e.g. water-milfoil) and floating vegetation (e.g. pond lily)
- * Too deep for emergent plants like cattails and rushes to establish

Hydrology

- * *Water sources:* precipitation, run-off, groundwater and streams
- * *Water levels:* generally permanent but may fluctuate seasonally, exposing mudflats

Soil

- * Soil is poorly developed because of high water levels and lack of oxygen
- * *Substrate:* silt, gravel or combinations of organic deposits



Resources

- * Ducks Unlimited Canada in the Boreal Forest – borealforest.ca
- * Ducks Unlimited Canada Natural Values Fact Sheet Series – ducks.ca/learn-about-wetlands/what-wetland
- * North American Wetlands Conservation Council: WetlandNetwork – wetlandnetwork.ca



Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

ducks.ca