

Loves Marsh Wildlife Management Area

Last edited: 9/30/22



General Description

Loves Marsh Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is a 73-acre parcel owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The WMA lies in the Town of Castleton at the north end of Lake Bomoseen. It can be accessed from the Johnson Spooner Road, which is south of Float Bridge Road. Parking is located along the town road.

History

Love's Marsh was purchased from Hollis Johnson and Mrs. Allan Spooner Loves Marsh WMA in 1954 by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department using Pittman-Robertson Funds, which are generated from a tax on firearms and ammunition. The property was sought after because it is an important wetland habitat for waterfowl.



Looking North at Loves Marsh. VWFD photo

Habitat Features

The WMA has both a large cattail marsh and open water wetlands. 62 acres of the parcel is open water; the northern section contains the cattail marsh. Cattail marshes are sometimes considered common and uniform, but they are highly productive communities and provide critical habitat to many wildlife species. There are some mixed hardwood forests located around the edge of the marsh. The wetland was created by an impoundment; a dam is located at the southern end of the marsh. Loves Marsh WMA has excellent birding.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Because most of this WMA is a wetland, aquatic mammal species are more common on the parcel than upland species. Species present include beaver, muskrat, otter, and mink. Muskrats use cattails as a food supply and as building material for their small, conical lodges. A colony of muskrats can have a major impact on cattail marshes, forming a mosaic of open water and vegetation that is ideal waterfowl habitat. Small, often overlooked, wetland mammals include long-tailed weasel, star-nosed mole, and water shrew.

Birds Loves Marsh is excellent waterfowl habitat. Nesting ducks include black, wood, and mallard ducks, and hooded mergansers. Also present are wading and water birds such as great blue herons, American bitterns, kingfishers, red-winged blackbirds, marsh wrens, swamp sparrows, and eastern kingbirds. Spotted sandpipers and common snipe might be seen foraging along the shore. Ospreys are seen regularly on Lake Bomoseen. The surrounding woods support forest and edge-dwelling songbirds such as tree, barn, and cliff swallows, blue jays, gray catbirds, cedar waxwings, yellow-rumped warblers, and ovenbirds.

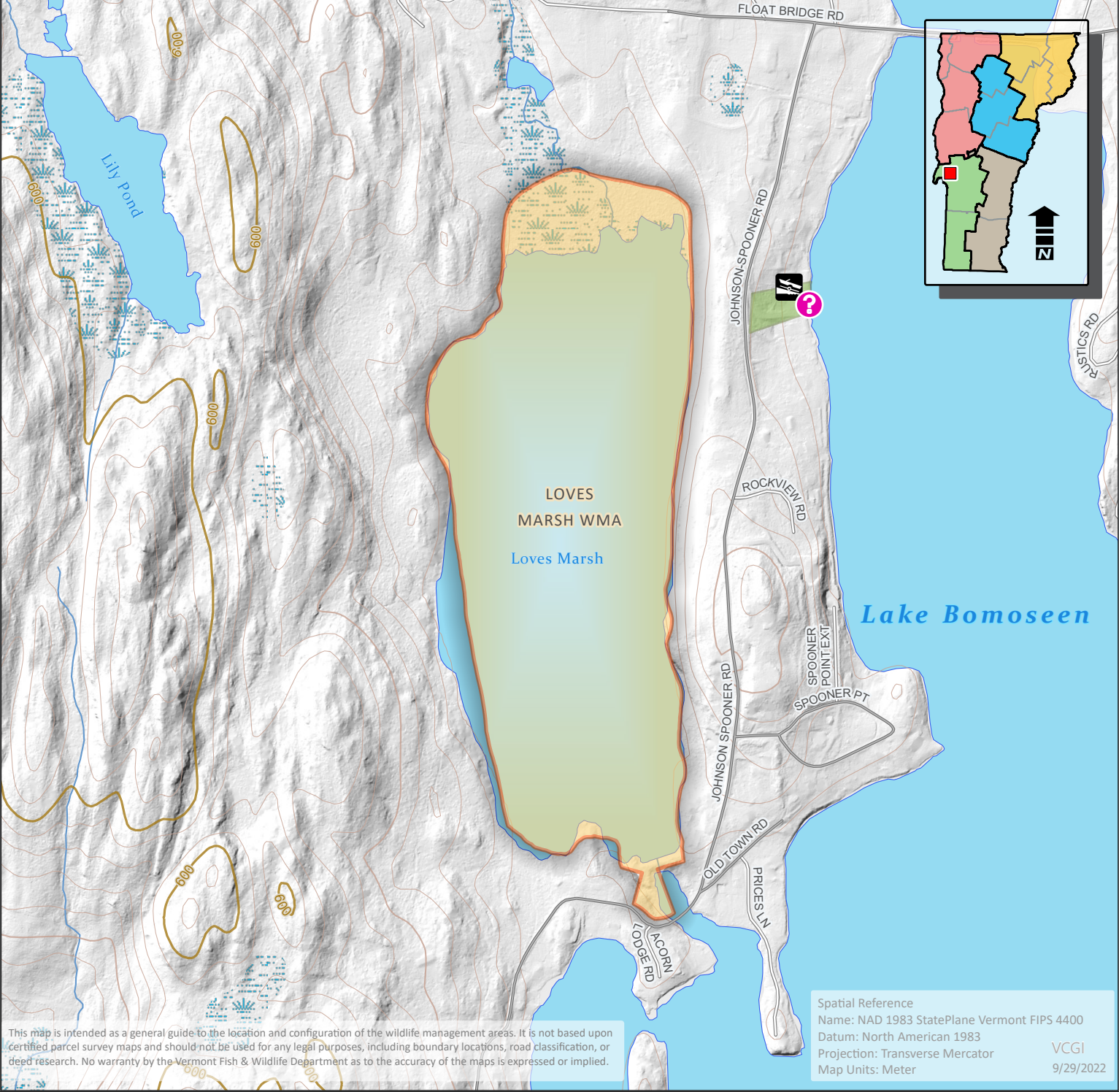
Reptiles and Amphibians In the woods around the marsh and near the marsh's edge, there are Jefferson, spotted, blue-spotted, and eastern red-backed salamanders and eastern newts. From the marsh itself can be heard the calls of bullfrogs, green frogs, spring peepers, and pickerel frogs. Gray treefrogs can be heard from nearby trees and shrubs. Snake species found on this WMA are northern watersnake and gartersnake. Snapping and painted turtles may be seen moving in the water and basking along the shores.

Fish Loves Marsh is a warm water fishery that supports several species of fish including largemouth bass, rock bass, bullhead, northern pike, perch, sunfish, and golden shiners.

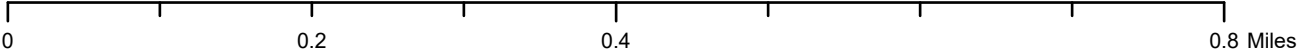


Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Loves Marsh Wildlife Management Area



73°12'W



Loves Marsh WMA

Parking	Shooting Range	Fishing Access	Trails	Refuge (no public access)	Federal Land
Boat Ramp	Wildlife Viewing Area	Visitor Information	Town Boundary	Special hunting/trapping restrictions	State Land
Cartop Access	Campground	Gate	Wildlife Management Area	Streambank Management Area	Town Land
Park Office	Vista	Rail Lines	WMA Hunting Rights Only	Controlled Hunting Area	

Map Number: 84