

Dedicated to the Memory of Commissioner Enoch S. "Inky" Moore Jr.

PLAY

Pennsylvania • League • of • Angling • Youth
SUMMER 2001

Take Your Family Fishing

by Dennis Tubbs

Fishing is family fun! How can you get your parents to take you and your friends fishing more often?

Start by reminding them that fishing is fun and a healthy outdoor activity. Fishing is about more than just fish. Fishing gets everyone outside for fresh air and relaxation. Maybe you would prefer to go fishing with your family and friends instead of playing video games—at least this time. How often is that going to happen? Remind them that soon you will be grown up and on your own. By then it may be too late.



photo-Lawrence Czuziak, Honorable Mention, Family Fishing and/or Boating Category, PFBC 2000 Photography Contest

Many reasons are given for not fishing or for not fishing more often. Not having enough time is a frequent reason. But who doesn't have time (or can't make time) for family fun? Some families don't have equipment, or they don't know which equipment to buy. Others don't know where to take the family fishing. Still others aren't sure of the right knot, or their casting skills are a little rusty.

This issue of PLAY focuses on the information a family needs to go fishing more. If you already fish a lot with your family, please pass this newsletter on to someone else.



photo-Aurelia Hagan, Honorable Mention, Family Fishing and/or Boating Category, PFBC 2000 Photography Contest

Fishing from a Rented Boat

by Keith Edwards

Lots of people fish from the shoreline.

But if you get the chance, try fishing from a boat. You can reach deeper water, where bigger fish may be hiding. If you don't have a boat, there are



photo-Dan Martin

places in Pennsylvania that rent small fishing boats. Some of our state park lakes and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes have liveries that rent canoes, rowboats and motorboats. Remember to be extra safe whenever you are on a small boat. Always wear your life jacket. People die every year in boating accidents. Most of these people would not have died if they had just worn a life jacket. The people from whom you rent your boat must give you a wearable life jacket to put on while you are boating. If you are under age 13, our laws say that you have to wear your life jacket when you are in a small boat, including all canoes and kayaks.

When you catch a fish, never stand to reel it in. Tipping boats over or falling over the side are two ways people die while boating. Small boats tip over easier than big boats. So instead of standing up to reel in your fish, stay calm and reel in the fish while sitting down. You should always fish with a "buddy." Have your buddy help

you get the fish inside the boat. But tell your buddy not to stand up, either, or you might have to "fish" him out of the water instead of the big fish you just caught!

Even worse, you might tip the boat over and everyone might end up in the water!



photo-Art Michaels

The Ideal Fishing Spot

by Dennis Tubbs

There are lots of places to go fishing in Pennsylvania. Some are better than others for a family fishing outing. When choosing the ideal family fishing spot, look for these features:

✓ A gradually sloping bank in the area you want to fish.



✓ Stay away from high banks or ones that are covered with trees and shrubs.



✓ Dry place to sit on the bank.



✓ Trees close by to shade the bank.

✓ Easy to walk or drive to with a lot of parking for cars or bicycles.



✓ Restrooms nearby.



✓ Slow-moving water. Fast-moving water can be dangerous.

✓ Loaded with panfish. See panfish identification in this issue.



photos Dennis Tubbs



✓ Picnic tables.

✓ Other fun things to do when the fishing action slows.

To help find an ideal family fishing spot, look on the Internet. Start at the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission web site: www.fish.state.pa.us. There you will find information about Fish & Boat Commission lakes. The trout stocking schedule is also posted on the web site.

The PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has a good site at www.dcnr.state.pa.us. The DCNR has information on Pennsylvania state parks.

State parks make great family fishing spots. You can find everything on the list in many of our state, county and local parks.

Water works wonders

IN PENNSYLVANIA

One site you have to visit is www.WaterWorksWonders.org. There you can find information about family fishing spots all over the United States. Looking for the ideal family fishing spot on the Internet is a great rainy day activity.



Checklist of Equipment, Bait and other Gear

by Dennis Tubbs

Before going fishing, make sure you have everything you need. Here is a checklist of items you need:

✓ **Fishing rod and reel.** Spincasting outfits are good for beginners. NOTE: There are a few places where you can borrow fishing rods and reels, as you would borrow a book from the library. Visit the Fish & Boat Commission's web site www.fish.state.pa.us.

✓ **Line on the reel.** Check it for twists, nicks or knots. Change the line, if necessary. Use 6-pound test as a good all-around size.

✓ **Tackle box** with lots of hooks, sinkers, bobbers and any other lures you can find. Many sporting goods stores now sell tackle boxes already stocked with these items.

✓ **Lucky fishing hat and vest.**

✓ **Sunscreen.**

✓ **Live bait** such as red worms, nightcrawlers, maggots, mealworms and grasshoppers. Bait can be bought at a local bait shop. Bait can also be found in your garden. Dig around the plants with your parents and find your own worms.

✓ **Kitchen baits** such as chicken livers, cheese, bread and dough balls.

✓ **Plenty of drinking water,** especially necessary on hot days.

✓ **Snacks.**

✓ **Insect repellent.**

✓ **Waders** if you have them, old sneakers if you don't.

✓ **Rain gear** (just in case).

