

Mass Audubon Quests

North River Wildlife Sanctuary

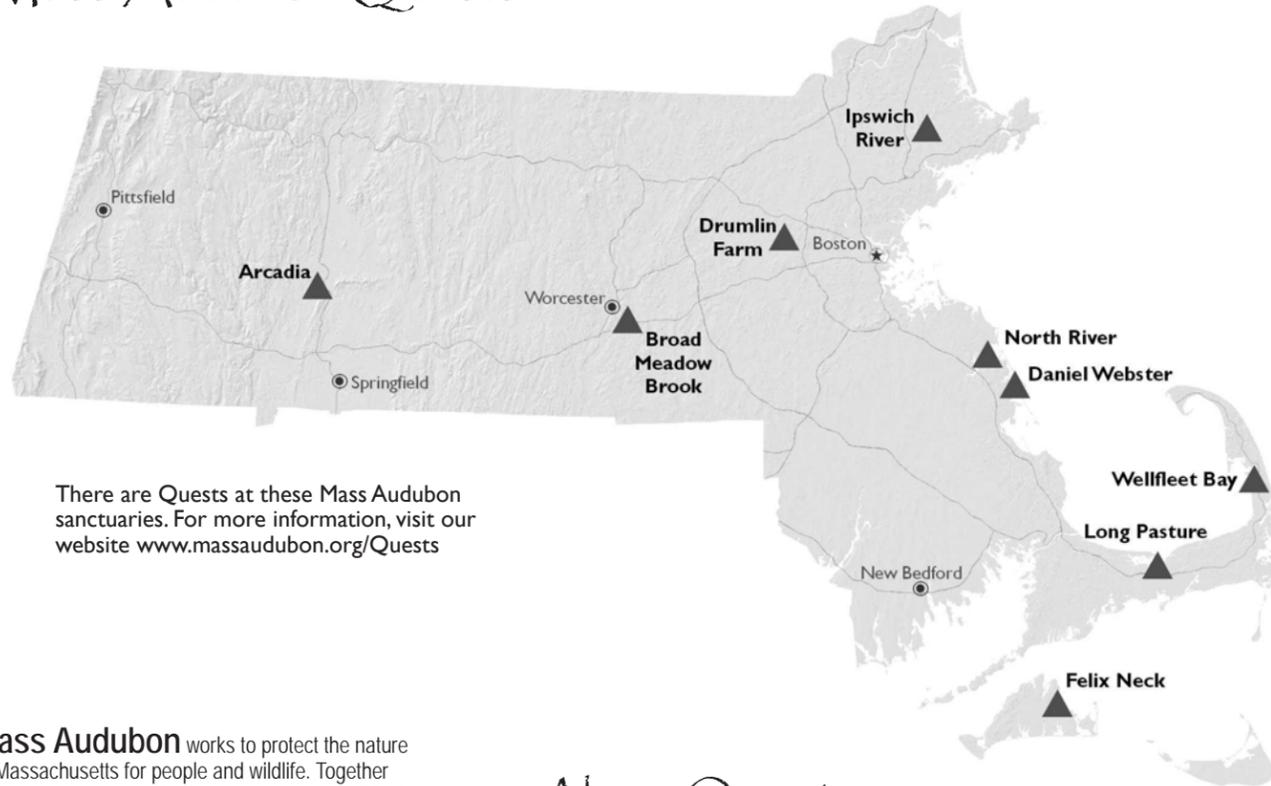
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Nature Center Hours:
Mon-Fri, 8:30 am-5 pm
Sat (April-December), 10 am-3 pm

Trail Hours:
Open every day, dawn to dusk

The loop trail offers a chance to walk through old agricultural fields to a view of the North River where one can spot birds such as osprey, bald eagle, and song sparrow, and in the winter, harbor seal. The River Loop passes through an array of wetland habitats, including wet meadow, red maple swamp, broad-leaved and narrow-leaved cattail marshes, and onto a spartina salt marsh at the edge of the river. It's easy to see the importance of protecting these habitats for future generations of Questers!

