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I FISH NY Newsletter

Spring 2008

DEC Launches a Statewide Effort

By Greg Kozlowski

Most people familiar with the I FISH NY program know of the excellent fishing education and outreach programs on Long Island and in NYC. While education is one of the backbones of I FISH NY, the program was originally envisioned to be statewide and also include fisheries management, promotion, and access enhancement. Lack of funding for staff prevented I FISH NY from expanding.



Photo courtesy of NYSDEC staff

James Everard works with a group in the Cortland area.

Last May, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) hired four Fishing Promotion Biologists to help I FISH NY grow. Our new team members, Ryan Coulter (New Paltz), Joelle Ernst (Albany), James Everard (Cortland) and Mike Todd (Buffalo), hit the stream paddling and achieved some significant accomplishments in their first months. Some of these accomplishments include:

- Participation in school programs, youth programs, sportsman shows, and fairs;
- Creation of a new New York State Fishing Hotspots brochure, featuring hot fishing locations for the upcoming angling season;
- Production of Public Fishing Rights brochures for the Catskills/Hudson

Valley regions that are downloadable from the DEC website;

- Expansion of the Western NY Fishing Hotline to include Western Lake Ontario and creation of a Region 3 Fishing Hotline (Catskills/Hudson Valley);
- Expansion of website pages to include more information on top fishing locations, ice fishing, fishing access, and fisheries research;
- Development of a fishing education program at DEC campgrounds.

The DEC plans to have the biologists work with existing I FISH NY staff to develop a new statewide youth fishing education program and fishing brochure. The new education program focuses on sequential units, designed to increase participants angling knowledge and skills with each section completion. With the national trend of ever increasing numbers of children spending more time indoors, it's good news that I FISH NY has gained the assistance of four new employees dedicated to helping New Yorkers get out and fish!



Photo courtesy of NYSDEC staff

Promotion biologists, such as Ryan Coulter in New Paltz, focus not only on education, but also fisheries management activities.



ASK KATIE ? Q: I see many different types of reels for sale. How do I decide which is right for me?

A: Buying a reel depends on a few factors: your intended catch, fishing location, and your skill level. Generally, lighter reels are used for freshwater while heavier reels are used for saltwater. Still, there are differences in the four types of reels: spincasting, spinning, baitcasting, and conventional (a fifth type, fly fishing, is another topic). With respect to bait, all the reels can be used to cast natural or artificial baits. Here are other important distinctions.



In spincasting, the reel faces you and is enclosed. This type reduces the number of line tangles, and thus, is best suited for beginners fishing in freshwater. Spinning reels are open-faced and used in both fresh and saltwater. They are the most common and used by all skill levels, from strong beginners to advanced anglers. Baitcasting reels are more difficult to master. Requiring more skill to control the casting mechanism, they are best suited for solid, intermediate anglers. They can be used in fresh or saltwater. Conventional reels look like baitcasters, but are made to catch stronger, more powerful fish found in saltwater. These reels are not intended for freshwater use. Remember, having the best equipment isn't as critical to fishing success as effort, persistence, and observation.

FISHING HOTSPOTS

Long Island: Shinnecock Canal and Lock

Type: mile long saltwater channel that connects the Great Peconic Bay to the Atlantic Ocean.

Where: In Southampton. Take exit 65 South off Sunrise Hwy (Rte 27), make left onto Montauk Hwy and take for about 3 miles, turn left onto Newtown Rd, turn right on Eleanor St, make right or left at T, park along side of road.

Access:

Boat Launch: No, but boats can navigate through canal.

Handicap Access Fishing Pier: No

Shoreline: Yes, about 0.25 mile cement bulkhead.

Species: Striped bass, summer flounder, bluefish, porgy, black sea bass, weakfish.

Other:

For general rules about saltwater fishing go to: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7894.html>

To find the lock schedule, go to your local bait and tackle store and pick up the most current The Fisherman magazine. Fish within one hour of the locks opening and closing when currents are slowest; faster currents make fishing more difficult.

NYC: Wolfe's Pond Park, Staten Island

Type: freshwater, 18 acres.



Photo courtesy of NYSDEC staff

Where: South of Hylan Blvd between Cornelia and Holton Avenue. By subway, take #1 or #9 train to Whitehall St/South Ferry station. Take Ferry to Saint George terminal. At terminal, board the S78 bus to the intersection of Hylan Blvd and

Cornelia Ave. Walk south along Cornelia Ave to park entrance. Street parking is available.

Access:

Boat Launch: No

Handicap Access Fishing Pier: No

Shoreline: Yes

Species: Largemouth bass, sunfish, white perch, American eel, carp.

NYC freshwater fishing rules: catch and release only, barbless hooks only, no lead weights.

For complete list of freshwater regulations go to: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7752.html>

For general rules about fishing in NYC Parks go to: http://nycgovparks.org/sub_things_to_do/facilities/af_fishing.html

FACT OR FISHIN' seafood health advice



What is bioaccumulation? Is it the inch you can pinch around your waistline? For seafood lovers, it's a toxic consommé--the highest level predatory fish contain the highest levels of toxins. When inorganic mercury is released in the atmosphere (mostly through the burning of coal containing mercury), some of it eventually settles in water where it is transformed by bacteria into organic or methyl mercury. The organisms that eat bacteria and the things that eat the things that eat bacteria start to accumulate methyl mercury, and this process repeats itself up the food chain. The best way to avoid this toxin while still getting seafood's health benefits is by eating down the food chain; focus on small fish and various invertebrates. To see the methyl mercury content of different seafood, visit the Food and Drug Administration's website.

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/%7Efrf/sea-mehg.html#Mercury Levels in Commercial Fish and Shellfish>

Contributors

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I FISH NY is a collaborative program between the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York Sea Grant.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

We provide all tackle and bait. Call and reserve your spot today!

* Pre-registration required.

Long Island:

Sat. April 5th

Spring Freshwater Festival
Belmont Lake State Park
10am-4pm

Sat. June 7th*

North Shore Beach Fishing
Cedar Beach Pier, Mt. Sinai
4pm-7pm

NYC:

Saturday May 17

Waterfront Celebration
Rainey Park in Long Island City
1pm-5pm

Friday June 6*

Overnight Camping and
Fishing with NYRP
Swindler's Cove
5 pm-8 pm

To get more information,
log on to <http://www.ifishnewyork.org>.

To ask questions or register,
call 718.482.4940 (NYC) or 631.444.0283 (LI).



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