

Watershed Wildlife You May See

ALL PHOTOS BY SHAWN P. CARLY (MICRATON PRODUCTIONS) EXCEPT WHERE NOTED.



GREAT BLUE HERON
(Ardea herodias)
These graceful, blue-gray birds stalk their prey in shallow, calm waters.



MEADOW VOLE
(Microtus pennsylvanicus)
Look for this small, common rodent in grassy fields, woodlands, marshes, and along lakes and rivers.



PAINTED TURTLE
(Chrysemys picta)
These colorful turtles bask in the sun on rocks, logs, or riverbanks.



BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON
(Nycticorax nycticorax)
This medium-sized heron is most active at dusk and at night in wetland areas.



DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS
(Phalacrocorax auritus)
Cormorants are large, dark brown long-necked birds that dive for fish from the water's surface.



GREEN DARNER DRAGONFLY
(Anax junius)
This large, showy dragonfly will often rest near water, and flies in fast straight lines.

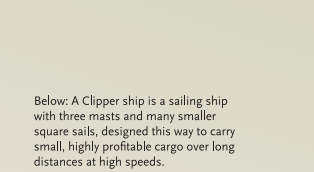


RIVER HERRING
Blueback and Alewife herring are silvery fish that annually return to the Mystic in the spring to spawn or lay their eggs.



COMMON TERN
(Sterna hirundo)
These graceful birds can be seen hovering in the air before plunging into the river to catch their prey — small fish.

WEST MEDFORD



Left: Note Medford Square's iconic St. Joseph's Church in this historic photograph taken from the Winthrop Street Bridge. You can replicate this view on the Condon Band Shell Park trail.



Below: A Clipper ship is a sailing ship with three masts and many smaller square sails, designed this way to carry small, highly profitable cargo over long distances at high speeds.

From Missituk to Mystic: Our River's Transformation

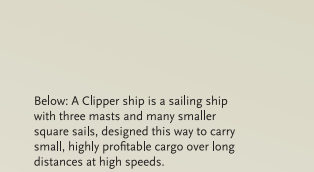
THE MYSTIC RIVER'S name originates from a Native American word "Missituk" meaning "great tidal river." Strong tides provided ideal conditions for industry such as shipbuilding as the depth at high tide could easily float an empty ship of 2,500 tons! The Mystic River's tides once flowed to the base of the lower Mystic Lake in Medford and Arlington before damming in 1909.

During the 19th century, ten shipyards along the Mystic River built more than 500 clipper ships. Shipbuilding flourished for nearly 75 years. In its heyday, a fourth of all U.S. shipbuilding took place in Massachusetts. The industry peaked in the 1840s as schooners and sloops built on the Mystic transported timber and molasses

bound for rum distilleries between Medford and the West Indies. Shipbuilding in Medford waned toward the end of the 1800s as the wooden ship was replaced by steam-powered iron vessels too big for rivers like the Mystic. This was however, not the end of the Mystic's industrial history. By the turn of the 20th century, Chelsea had four miles of waterfront for docking ocean liners, and over 200 separate manufacturing companies along its busy industrial port. Malden was the center for shoes and rubber — notably, in 1908 Converse Shoes had its first rubber shoe factory along the Malden River. Everett and Somerville were densely packed cities with hundreds of manufacturing plants producing steam engines, Boeing jet engines, textile machinery, General Electric products, brick

and construction materials, varnish, stains, and many industrial chemicals. Throughout the 20th century, the Mystic River would continue its legacy of evolution and service, enduring further damming, rerouting, and dredging. Yet the river remains, ever flowing.

WEST SOMERVILLE



Above: This historical bathhouse and swimming beach stood in the same spot as present day Blessing of the Bay Boathouse. Currently no facilities support swimming. Left: Dramatic high and low tides enabled shipbuilding and early industry along the Mystic and Malden Rivers.



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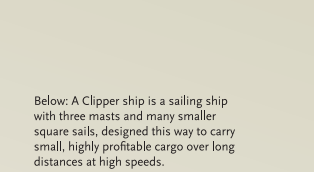
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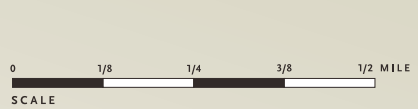


About the Mystic River Watershed

A WATERSHED IS a land area draining to a river or other body of water, in this case, the Mystic River. The Mystic River Watershed covers 76 square miles or roughly 1% of the land area of Massachusetts. Its headwaters begin in Reading, MA and form the Aberjona River, then flow into the Upper Mystic Lake in Winchester, a kettle pond that formed during the retreat of a large ice sheet which disappeared from the region 11 – 12,000 years ago.

From the Lower Mystic Lake, the Mystic River flows through Arlington, Somerville, Medford, Everett, Chelsea, Charlestown, and East Boston before emptying into Boston Harbor. The Mystic River Watershed connects over 500,000 people in 22 communities. www.MysticRiver.org

The Mystic River Watershed Urban Trail Map



KEY TO SYMBOLS

Bus	Public Boat Launch
Public Parking	Lookout Spot
MBTA Orange Line	

