

NH QUIET WATER PADDLING

Fifty-five Choices

(Update – August 19, 2011)

For NH AMC Paddlers by Beck

(Send corrections, suggestions, etc. to becanamin@hotmail.com)

2011 updates to date

Group 1 - Through August 7	
Updated	Hubbard Pond (rewrite)
Added	Powwow River
Deleted	Deering Wildlife Sanctuary (no easy access)
Renamed and updated	Deering Preserve - (name change, parking, put-in)
Updated	Kimball Pond (directions, rewrite, new information)

Group 2 - Through August 19	
Updated	Big River (rewrite, dam warning)
Updated	Shellcamp Pond (directions, rewrite, downgrade due to development)
Updated	Brindle Pond (rewrite)
Updated	Manning Lake (directions, rewrite, downgrade due to development)
Updated	Gile Pond (directions, put-in, rewrite)

Ballard Pond Delorme 16-E7 Rough relative size – 100 acres
Route I-93, Exit 4 Derry
Route 102 East through Derry
Take Route ‘Bypass 28’ South at small traffic circle (there is no sign – turn right)
Continue to intersection of ‘Bypass 28’ and Route 28 (R 28 is on right)
Turn left on Island Pond Road (Between clam restaurant and trailer sales)
Go approximately 3.5 miles
Ballard State Forest and Sawyers Mill on Left
Unload by Mill, then park across street or along road

Because of the heavy summer traffic on Route 28, and depending on your need for solitude, fishing, or company, you may want to carefully choose when to do this rewarding, matured, attractive, and undeveloped pond. For solitude and for avoiding vegetation overgrowth, spring and fall would be best. In season, it is a popular fishing spot for those who want that. A trail around the pond and the pleasant mill area make it a comfortable spot for family picnics, but no toilet facilities are available.

There are actually two ponds. Access to the main pond is only through the lower millpond and a short carry across a dam. The millpond is small, narrow, and deeper than the upper pond, relatively free of vegetation other than lily pads. Putting in at the first dam, you will cross that millpond in a few minutes, cruising through the lily pads and passing folks sitting, walking the trail, or fishing. At the higher dam, there is an undeveloped carry path on the right. The informal put in for the second pond brings you to an expanse of vegetation-rich shallow water and its wildlife. The vegetation does fill in during the summer, but the sharp eye can find a channel through much of it, until reaching the marshier far end.

Bearcamp Pond Delorme 40-F4 Rough relative size – 200 acres

Route 25 North from Moultonborough
Through East Sandwich
Left on Bearcamp Pond Road
After a road bend, two adjacent accesses are on the left, perhaps a mile from route 25
First access – public (parking is very limited)
Second access – “Tamworth Town Permit Required - \$50 fine.”

This is an aesthetically attractive, somewhat developed, quiet, mountain-surrounded pond with plenty of natural beauty: A varied heavily wooded shoreline opens to an inlet through a marsh in the northwest part. Since it is locally popular, off-season paddling will provide more privacy and less parking competition. The locals say that they have never had a problem parking in the restricted lot during the off-season, but to be respectful, law-abiding, and worry-free an inquiry to the town offices might be worthwhile.

Big River

DeLorme 36 K-7 (Updated on August 12, 2011)

Route 28 North from Epsom traffic circle or South from Alton
East on Route 126 at Center Barnstead
Pass Post Office
Across from Fire department which is on left
Take driveway into Library parking
Fork left on dirt into recreation area
Go left around skating rink to the put-in
Upstream is to the left (NE), downstream (South - merges into Suncook River) is to the right

Going downstream (right) from the put-in, you can meander for some time, exploring bays and channels. The privacy and beauty of this little, not “big,” slow current river will surprise you. Be aware of landmarks, because there are several ways to misread the return channel and take unwanted side-trips. A pleasant variety of older evergreen and deciduous trees lines the channel. The water surface, banks and bottom display many forms of life. The bird and frog sounds, alternating sunny and shady zones, and stillness provide idyllic peacefulness. As you pass the civilization at Barnstead Parade, the channel widens to become pond-like and traffic noise enters the picture for a while. The trip ends shortly after that, at a dam beneath the Parade Road bridge at the intersection with Hartshorn Road: a boat ramp at that point would allow you to spot a car there or have an alternate starting point. Paddling at a steady rate, without side exploration, will take about two and a half hours for a round trip. **Warning - You need to be alert for the dam: there are no markings, buoys, or signs.**

Turning left to go upstream from the put-in, takes you through a narrower channel whose beauty continually increases. Depending on water depth and your willingness to do mild carries and ignore false endings, it can take you on a ways. In spring, you can skim across the few small logs and shallows that may cause a carry in lower water.

Blackwater River – The Bay

DeLorme 35 I-9

Route 4 southeast from Andover or northwest from Salisbury
Take Bay Road south
Look for unmarked narrow dirt roads on your right (There are two of them)
These short roads lead to the pout-in and parking

The bay is a still-water widening of the Blackwater River that has created a marsh and pond. You may find it a delightful place for a family trip. The access road off Bay Road leads to a wide sandy put-in that can serve as beach or picnic area. The Bay is a wide pond at that point, but if you go in either direction, you find interesting marshes, channels, peninsulas, and a varied shoreline. Going north through the meanders will eventually enable you to tour the Blackwater for a bit, but the river stays close to the highway. Going south provides opportunities for exploration. A few houses may be visible, but is mostly undeveloped.

Brindle Pond DeLorme 36-J7 Rough relative size – 100 acres

(Updated August 2011)

Route 28 (N) from Chichester, or Pittsfield to Center Barnstead, or south from Alton

Pineo Road (E)

(Hard to see. Small road angling off at curve where road narrows.)

Boat launch on left

This is an undiscovered, still wild, treasure. Recent attempts at development did not succeed. One house is in view at the east end, but it is not obtrusive. Shallow with pretty summertime vegetation it is highly varied. Many beaver lodges, a beaver dam at the west end (where route 28 traffic may slightly distract the senses), and wildlife. There are wooded shorelines, areas of swamp vegetation that can be canoe or kayak whacked at some times of year. At the east end, a long marshy channel narrows before ending at a culvert. Grown in during summer, the wide turnaround area at the end is not accessible. You will have to back paddle for a short distance. Low-power motorboats occasionally and lightly use the pond, but it is too stumpy to attract many. Old hunting blinds may offend some folks, but there is no evidence of recent use.

Chocorua Lake DeLorme 41-C8 Rough relative size – 200 acres

Route 16 (N) from Chocorua

There are two obvious put-ins

An enjoyable lake with good scenery, a great view of picturesque Mount Chocorua, a beach and nice paddling, but the sounds from Route 16 will remind you of civilization most of the time you are there – tourist abundance may also. Development is not obvious, except for the road-hugging park.

Clark Pond Delorme 28-K5 Rough relative size - 150 acres **(New - July 1, 2010)**

Route I93 (S) from Manchester

Route 101 (E) from I93

Exit 2 from 101 - Hooksett Road

Hooksett Road (S)

Recommended put-in

Left on Depot Road (the second left, it comes up suddenly on down side of a hill)

Pass large parking area in front of berm on left

Immediately find a dirt access road angling back on left

Drive up that road to a bike bridge and drop your boat - return to park

Put-in is a short steep path on pond side of bike bridge (on right when facing bridge)

Alternate put-in

Left on Depot Road
Enter the large parking area on left (mentioned above)
Park and carry over the berm

Warning - even during high water, the water under the bridge in front of you is debris clogged, but skim-able by a kayak. A canoe is unlikely to cross it.

