

2004 Fish-for-Free May 29 Days June 5

Your Guide to a Perfect Outing

Because you're an experienced angler, Fish-for-Free Days this year, May 29 and June 5, offer the ideal chance to introduce (or reacquaint) a friend, relative or business associate to fishing. During a Fish-for-Free Day you could tout the benefits of becoming an angler. You could explain how fishing lets you "get away from it all." You could mention your appreciation of the outdoors. You could solidify family relationships or deepen friendships. In addition, you could have a terrific, fun time catching fish!

To enjoy all these benefits, prepare thoroughly. Here are eight ways to plan a perfect Fish-for-Free Day outing.

▶ **1.** To identify hotspots, start with "Pennsylvania's Biggest Fish of 2003." From the Commission's web page, www.fish.state.pa.us, under "Navigate Our Site," click on "Fishing," and then click on "Biggest Fish of 2003." Here you'll find a list of waterways in Pennsylvania where anglers caught the five largest fish of more than 30 species in the Commission's Angler Recognition Program. Included are each fish's weight, length, date caught, lure or bait used and other details. You can also click the links for similar information from the last few years.

▶ **2.** For fishing how-to-do-it information, check the "PFBC Online Education Resources Catalog." From the Commission's main page under "Navigate Our Site," click on "Education," and on that page click on "Education Resources Catalog." On the catalog page click on "Fishing." View, download or print your selections.

▶ **3.** To find more how-to-do-it and where-to-go information, on the Commission's main page under "Navigate Our Site," click on "Angler & Boater." This link takes you to the *PA Angler & Boater* page. Under "Past Issues" browse the last few years of magazines individually or by annual index, and view, print or download linked items.



by Art Michaels

▶ **4.** If you prefer big water or big fish, consider a Lake Erie charter for trout, salmon or walleyes; a guided excursion on Raystown Lake for lake trout, largemouth and smallmouth bass, or striped bass; or a small-boat trip on the Delaware River for American shad.

To find a charter boat or guide, visit the "Registered Fishing Guides and Charter Boats" page on the Commission's web site. From the Commission's main page click on "Fishing," and then in "Commercial Information" on the lower left, click on "Charter Boats/Guides." If you choose this option, don't delay: Charter boat captains and guides book prime dates quickly.

▶ **5.** If you're planning an adventure on flowing water, consider a Pennsylvania water trail. Under "Regional Information" on the Commission's web page, click on "Water Trails." Then click on any red-numbered water trail on the state map for details on the trail and its online map, which you can view, download or print.

▶ **6.** For a trip to a local waterway, check out the Commission's online regional maps. From the Commission's web page under "Regional Information," click on "Online Maps." Then, on the next page's state map, click on the region where you want to fish. When the regional map appears, on the left click on a county. Then click on access numbers and special-regulation numbers for linked specifics. You can view, download or print this information.

▶ **7.** Set an example by heeding safety information prescribed by law and by prudence, and be sure those who accompany you observe safety measures. For instance, ensure that all aboard a boat wear properly sized, buckled and zipped life jackets, and if you'll be wading, know your limits and those of your companion and plan accordingly.

▶ **8.** Lastly, remember that on Fish-for-Free Days in Pennsylvania only the license requirement is put aside. All other rules and regulations and special regulations, including seasons, sizes and creel limits, still apply. ☐