Mass Audubon Quests



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

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. In the early 1990s, Vital Communities was concerned about the future of the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont, and was hoping to develop a program that would foster sense of place, strengthen relationships between schools and communities, and build bridges across the generations. The result was Valley Quest, with "Valley" referring to the place and "Quest" referring to a treasure hunt—made by children and adults working together—leading to the community's special places. Over time, the Valley Quest program has grown. More than 2,000 children, adults, families, scouts, students and historical society members have contributed to the creation of the 200+ Quests found in the Valley Quest books; and communities across the country are beginning to replicate Valley Quest's success.

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



North River Quest

Marshfield



Welcome to North River Quest!
Get ready for an expedition.
Snag a map and a pair of binocs
And start a family tradition!

Before you begin,
There are some things to know.
Leave wildlife where you find it,
And please don't run when you go.



Date _____



This Quest is best done in the winter, spring, fall and is appropriate for ages 5-8 with an adult. Level of difficulty: easy.

Starting Point



GO Exit the Nature Center.
Straight ahead you will discover
Some friendly feeders here and
Possibly small birds under cover.

STOP Turn left on the path
Walk over to the field
An array of shiny panels!
Whose power does it yield?

— — — — —
1

GO Take a left past the panels.
Cross the street and you will find
A split in the path, again!
I hope that you don't mind.

STOP Straight ahead there is a bench
Overlooking a splendid scene,
Where red-tailed hawks soar the skies
And another bird is sometimes seen.

In the field there are bird houses
Maybe you see them out yonder.
Inside these birds make a nest of grass
And sing 'cheer, cheerful charmer!'

And cheerful birds, they are indeed!
Perhaps you know whom I describe
With bright blue feathers and rosy chests
They do rather give a good vibe!

— — — — —
2



Photo: Suzanne Reynard
FUN FACT: This is the official state bird of New York.

GO Down the knoll a few paces and to the right
On another loop path you will go,
Home to squirrel, coyote and salamander
And also a special tree you might know.

STOP In a bend in the boardwalk to the left
This special tree leans over the trail.
With pale gray bark and palmate leaves,
That, in the Fall become a red veil.

In the spring, again, it has red flowers
and many helicopters.
For this swamp it is a staple,
You may already have guessed, it's a Red

— — — — —
3

GO Continue down, past the big pine,
You meet the River Path in a T
Go right to the 'North River View'
To the boardwalk and you may see

STOP Skunk Cabbage that heats snow in the spring
And a thorny, tangle of green briar.
Turn right on the boardwalk to the River View
Find reeds sucking nutrients from the mire.

Sometimes in the spring, or the winter
A sea mammal floats most demurely,
It loves to swim in ports and in harbors
Binocs are the best way to view, most surely!

With liquid eyes like a puppy
And a big, spattered gray body
You might find this flippered friend
Has a style that is far from gaudy!

— — — — —
4



FUN FACT: This mammal can stay underwater for up to 28 minutes!

GO This is a nice spot to be,
Indeed, it is tempting to stay.
However, you are halfway there,
So, let us not waste the day!

Time to get back to the River Loop.
Stop at the bench before the hill.
Autumn brings a sweet smell to your nose,
A juicy, purple fruit; a real thrill!

STOP This fruit can be made into jellies
Or turned into juice and to pies.
When cooked, the leaves can be tasty
By now, I'm sure you can surmise:

WILD — — — — —
5

GO Climb the hill, to finish your quest
The fruit of your day is almost peeled
But, just to be sure we don't miss a step,
I'd like to share: this was once a hay field!

You are almost to the end of the trail
See the sumac? High in vitamin C!
These crimson clusters called 'drupes' or 'bobs'
Are used by natives to make tea.

STOP Six paces further, you come to a tree
With many uses, it's a real leader
Good for shelter, lumber, and oils
This conifer is a:

RED ● — — — — —
6

At the end of the path you come to a
coniferous tree with bark that looks like this:



And indeed, it is here you will find
The great purpose of this excursion,
But first, take a pen and fill in the boxes
And learn what is our version!

In nature, you, me, the birds, seals, and trees
Have one thing in common; that's right, we are

— — — — —
6 4 1 1 5 6 T 3 2 !

In a great web-of-life we rely on each other
Which is why, at Mass Audubon, we make sure
it's protected.

Go back through our Quest and find the numbers and fit the letters above them in these blanks. One letter is already given to you

Congratulations! You have completed the North River Wildlife Sanctuary's Quest. Find the stamp here and stamp your booklet then follow the trail back to the Nature Center.