

Newbury Marsh

Newbury, Massachusetts

Coordinates: N42° 47.840 W070° 49.373

Geocaching.com code: GC3335C

Type of Cache: Earthcache*



Newbury Marsh, part of Great Marsh, is a complex ecosystem comprised of upper and lower marshes, salt pans and barrier beaches.

Great Marsh is the largest saltwater marsh in New England and the Gulf of Maine and one of the most important coastal ecosystems in northeastern United States. It is part of the largest contiguous salt marsh north of Long Island, New York. It extends from southern New Hampshire down the northern coast of Massachusetts and is fed by numerous river

systems including: Merrimack River, Parker River, Ipswich River, Rowley River and Essex Bay.



The Great Marsh is a globally important foraging and resting spot for migrating birds along the Atlantic flyway. The area supports more than 67,000 shorebirds representing 30 species. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts designated Newbury Marsh an Area of Critical Concern (ACEC) because of its quality and uniqueness as well as the significance of the natural and cultural resources.

Efforts are underway to study the feasibility of eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) restoration in Plum Island Sound which partly protects Newbury Marsh. The area currently faces several challenges, including the threat of *Phragmites australis*, an invasive species that spreads rapidly and competes with native plants. This

fragile environment supports local fish and shellfish industry and provides a recreational paradise for kayaking, canoeing, hiking, boating and birding.

Learn more about this area:

www.whsrn.org/site-profile/great-marsh

Thank you to: roadwanderer (cache owner), Prassede Vella (MA Office of Coastal Zone Management)

Passport Question:

- What type of fish has a catch size limit of 28"?
- What letter corresponds with "Eelgrass" in the list of plants

***Please note:** To log this Earthcache, please visit Geocaching.com for additional tasks or questions to be completed.

The Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment's (GOMC) 2012-2017 Action Plan identifies goals for three broad issues that benefit significantly from regional collaboration:

1. Restore and conserve habitat
2. Environmental and human health
3. Sustainable communities

More information on the GOMC, its partners and its activities can be found at www.gulfofmaine.org



Did You Know: The Gulf of Maine Council, through its Habitat Restoration Grant Program, has funded several restoration projects within Great Marsh. In 1993, the **Merrimack River Watershed Council** received an award from the Gulf of Maine Council for its protection of the Merrimack River and its watershed.