‘Carry-in’ put-ins

Left on Old Candia Road (very soon after leaving 101)
Small parking area on right, just after a small bridge and before a trail with a bar across it
Note: A lot of Route 101 noise carries to this marsh end of the pond

1. Wheel or carry your boat up the trail about 75 yards

(Pass by a barely noticeable path that goes to the water on the right)

A second small path angles off to the right.

At its end, there is an opportunity for an informal mucky marsh put-in

Hang something high to mark it, or you will not find it on return

Paddle straight across the marsh to open water, perhaps first exploring the dead-end channel just after the small island on the left

2. Much farther along the trail there is a larger put-in, going directly to the pond

Perspective - This is an interesting quiet water experience, but not among the best. It could be of high value to those who would like to combine quiet water paddling with hiking, biking, running, or fishing. When you arrive at the Depot Road parking lot, you may find many cars, bicycles, and people who are carrying fishing equipment, but no evidence of boats. Those who fish, do it from the berm and the banks of the bike trail bridge. Bike trails extend in many directions, used by hikers, bikers, and runners. One biker said that the northern trail from Old Candia Road goes to Tower Hill Pond and its observation tower. Since the trails are formal and maintained, a map will certainly be available from some source. If you use the put-in from the northern end on Old Candia Road, Route 101 traffic noise will surround you. All of the lightly used put-ins are informal ‘places of opportunity,’ far more friendly to kayaks than to canoes.

The Pond - A dammed pond, it has the look and feel of a natural pond. Completely undeveloped, the southern portion has a feeling of isolation and is quiet. It is a truly pleasant place to be, surrounded by varied woodlands. When putting in from the Depot Road end, you will enter open water with pond vegetation along the edges. A channel to the west (left if putting in from the berm) on the berm side of the bike bridge takes you to the dam and overflow. As you travel north, away from the berm and bridge, you will come upon a shallow and vegetation thick bay to the left and a narrowing channel straight ahead. Following that channel, you will enter the lush northern marsh and the not-so-lush Route 101 noise. Following that channel to the right, perhaps needing to briefly push through some vegetation, you will find a small island and another channel that heads south from it. It is inviting and fun to paddle, but it becomes increasingly shallow and filled with tree debris before ending.

Copps Marsh Pond

DeLorme 40-K7

Rough relative size – 200 acres

From Route 25 in Moultonborough, East on Route 109

Or from Route 28 in Wolfeboro, West on Route 109

At intersection of 109 and 109A, east on 109A

.1 mile, look for unmarked dirt road on left

Dam and put-in are at the at end of the short road

I may be letting out a secret, because this seems lightly accessed. In the midst of the Lake Winnepesaukee motorized hubbub, there is an isolated and undeveloped marshy lily pond. Small appearing at first approach, it is much larger when you are on it, perhaps 150 acres or more. Nooks, bays, side-channels and irregularities will keep you there a while. Islands, several types of ducks, heron, redwing blackbirds, mountains, bird songs, a wall-to-wall carpet of lily pads showing their white and yellow flowers, and a variety of movements and buzzings will warm your soul. Though created by damming, the pond has the feeling of a natural and wild isolated northern pond. Few sounds intrude from the outside world, and only occasional hints of buildings on 109A emerge.

- Connecticut Lakes** DeLorme 53 - various sections
- First Connecticut Lake - not for family fun unless you like big, windy, powerboat heavens
Route 3 (N) at The Glen
 - Second Connecticut Lake - not for family fun unless you like big, windy, powerboat heavens
Route 3 (N) at Idlewild
 - Third Connecticut Lake - a pleasant smaller lake – about 300 acres with good backdrop. Not developed.
Route 3 (N) on left near Canadian customs

The first two are huge lakes, if you like that kind of paddling, but not recommended for quiet water aesthetic paddling. The waves can quickly get nasty, even in moderate winds. There is some beautiful shoreline paddling where the big boats don't travel, but paddling it must be balanced against the distances and weather risks. The third is smaller, and a nice paddle if you are in the area, but not worth a special trip for it. However, you might want to combine it with a visit to East Inlet, which is worth the trip (Scott Bog also, but it has not been tested out for you). The Connecticut River in that area is also a nice paddle, but under the frequent spell of traffic noise.

- Danbury Bog WMA** DeLorme 35-E8 Rough relative size, none – Long channel
- Main put-in
 - Route 140 (W) from Bristol or I93 Exit 23
 - Left on Gould Hill Road shortly before Danbury center and Route 4
(This is the next left after Ragged Mountain Road)
 - Dam and put-in are on right at the end of Gould Hill Road
(One way road, Gould Hill Road intersects Ragged Mountain Road at that point).
(It's a hundred yards in from Ragged Mountain Road)
 - Alternate put-in
 - Route 140 (W) from Bristol or I93 Exit 23
 - Left on Ragged Mountain Road
 - Look for guardrails where the road bridges the bog - two miles or so
 - Small put-in and parking area are on left side
(You could leave a second car or a bike there to make it a one-way paddle.)
(Old picnic area (or 'Park') is now overgrown)

This is a classic narrow channeled marshland: quiet and peaceful, a good place to simply be with nature, a perfect place for a long paddle in the sun, enjoying the flowers, ducks, geese, red-winged blackbirds, heron, large turtles, and miscellaneous water birds. Created by damming a stream that passed through bog-land, it remains mostly undeveloped. The few houses you will see add a nice touch and are unobtrusive. The

gently sloping main put-in is at a swimming hole with a knotted swing rope hanging from a tree. Your paddling from there takes you along a narrow pond, with marshy bays. After passing through stands of tall evergreens, it opens to a wide marsh. From there, a sinuous open channel takes you through varieties of vegetation. You will come upon several false ends, but the channel continues further, sometimes doing a double u-turn.

When you see Ragged Mountain Road crossing the marsh ahead of you, the distance will make you feel that the corrugated pipe beneath it is too small to pass through, but there is at least five feet of clearance. As you travel the long channel on the other side, the surrounding vegetation gradually changes, becoming thicker and more enclosing on each side. At one point, wood-duck boxes may seem like cairns on a mountain trail, giving advance notice of where the channel leads. Long after passing Ragged Mountain, the channel will fade away, along with your fantasy of finding a bubbling source stream. Depending on the water level, though, impeding vegetation, and your willingness to push through, you might find the beaver dam and cross it into a small swamp. On the return trip, the distant mountains and nearby hills that were at your back as you paddled southward will be in view.

Dan Hole Ponds

DeLorme 41-18

Rough relative size – 300 acres

From the intersection of Route 28 and Route 16 in Ossipee travel west

Turn left on Old Route 16 (Main Street) toward Center Ossipee (also called Moultonville Road)

In Center Ossipee, pass through town, bearing left in the village's "business district"

Pass the general store and laundry on your right, eventually pass a dam and small pond

After some distance, **turn right** on Valley Road

(Careful - the Blake Hill Road and Valley Road signs may be turned)

At 1.5 miles, Valley Road bears left at a sign pointing to Roland Park.

The right of the Y goes to a campground, which you may opt for visiting or seeing if they have a put-in fee.

After .2 more miles on Valley Road a shallow put-in to Little Dan Hole Pond may tempt you, but **please be respectful and do not use it. It is both private property and a wildlife refuge.**

You have three choices:

1. Paddle Little Dan Hole Pond from the campground, a pleasant short paddle
At the south end broken down dam, a hidden portage is on the left
Carry uphill 100 feet to a dirt road: Go right for 150 feet to Dan Hill Pond
2. Put in on Dan Hole Pond from the campground.
3. About .5 miles from the road Y, tennis courts, and Garland Road are on the left
Opposite them on the right, there is an unmarked access road to Dan Hill Pond.
Parking, however, will accommodate no more than two cars at a time.

