

Mass Audubon Quests

Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary

Topsfield

Welcome to the Ipswich River Quest,
But please remember you're a guest.
Respect our wildlife, plants and trees
It's their home you are in, so please
walk softly, don't run or shout,
but look and listen for who's about.
Birdsong, beavers, a glimpse of deer -
it's great to explore the habitats here.
We hope this quest gives you a lot of pleasure,
so let's get going to find the treasure!



Ipswich River Quest Stamp

Date _____



Use the clues and map to find the hidden treasure. You'll have fun and learn about some of the habitats that make this sanctuary special.

#1 Cultural Grassland Habitat

Look out at this field and you will see a place that does not have a shrub or a tree, a home for mice and moles and voles, for snakes and toads and woodchuck holes.

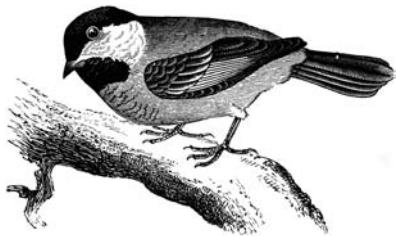
Wildflowers and grasses wave in the breeze, Grasshoppers and bluebirds feed here with ease. This cultural grassland was once pasture and farm, now Mass Audubon keeps it from harm. If yearly this field a mowing does not get it will turn into woodland quite soon you can bet!

Question: *Which word below does NOT describe this habitat?*

Open, Wooded, Mowed, Grassy

Take the first letter of your answer and put it in space 1 on the Answer Scroll.

- Proceed down the path at the right edge of the field - this is the Ipswich River Trail.
- You will come into a shrubby area. Continue to walk until you get to the intersection with the Drumlin Trail - you will see the trail marker.
- Take a left, go about 20 feet; you will see a path leading down to the right.
- Stop at the rocks on the left side of the path.



#2 Forest Habitat

You've reached the forest, so gaze all around from the top of the canopy down to the ground, White pines and hemlocks a hundred feet high, Oak, ash, beech, and maple lift their leaves to the sky. Through shrubs and thickets deer pick their way while up in the branches owls perch and squirrels play. At home are weasels, woodpeckers, treefrogs; mushrooms and fungi recycle dead logs. A century ago this forest was gone, men cut down the trees to plant barley and corn. But Nature is wondrous, and that is a fact, - a hundred years later this forest's grown back!

(Forest Habitat Continued)

Question: *Which word describes what squirrels must do to get up into trees?*

Fly, Burrow, Climb, Swim

Take the second letter in your answer, and enter that letter in spaces 2, 3, and 4 on the Answer Scroll.

- Follow down the path, through the grove of tall maple trees; you will see water.
- You will see a trail marker for the Bunker Meadows Trail.
- Turn left and follow Bunker Meadows Trail to the end.
- Bear right toward the water and canoe landing; you will pass a wooden kiosk on the left.
- Walk beyond the kiosk, up to the wooden platform on the ground, and then turn and face to the right. You will see a watery expanse.

#3 Freshwater Marsh Habitat

An open wetland, a freshwater marsh you will see, a watery place where trees will not be. Instead you'll find grasses, ferns, and cattails too, with a bottom full of muck and soggy boggy goo. It's home to frogs, turtles, ducks, and snakes, Filtering out pollutants, fresh water it makes. Rising and falling with the sun, rain, and snow, into it the Ipswich River occasionally does flow.

Question: *Which kind of plant would NOT grow in this marsh?*

Oak Tree, Marsh Fern, Broad-Leaved Cattail

Take the first letter of your answer, and enter that letter in spaces 5, 6, and 7 on the Answer Scroll.

#4 River Habitat

Now do an about-face. What do you see? A body of water on its way to the sea. The river flows in a one-way motion, gravity pulls it down to the ocean. In the ripples and pools little fish swim; on the surface ducks glide and water bugs skim. There are turtles and snakes, shiners and frogs, herons, dragonflies, grasses, and logs. Along its banks deer come to drink. If you're very lucky you might see a mink! Muskrat, beaver, and otter, they swim here too, - if you want to see them then jump in a canoe!

(River Habitat Continued)

Question: *What wouldn't you find in the river habitat?*

Mink, Groundhog, Beaver, Otter

Take the first letter of the answer you choose, put it in space 8, you don't want to lose!

- Head back the way you came, and look for the trail marker at the intersection of Bunker Meadows and Ipswich River trails.
- Follow the Ipswich River Trail up the hill.
- You will see an arbor up ahead. Stay on the trail to the left of the arbor. You will reach the intersection with the Drumlin Trail.
- You will see two trail markers – take the path on the right for the Ruffed Grouse trail.
- Proceed on the Ruffed Grouse Trail. Watch carefully and pay attention to the signposts!
- Eventually the trail takes you into a grove of tall hemlocks and white pines.
- Take the path which bears to the right side of the pool, and you will see a wooden bench.
- Go to the bench and stop.

