



The Quinsigamond River flows south out of Lake Quinsigamond in Worcester and Shrewsbury, MA, flows through North Grafton and Grafton to South Grafton, making its way to the Blackstone River in Fisherville, and then on to Narragansett Bay. This guide was created for all to enjoy the river and its wildlife in all seasons.

- The Quinsigamond River Stream Team



Natural and Recreation Features of the Quinsigamond River

1. Snow Marsh: This beautiful 59-acre marsh is permanently protected thanks to MassWildlife and Ducks Unlimited, and is accessed from the Ekblaw Landing (see #2 below). It is a rich wildlife habitat that abounds in painted turtles, frogs, great blue heron, kingfisher, redwing blackbirds, and of course the swans, as well as native aquatic flora such as arrow arum, arrowhead, and pickerel weed. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the marsh, and depending on water level, you may be able to paddle north to the confluence of Big Bummer Brook near the back of Washington Mills. Keep going on the Bummer as it curves to the east, but usually the railroad bridge is the stopping point unless water is low. It's easy paddling, and be sure to bring your binoculars and field guides.



2. Ekblaw Landing Access: This public river access is perfect for launching your kayak or canoe for a paddling adventure either upstream to the Snow Marsh, or downstream to Lake Ripple. If you head **upstream** you'll paddle by great stands of native vegetation, through the tunnel under the Mass Turnpike, maybe spot a beaver lodge on the right just after you leave the tunnel, and then slip into the Snow Marsh. If you paddle **downstream**, you'll enjoy a lazy paddle on the river and then experience Lake Ripple from a whole new perspective. It's flat water all around, until you get to the dam, that is. Portage around it or head back to Ekblaw Landing. A fishing rod (and license) would be a great accessory for either of these trips.

3. Grafton Land Trust Trails: Great hikes for landlubbers on the GLT's Gummere Woods and Marsters Preserve. Well-manicured trails lead from Wheeler Road through pine groves and hardwood forests, with frequent views of the Quinsig and Lake Ripple. Be sure to bring a picnic to really savor the shifting shadows and light through the pines in the grove. Trail maps are available at www.graftonland.org.



4. Lake Ripple Access: Boat access to the Lake is either through the town-owned Lake Ripple Conservation Area behind the Municipal Center or from Ekblaw Landing. The Conservation Area's dirt road off of Brigham Hill Road leads to the dam and access area. Omnipresent anglers attest to the lake's excellent year-round fishery - especially good for bass and pickerel. Keep an eye out for turtles, frogs, and birds. Putting in below the dam begins a beautiful paddling adventure through the southern reach of the Quinsig.

5. Southern Reach: Just below the Lake Ripple dam you experience a quiet, serene stretch of the Quinsig - you almost think you're in Maine - that brings you through woodlands, meadow and farmland. The river widens out with the Sunrise Avenue neighborhood on river right. Good fishing here, too. Either take out at the Riverview access (#6) or continue on to Fisherville Pond (#7).



6. Riverview Access: This town-owned access near Riverview Apartments off of Providence Road is near the new playing fields. Put in here and enjoy the fish and wildlife in this broad reach of the river, or continue on down to Fisherville Pond and the confluence with the Blackstone River.

7. Fisherville Pond: It used to be a real pond when the dam gate was operable, and may be yet again. Make note of where the Quinsig meets the Blackstone on river right. Continue on down to the Fisherville dam (not too close, now!) or veer right into the Blackstone and enjoy its majesty. Notice the different feel of the Blackstone - it's a bigger river with more current, higher banks and lots of history. Paddle on back to Riverview to take out.

The Quinsig is Grafton's centerpiece and needs our care and protection. Let's keep it beautiful!

This guide was created by the Quinsigamond River Stream Team, in partnership with the Blackstone River Coalition, the Blackstone River Watershed Association and Mass Audubon, and was funded by the Norcross Foundation.

It was designed by Robin Cutler and Donna Williams. To learn more about the Quinsig and the Campaign for a Fishable/Swimmable Blackstone River by 2015, visit www.zaptheblackstone.org or www.thebrwa.org.

Recreation Guide
to the
Quinsigamond River