Being in a "hole" within the Ossipee Pipe (an eroded volcanic pipe), both Ponds are surrounded by the Ossipee Mountains: Similar to the rounded and rough Green Mountains, they provide a nice aesthetic. Large campgrounds complete with large boats have, though, invaded each pond – which may or may not appeal to your style and tastes. Although I had a peaceful August paddle here, I will probably only return in early spring or late fall, outside of camping season, unless I decide to camp to enjoy it more slowly.

Dan Hole is crystal-clear. In most places, its bottom makes you believe that a master artisan has carefully pieced slabs of granite into a sloping pavement. Where there is no pavement, the bottom is mostly flat and sandy, not mucky. The eastern shoreline is

varied and continually interesting, protected by a nature conservancy. Docks, campsites, and houses line much of the western shore, but all was quiet and friendly while I was there on an August Monday. The southern shoreline, inaccessible to you except by your boat or by camping at the Baptist Campground there, hosts that and a children's camp. Please be wary: Dan Hole is big enough to produce large chops. Its geography draws winds, which varied greatly and came up suddenly even during the two hours of the sunny day that I paddled there. Sail-boaters love it.

Deering Wildlife Sanctuary (Deleted July 13, 2011)

No reasonable access to the water - good hiking area

**Deering Preserve (Previously 'Name Unknown') DeLorme 26-J7 Rough relative size – 50 acres
(Renamed and updated July 13, 2011)**

Hillsborough
Route 149 (S)
Old County Rd. (S)
Falls Rd. (W)

This is shortly after the intersection with Wolf Hill Rd. on the right (if going south)

No formal put-in: the best spot is past the far end of the beaver dam

Parking is ad hoc, perhaps roadside or on the short forestry road to the left

If you visit this little known beaver pond, you will want to send your god (if you have one) a thank-you note. You will be thrilled from the moment you see the nearly century old beaver dam that parallels the road. Although the trip around it takes little more than an hour, it is through islands and marshes, with swallows darting above your head. The variety of surrounding terrain and island vegetation will please your soul. It is just a truly nice place to be. Bring a lunch, because there are plenty of places to get out and enjoy - but, especially here, "pack it out." There is only one house to betray the solitude, perhaps built before the pond and surrounding 200 acres were gifted to the NH Conservancy, and recently became the Deering Preserve. . The house is at the far end.

Dubes Pond Delorme 28-I4 Rough relative size – 100 acres

From I93 south of Manchester (Exit 9N), go North on routes 3 and 28

East on route 27

Pass Casey Drive and two more streets on left

At a left bend in the road, at a parking area on the right, begin to look carefully

The pond access comes up suddenly and is easy to miss

You will see a snowmobile bridge and a snowmobile stop sign on the right

The outflow of the pond passes under that bridge

Across from the bridge, on the left, you will see a low dam and its sluiceway

A short dirt road goes uphill from a parking area on the left

That is the put-in

You can drive up to unload, or easily carry up from the parking area

(If you reach Rows Corner @ Chester Turnpike, you have passed it.)

When you first look at the pond two things will capture your mind, beauty and water skiers (sometimes). If you are put off by the water skiing, you may miss a gem. There is a single defined water skiing channel in the center of the pond. You will soon lose sight of it and will not even hear it after a bit. A marsh to the right will quickly draw you to it. You may already draw a curious beaver out. Enjoy an exploration there and then head north along the shore. You will soon be among islands and heading into the

discovery of marshy channels. Eventually you will see a line of tall trees toward the rear of a marsh. You are then in the northwest corner of the pond. If you are an adventurous explorer, and the water level and vegetation allow it, you will find channels through the marsh to those trees; they are on a low ridge. To your delight, you will see another pond across that barrier ridge. It is an easy carry to the other pond, which has no other entry. Both ponds are aesthetically and wildlife rich. Although almost within Manchester, you will feel as if you are far from civilization.

East Inlet DeLorme 53-C9 Rough relative size – 50 acres plus stream
Route 3 (N) in Connecticut Lakes region
Enter a logging company road on the east side just short of Deer Mountain Campground
Signs will guide you, but take a good map

It is a long way north, just south of Third Connecticut Lake and feeding Second Connecticut Lake. Yet, if you are in the area, this is a wonderful pond and bog with much wildlife. The stream on the north end will take you farther than you might wish to go. This is a wildlife management pond created by human damming, but it has a natural tone. The access road is a little tricky to follow (watch for the sudden turn at an intersection), but it is well maintained. The area is completely undeveloped.

Everett Lake Delorme 27-H12 Rough relative size – 100 acres
From Goffstown, West on Route 114
(Signs will lead you to Clough State Park)
Right onto Parker Station Road
After a mile, right fork
Another 2.5 miles right onto Clough Park Road
Two miles to Park
Option 1 - Enter Park and turn right
Option 2 - Pass Park entrance
Go about two miles
Take Mansion Road, which veers to left
.5 miles Mansion Road veers to right
.5 miles - Go straight on partly maintained road
1.5 miles - Pass gate on left, or enter if open
Continue to bridge and put in there
Option 3 – Just past the usually locked gate in option 2 above
Take unmaintained dirt road (rough) on left
Nice (unintended) parking/picnic area is at end
From the North
Route 13 west from Concord
Route 77 west from Pages Corner
Take Ray Road or Sugar Hill Road south
Turn Left from Sugar Hill for all options above
Or turn right from Ray Road for Northern options, left to enter for Park

Everett Lake feels more like a large pond than a lake. For a facility constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers, it is amazingly natural and not sterile. U shaped, the northern tips of the u are the most scenic and natural. If starting at the Eastern U tip, from the unmaintained road, there are two bays to play in before passing a more formal put-in to the south, a looming dam, and a truly nice beach with all facilities. Completing the U, you will skirt a perimeter that takes about an hour and a quarter at a moderate

pace. Lilly pads, shoreline flowers, a private natural beach, isolated picnic tables and pleasant scenery will pass by. Nearing what appears to be the western tip of the U, you may assume as I did that the higher power ordained nothing but white lilies for this water. A patch of yellow lilies, though, may draw you toward it, as if a lure. Rounding a bend behind the yellow patch, a sea of vermillion flowers draws you into a bay with a pronounced channel. The channel takes you a short way up the Piscataquog River, through accents of pinker flowers.

After returning to your car, you may want to take advantage of an additional paddling option at the southern end of Ray Road. Park by a small dam, then head up a stream to a small pond that has no other access. Generally a pleasant spot, this lake seems a wonderful family location for a day of sun and paddling. (If you really want to make it a full day, Stumpfield Marsh (about 100 acres) is a nice small paddle a sort way north of Route 77 via Sugar hill Road)

Exeter River DeLorme 23A&B-14
Routes 27, 101, 108 or other to Exeter
South on 108
Pass Phillips-Exeter Academy
Left on Bell Avenue
Put-in is in Gilman Park
Alternate put-in if you want to camp
Exeter Elms Campground further south on 108

This is a long, winding, slow moving stream. With no development intruding, other than the unobtrusive campground several miles upriver (south), the bustle of Exeter quickly fades away. Tall trees, hanging moss, a great variety of plant life in the water and on the shore make it a wonderful treat. Depending on the season, you may come upon ducks, heron, beaver, and many song-birds. The many side channels, backwaters and marshes could fill a big part of a paddling day.

