

Parker River

National Wildlife Refuge Shellfishing Permit Information

Thank you for your interest in shellfishing at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. Please read the following information thoroughly so that we may ensure your shellfishing experience is as safe and enjoyable as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Enjoy your visit!

Permits

To access clam flats from the refuge, you must have on your person a valid Refuge Use Permit for shellfishing. To qualify for and maintain the validity of a refuge permit, you must possess a valid commercial or recreational clamming license from the Towns of Newbury, Rowley, or Ipswich. Refuge permits must be applied for in person and are available year round from refuge headquarters, during normal business hours (Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, federal holidays excluded) and from the refuge entrance gatehouse, when staffed, located on Sunset Drive. Please bring your vehicle registration and town shellfishing license when applying for a refuge permit. **Refuge permits are valid through December 31 of the year of issuance, are not transferable, and are at all times subject to discretionary revocation by the refuge manager.** Permittees must abide by all refuge, town, and state shellfishing regulations. Vehicles must display a valid refuge decal (issued with the refuge permit) on the driver's side, lower corner of the windshield.

User Fees

Refuge shellfishing permits are issued free of charge.

Recreational shellfishing permit holders are subject to the daily refuge entrance fee. Annual Refuge Passes are available.

Commercial shellfishing permit holders are allowed free access for clamming purposes only, three hours before-three hours after low-tides.

Access

Bed closures due to rain or other contamination are announced on the Clam Line. Please call (978) 356-6671 for the daily updates. This information is not available from refuge staff.

Use is limited to the normal hours of refuge operation, sunrise to sunset. The Plum Island portion of the refuge is closed whenever vehicle parking capacity is reached. At these times both recreational and commercial permit holders are allowed access for clamming purposes only, from three hours before to three hours after low tide. In the fall, all clamming access via the Plum Island portion of the refuge is prohibited during the annual refuge deer hunt (it is advisable to wear hunter orange whenever clamming during deer and waterfowl hunting seasons). To reduce conflict with waterfowl hunters, only commercial shellfishing permit holders are allowed access through Nelson Island to the Nelson Island flats Monday - Saturday, generally from early September - early February.

Parking

Access from the refuge to all flats is from designated parking areas on a

first come, first served basis and by foot only. These lots are as follows:

Newbury: Refuge sub headquarters/maintenance area.

Rowley: Nelson Island and Hellcat (Lot 4). Note: Access from the Hellcat Wildlife Observation Area (Lot 4) is permitted only from November 1 - March 3. Clammers must walk due west of the Hellcat observation tower and return via the same route.

Ipswich: Lot 6 and three reserved clamming lots along the gravel road. From Lot 6, clammers must leave the dike at the base of the hill only and return via the same route.

**Parker River
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