



I FISH NY Newsletter

Summer 2008

## **New Fish Ladder Gives Migratory Fish a Boost up the Carmans River**

By Chart Guthrie

Alewife are anadromous fish; they spend most of their lives in the ocean, but return to fresh water to spawn. An important food fish, bait fish, and favorite prey of striped bass, their runs have been declining along the Atlantic coast partly due to construction of barriers on spawning tributaries. To combat the declining number of alewife and other native fish, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) recently unveiled Long Island's first permanent fish ladder on the Carmans River in the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County.

The fish ladder permits fish to move upstream beyond a previously impassable barrier into Hards Lake in Southaven County Park, once again connecting two isolated parts of this important South Shore Estuary Reserve ecosystem. Alewife and sea-run brook trout (a.k.a. "salters") now have access to spawning areas above the Hards Lake Dam. The Carmans River, which flows from Middle Island in the north to Bellport Bay in the south, holds the largest remaining population of native brook trout on Long Island.

Improving the Carmans River fish population will help sustain New

York's native fauna and enhance recreational-fishing opportunities. This \$200,000 project was made possible through the cooperation of many partner organizations:



Photo courtesy of NYSDEC staff

The ladder system enables fish to pass a formerly impassable barrier and swim upstream into Hards Lake.

NYSDOT, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Fish America Foundation, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Suffolk County, and the Art Flick Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Within days of the installation of the fish ladder, alewife were observed using the ladder.

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### Contributors

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## ASK KATIE ? Q: When I practice catch-and-release, how can I help return fish safely to the water?

A: Being caught is a physically stressful experience for fish. Survivorship depends on variables such as species, water depth, and water temperature. You can greatly increase their chances for survival by following some simple tips. After you've hooked a fish, land them as quickly as possible. By properly setting the drag, you can reduce drawn out fights, which can exhaust fish. Tamping down barbs will help you remove hooks and using circle hooks (see Fall 2007 Newsletter) will help you avoid gut-hooking fish.

Handle fish as little as possible and avoid removing their slime layer, a protective coating; if possible, wet hands when handling and do not use a shirt or rag (see Summer 2007 Newsletter). If you can, remove the hook without taking the fish out of the water. Tools, such as needle-nose pliers or forceps, can help and is a must for the conservation-minded angler. Avoid using landing nets when fishing. Nets can also remove fish's slime layer, and impair swimming and breathing abilities. If a net is absolutely necessary, use a rubber or knotless mesh type.



## FISHING HOTSPOTS

### NYC: Harlem Meer, Central Park, New York

**Type:** 10-acre freshwater pond.

**Where:** Manhattan. Northeast corner of Central Park at 110th Street and 5th Avenue.

Public transportation: #2 and #3 trains and M1, 2, 3, 4 and 18 buses to 110th Street and Central Park North.

**Access:**

*Boat Launch:* No.

*Wheelchair Accessible Fishing Pier:* No.

*Shoreline:* Yes.

**Species:** Largemouth bass, bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie, carp.

**Rules for Site:** Catch-and-release only, no closed season, barbless hooks only, no lead sinkers.

**Other:**

- For general rules about fishing in NYC Parks go to: [http://nycgovparks.org/sub\\_things\\_to\\_do/facilities/af\\_fishing.html](http://nycgovparks.org/sub_things_to_do/facilities/af_fishing.html)
- For information on New York State freshwater fishing regulations: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7752.html>
- For other fishing locations in NYC go to <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8377.html>



Photo courtesy of NYSDEC staff

A largemouth bass taken from Harlem Meer in Central Park.



## Long Island: Blydenburgh County Park, Smithtown

**Type:** Freshwater, 100 acres, up to 6 feet deep.

**Where:** Suffolk County. Main entrance to the park is on the north side of Veterans Memorial Highway (Route 347), opposite the H. Lee Dennison County Center in Smithtown. For northern entrance follow Route 347 to Brookside Drive north, turn left on New Mill Road and follow to park entrance at end. (631) 854-3713; <http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Home/departments/parks/Blydenburgh%20County%20Park.aspx>

**Access:**

**Boat Launch:** Yes, but only with park rental boats.

**Wheelchair Accessible Fishing Pier:** No.

**Shoreline:** Yes. You must obtain a Green Key and be a Suffolk County resident. For more information call (631) 854-4949 or (631) 854-3713 or log on to: [http://www.co.suffolk.ny.us/Parks/FEE\\_PROGRAM](http://www.co.suffolk.ny.us/Parks/FEE_PROGRAM)

[SCHEDULE 2008.pdf](#)

**Species:** Largemouth bass, pumpkinseed, bluegill, yellow perch, catfish.

**Other:**

• For general rules about freshwater fishing go to: [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish\\_marine\\_pdf/06-08revisedfishregsguide.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish_marine_pdf/06-08revisedfishregsguide.pdf)

• For a contour map of Blydenburgh go to: [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish\\_marine\\_pdf/blydlkmap.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish_marine_pdf/blydlkmap.pdf)



Photo courtesy of Eric Fieldstadt

Mikaela Fieldstadt hauls a nice bass out of Blydenburgh Lake.

## MORE NEWS

### newsletter survey update

The I FISH NY Newsletter staff would like to thank everyone who took time to complete our questionnaire. Respondents were automatically entered into a drawing for one of four prizes: 3 one-year subscriptions to The Fisherman magazine or the grand prize of a Goody Basket from A&E Sportsman shop. Deborah B., Domenico M., and John J., each won a magazine subscription and Richard S. won the grand prize. Congratulations!

Here are the results. Based on your feedback, the Newsletter is giving you the information you want; 81% of respondents told us the amount of detail is "just right." That's great to hear because we try to explain fishing topics to beginner and intermediate level anglers without using a lot of technical jargon. This might explain why 94% of you said you read the newsletter "often" or "sometimes." We never want to waste your time or paper, so please contact us if you ever want to be taken off our mailing list.

The segments you found most useful were Calendar of Events (86%) and Fishing Hotspots (79%), with Fact or Fishin' (67%), Featured Article (65%), and Ask Katie (64%) close behind. Since 51% of you fish "regularly" or "often," that might explain why most of you are looking at the newsletter for opportunities to go fishing. In addition, we received great feedback on what you want to read about in future newsletters. You don't have to wait for the next questionnaire. Feel free to send us questions and comments by e-mailing us at [ifishny@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:ifishny@gw.dec.state.ny.us).



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

I FISH NY provides all the tackle and bait you'll need.

## **Long Island:**

### **Sat. June 28th**

Free Fishing Day Festival  
Lake Ronkonkoma County Park  
10am-4pm

### **Sat. August 9th**

Family Fishing Clinic  
Hempstead Lake State Park  
10am-2pm  
\*Pre-registration required

## **NYC:**

### **Sat. July 26, rain date Sun. July 27**

City of Water Day  
Governors Island  
10am-4pm

### **Sat. Sep 13, rain date Sun. Sep 14**

Fishing with People with Disabilities  
Prospect Park Lake, near Audubon Center  
11am-3pm  
R.S.V.P. required by August 15th

To get more information and find out about  
other events,

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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