Garland Pond DeLorme 40-H3 Rough relative size – 100 acres
(Note: There is another Garland Pond, small in a WMA)
From Moultonborough, at intersection of Routes 109 and 25
South on Route 25, about a half-mile
Look for restaurant on left (east side) and Garland Pond Road on right (west side)
You may begin to back out of the road, thinking it is a driveway
Keep going, passing the house on its right
Caution – it would be wise to walk the first fifty yards before driving
It appears overgrown, but is not – does have a slightly high center
Parking area is in a ways, on a good road
You may want to carry or wheel from there
Checkout the road to the small put-in. It might be OK for you.

This is the second of two huge secrets hidden within the bustling Winnepesaukee/Squam area. Like Copps Pond, it is completely isolated, surrounded by conservation land. Partly marshy and mainly open, this is a long pond surrounded by appealing hillsides with varied vegetation. You will feel and be alone here, rapidly losing the Route 25 traffic noise as you move north. At the northern extremity you can follow a sinuous smooth river for perhaps a mile. You cannot go the distance here, though,

without enjoying the skims or carries over beaver dams as you soak up the true wilderness. You will probably want to stop at or after the fifth dam. With a smaller boat, you can go further, but by dam number eight – if you can find it - you may decide that further effort is not worthwhile.

George Pond Delorme 34-C2 Rough relative size – 100 acres
From Enfield Center – South on Route 4A
At Fish Market look for intersection of Bog Road on right
First put-in is at Bog Road and Route 4A, just past bridge
Second put-in is .1 miles up Bog Road on left

A small pond that is a treat you could only discover by “accident.” This is an undeveloped and unspoiled marshy pond with a variety of animal and plant pond life. Using the marshy first put-in, I disturbed about fifteen ducks. The pond that the marsh leads to yielded a kingfisher, redwings, pond-skimming birds of some sort, turtles, and plenty of jumping fish. The serene wildness was a joy. At first seeming small, it increased in size and led to a clear feeder channel that extended to the culvert crossing under bog road. A compulsive paddler could do the perimeter in an hour, or you could piddle-around for two hours if you like. You might choose to combine this with a trip to McDaniel’s Marsh at the far end of Bog Road. On Bog Road, you will also see a Forestry sign for a walk-in to Coles Pond – distance unknown.

Gile Pond Delorme 34-K6 Rough relative size – 50 acres
(Updated August 19, 2011)

From Interstate 89 Exit 10 at North Sutton
Turn south from ramp onto Gile Pond Road - toward Sutton
At .4 mile turn right on Gile Road
Go .3 mile to put-in ramp on left
(Just a little further is a pine grove that could be good for picnics, and provides added parking.)
Alternate, but less desirable, put-in
Pass Gile Road to parking area on right on Gile pond Rd. at .6 mile from I-89

With the exception of one unobtrusive house across from the put-in, this is a completely undeveloped scenic pond with a backdrop of layered low mountains. Shallow water vegetation surrounds the open water of the middle. A mix of hardwood and softwood trees of varying types, heights, and hues of green provides a delicious aesthetic. It is not a large pond. You could probably paddle the circumference of the open water in well less than an hour, but you would miss the best part. Paddling through the lilies and pickerelweed to stay close to the shoreline vegetation will bring many surprises. At the end furthest from Gile Pond Road, a long shrub-covered berm-like mound separates the pond from a marsh behind it that displays a large expanse of bur reeds. That mound and the entire shoreline are home to a variety of shrubs, including flowering Swamp-loosestrife and Meadow Sweet. Although the pickerelweed and lilies dominate the waters, rushes, cattails, and grasses of several types show up in patches. .

Gilman Pond DeLorme 37-E8 Rough relative size – 50 acres
Alton

From Alton, Route 28 North
Pass large Catholic Church on left
Turn right on Gilman's Corners Road
Watch for a long straight driveway on right
 Recreation area sign on left of driveway near the road.
Put-in is at end of drive.
Back your car out to the parking area after unloading

Except for a large house set back from the pond at the far end, Gilman's Pond is undeveloped. Take note of the huge beaver dam near the put-in and continue down the pond. You will begin on a clear pond with a pleasant view, water lilies, a partially rocky shore, downed trees, and water shrubs. After the first island that you pass, the pond becomes increasingly shallow and marshy. Depending on the time of year, your playing in the channels may lead you into temptation from a far side return channel. It will be fun to explore, but a dead end.

Grafton Pond DeLorme 34-C3 Rough relative size – 250 acres
From Grafton Center take Route 4A (S), south of Fish Market
Grafton Pond Road angles to the east (Hard to spot – pay attention)

Among the best places in New Hampshire, Grafton Pond is an undeveloped delight. Large enough to provide a lot of variety, natural features separate it into small zones, which are calm and peaceful, many feeling enclosed. The scenery is great and includes islands, rocky shores, varied tree types, much wildlife, huge boulders in the water (some of which you can sun on) and peninsula to explore. It is protected, as part of the Grafton Pond Reservation. Bring a picnic and enjoy the picnic area at the boat launch, (sometimes a bit crowded), or sit on the dam and enjoy the sun. Undeveloped and not overused.

Great Bay DeLorme 30-11 Rough relative size – 4000 acres

1. From Newmarket, Route 108 south
 Just before Lamprey River
 Left (east) on Bay Road, 4 miles to Adams Point
2. From Newmarket, Route 108 south
 Cross Squamscott River Bridge
 Put-in is just past bridge –access road not maintained well
3. Put-ins also at Sandy Point and Weeks Point
 Route 108 south to Route 33
 Route 33 northeast, check map for local roads north, such as Depot Road
4. In Newmarket, on the Lamprey River, near the bridge

This is a magnificent tidal estuary. Huge, it offers much for all levels of paddling and boating. For the take-it-light folks, put in at the Adams Point end and head up the tidal part of the Lamprey River to Newmarket. (Adams Points may or may not be the Research Center where we put in. If not, the Research Center is another option.) It can make for a nice day if you have lunch there and then return with the tide. You may want to do it the other way, starting at Newmarket and returning or leaving a car or bicycle at Adams Point. Whatever way you do it, be aware of the tide and plan for it. You will want to be riding with it, not against it. Also, be prepared to cross open bay water. It is often smooth, but gods are sometimes pranksters.

Great Hill Pond DeLorme 40-C5 Rough relative size – 150 acres
From North Sandwich – Route 113A (N)
6.5 Miles
Turn right on Pease Hill Road
Left on Great Hill Road
At .4 miles look for dirt road on left – just before a small bridge
Signs on each side “No Trespassing with Bear Dogs” “No ATV’s”
Pond is 600 feet in
Caution – after 200 feet the road may be too bumpy for low vehicles
You can park and carry or wheel-in for 400 feet

This is a gem of natural beauty overlooked by the Wonalancet and Sandwich Mountains. A greatly varied, sometimes marshy, shoreline outlines low tiers of vegetation and an open view of forests and mountains. A central island and a peninsula provide a nice aesthetic. The peaceful stillness may be the best part.

Please be aware that the land and water are private property, but open to public use and give this gift the respect it deserves.