✓ **A fishing buddy.**

✓ **Mom and/or Dad and your brothers or sisters.**

✓ **Family members 16 and older need a fishing license.** A license can be bought at most stores that sell fishing equipment. Licenses are also available online at the Fish & Boat Commission's web site www.fish.state.pa.us.

✓ **Good Luck!**

Have a great time fishing with your parents!



photo: Art Michaels

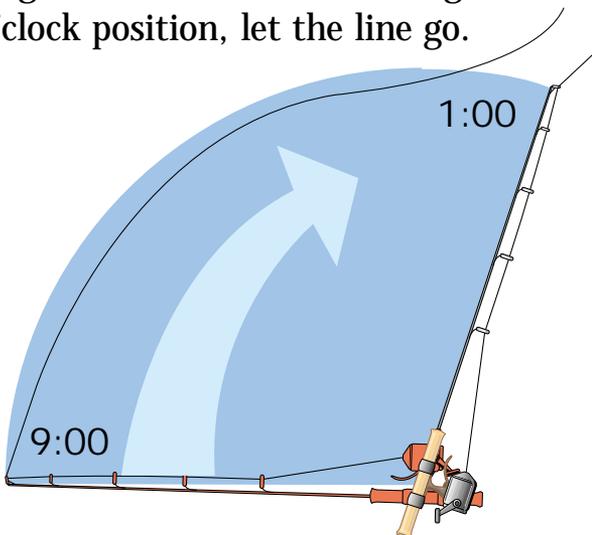
The Basics: Casting and Knots

by Dennis Tubbs

Casting is an important part of fishing. If you cannot cast to the right spot, the world's best bait will not help you catch fish. Here are two ways to cast.

Overhand cast

To perform an overhand cast, place the rod to your back at about the 9 o'clock position. Swing the rod overhead and as it gets to the 1 o'clock position, let the line go.



Sidearm cast

Start with the rod in the same position as the overhand cast. Swing the rod to your left or right side. As it gets to 1 o'clock for left-handed casters, or 5 o'clock for righties, let the line go.

Remember to turn the crank on the reel after the bait hits the water. This sets the reel's drag.

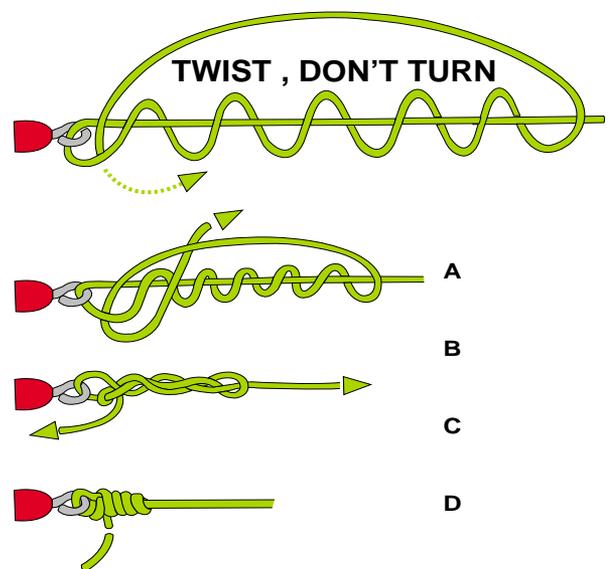
Practice casting in your backyard before going fishing. Use different-sized targets such as a plastic hoop or tire swing. Then, when you get really good, try a soup can.

Knots

A strong, easy-to-tie, basic knot is the improved clinch knot.

To tie an improved clinch knot:

A. Thread your line through the hook eye and double back the line. Wrap the loose end five to six times around the line to the reel.



B. Thread the loose end through the first loop above the eye.

C. Thread the end through the loop made in step B. Wet the knot and then pull it tight.

D. Clip off excess line.

To learn more about casting and knot-tying, read these Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission publications:

Fishing: Getting Started

"Practice Makes Perfect"

"Knots on Knots"

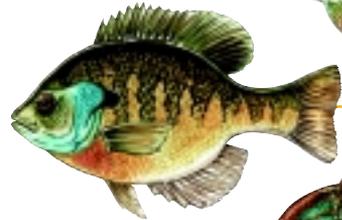
Panfish

White crappie
Pomoxis annularis



Black crappie
Pomoxis nigromaculatus

Yellow perch
Perca flavescens



Bluegill
Lepomis macrochirus

Pumpkinseed
Lepomis gibbosus



Identification



White crappie has head, back and upper sides dark green with 8 to 10 vertical bars. Dorsal fin has 5 to 6 spines.



Black crappie has scattered spots and 7 to 8 dorsal spines.

Yellow perch has separate spiny rayed and soft-rayed dorsal fins. Sides have 6 vertical bars.



Bluegill has a dark spot at base of dorsal fin. Spiny rayed and soft-rayed dorsal fins are joined. Black spot on gill flap. Dark vertical bars on body.

Other sunfish



Rock bass

Ambloplites rupestris
Red or orange eye, 5 to 7 spines on anal fin, dark mottling over light belly.

Redbreast sunfish

Lepomis auritus
Long gill cover, short, rounded pectoral fin.

illustration-Ted Walke



Cut out the trout identification card at left, fold over on dotted line and keep in your fishing vest pocket to help identify your catch.

