

Where is your project located?

You have selected FIELD / GRASSLAND.

Within the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve, this habitat type is typically large old fields and meadows, tall grasslands, and hayfields. This habitat is very important to two threatened bird species; the Bobolink and the Eastern Meadowlark. These birds have experienced serious population declines of roughly 70% over the past 40 years. Therefore it is important to protect their habitat and nesting sites. Unfortunately the nesting sites are hard to find since they're located on the ground within tall grass. The best approach is to learn how to identify these species by visiting:

- <http://www.gbbr.ca/our-environment/species-at-risk>

Grasslands and fields located near Georgian Bay are also used by the Eastern Foxsnake as foraging habitat; where they go to hunt mice, voles, and other small animals. In addition, other snakes such as the Massasauga and Eastern Hog-nosed may forage in this type of habitat.

To help protect nesting Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlark, please delay cutting or disturbance in grassed fields until mid-July, which will allow nestlings time to fledge.



Field

Photo credit: Glenda Clayton



Grassland

Photo credit: Glenda Clayton

If you suspect you have a Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, or at-risk snakes in a field/grassland, please contact the Parry Sound MNR Species at Risk Biologist (705-773-4205) before conducting activities such as mowing.

About the Habitat Screening Tool

The Georgian Bay coast is home to more than 1,100 native plant and animal species. Most have stable populations, but some are experiencing significant declines and therefore have protection under the Provincial Endangered Species Act (ESA). The loss of biodiversity has many consequences that we understand, and many that we do not. The loss of species may reduce the environment's resistance to disturbances which can lead to a decrease in available natural resources. Currently, over 40 species are "at risk" in the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve (GBBR) due to a variety of factors including habitat loss and fragmentation, road mortality, competition from invasive species, pollution and over-harvesting. Much of GBBR offers excellent habitat for species at risk, especially reptiles.

It is your responsibility to ensure your building project is in compliance with the ESA. Local Townships are not responsible for verifying if you are compliant under the ESA, and do not have the authority to consider the ESA provisions in their decision to issue a building permit.

This habitat screening tool has been created to help you determine how the ESA may be applicable to your proposed building project. Essentially the screening tool helps you determine the potential for species at risk habitat on, or adjacent to, your proposed building site. This is best completed as early as possible in your planning process. This screening tool has been designed for small scale building projects.

Please note that this screening tool does not replace an ESA permit or absolve the user of any responsibility under the Endangered Species Act. Please contact the Parry Sound MNR Species at Risk Biologist at 705-773-4205 with any questions or clarifications about the ESA.