Hoit Road Marsh DeLorme 28-B1 Rough relative size – 200 acres
From Concord, Loudon Road North (Route 106)
106 North to Loudon
At Route 129, left into Loudon
Pass South Village Road on left
Pass Fox Pond Road on left
Pass North Village Road on right
Left on School Street
At about 4 miles School Street Becomes Hoit Road at Concord city line.
Put-in is on the right a short distance beyond the city line

Conveniently located within the city limits of Concord, this is a pleasant, unspectacular, place for quiet paddling. Yellow and white lilies, blue heron, songbirds, and typical marsh vegetation adorn this seemingly natural (though dammed) location. The popularity means you will have some company during fishing season and summertime. The traffic on Hoit Road takes away from the serenity at first, but the sounds disappear quickly. The pond at the put-in gives way to four shallow, heavily vegetated bays that are fun to explore. The inlet feeds the second bay on the right, providing additional opportunity for the adventurous. At first approach, the channel seems blocked by a small downed tree, but it yields easily to a boat bottom. With a little effort, a kayak can cross the six or so uncompleted beaver dams or downed sapling parts, built up by debris accumulating behind them. Canoes will have more difficulty. The fourth bay from the right is the farthest out and largest and has the thickest lily pad cover, making you work a bit for your pleasure. It is an easy to get to and nice place to paddle.

Hubbard Pond DeLorme 20-H5 Rough relative size – 200 acres
(Updated in July of 2011)
From Peterborough going south
Route 202 to 119
Left on 119 (go approx 2 miles)
Left on Cathedral Rd.
After nearly a mile, road goes downhill and curves to left
Dirt access road is on right (Y-shaped entrance)
Hubbard Pond is .4 miles in

Road is rough, sometimes wet in spots, but passable for most vehicles
Annett Wayside Park is 500 yards further along Cathedral Road on right

Although dammed, this pond has a natural and appealing feel, and is surrounded by the Annett State Park forest, with no development other than the Rotary International Camp on the south shore. It is a wonderful and relaxing place to be, for paddling or fishing. The intimidating access road and small parking area limit the number of boats on the water. With much variety, a large surface area, islands to land on, bays and marshes, you can spend hours exploring the variations. The marshy areas support varied wildlife and vegetation: some provide shallows for skimming through the grasses and flora (yes, and becoming grounded easily). There is deep open water if you like it, but you can avoid it by sticking to the marshy areas, peninsulas, and islands (with landings) along the edges. If you face westward from the southeast finger, you will find a wonderful view of Mount Monadnock. Caution - You should make sure to fix landmarks in your mind as you leave the channel that takes you from the parking area. As you return, a channel to the right of the channel you entered through will lure you with its peeks at open water ahead: it is a worthwhile dead-end. Turning left to explore it on your way in will reward you, and it will fix the return route in your mind.

Kimball Pond & Conservancy

DeLorme 27-114 Rough relative size – 50 acres
(Updated July 13, 2011)

From Dunbarton Center
Route 13 (S)
Black Brook Rd. (E)
Snow Rd. (N)

From Bow Center
Wood Hill Rd. (S)
Morse Rd. (W)
County Rd. (S)
Kimball Pond Rd. (W)

(Camping available by permit from Dunbarton Town Hall)

This is a great undeveloped, midsize, dammed pond with greatly varied features. You can leisurely circle the main pond in an hour and a half. There are bays to explore, though, and two beaver dams at the far end, with the Great Marsh ponds beyond them. Portaging over the dam that is further to the west provides a wealth of paddling opportunity. The bays that lead to those dams fill with vegetation during the summer, but on July 13 both dams were still accessible. You can find the one further to the west (or left of the other) by looking for a notch in the treeline. Across the next bay to the right of that dam, a tree with white and orange signs on it is a benchmark for the more eastern dam. As you approach the signs, a beaver lodge will appear on your right. If you then look to your left, a second notch in the treeline will show you where the dam is. Even so, since vegetation densely fills the marshes behind them, paddling the other side will be better in spring or fall.

Knights Pond (a Conservation Area)
Recommended put-in:

Delorme 37-D9

Rough relative size – 50 acres

From Alton
Route 28 (N) (or 28 south from Wolfeboro)
Right on unsigned road - Just after the 40 MPH sign as you enter Wolfeboro (Left if leaving Wolfeboro)
Road name not on Delorme map
The turn is at sign for 'Winnepesaukee Estates' - the sign is near the ground on right

Right on Knights Pond Road
Parking lot is at the end, and the trail is straight across the lot.

On the trail, you will quickly reach a T - turn left (Careful - T may be hard to see on return)

Main put-in: It is a smoother and wider path, and a pleasant walk, but is more than twice as long and is hilly.

From Alton
Route 28 (N) 7.5 miles. (or 28 south from Wolfeboro)
Right on Rines Road (left if from Wolfeboro)
After one mile, bear left at fork
After .5 mile, brown gate at left, turn onto access road
Ends at parking area - trail is on left, .4 miles to pond

Small but beautiful, the pond is surrounded by hiking trails, and there are at least two places on the pond where it would be easy to land for sitting, hiking, or a picnic. If you put in at the place recommended, you can easily land at the alternate put-in and walk uphill the 700 yards or so to the gate, where trail maps and information are available. Hemlocks, tall pines, birch, low shrubs, and rocks striped by the changes in water level surround this undisturbed, undeveloped, natural beaver pond. The pond itself is a treat, with its clear water that exposes the fish, clouds of early summer fish eggs, tree drops, and aqueous vegetation along the shallow edges. A small nearby mountain enhances the view. A channel to the right at the opposite end becomes increasingly shallow as you follow it, is vegetation filled as the summer progresses, and is littered with tree parts, but it allows you to come upon a classical and amazing beaver dam that stands high above the water. There did not seem to be great paddling opportunity that would reward a portage across the dam to paddle the lower water there, but that might vary with time of year and rainfall.

Long Pond – Benton DeLorme 42-I7 Rough relative size – 100 acres
Off route 116 between Benton and Boutin Corner
South on Long Pond Road – narrow dirt road (Previously North South Rd.)
or
From Glencliff on Route 25
North on Long Pond Road (Previously North South Rd.)

Rocks, spruce, birch, water flowers, loons, heron, ducks, beaver, islands, marshes, channels (dead end mostly), and moose (locals say) if you play your cards right. That is the flavor, but nothing can describe the peacefulness and quiet, when the loons are still, or tranquility of this pond. Seemingly undiscovered, it maintains its natural beauty with elegance that you may find that is yours to enjoy alone. There are waterside picnic areas, restrooms, and viewing platforms, just right for some folding chairs at the launch site. The paddle around is about an hour, if you are an obsessive paddler, or longer if you want to absorb the quietness, or explore the nooks, islands and bays. I did both.

Manning Lake DeLorme 36-F5 Rough relative size – 200 acres
(Updated August 2011)
Route 140 from Alton or Belmont
To Gilmanton
From the Gilmanton Iron Works Store go .3 miles west toward Belmont
Right on Crystal Lake Rd. (N) (or left if coming from Belmont)
(It, perhaps unnoticeably, becomes Guinea Ridge Rd.)

4.8 miles of paved road
1 mile of dirt road
Right on Manning Lake Road just after campground
.4 miles to boat ramp and parking area on right

With the installation of a motorboat ramp, continual development along half of the south shore, and the replacement of the loon habitat with the boat and swimming docks of a youth camp built in the conservation area, the pristine wilderness feeling is gone. Yet, it is still a good place to paddle, though not always a serene one. The rocky shore with its stripes reflecting the varying water level, clear water, and mountain backdrop provide a comfortable aesthetic. Vegetation along the north side (the conservation area) includes a variety of grasses, what may be hedge hyssop in small patches, lobelia, pickerelweed, rushes, sedges, lilies, rushes, some water crowfoot, and some bottom growth that may be algae. The forests to the north include several evergreen varieties and mixed hardwoods. Beaver activity is still evident near the far end, but during recent visits, no loons or other previous wildlife appeared. If paddling at a moderate speed without pausing to absorb, the round trip will take about 1.5 hours.

