

## **A Review: Parker River National Wildlife Refuge**

**-Grace Perry**



Looking for something to do on an empty and beautiful Sunday afternoon? I suggest taking the trip to visit Parker River, National Wildlife Refuge. Think salt marshes, shell fishing, bird watching, binoculars, photography, kayaking, fresh outdoors, boardwalks, and cycling. Parker River was the ultimate Mother's Day event for my Mother and I.

Parker River is located on Plum Island, Newburyport, Ma. The entire refuge stretches over 6.5 miles of man-made trails, large sand dunes, salt marshes and sandy beach. For five dollars per car, you are given an all-day pass inside the refuge. The park is split up by numbered parking lots. Trails differ depending on which parking lot you choose to park in. A nice volunteer will also hand you a handy map shortly after you purchase your all-day pass, this map includes all of the different trails, restrooms, parking lots, exc.

My mother and I chose to park in lot four first, which included the Hellcat Wildlife Observation Area. This trail was my favorite. A complete boardwalk guided us throughout the trail and brought us directly to an observation tower. My mother and I both climbed up the structure, and both agreed that the views were absolutely gorgeous. You can see for miles! I took over 50 pictures throughout the day, so definitely bring your camera.

We also found that every trail we took was clean and well kept. Not only was each trail filled with wildlife, it was also filled with at least two or three enthusiastic bird watchers that were eager to share interesting facts and information with us. I learned so much!

After walking through a couple different trails, we decided to take a drive to the end of the refuge and sit on the beach. At that point we had run out of water and were starving. There isn't any food service inside the refuge, therefore I recommend packing a picnic to take with you. After you are done sight seeing on the designated trails, go to the areas with beach access. The beaches are gorgeous and perfect for picnics!

I definitely recommend Parker River National Wildlife Refuge to anyone and everyone. Parker River is nature at it's best. The entire refuge captures you in many ways and shows you the beauty of life. I give the park 5 out of 5 stars! Check it out!

For more information visit [www.fws.gov/northeast/parkerriver](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/parkerriver)

© 2011-2012 Headlight  
You may not copy use or  
distribute without  
permission from the  
author of this piece and  
from the Headlight  
newspaper editor.