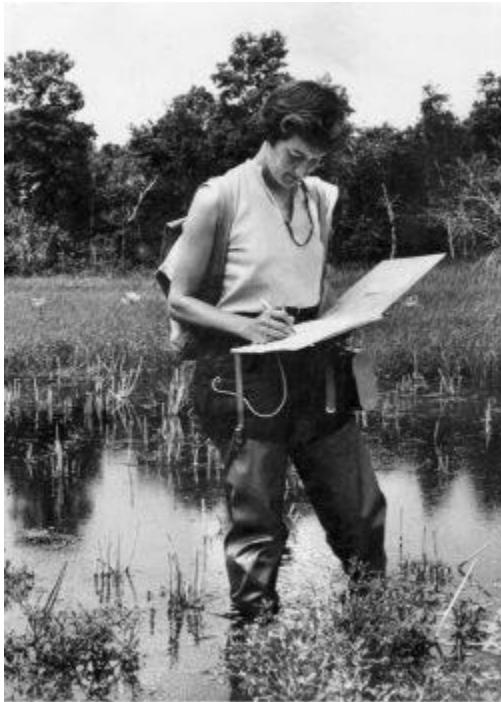


# Remembering eminent ecologist, alumna Jennifer Shay

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**Jennifer Shay (nee Walker)**, professor emerita who founded the renowned Delta Marsh Field Station, ushering in hands-on field work, died May 7 at age 88. Shay [**MSc/59, PhD/66**] taught for almost 30 years in the University of Manitoba's Departments of Botany and Landscape Architecture, and won national recognition for her environmental work and community service.



Jennifer Shay.

Born in Hull, England in 1930, she was fascinated with nature as a child, sitting and listening to bird songs. She earned an undergraduate degree in natural sciences in London before coming to the University of Manitoba in 1957 to study the plants affected by the 1950 Red River Flood.

“Jennifer was a true trailblazer. She was one of the first women in science at the University. She believed passionately and forcefully in the importance of getting students out of doors, and established the Delta Marsh Field Station as a means of doing so,” said Associate Professor Gordon Goldsborough, the station’s final director before it closed in 2011.

Shay ran the Field Station’s research and teaching programs at the famous waterfowl grounds in Delta Marsh for 20 years. During her career, she promoted wilderness protection in Riding Mountain National Park and stronger environmental regulation; she was president of the

Manitoba Naturalist Society and campaigned to preserve tall grass prairie in Manitoba, which led to the creation of the Living Prairie Museum in St. James.

Shay also influenced the government of Manitoba to create ecological reserves on provincial land, eventually donating to the province her own seven-hectare property (shared with husband Tom Shay) that was damaged by the flood of 1997. Today, it is a protected ecological reserve with rare flora, fauna and river-bottom forest.

Shay and her husband retired to Yorkshire, England in 2005, where she died. Shay was an Officer of the Order of Canada and a YWCA Woman of Distinction, and received major awards from the Canadian Nature Federation, Canadian Botanical Association, and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

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