Marcus Wildlife Sanctuary DeLorme 40-14 Rough relative size – 25 acres
General - From Route 109 in or Route 25 in Moultonborough follow signs to the Loon Center
 You will be next door to the paddling attractions
From Route 25 in Moultonborough take Blake Road southeast (right if coming from the south)
Look for Access Road on the right
 You will immediately see Lee's Pond (The name is displaced on DeLorme maps)
Continuing along Blake Road takes you to the Loon Center on a perpendicular road
If you turn right on that perpendicular road, it will take you to a Lake Winnepesaukee bay

Within the sanctuary, Lee's Pond is a protected environment within the otherwise hectic Lake Winnepesaukee region. A natural lake deepened slightly by a dam, it has a large central island, a varied shoreline that invites exploration, some marshes at the northern end – but also some traffic noise from Route 25, woodlands, and rocks that invite maneuvers. Motors are limited to 7.5 horsepower, but I saw none, only two canoes. The nearby Loon Center has wonderful hiking trails and information: It invites picnickers to use its screen-enclosed deck.

While there, I also put in at the public landing on Winnepesaukee and explored the bay to the left, which did not tempt big motors. Circling a small house on an island, I had a delightful conversation with the owner who thanked me for making a channel through the lilies and her teen-aged daughter who waded to pop my displaced skeg back into its normal place. I tried to find a route into the marsh that the Loon Center hiking trail skirted: Failing that, I returned with a collection of arm scratches and a kayak sporting broken bush-limbs. After the waning of summer growth, I may try it again.

McDaniel's Marsh DeLorme 34-E2 and others Rough relative size – 500 acres
From Fish Market, South on Bog Road
 Or Exit 13 from I89 to East Grantham
 Route 114 to West Springfield
 North on George's Hill Road

(Note: it is a hard to see this V-shaped intersection with 114)
At intersection of Bog Road and Georges Hill Road
The Marsh put-in is directly across from Bog Road on the east side

An apparently natural marsh, the low dam at the put-in has formed a pond with marshy edges. When you arrive, note the location of tall evergreens on an island directly across the pond. When you arrive at that island, after exploring the pond edges, pass on the right to enter the shallower marshland, noticing the huge beaver lodge on the island's edge. You may then think that you will spend your day pushing through an apparent wall of pickerel weeds and lilies, but if you bear to the left a good channel will open to view. That will windingly take you to the end of the marsh at its source in an evergreen forest. McDaniel's has all the features and life of a classical marsh, but provides an openness of view often blocked by high grasses in other marshes. During summer bloom, you will pass through varying "fields" of color, which will alone make the trip worthwhile. If you have time, you might want to combine this with a trip to George Pond at the far end of Bog Road or a hike into Cole Pond halfway along Bog Road.

Meeting House Pond Sanctuary DeLorme 19-E14 Rough relative size – 50 acres
Marlborough
Route 124 (S)
At Thatcher Road there are roads east, unnamed on the map
Explore and enjoy – you will get there

This is a small pond, but well worth the trip. Although you can circle it in an hour, it has nice marsh and island features, and is completely undeveloped. There is much wildlife, hiking trails to beaver ponds and other features, and it has a great picnic spot.

Merrymeeting Run Delorme 37-G8 to 37-H9
From Alton Bay (Winnepesaukee) to new Durham
See directions below and piece it together any way you like.

If you are willing to do a carry for perhaps a hundred yards going between the Alton recreational facility and the dam, you can pass by the dam and spend a long day on the Merrymeeting - simply combine Merrymeeting River section 1, section 2, and Merrymeeting Marsh #1 (not Merrymeeting Marsh #2).

Merrymeeting Marsh #1 DeLorme 37-H9
From Alton
Route 11 (East)
Put-in is on the right, clearly marked, just before a bridge

A long, sinuous, marsh meander, for as much of the day as you want to play. The through channel, paralleling Route 28, veers to the right after a bit, while the channel to the left eventually ends. It will take a while to lose the initial Route 11 traffic noise, but once you have, both the silence and the sounds will intrigue you. There are many side channels to trick you and trap you, so keep a wary eye, drag a long string from the boat launch, or drop breadcrumbs on the water. I have done it several times and still have much exploring to do. By the way, if you want to see just how dark a marsh can get and

how hard it is to follow a channel when it does, lose track of the time as I did one afternoon.

Merrymeeting Marsh #2 DeLorme 37-G9 Rough relative size – 400 acres

From Alton
Old route 11 (Briefly north from the traffic circle, turn right)
Perhaps a couple of miles, road on left (north), unnamed on my map
(Or go on to Brackett Rd. (going north))
(The unnamed road may be Chesley Road)
Follow this road along Merrymeeting Marsh
After a bridge at Merrymeeting Pond on left (or called Marsh Pond)
Begin to look for a left parking area with a large wooden sign
Put-in is hidden at far end of the parking area and down a small hill

This delightful paddle starts out in classic stream beauty. Before or after the thickness of summer vegetation, and even during it if you are hardy, you can take a side trip just before Merrymeeting Pond to explore a not too obvious route into a beaver dam with a higher pond behind it. Vegetation is varied and summer birds are fun. Being a wildlife management area, all sections of Merrymeeting Marsh have waterfowl in season. I once had a beaver swim along in front, as if guiding me back to the boat launch (or perhaps away from its lodge).

Merrymeeting River – section 1 Delorme 37-G8

From Alton to Alton Bay and Lake Winnepesaukee
Traveling west on Route 11 in Alton
Left turn on route 140
After a short distance, turn right on S Curve Road
Across from Fire Department
Between a Pond and Merrymeeting River
Pass a dam on the left and look for town recreation area on left
Turn into recreation area
Put-in is at end of parking area
(There are public and paid put-ins in Alton Bay – water sometimes rough)

In spite of its proximity to roads, this is a lovely sinuous and mostly narrow paddle. It takes you under a bridge, through marshy areas, and on to boat yards at the lake. If adventurous, you could paddle the lake for a short distance to the docks on the left and have lunch at one of the restaurants.

Merrymeeting River – section 2 Delorme 37-G8

From Alton
Traveling west on Route 11 in Alton
Left turn on route 140
Pass the Fire Department on the left and the pond and road on the right
Cross the Merrymeeting River.
The put-in is immediately after the bridge on the left
(Please take care to leave put-in access open for others)
Alternate put-in is across the bridge, by the Fire Department.

This is a nice slow water paddle from one side of Alton to the other. Just before the Route 28 bridge there is a kayak rental dock on the right and a path from it that leads to the River Run deli/restaurant. The rebuild of the bridge and ‘Posted’ signs have

Powder Mill Pond adds to its attractiveness. Putting in at the boat ramp, you have three options. Turning left to pass the small swimming beach (another nice put-in when no one is swimming) you can travel a ways up a stream. As always, how far you will go will depend on the variable water level and degree of vegetation fill at that time. A right turn takes you under the covered bridge to a short stretch of the Contoocook River and Powder Mill Pond, created by a Contoocook river dam at the far end. Having turned right, though, you can choose to turn to the left at the end of initial left side embankment, and then follow a channel through a stretch of marshland with bays and islands. The marshes give way to deciduous woodlands and a slow-flow section of the Contoocook. You can travel a nice distance before it shallows and turns to rock-strewn quickwater. There is an interesting side exploration along the way, accessible through a narrow concrete culvert passing under an old railway track.

