

#WetlandWalk How-To

To help bring hope and positivity during this health crisis, Wisconsin Wetlands Association is offering special virtual wetland programming to our members, supporters, and the community at large. One of these offerings is Wetland Walks, videos of our staff and supporters safely enjoying wetlands near their homes while maintaining the important social distancing protocols.

Getting outside and enjoying the resource we're still working hard to protect is good for our hearts, souls, and mental health. Our hope is that these videos will offer wetland lovers who need to stay inside a little peek into what's happening in the wetlands around us, and bring the joy of wetlands in spring to people who may not be able to enjoy those sights and sounds in person.

If you do decide to take a break from the house and go on an adventure to a wetland, below are some guidelines and tips for recording your adventure and sharing it with WWA:

- Record with your phone. Video quality on smartphones is incredible these days, and using them is easy—no fancy equipment needed! And filming in landscape (moving your phone on its side) is generally better than filming vertically.
- **Introduce the wetland you are visiting and why.** Take a moment at the top of the trail (and in front of a sign if possible) to introduce the wetland and why you chose it (is it your neighborhood wetland? Is it a Wetland Gem?) This part doesn't have to be long. *Don't forget to introduce yourself too!!*
- **Think about what you want to say or show before you arrive.** This will help you decide when and what to film and what to say. If you can't think of anything to say, share why you love wetlands or this wetland in particular. Share what type of wetland this is, and how people can tell. Share a story.
- **Make sure your thumb isn't in the way!** This goes for both the camera *and* the microphone.
- **Don't be afraid to turn the camera on yourself!** We love wetlands, but we want to hear from you too! When you do take a video of yourself, talk into the lens rather than your image on the screen.
- Is it windy? **Try to block the wind with your body** by putting your back to the wind or by cupping the phone microphone with your hand, with the back of your hand facing the wind. This will help reduce wind noise so that we can hear all that wetland wildlife!
- And finally, do what makes you comfortable! These kinds of videos work best when you **have fun and are relaxed and genuine**. Bring your kids and film them having fun! Dip your hand in the cold water of a spring and exclaim how cold it is. Are you excited to spot a rare or unexpected flora or fauna? Show us and say so! And **speak to the camera like it's your friend**. This will make it easier to talk to nobody, and it will make your final video even better.

After you record your walk, please share it with us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#), or email it to us at Emily.buck@wisconsinwetlands.org. We'd love to see your wetland adventure!