



Southeast Best Family Trout Waters

by Vic Attardo

photos by the author

Fish and safety: these are the two characteristics I think parents seek when considering where to take the family trout fishing.

Fish are supplied by Mother Nature, the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) and your license fees. Safety is a matter of parental involvement and the topography of a setting.

Depending on their age, a parent with youngsters should limit difficulty to the sloping shores of a lake or a placid stream pool. Older kids can wade, with their wits about them, around semi-slippery rocks. Tumultuous river flows are not recommended.

Here are some places I believe would make the fishing seal of approval, if there was one.

Most of following lakes and streams provide restroom facilities, important when fishing with little ones.



This golden rainbow trout was caught at Deep Creek Lake, Montgomery County.



Kaercher Creek Lake in Berks County is a beautiful lake at the eastern edge of Hamburg, Berks County.

Scotts Run Lake

Scotts Run Lake is stocked with trout. This lake has a rectangular shape, manicured on one long side with a high-earthen dam and spillway at the shorter, down current side. Most families fish a spell on the long side while the spillway, with its elevated bridge and the slanted dam face, is for the sure-footed. The deeper waters out from the dam particular in its midsection and the pool in front of the spillway hold large numbers of trout.

Where there is brushless ground around Scotts Run Lake, a family can work the shallow shoreline with a good chance of success. However, once the crowds stoke up the artillery, the trout will move out. A longer rod, about 6½ feet spooled with 4-pound-test line can really throw line and may be helpful on the flatter shore.

Antietam Lake

With a preseason and currently two spring inseason stockings, 17-acre Antietam Lake is so full of trout one could cast a string with a stick and probably catch a trout.

While a considerable portion of this high-hill reservoir in Berks County has sides so flat you couldn't roll a diaper pail down the bank, there are major portions on Antietam Lake where the diaper and the child need a steady hand to hold them up. Pick your spot cautiously. Still, there is so much family good at Antietam Lake, outside of Reading, that I give it a strong recommendation. And, it's a beautiful place.

Antietam Lake trout responded well to the usual bait and the stuff you can buy in grocery stores. Corn, marshmallows and bread work quite well in the early season.

There is good parking at Antietam Lake. If you have little ones, don't park beneath the cliff along the upper part of the lake. Go around the impoundment to the flat parking area at the far end.





Saucon Creek Bridge

Deep Creek Lake

Part of Green Lane Park, 38-acre Deep Creek Lake, Montgomery County, caters to family fishing in the first weeks of the season. It's a safe and easy place to fish and is well-maintained and patrolled.

The lake is shaped like an upside-down question mark with bare banks around half its circumference and trees lined around the other half, presenting access to stocked areas. The beach along the spillway side and the woods bordered by the main roads are top notch. Throughout the year, Deep Creek Lake is stocked by both PFBC and the county, so there's a strong chance of hooking some hefty trout.

Be aware, Deep Creek Lake may not fish great from shore on opening day. Its shallow trout get stubborn in off-weather, but eventually the banks do produce. Cast out, let the bait sit and move it back a foot at time, over an extended period of time. There are weeds, and you don't want your bait getting covered.

Deep Creek Lake is an excellent small boat lake for the family. From what I've seen over the years, boaters often do better than shore anglers at the start of the season.

Kaercher Creek Lake

Kaercher Creek Lake, Berks County, is a beautiful southeast Pennsylvania lake with gently sloping shores. Kaercher Creek Lake, at the eastern edge of Hamburg, is a jewel.

Currently, Kaercher Creek Lake is not stocked in the spring, but it did receive a winter stocking in 2012. So, if there is no ice in February, the family could get an early start on the trout season. This lake is open year-round.



Saucon Creek is stocked with trout and is good for family fishing in the Hellertown, Northampton County, area.

East Branch Perkiomen Creek

A giant pool with manicured shores is the hallmark of the family-friendly section of East Branch Perkiomen Creek, Bucks County, at Sellersville. There's room for plenty here, and plenty, both in people and trout, is what it gets.

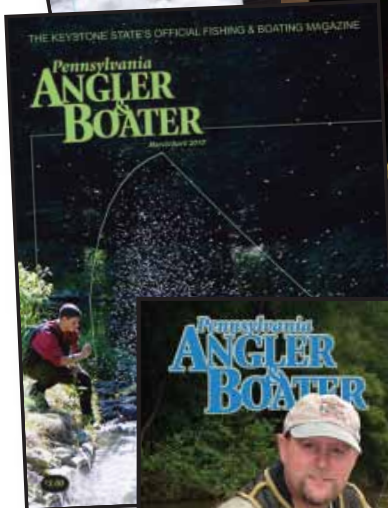
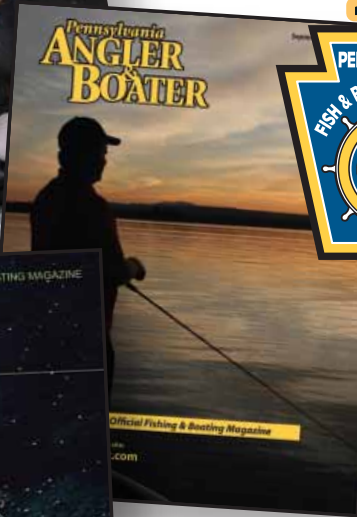
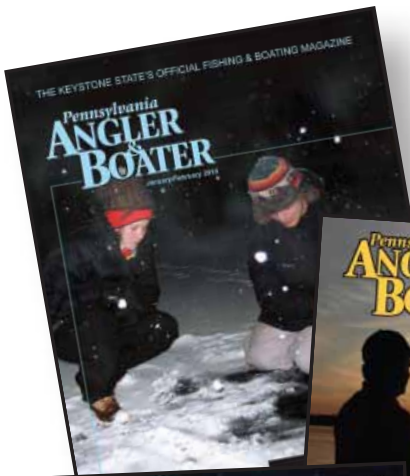
The pool is some 60-feet wide, so families gather on both sides and cast to the middle. The fishing is easy, and short rods are usable.

If the waters of the East Branch Perkiomen Creek are clear, this is an excellent opening week outing. However, this stream muddies quickly. When the water is cold and stained, fishing can be difficult.

Saucon Creek

A long stretch of Saucon Creek is under trophy trout regulations and is not the place to sit and fish. However, the wider less rocky area though Hellertown in Northampton County is very suitable for the family and full of stocked trout. There is municipal parking and facilities along the stream banks on the west side of town.

Major parts of Saucon Creek are lined with parkland banks, both mowed and slightly wooded. The former, which are actually against the shallower waters, should not discourage even the littlest ones if they are closely attended. ☐



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