Pawtuckaway Lake DeLorme 29-H9 (Big lake – this is a good place to put in)
 Rough relative size – 900 acres

Route 43	156
Parade Road into Deerfield	Nottingham
Nottingham Rd. (E) – <i>becomes</i> Deerfield Rd.	Deerfield Rd. (W)
Watch for boat launch signs to the south.	Watch for boat launch signs to the south

This can be a beautiful place to be, but open water can get rough in the wind. If you stay at the northwest end, you can convince yourself that it is totally undeveloped, while absorbing Mother Nature's good stuff. If you want to explore further, go down the west side and enjoy the islands. At the south end, you will find a big campground and facilities, and some nice paddling through bays, some of which are developed. The east shore is heavily developed. Pawtuckaway has many features for off water exploration, including a fire tower that is open to the public, gentle hiking trails, a road to a delightful small wood-pond that you could canoe or kayak, and many roads to walk.

Pillsbury State Park Ponds (This is not Pillsbury Pond) DeLorme 26-D2
 Rough relative size of largest pond – 200 acres

Washington
 Route 31 (N)

A delight for anyone, the ponds at Pillsbury State Park can be a family delight. Even the drive will lift your spirits as you move more deeply into nature and ascend into changing vegetation. Scenic picnic areas and a playground enhance the potential water adventures. This is a lightly developed, dispersed park, with primitive (toilets available, but no showers or other amenities) sites on and off the waterfront and a separated group camping area. Some sites are isolated from the others and some are across water. Portage trails are available between the ponds and at least three ponds are accessible directly by car. In a beautiful unspoiled natural setting, the small ponds offer a variety of experience. It is a great place for picnicking and pop-in paddling, or a longer adventure of exploration. During my first paddle, loons allowed me to watch them feed small fish to their young. The largest beaver I have ever seen paddled alongside, quietly exchanging fifteen minutes of coexistence on the planet with another grandfather.

Piscassic River DeLorme 29-J12 (Name not on map)
 North of Epping and south of Lee
 Route 125
 Turn east on Route 87
 Small put-in where creek crosses 87 (Construction during 2004 may make this difficult)
 Second put-in at intersection of Routes 27 and 125

This is included with hesitation, because it is probably not good for a family outing and involves some work. Take fair warning not to head north of Route 87, unless you bring a machete and like that kind of paddling. The trip south will also make you earn the first 200 yards or so, but it is worth the small extra work. Tree falls further along the river may cause an occasional carry. It is not a long straight-line distance, but meanders extend the distance. The isolated river meanders through surrounding vegetation that varies as you travel. Pleasant nature in the raw will engulf you. During the spring the current is strong, flowing from Epping northward, causing one strong quick-water spot (which may require a carry during low water) at an old dam near the Epping end. A more mild quick-water section appears a little further along. I like entry from the northern end on route 87, because I prefer to be with the current during the return. The traffic noise also fades more rapidly at that end. .

Pleasant Pond DeLorme 27-G8 Rough relative size – 50 acres
 Route 114 north of Weare
 East to Chase Village
 Paige Hill Rd.
 Reservoir drive (W)
 Upper Craney Hill Rd. (N)
 Deering Rd.

This pond has little development and sits comfortably in open country. It is not a highly interesting place to be, in terms of features, but is a good place to swim, picnic and see the surrounding country. It is a truly pleasant paddle. You could comfortably combine it with a trip to the Deering Wildlife Sanctuary for hiking. Locals speak highly of the pond, saying that it has kept its character for many years and that only low-power boats are allowed.

Powder Mill Pond Delorme 20-B6 Rough relative size - 350 acres

Put-in #1

Bennington	or	Peterborough
Route 202 (S)		Route 202 (N)
Look for Route 137 sign		Just after Route 137 intersection
Small parking area on right		Small parking area on left
Carry across road and old rail tracks		

Put-in #2

Continue South on Route 202	Not as far north on Route 202 several miles before 137
Left on Forest Road at stop light @ Greenfield State Park sign	Right on Forest Road - 1 mile after Route 123
Pass through covered bridge	Pass through covered bridge
Right into small State park for boat ramp	Right into small State park for boat ramp

Turn right to paddle up Contoocook River to the pond

The southern put-in is preferable. It provides more parking, a greater range of options (see Parker Mill Pond description), and is away from traffic noise. Powder Mill Pond is a broad and open pond just southwest of Crotched Mountain. Although partially developed, mostly on the southern portion of the west side, and traffic noisy at the north put-in, it is a pleasant and extensive place to paddle. With two large islands in the northern part, many bays, several inlets, varied vegetation, clear water, and the background of Crotched Mountain it has aesthetic appeal. You will find informal camping areas on the islands, but if you intend to use them check for overnight parking restrictions. Caution is advisable on windy days. Being broad and open, the water can become choppy and the terrain will channel a wind from the north down the Contoocook River into your face. Great value is added by the connection to Parker Mill Pond Wildlife Management Area - a gem in its own right, with its access to an extension of the Contoocook River. The prohibition against gasoline motors preserves the quietness of both pond areas.

Powwow River

Delorme 23-D12

Rough relative size - 2 miles long
(Added July 2011)

In Kingston

107 south from Northwood or 125 south from Rochester

Either way, continue 3 miles south of the intersection of 107 and 125

Left on New Boston Road at traffic light

Go .5 mile to put-in at a bridge

The Powwow River connects Powwow Pond and Country Pond. Powwow Pond itself is pleasant, shallow, lily covered, and a nice place to be, but housing development along the road side reduces the naturalness. After paddling the river, the presence of large motorboats at the entrance to Country Pond discouraged further exploration.

Some suggest that vegetation growth precludes summer paddling on the river, and on arrival on July 9, the entire breadth of the lily-choked river did appear to be impassable. On the water, however, the channel quickly becomes visible and it is deep enough through most of its length to be likely to stay open for the summer. As you approach Country Pond, though, the water becomes shallower and the channel becomes more faint. Passing through will require more effort by summer's end. Side channels and bays will have open water only in spring and fall.

The river is a continually changing mix of marshland and broadening sinuous lazy river, bordered by a varying mix of hardwood, evergreens, shoreline shrubs, and grasses. From the start, you travel through a colorful expanse of arrowhead, pickerelweed, purple loosestrife, and pink, yellow, and white water lilies. Farther along, grasses, rushes, pondweed, floating hearts, water-shield, and various submerged plants intermix. The standard cast of characters is present in blue heron, ducks, redwing blackbirds, water skimming insect hunters, and box turtles. On this auspicious July day, though, a couple in a canoe said to look for the bald eagle perched ahead. After giving up the search for it, a large bird suddenly appeared high above the river, soaring into the distance as only an eagle can.

Robartwood Pond and Campton Bog

DeLorme 39-F10

193 Exit 27

Bog Road West (there is a sign on the ramp)

2.4 Miles to Beech Hill Road on left

Access is immediately visible

(I prefer the grassy slope to the right, where the water is shallow.)

A quiet water paddler's playground, this pretty pond (with houses only near the put-in) soon becomes a wide meandering channel through marshes. You may be thrilled to hear the water flowing over the nearly two foot high beaver dam at the pond's end before you actually see it. To the left of that dam is a short portage to the raised Campton Bog (think which end of your boat you will want in the water – little turnaround space). With its many bays and channels, the bog is a treat. When you think you have run out of water, look for a narrow channel on the right: It will provide some more play time.

Salmon Falls River (small section of marshy paddling)

DeLorme 37-F14

Forms NH ME border

Route 125 south from Union or north from Milton

East to Milton Mills

Through Laskey Corner

On Branch Road (unlabeled and perhaps renamed)

North on Jug Hill Road, at Country Store in town center

Pass Milton Mills Post Office on left; drive another 0.3 miles to Hopper Road on the right

The first put-in is about a half mile up Hopper Road, by a bridge, above a dam

The second put-in is farther along the road, but has less parking. This is the better end to paddle.