#5 Vernal Pool Habitat

Ahead on the trail is a rich habitat, a cool wetland home to woodland amphibians, in fact. A vernal pool, a big hole in the ground - it fills up with water when spring thaw comes around. Since it has no connection to stream or to pond, wood frogs, and salamanders of it are awfully fond. On wet nights in spring from the forest they come to breed in this pool, lay their eggs, then are done. Their young grow, then leave, as the summer wears on, by autumn this pool may dry up and be gone! Now head for the bench and rest for awhile, the sights and sounds are sure to bring a smile.

Question: *Which one of the following creatures does not breed in the vernal pool?*

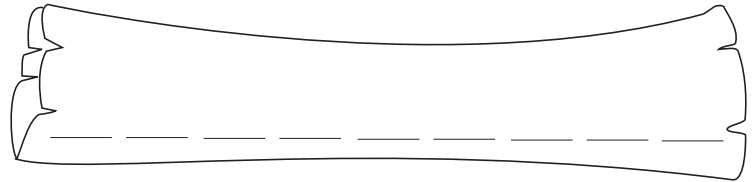
Frogs, Salamanders, Fish

The last letter of the answer is the one that you want, so before you head off to complete your jaunt, place it on the Answer Scroll in space 9. You're almost done! Go to the next line!

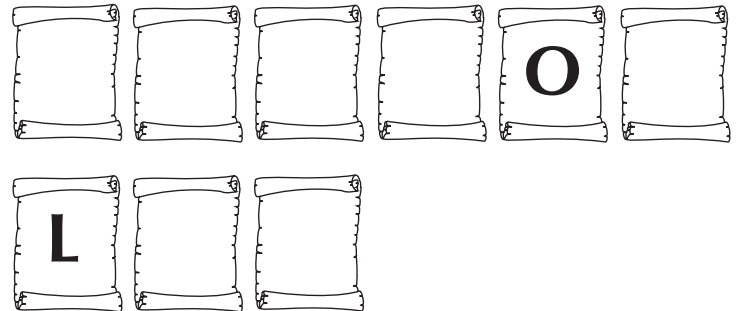
Final Clue

Go to the end of the pool, and up a bit, where a wooden post in the path does sit. The arrow on top is pointing the way to get to the end of your quest today. Find a six-trunked tree and a triangle of rocks, - You're, oh, so close, to the treasure box! So unscramble the letters to figure out the hiding spot, without a doubt. Please remember to be discreet, and keep the secret from those you may meet.

Place the designated letter(s) from each Clue answer in the scroll below.



Now rearrange the letters to form a phrase which tells you the location of the hidden treasure box (2 words). To help you, two letters have been put into place.



Quest End

You've solved the puzzle - congratulations - for finding the way to this secret location! Now stamp your booklet and you are done. We hope you've had a lot of fun and learned a bit about this great place. Please return the box to its hiding space!

Directions Back

Follow the path out to the field ahead. The Ruffed Grouse Trail proceeds along the right edge of the field out to the stone walls that mark Bradstreet Lane.

Take a left at the stone walls and walk up Bradstreet Lane to return to the Sanctuary Office and parking lot.

