

Parker River

National Wildlife Refuge

Recreational Fishing Information

The refuge offers some of the area's finest surf fishing. In season, you may catch several species including striped bass, bluefish, and flounder. A refuge permit is not required to fish in salt water during normal hours of operation (sunrise to sunset). However, any MA resident 16 years or older must have a MA Division of Marine Fisheries recreational saltwater fishing permit. For non-MA residents, a saltwater fishing permit from NH, RI, or CT may be used in lieu of a MA permit. More information can be obtained by contacting the MA Division of Marine Fisheries at (800) 703-1925. On the web: (www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).

After Hours Fishing

Walk-on access for fishing purposes is allowed with a refuge permit. The cost is \$10 in addition to the refuge entrance fee (\$5 drive-in, \$2 walk-in or a federal pass). These permits are issued from July 1 through Oct 31 and can be used when portions of the beach begin to re-open (generally in mid to late July). They expire on Oct 31. Anyone on the refuge beach after hours must be actively fishing at all times. Camping and fires are prohibited.

Where You Can Fish

With the exception of seasonal beach closures, surf casting from the refuge's ocean beach is allowed year-round. Most of the refuge beach is closed starting April 1 due to the piping plover nesting season. During that season

(generally April 1 thru mid-August), fishing is only allowed on the open sections of the refuge beach. As the birds finish their breeding season, portions of the beach are opened and fishing is allowed in these sections. The timing of these openings vary from year to year, so it is best to check with refuge headquarters for updates.

Nelson Island: Fishing is permitted on Sundays year-round and 7 days per week from mid-February to Sept 1. Access is by foot only and limited to within 100 feet of the walking trail. Night fishing is prohibited.

Stage Island: Fishing is permitted year-round by foot access only. Night fishing is prohibited. Access to and from Stage Island is only by way of Sandy Point State Reservation. All persons must remain along the shore, below mean high tide, and within 5 feet of the water's edge. Access to upland areas is prohibited. Access may be temporarily denied if sea ducks are nesting along the shore.

Other Fishing Opportunities

Let's Go Outside is a free public event held every June that includes a surf fishing education station. Check the refuge website for the specific date.

Sandy Point State Reservation and the north end of Plum Island are open year-round for fishing.

Additional Regulations

- ALL fires (including propane) are prohibited.
- Only park in open lots.
- Rods/lines must be kept within 20 feet of the shoreline to avoid conflicts with other beach users.
- All trash, including fishing line and hooks, must be packed out and disposed of properly.

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
6 Plum Island Turnpike
Newburyport, MA 01950
978/465 5753 or 978/465-2807 Fax
Email: parkerriver@fws.gov
www.fws.gov/refuge/parker_river/

Federal Relay Service
For the deaf and hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>

March 2017

