

Wildlife

The diversity and health of watershed populations of mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and birds are dependent on the quality of natural habitats and unbroken interconnections of their food chain relationships.

Black Bear, Fisher Cat, River Otters

In 2012 there was a confirmed Black Bear sighting in the watershed. Scat had previously been found near a reverted bog close to the southwest end of Great Herring Pond. Fisher Cats and River Otters are also occasionally seen. All had long been absent. Red (Pine) Squirrels and Flying Squirrels are present along with more common Gray Squirrels, Racoons, O'pposums, Red Foxes, Gray Foxes, and Coyotes.

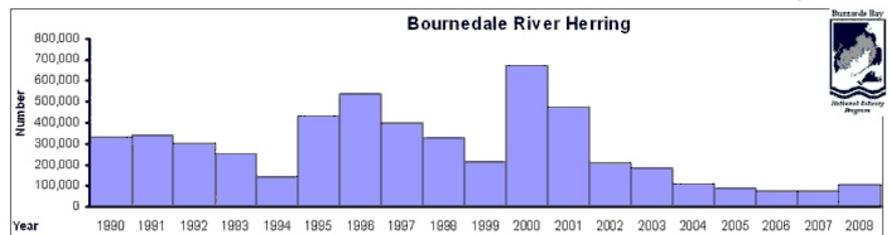


Fisher Cat - Source: <http://www.mpnnow.com/blogs/x255958675/The-Fisher-Cat>

Cat Pine Squirrel

Herring runs

Perhaps our most important fisheries resource is the herring run in two of the watershed's larger lakes, Great and Little Herring Ponds. The state Division of Marine Fisheries tracks



the number of Herring migrating into our watershed each spring with an electronic counter near the canal in Bourne. More than half a million herring passed the counter in 2000, one of the highest counts recorded for this run. More recently the population is in serious decline.

Monument River Fishway – Bournedale This system supports one of the Commonwealth's most productive river herring populations. DMF has monitored this run for over 20 years using electronic and visual counts to estimate population size, which has ranged from 91,000 fish in 1980 to 672,000 in 2000. Because of its size and accessibility, this population is the primary source of mature adult alewives for Marine Fisheries's stocking program."

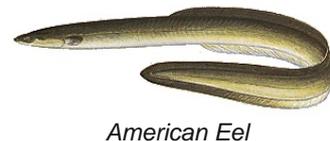
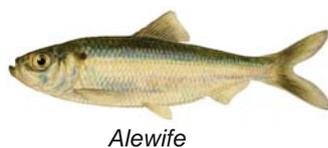
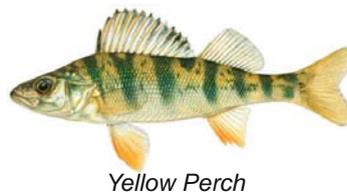
Source: http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dmf/.../river_herring_viewing_guide.pdf

In 2006 a moratorium was placed on all harvest of river herring in Massachusetts state waters. Populations have slowly improved in years since.

Fish species in LHP and GHP

(Blue text indicates a pictured species)

- American eel
- Alewife
- Blueback herring
- Chain pickerel
- Golden shiner
- White sucker
- Brown bullhead
- Pumpkinseed
- Smallmouth bass
- Largemouth bass
- Tessellated darter
- Yellow perch
- White perch



Reptiles and Amphibians

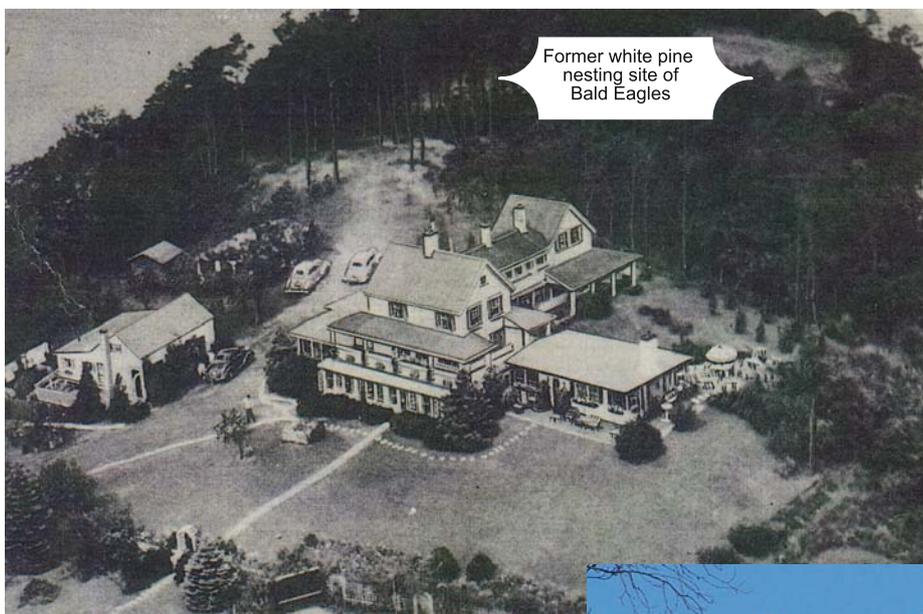
Reptiles in the area are noteworthy for some endangered and threatened species of turtles, and the woodlands are populated with salamanders, frequently found under logs on the ground.



Spotted Salamander
by Lee Pulis

Birds

Bald Eagles have recently returned to the area. One adult and five immatures were counted on Great Herring Pond in the 2012 Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Through the early 1900's there was a nest in tall white pines on the peninsula that is now Eagle Hill Drive. In those days the Eagle Hill Inn (originally a farm established in 1880) was the only residence on the peninsula. There was a known nesting north of the watershed in 2012.



Former white pine nesting site of Bald Eagles

The Eagle Hill Inn

Ospreys also nest in the ACEC in the summers, as do Turkey Vultures, Kingfishers and herons. In winter, the ponds host a diverse array of overwintering ducks and coots.

Species checklists for the area are available from the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences Audubon Christmas Bird Counts, eBird.com, Cornell University's Project Feederwatch, and MA Audubon.



Bald Eagle

Wild Turkeys abound in the forests around the ponds and Mute Swans nest and congregate on Little Herring Pond.



Wild Turkey
photo by Dave Clark



Coot



Wood Duck © Moodville
Dreamstime Stock Photos



<http://www.shawcreekbirdsupply.com/waterfowl.jpg>



Source: <http://www.massaudubon.org/images/commonbirds.gif>



Osprey - Source: <http://maggiesfarm.anotherdotcom.com/>



Mute Swans
photo by Dave Clark