Ipswich River

Wildlife Sanctuary

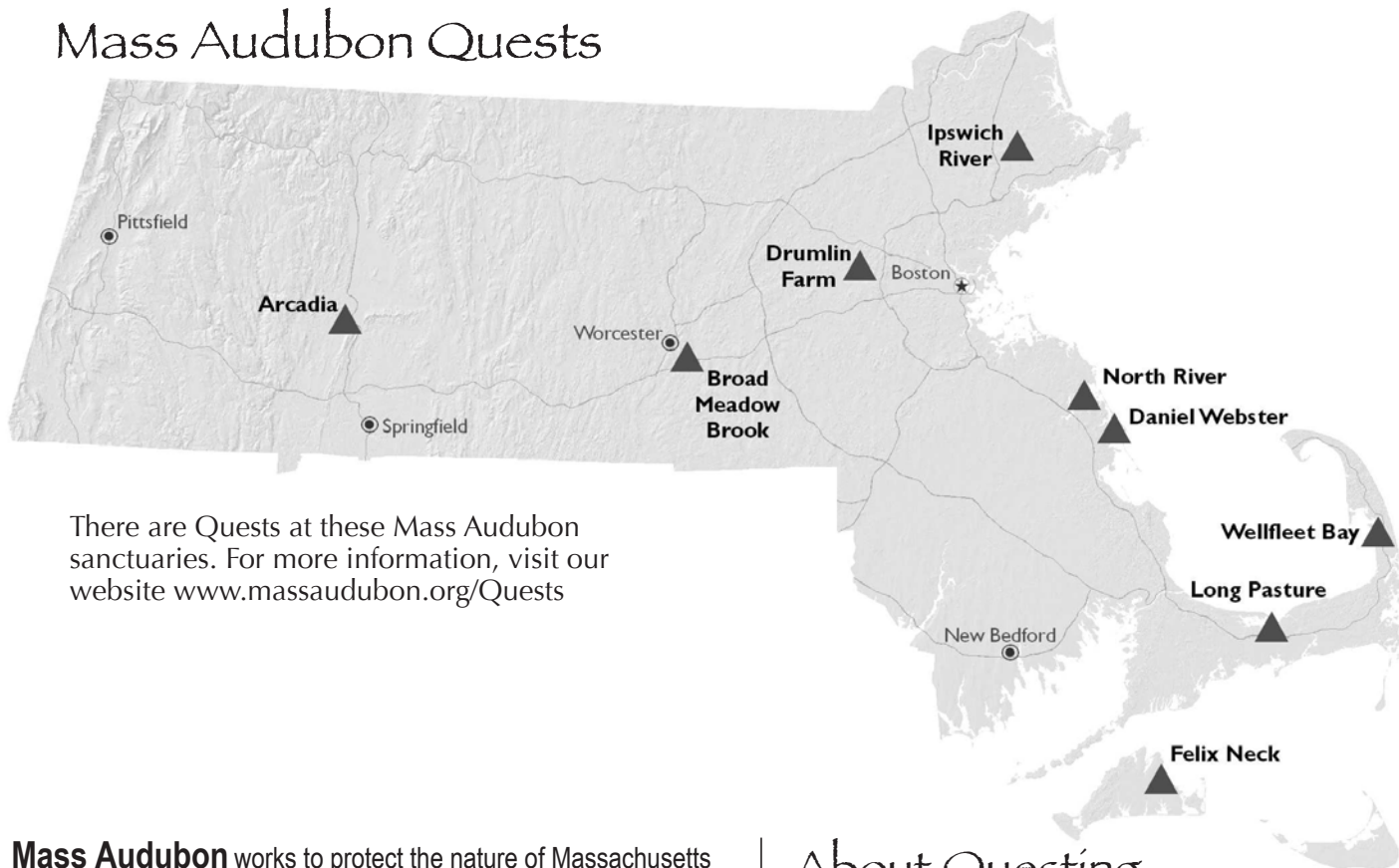
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Visitor Center Hours:

May - October, Tuesday - Friday, 9am-4pm
Weekends and Monday holidays, 9am-5pm
November - April, Tuesday - Friday, 9am-4pm
Weekends and Monday Holidays, 9am-4pm
Trails open Tuesday - Sunday and Monday
holidays, 7am-dusk

Come explore Mass Audubon's largest wildlife sanctuary with twelve miles of interconnecting trails that lead visitors on adventures through forests, meadows, and wetlands. Take advantage of our membership benefits and rent a canoe for a paddle along the Ipswich River or spend a night in the Innermost Cabin or camp-out on Perkins Island. Join us for one or all of our special events including maple sugaring in March, It's a Big Night, a program about vernal pools and salamanders in April, Audubon Nature Festival with live animal presentations in June, Halloween Happenings in October and Big Woods Hike in November. Ipswich River offers natural history programs for children, families, and adults year-round. Children have fun in nature at our summer day camp programs along with vacation programs each February and April. Celebrate your child's birthday with a naturalist-led program and party time. We hope to see you at Ipswich River!

Mass Audubon Quests



There are Quests at these Mass Audubon sanctuaries. For more information, visit our website www.massaudubon.org/Quests

Mass Audubon works to protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife. Together with more than 100,000 members, we care for 33,000 acres of conservation land, provide educational programs for 200,000 children and adults annually, and advocate for sound environmental policies at the local, state, and federal levels. Mass Audubon's mission and actions have expanded since our beginning in 1896 when our founders set out to stop the slaughter of birds for use on women's fashions. Today we are the largest conservation organization in New England. Our statewide network of 48 wildlife sanctuaries welcomes visitors of all ages and serves as the base for our conservation, education, and advocacy work. To support these important efforts, call 800-AUDUBON (283-8266) or visit www.massaudubon.org.

About Questing

Questing was born out of a 150-year old tradition in the region surrounding Dartmoor National Park in southwest England. "Letterboxing," as this tradition is called, is a popular past time, with thousands of boxes hidden in both natural and cultural locations. Vital Communities, a regional non-profit organization based in Vermont, built on this tradition in the United States by developing the Valley Quest program.

Quest is a trade name of the Valley Quest program, and is used with permission. For more information, visit www.valleyquest.org