Parker River
National Wildlife Refuge

Represented by the following Members of Congress:
Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D)
Senator John F. Kerry (D)
Rep. John F. Tierney (D-6th)

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Purpose
Parker River National Wildlife Refuge was established as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds.

Public Use Notes
- Surf fishing
- Shellfishing
- Controlled deer hunt
- Wheelchair accessible trail
- Beach use restricted during piping plover nesting season
- Wildlife observation
- Waterfowl hunting

Management Activities
- Provide undisturbed feeding and nesting habitat for federally threatened piping plover
- Control invasive plant species
- Manage wetland, upland, grassland and shrub/thicket habitats for migratory songbirds, shorebirds and waterfowl
- Restore saltmarsh habitat and utilize open marsh water management in partnership with other organizations
- Thacher Island National Wildlife Refuge, managed as a satellite of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, is located in Rockport and consists of 22 acres of rocky grassland, shrubland and ocean shore that serve as nesting habitat for several gull species

S. Maslowski/USFWS

Black duck flying

Highlights
Staff moved into the new refuge headquarters in January 2004; interactive exhibits were completed in January 2006.

The refuge contains approximately 1,600 acres of undeveloped barrier island habitats (sandy beach and dune, shrub/thicket, upland grassland, fresh and brackish water marshes, maritime woodland) and 3,000 acres of associated salt marsh.

The refuge is recognized by National Audubon Society as an Important Birding Area and a regional Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network Site.

The refuge is considered to be among the top 10 birding areas in the nation.

A portion of the Cape Ann Light Station, a national historic landmark, is located on Thacher Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Issues
Invasive plant species

Some management programs and policies are controversial.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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