

NATURE RESERVES

Petrel Point Nature Reserve

"A garden of wildflowers" - this phrase recurs again and again in descriptions of Petrel Point. The wonderful sprinklings of pink, mauve, red, blue and yellow that fill the wetland through the seasons can only inspire a passion for nature. Petrel Point Nature Reserve is a spectacular example of Great Lakes Coastal Meadow Marsh, a globally rare habitat. Slight changes in elevation in the fen separate distinct communities of plants, many of them rare.

Petrel Point is home to many unusual wildflowers due to its basic (high pH) groundwater which is the result of dissolved calcium carried upwards from the limestone bedrock. Clear evidence of this is the accumulation of marl, a ghostly white muck that precipitates in shallow pools of standing water. A dense White Cedar Swamp surrounds the meadow marshes.

The meadow marsh supports a diverse community of carnivorous plants, including Horned Bladderworts, Sundews and Pitcher Plants. Orchid lovers will find Showy Lady's Slippers, Rose Pogonia, Grass-pink, Purple-fringed Orchids and Broad-leaved Twayblade scattered throughout.

Due to the delicacy of the plant life at Petrel Point, visitors *must* explore from the walkways provided.

There are a number of other interesting areas nearby, including the Oliphant Fen, Reid Point Conservation Area, Walker Woods Conservation Area, and Sauble Falls Provincial Park. The Federation helped raise funds to purchase the Reid Point and Walker Woods properties.

How to get there

From Hwy. 6 turn west at the town of Mar. Drive along the Red Bay Road to a T-junction, drive north on Huron Road roughly 3 kilometres, then turn left (west) on Petrel Point Road. This road is just north of the Red Bay Lodge and divides the northern and southern halves of the reserve. Please park only on the north side of the road.