

# Biodiversity in Cootes Paradise Marsh



Cootes Paradise Marsh sits at the far western end of Lake Ontario.





# Cootes Paradise

Google Earth image 10/9/2016

Legend

It covers 320 hectares and sits between Hamilton and Burlington, ON.



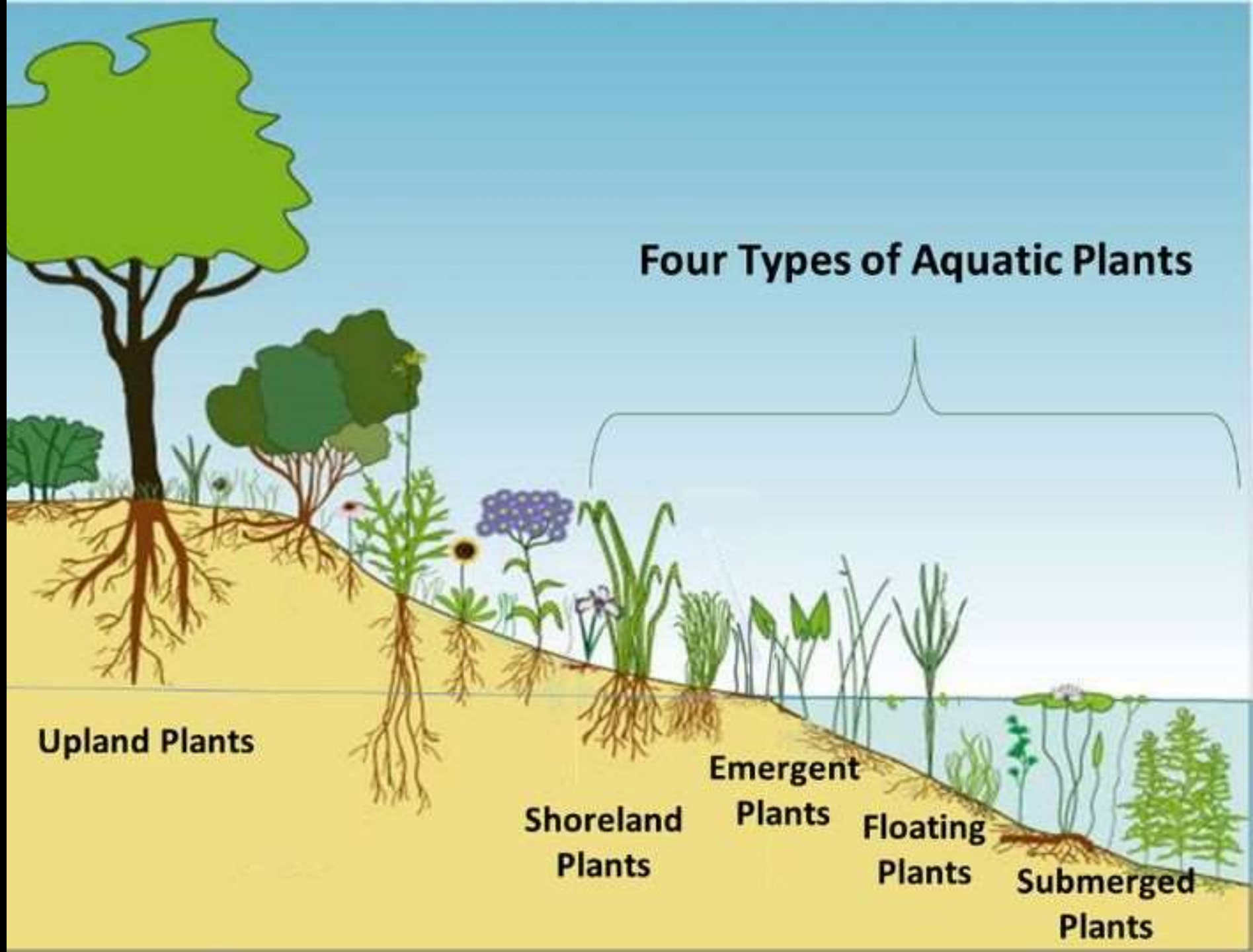


Cootes Paradise is home to 877 different species of plants — one of the highest levels of biodiversity of plants in Canada!



Aquatic plants are very important to a marsh ecosystem.

Because different species have different ways of growing and need different amounts of sunlight to survive, they can live at different water depths.



This diversity of plants provides the following benefits for the animals of the marsh:

- Plants provide fish with shade and places to hide from predators.
- Fish, turtles, insects, ducks, geese, and some mammals feed on aquatic plants.
- Many water plants not only absorb nutrients from the water, they also absorb pollutants and toxins too.
- Emergent and shoreline plants often have very large root structures which hold on to soil that would otherwise erode and wash away.







This swamp milkweed is a shoreline plant — look for an insect that can't live without milkweed in this picture.





This frog is covered in duckweed, a floating plant that is one of the smallest flowering plants.





A muskrat nibbles at some cattail, an emergent plant that it will use for food and shelter.





A red-winged blackbird has made its nest in these cattails.





Waterlilies are floating-leaved plants that provide food, shelter, and shade to marsh animals.





Preserving biodiversity is  
an important part of  
keeping Cootes Paradise  
Marsh healthy and safe