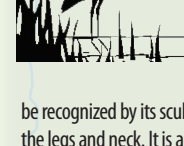


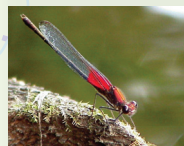
What to look for:



Blue herons. These striking birds are often found in the ponded backwaters and coves along the trail, where they fish for food in the shallows.



Wood Turtles. Cass Meadow hosts this turtle* which is medium-sized (5.5-8 in.) and can be recognized by its sculpted shell and orange coloration on the legs and neck. It is a species "of special concern."



Odonates. Damselflies, including the American Rubyspot*, favor the quicker, gravel-bottomed river upstream of the Daniel Shays highway, whereas the Eastern Amberwing dragonfly (shown on reverse) likes the slower river downstream.

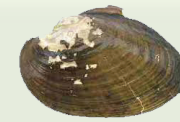


Invasive plants. Along the banks in August you may see the beautiful, but non-native invasive, Purple Loosestrife, as well as Japanese knotweed, which looks like bamboo. In some coves you may see invasive aquatic plants like milfoil* and cabomba. Please report these to MRWC.

... and more

*Shown here.

Mussels. The Millers River is home to five species of mussels, including the Triangle Floater*, which is "of special concern" due to its low abundance in this stretch. The Eastern Elliptio is abundant.



Fish. The river is stocked with trout. Fishermen will find bass and northern pike; some large pike have been caught.



Footprints. Keep an eye out for footprints in the mud along the riverbanks. You may identify beavers, mink, otter*, raccoons or other wildlife.



Paddling Options

The Athol & Orange segment of the Millers River accommodates paddlers of all ages and skill levels, and can be enjoyed from either direction and for varying distances.

Some suggestions (distances/times approximate, depending on how long you linger):

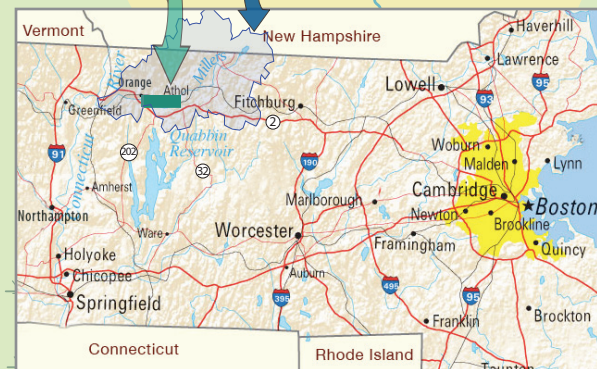
Rich Park, Athol (#2) downstream to Orange Riverfront Park (#22): 6 miles (3-4 hours)

Orange Riverfront Park (#22) upstream to Daniel Shays Highway bridge and return downstream: 6 miles (3-4 hours)

Rich Park (#2) downstream to Mass. Fish & Wildlife protected area (see map icons near #7), return upstream to Rich Park: 4 miles (2-3 hours)

Come and be inspired!

Map location **Millers River Watershed**



Legend

- Town centers
- State land
- River and ponds
- Streams
- Intermittent streams
- Wetlands
- Canoe/kayak access point & parking
- Paddle stops
- State highway
- Major road
- Secondary road
- Railroad tracks
- Town lines
- Ancient lake shore (#10)
- Points of interest – see reverse side of guide

About this River Guide

Rich in both natural and cultural history, as well as tranquil beauty, the inaugural Athol & Orange Segment of the Millers River Blue Trail flows undisturbed between the downtowns of two former mill towns in the North Quabbin Region of rural north central Massachusetts. Along its nearly 6-mile, gently winding length, paddlers seeking recreation, solitude and inspiration pass locations prized by Native Americans, early industrialists, 19th century pleasure-seekers and present-day naturalists. Wildlife is abundant: blue heron, otter, painted turtles and bald eagles can be observed, as can several species of less-common odonates like clubtail dragonflies.

This map guide is designed to acquaint visitors from near and far with some of this river segment's many distinguished but lesser known natural and historical features and recreational opportunities. The Millers River Blue Trail is a community partnership working to strengthen river stewardship and community vitality throughout the North Quabbin Region and the Millers River Watershed.

River Safety & Etiquette

The Millers River flows relatively smoothly between downtown Athol and Orange throughout the paddling season. However, paddlers should always be on the lookout for downed trees, rocks and other obstacles that can pose serious hazards. Wearing a life jacket is recommended—and required October through May.

Highlighted **Paddle Stops** may be used for brief pullouts—these stops are marked by Blue Trail signs. Stay near your boat and "leave no trace" of your visit. Please respect private property and avoid trespassing and littering at all times. Enjoy wildlife quietly and from a safe distance.

Useful Resources

- Athol Bird & Nature Club: www.millersriver.net/abnc for nature programs and events calendar
- North Quabbin Woods: www.northquabbinwoods.org for recreational opportunities
- North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce: www.northquabbinchamber.com for local business listings
- Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust: www.mountgrace.org for regional land protection
- Millers River Trout Unlimited: www.millersriver-tu.org for fishing and habitat protection

Millers River Watershed Council, Inc.

The Millers River Watershed Council, Inc. was founded in 1970 to protect the health of the Millers River and its watershed. MRWC remains a small organization focused on providing volunteer water monitoring, as well as recreational and educational activities for watershed residents. MRWC also serves as an advocate for local concerns and works collaboratively with towns, government agencies and community members to provide effective long-term solutions.

To support the Millers River Blue Trail and other MRWC projects, please contact us at:
100 Main Street, Athol, MA 01331 • 978-248-9491 • council@millersriver.net
Visit our website: www.millerswatershed.org

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