

FISHING in Pennsylvania State Parks and Forests

11/2014



Big Bass Favorites

- Codorus – 1,275-acre Lake Marburg
- French Creek – 68-acre Hopewell Lake
- Gifford Pinchot – 340-acre Pinchot Lake
- Hills Creek – Hills Creek Lake 137 acres
- Keystone – 78-acre Keystone Lake
- Marsh Creek – 535-acre Marsh Creek Lake
- Moraine – 3,225-acre Lake Arthur

Contacts

For more information, contact:

Bureau of Forestry
PAForester@pa.gov
717-787-2703

Bureau of State Parks
ra-parkinfo@pa.gov
717-787-6640



Fishing in Pennsylvania Parks and Forests

Fishing can be a relaxing solo experience that rejuvenates the spirit, an enjoyable outdoor family activity, or an exciting sport that drives anglers to learn and test new skills. Pennsylvania's wealth of freshwater produces outstanding fishing opportunities for every level of interest. There are 85,000 miles of rivers and streams and thousands of lakes and ponds in Pennsylvania. Much of this abundant freshwater wealth is found within our state parks and state forests. Fishing opportunities are endless and available to anglers in every part of the state.

Incredibly, 101 state parks and 20 state forests are open to fishing. A wide variety of popular fish species inhabit the waters of our parks and forests. Pristine streams and cold creeks are home to native brook trout and stocked rainbow and brown trout. Meandering rivers team with smallmouth bass, catfish and pike. Largemouth bass, bluegills and yellow perch populate the calmer waters of lakes and ponds.

Good to Know about Fishing in Pennsylvania

All anglers 16 years and older must have and display a valid Pennsylvania fishing license to fish Pennsylvania waterways. Fishing licenses and boat registration fees (including launch permit fees required for canoes and kayaks) help protect and preserve Pennsylvania's water resources and enhance the sport of fishing.

While fishing in state parks and state forests, all Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) regulations apply and all DCNR rules and regulations apply. Some waterways have special regulations, so it is important to be familiar with the seasons, sizes and creel limits before fishing at a location. The Pennsylvania Summary of Fishing Regulations and Laws provides an overview of fishing regulations. For the summary book and additional information visit the PFBC website at www.fish.state.pa.us.

Many state parks open to fishing also have lodging available including yurts, lodges, houses, modern cabins and rustic cabins. Year-round or seasonal camping is also available at 60 parks. Reservations can be made online at visitPAparks.com or by calling the toll-free information and reservation line, 1-888-PA-PARKS (1-888-727-2757).

Some state parks have fishing piers to accommodate people with disabilities. Check with individual parks for specific ADA access information.

Fish-for-Free Days



Each year the PFBC holds Fish-for-Free Days when residents and non-residents can fish legally without a fishing license. All other fishing regulations still apply during those days. There are typically two designated Fish-for-Free Days each year. State parks and state forests are popular places during the Fish-for-Free Days program. The program is a great time to try fishing or to introduce friends and family to this fun activity.

Some parks, forests and friends groups also offer fishing derbies. Check the DCNR calendar of events to see if a derby is happening near you.

Trout Fishing in Pennsylvania

Whether using a spin-casting rod or fly rod, the sport of trout fishing is both challenging and satisfying. Some of the most pristine trout streams in the state are found in our state forests and parks. There are hundreds of miles of cold, tumbling headwater and wilderness trout streams where native brook trout reproduce naturally and thrive on aquatic insects and larvae. Parks and forests also have high quality waterways and Approved Trout Waters where brook, brown and rainbow trout are stocked.

To fish for trout, all anglers over 16 years old must purchase a Trout/Salmon Permit in addition to a Pennsylvania Fishing License. The PFBC classifies trout streams into categories in order to define, manage and protect these valuable water resources. Check the Summary Book or the Special Regulation Areas page on the PFBC website for trout fishing regulations and restrictions at www.fishandboat.com/specreg.htm. Trout stocking schedules are also posted online. See panel to the right for State Forest *Trout Stream Favorites*.

Ice Fishing in State Parks

When temperatures drop through winter, hardy anglers avoid cabin fever by visiting a state park for a day of ice fishing. Most state parks with fishing also permit ice fishing and this winter activity is becoming increasingly popular. Contact individual parks for lake conditions and ice fishing information.

Fishing Tackle Loaner Program

Through a partnership with the PFBC, the American Sportfishing Association and DCNR, the public can borrow fishing rods, reels and an equipped tackle box to try fishing while at the park. The following state parks loan fishing tackle:

Bald Eagle, Bendigo, Black Moshannon, Chapman, Clear Creek, Colonel Denning, Cook Forest, Frances Slocum, French Creek, Gifford Pinchot, Hills Creek, Kettle Creek, Lackawanna, Little Buffalo, Locust Lake, Lyman Run, M.K.Goddard, McConnells Mill, Moraine, Mount Pisgah, Nescopeck, Nockamixon, Ole Bull, Pine Grove Furnace, Point, Presque Isle, Prince Gallitzin, Promised Land, Pymatuning, R.B. Winter, Raccoon Creek, Reeds Gap, Ricketts Glen, Ryerson Station, Tobyhanna, Tuscarora, Tyler and Yellow Creek

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

Non-native invasive plants, animals and pathogens threaten Pennsylvania's biodiversity. Invasive species cause environmental and economic harm and can impact human health. Anglers and boaters can help prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) by cleaning all gear and recreational equipment before leaving any body of water.

To learn more visit:

www.fish.state.pa.us/cleanyourgear.htm

www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/plants/invasiveplants/

Fishing and Waterway Considerations

Learn proper catch and release techniques to return out of season, regulated or surplus catch back to the water unharmed. Catch and Release guidelines can be found at www.fishandboat.com/education/learning/fish_funda/catch_release.htm

- Know and follow fishing regulations.
- Know and follow boating regulations, including canoes and kayaks.
- Dispose of fishing line properly.
- Avoid sensitive areas and do not pick or trample native plants and wildflowers.
- Do not discard live bait at the fishing site.
- Use lead-free tackle.
- Do not drive through streams or riparian areas.

Leave no Trace

Using Leave No Trace's Seven Principles helps minimize our recreational impact.

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare.
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces.
3. Dispose of Trash Properly.
4. Leave What You Find.
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts.
6. Respect Wildlife.
7. Be Considerate of Others.



Trout Stream Favorites

- Bald Eagle – Penns Creek and White Deer Creek
- Forbes – Laurel Hill Creek
- Gallitzin- Clear Shade Creek
- Lackawanna - Harvey's Creek
- Michaux - Conococheague Creek
- Sproul – Includes 12 designated Wilderness Trout Streams
- Susquehannock – First Fork Sinnemahoning Creek, Kettle Creek and tributaries
- Tiadaghton – Pine Creek and tributaries
- Tioga – Pine Creek and tributaries

Fishing Links

Take Me Fishing – www.takemefishing.org/state/pa

Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited www.patrou.org

