



Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Fishing & Shellfishing Information

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge offers high-quality surf fishing opportunities. In season, you may catch striped bass, bluefish, flounder, and more. Both recreational and commercial shellfishing are allowed year-round. Good luck!

Permits

All recreational anglers and shellfishers must pay the daily entrance fee or use a valid pass. Commercial clammers are allowed free entrance for clamming purposes only three hours on either side of low tide.

All clammers must have a valid commercial or recreational clamming license from the appropriate town.

Additional refuge permits are not required to fish or shellfish during normal hours (sunrise to sunset). All local, state, and federal regulations apply. All anglers 16 years or older must have a valid MA, CT, NH, or RI state saltwater fishing permit. Youth under the age of 16 can fish for free.

Access & Parking

All fishing and shellfishing activity must take place during regular refuge hours with the exception of anglers holding valid night fishing permits. Parking is only allowed in designated refuge lots on a first come, first serve basis.

Fishing Locations

Plum Island: Surf casting is allowed year-round from open areas of the refuge beach.



A local angler teaches a young visitor.

Beginning April 1, most of the beach is closed to protect nesting piping plovers. Sections reopen from early-July through late-August.

Nelson Island: fishing is permitted on Sundays year-round, and 7 days a week from February 16 through Sept 1. Access is by foot only and is restricted to within 100 feet of the trail. No night fishing.

Stage Island: fishing is allowed year-round by foot. No night fishing. Access is available via Stage Island Trail across from Lot 6, or by walking the shoreline from Sandy Point State. Anglers must remain along the shore.

Night Fishing

Night fishing runs from August 15 to October 31. Anglers must arrive at the refuge prior to legal sunset, and anyone on the refuge beach after hours must be actively fishing. Camping, fires, and propane grills are

prohibited. Night fishing permits can be purchased for \$10 from the kiosk at Lot 1, the refuge visitor center or gatehouse when staffed.

Shellfishing Locations

Newbury: Access trail to flats from the sub-headquarters / maintenance area parking lot.

Rowley: Access flats from Nelson Island or Hellcat Trail parking lot. Only commercial clammers are allowed at Nelson's Island during waterfowl hunting season. Access from Hellcat is only permitted November 1 – March 3. Clammers must walk due west of the observation tower and return via the same route.

Ipswich: Access flats from 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 and return via the same route.

Please note: clam bed closures due to contamination are announced on the Clam Line. Please call 978-356-6671.

Additional Regulations

- All fires, including propane grills, are prohibited
- Rods/lines must remain within 20 feet of the water
- Properly dispose of all trash, including fishing line and hooks
- Fishing and shellfishing are not allowed during the annual 2-day shotgun deer hunt on Plum Island
- Wearing blaze orange is highly advised during hunting season

