



## mashkiig (wetland)

Northern Minnesota is a very wet place! It is still drying out from the last Ice Age, which gives us many lakes and wetlands. Wetlands come in several types, including bogs, swamps, and marshes, depending on the type of vegetation and amount/duration of water. Wetlands act as filters. They improve water quality, provide a natural reservoir, and help moderate the water table and the flow of rivers and streams. Wetland plants provide erosion control during flood events as their roots hold soil in place. Wetlands provide critical habitat for birds, amphibians, and many rare plants.

### Cultural Importance

Manoomin (wild rice), an important food staple for the Anishinaabe, depends on these wet areas. In addition to the very useful apakweshkway (cattail), traditionally used as fluff for diapers or bedding and weaving material for mats, a surprising number of flowering plants prefer wetlands. Blue Flag Iris (*Iris versicolor*) and Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) are two seen commonly around Grand Portage.



