

## Background: Geography & History

Maps dating back early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century clearly showed “Belcher’s Pond” as a geographical feature. The connection with the Belcher family is through Andrew (1763-1841), son of Nova Scotia Lieutenant Governor, Jonathan. Andrew, a successful merchant and politician, was a landowner with both town and country residences in the Birch Cove area. Over the years, the area continued to be popular with residents for hunting, fishing, ice skating and now for hiking, geocaching and nature appreciation.

Aerial survey maps indicate that the Pond varies in size from year to year, depending on precipitation. When the area was developed in the 1990’s, the Pond and surrounding wetlands were handed over to the city as parkland. The developers built the 2.5km of gravel trails around the Marsh, along the stream and around Little Belchers Pond across Parkland Drive. Naming of Belchers Marsh Park in the 21<sup>st</sup> century maintains the connection to Halifax’s early history.

Visit the 2 Interpretive panels for more historical and natural history information.

Stewardship was initially provided by **Friends of Belchers Marsh** who organized annual clean-ups of the trails and the wetlands. Currently, the **Halifax North West Trails Association** and others monitor Park integrity.

Approach the Park from Highway 102 at Kearney Lake Road (Exit 2) or at Lacewood Drive (Exit 2A) with access along Parkland Drive and local pathways.

Parking is on streets nearby.



## Trail Etiquette

- Please keep to the trails.
- Take only pictures and leave only footprints so others will be able to enjoy nature.
- Respect the environment; place litter in the garbage cans provided.
- Please do not feed the ducks; there is plenty of natural food available.
- Keep dogs on leash at all times and clean up after them; discard waste in garbage cans.
- **Please report trail problems or concerns to the Halifax municipality at 311.**
- **Civic addresses:**  
**445 Parkland Drive - Marsh**  
**590 Parkland Drive - Pond**



[www.HalifaxNorthWestTrails.ca](http://www.HalifaxNorthWestTrails.ca)



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Record your nature sightings  
[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) [www.naturewatch.ca](http://www.naturewatch.ca)

To explore other trails in the region  
[www.trails.gov.ns.ca](http://www.trails.gov.ns.ca)

[www.halifax.ca](http://www.halifax.ca)

2016

# Belchers Marsh Park & Trail

**Explore this urban park in  
Clayton Park West and  
discover where the 2.5km  
trail will take you - the wood-  
lands and wetlands form  
part of the Halifax green  
network.**



## Flora and Fauna

### The Ponds and Wetlands:

Besides the ducks, the ponds provide habitat and natural food sources for herons, kingfisher, gulls and Osprey, our provincial bird. Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles nest in the cattails as swallows hawk for insects over the water. Aquatic plant life includes spatterdock (the yellow water lily), bladderwort with its tiny yellow pea-shaped flowers and leatherleaf with its many white bell-shaped blossoms in early spring. The boggy areas, in particular around Little Belchers Pond, provide a refuge for several species of our native orchids. In addition, several varieties of dragonflies and damselflies patrol the marsh and shoreline; we should be thankful for their presence in keeping the smaller flying insect population in check!

The marsh and pond connect through to the Bedford Basin via Paper Mill Lake and the Birch Cove Lakes watershed.

Environmental monitoring continues to be a priority. Naturewatch is one way that citizens can participate in learning more about nature and sharing feedback. Check out [naturewatch.ca](http://naturewatch.ca) or [ebird.org](http://ebird.org) and become a citizen scientist.



## Belchers Marsh Trail



Data Source: Nova Scotia Geomatics Centre, Service Nova Scotia & Municipality Relations and GPS trails (WGS 84)

Saint Mary's University  
2015



### The Woodlands:

Over 140 species of trees, shrubs and other flowering plants have been recorded in the Park. These include Red Spruce (Nova Scotia's provincial tree), Beech, Red Oak, maples (Red, Striped and Mountain), Hobblebush, Witherod and many species of ferns. In September 2003 Hurricane Juan took down a lot of trees along the brooks so the area is less wooded now. Mayflowers, our provincial flower, greet visitors in the early spring. Lichens are plentiful on the trees and rocks and indicate a healthy environment.

Birds often seen and heard include Black-capped Chickadee, nuthatches, finches, woodpeckers (especially near the burned-out area in the SE corner) and warblers in migration.



Lady's Slipper