The Ipswich River is one of the largest freshwater ecosystems on the Mass. North Shore. Over the course of 45 meandering miles, the river travels through seven communities on its way from Wilmington to the outlet in the Atlantic. Additionally, the rivers watershed area, which comprises 155 square miles of marshes, forests, and developments, is home to a wide variety of bird species. Some like the Canadian Goose and the Wood Duck, call the watershed home year round, while others, like the Ruby Throated Humingbird and Tree Swallow, only spent the spring and summer here before heading off to more exotic destinations in South America. Additionally, others species like the Piping Plover and Golden Winged Warbler, which are commonly found in the watershed, are on the federally designated list of endangered species. No matter what the season or number though, every bird species on the Ipswich is currently facing the strain of increased development within the watershed. New neighborhoods are cutting down the trees and draining the marshes that these bird species call home. Additionally, wide scale flooding, a direct result of increased paved surfaces, is destroying the mating and nesting habitats that the Ipswich’s bird species rely on. We, as stewards of the river, need to work to counteract these devastating effects.

**Ipswich River Watershed Maps:**

**Did you know that…**

1. **The King Rail specie has become almost non-existent.**
2. **The hummingbird is the smallest bird surrounding the Ipswich River.**
3. **The great blue heron is the largest bird surrounding the Ipswich River.**
4. **Hummingbirds drink almost double their body weight of nectar everyday.**
5. **There is only one known species of bird that is poisonous, the hooded Pitohui. Poison is located in its feathers and skin.**
6. **The Australian Pelican has the longest beak out of all species of birds.**
7. **The most yolks ever found in one egg are nine.**
8. **The only bird that can fly backwards is the hummingbird.**

Diagrams

Structure of Bird

River Route: How the fresh water enters and exits the river.

Food Cycle for Birds

Characteristics of Short, Middle, and Long Distance Migrants

Middle- Distance:

Middle-distance migrants do not leave America but travel to warmer states during the cold seasons. They can still tolerate some weather changes, but more adapted to living in warmer conditions.

Short- Distance:

These birds do not travel very far. They tend to stay local and only travel as far as the next open, non- frozen body of water. They can tolerate much more variation in weather than other birds.

Long- Distance:

These birds travel completely out of North America. They cannot tolerate severe weather changes. They depart for countries as soon as the temperature begins to drop.