This is not a large area, but it is unspoiled and fun to paddle. After putting in, head north to get the most wilderness, moving away from the road and minor development. After a short marshy paddle from the more northerly put-in, a broad channel will narrow at a beaver dam. During high water, you can paddle over it. The rest of the time you will carry, but it is fun and worth the effort. The channel narrows and becomes lightly sinuous, with marshy side channels, some deceptive. Numerous redwing blackbirds, swallows, dragonflies and other things of the air will greet and accompany you. About halfway up, a false channel will pull you to the right towards some cabins, but it is fun to explore. The main channel is to the left through marsh, with opportunity for playing. Toward the end of the marsh, the roles reverse with a smaller channel pulling you to the left. The slightly longer and more open paddling opportunity is on the right. Both channels end at new beaver dams of green wood, not yet mudded in. You can cross, but you will not yet find much paddling beyond them. The dam at the more southern put-in would be a nice place to picnic.

Shellcamp Pond

DeLorme 36-I4

Rough relative size – 150 acres

(Updated August 2011)

107 from Laconia or Pittsfield or 140 from Alton or Belmont

To Gilmanton Corner at intersection of routes 140 and 107

West on route 140 (toward Belmont) .1 mile

Left on Meadow Pond Rd.

1 mile to parking and ramp on right

Due to development that has continued along the south shore, this pleasant pond with an irregular shoreline and varied vegetation is a good local choice, but not worthy of long travel. The home building is not intrusive for much of the distance, but becomes more open and apparent as you approach the far end. The presence of motorboats may make off-season paddling preferable. The mixed deciduous forest would make it a good fall foliage choice.

Although now more developed, it is still a good place for paddling. The north shore abuts the Meadow Pond State Forest with its widely varied mix of trees. Unlike the south shore, which is deep, its shallow waters provide a continuous wide band of vegetation. You will skim through grasses, rushes, lilies, watershield, pikerelweed, and arrowhead, and will come across small patches of more unusual finds. There are two large marshes with many channels to explore. You will want to stay on the north side, except to make a circle around the island (“Posted” - no landing) with its varied features and vegetation. You can be sure of a smooth and gentle paddle, even on days when wind whips up the nearby big lakes. A round trip at a moderate paddling rate, without pausing for explorations, will take about an hour.

Spoonwood Pond

DeLorme 20-A2

Rough relative size – 150 acres

Hancock

Route 123 (N)

Hunts Pond Rd. (W)

Kings Highway (N)

Paddle across Nubanusit (heading at 1:00 before you) or turn right from the boat launch to follow the shore.

At opposite shore, use short, marked portage trail or carry over dam

A quiet, nature-sweet, moderate sized pond with interesting features, accessible only by a short portage across a dam separating it from Nubanusit Lake. It is a good place to spend a day. There are campsites, but they are reserved for members of the Harris Center, a nature group that manages the pond. The nearby Harris Center has hiking trails and other activities. To reach Spoonwood, you cross Nubanusit Lake, which is always windy and sometimes rough, but a nice place to be. Nubanusit boasts one of the few Bald Eagle nesting trees in New Hampshire. Spoonwood Pond itself is not developed, but Nubanusit is.

Stumpfield Marsh

Delorme 27-F10

Rough relative size – 100 acres

Route 9/202 east from Henniker, about 5 miles

Right on Stumpfield Road, just before bridge over Hopkinton Lake

or

I89 west from I93 south of Concord

At exit 5 enter route 9/202 west

After crossing Hopkinton Lake at 1.5 miles

Turn left on Stumpfield Road

Stumpfield Marsh sign and road are on the right at about 1.7 miles

Just before a long set of guardrails

The parking area adjoins an area of needle-covered ground under a grove of tall white pines, which could be a nice spot for a light picnic near a crystal-clear stream and the sounds of the water flowing across the beaver dam. From the easy put-in, three elusive and shallow channels lead into the natural and undeveloped beaver marsh. The one at about 11:00 from the put-in is the easiest to find and has slightly deeper water. The marsh is not large, but there are plenty of opportunities for exploring channels, weaving around hummocks and islands, and finding hidden coves, all while surrounded by a pleasant and interesting variety of vegetation. Spring or fall may be better than summer for your excursion, unless you truly enjoy the sound of hull against lily-pads, the moderate effort required for paddling through the lily leaves, pickerel weed, and tall grasses. Even in the more open spring or fall water, you will probably chuckle over the sudden hang-ups on unseen mud hummocks or logs. There are many delights while on the water, including silver dollar sized floating snail shells - complete with matching snails, four huge heron nests in two barren tall trees, and at least two beaver lodges. Perhaps you will even have the treat of seeing three huge herons in another barren tree, or the high-soaring hunter circling above. The inlet was not accessible during August, but it would be a good guess that the marsh will seem larger outside of growing season, maybe even opening to the inlet.

Umbagog Lake

DeLorme 51-F10 (A big lake – this is a good put-in place)
Rough relative size – 8000 acres

Errol
Route 16 (N)
Pass dam
Look carefully for lightly used roadway on right

Often thought of as too windy and rough, except for passing-through adventure travel, Umbagog has some beautiful tranquil spots. If you put in at the (fairly well hidden and lightly used) boat launch at the wide spot on the Androscoggin River (west of what is called Sweet Meadow on the maps) then paddle east, you will have great treats in store. Those treats are more likely to include Moose than most New Hampshire paddling places. There are marshes to explore on the way and it is a nice section of the river. When you enter Umbagog, you are in an island area that is fun to paddle and has campsites (Reservations needed from the State during active times). Much of the northern sector is good paddling. You can also go farther north to the ranger station for a put-in and come down the Magalloway river, but the scenery becomes repetitive. It is not a fast river in that section. The Magalloway River and some sections of Umbagog have development in some places, but not in the northwest section of the lake.

White Oak Pond

DeLorme 39-I14 Rough relative size – 300 acres

From Holderness – East on Routes 25 and 3 toward Meredith

Put-in is just before the White Oak Motel on your right

Look for the pond and a small intersecting road at a sharp angle to the right

The road traffic and the development around the put-in may give you a negative first impression, but both rapidly disappear. There are a few small docks scattered about the

lightly developed pond, but there are no powerboats: Although there is an expanse of open water, motors are limited to 7.5 horsepower. A truly nice, quiet, mountain-surrounded pond with heavily wooded shoreline, this has several islands, backwaters, bays, and a long input channel eventually interrupted by a beaver dam. I did not cross the dam during my trip, but there is at least some paddling opportunity on the other (higher) side.

Wickwas Lake Delorme 35-B14 Rough relative size – 350 acres
Route 104 between Meredith and New Hampton
Meredith Center Rd. (S)
Chemung Rd. (W)

A very pretty lake with much variety, including marshes, short streams, and islands. Nice wooded shoreline, although now partially developed. It is best to find a time when motorboat traffic is likely to be lower, unless you enjoy their company. Pretty and quiet in the spring and fall.

Willard Pond DeLorme 26-K4 Rough relative size – 100 acres
Route 123 (S) from Route 9 to South Stoddard
Willard Pond Road on left (if headed south)

This is a delightful place to be. Usually calm it has many interesting features, great backdrop, and lots of nature in the raw. An Audobon Preserve, it has only one house, near the boat ramp. People swim at the boat ramp and there are plenty of islands and rocks for additional swims in the Pond. To round out a day bring a picnic, and use the hiking trails around the pound or up the mountain. You will return, probably more than a second trip.