



Want to learn more about freshwater fishing?
Each year, the Bureau of Fisheries hosts fishing clinics and festivals to help people of all ages get started in the exciting sport of freshwater fishing. The Bureau also sponsors seminars on various fishing topics throughout the year. Contact DEC for more information about scheduled events.

Attention Teachers and Youth Educators

The Bureau of Fisheries has developed a number of informational manuals, lesson plans and pamphlets designed for beginning anglers. These materials are excellent for teaching children about fishing and about the protection and management of our valuable freshwater resources on Long Island. Training on these subjects is also available to youth educators and school and youth groups of all types through the I FISH NY Program. For more information about instructor training and in-class fishing instruction, contact:
• Nassau and Suffolk - Region 1 Fisheries Unit - 631-444-0280
• New York City - Region 2 Fisheries Unit - 718-482-4022



DEC WEBSITE
www.dec.ny.gov

Common Freshwater Fish Species on Long Island and New York City

Largemouth Bass

New York State's number one sportfish.



ID Jaw extends beyond eye; deep notch between the spiny and soft sections of the dorsal (top) fin. Average 15-18", but fish over 20" are not uncommon.
Habitat Weeds, logs or docks in shallow parts of warm-water, weedy lakes and rivers. In hot weather, look in deeper water off weedlines and dropoffs.
Fishing Tips In heavy cover, use weedless spoons, plastic frogs or plastic worms and tubes rigged weedless. In open water, use top-water baits, spinnerbaits and diving plugs.

Smallmouth Bass

This hard-fighting species is found only in Fort Pond and Lake Ronkonkoma on Long Island.



ID Jaw does not extend past eye; very shallow notch separating spiny and soft sections of dorsal (top) fin. Average 12-15", but fish over 20" are possible.
Habitat Near rocky shoals and dropoffs. Look in deeper water during hot weather.
Fishing Tips Commonly caught with tubes, curly tail jigs, spinner baits or live crayfish around cover. Use top-water plugs during early morning and evenings.

Chain Pickerel

Long Island's native predator. Popular with ice anglers.



ID Long, narrow body with chain-like markings on sides. Dark, vertical bar under each eye. Average 15-18", but can grow over 24". Beware of their sharp teeth.
Habitat Shallow, warm, weedy lakes.
Fishing Tips Weedless spoons, spinner baits and soft plastics rigged weedless are very effective during open water season. Commonly caught by ice anglers using tip-ups baited with shiners.

Walleye

Stocked in Lake Ronkonkoma and Fort Pond on Long Island. Walleye are the largest members of the perch family.



ID Large, silvery eyes, white tip on the lower lobe of tail. Can exceed 14 pounds in New York State. Average 15-18", but can grow over 20".
Habitat Their light-sensitive eyes force them to stay in deeper water during the day, but they will move to the surface to feed during low-light periods and at night.
Fishing Tips During open-water periods, drift or troll with plugs, live bait or jigs. Also popular with ice anglers. Live minnows tend to work best through the ice.

Black Crappie

Excellent eating; often found in large schools.



ID Flat, diamond-shaped bodies; dark mottled coloration. Average 10" but can get over 14".
Habitat Most common in weedy areas.
Fishing Tips Use live minnows, small jigs, spinners and plugs. Easiest to catch during the spring when they move into shallow cover-filled areas to spawn. Use a light touch when setting the hook because it can pull through their soft mouth—hence the nickname "papermouth."

Sunfish (Bluegill and Pumpkinseed)

Popular with anglers because they are easy to catch.



ID 6"- 8", occasionally over 10". Bluegill - dark spot at the back of dorsal (top) fin. Pumpkinseed - wavy turquoise bands on cheeks, red spot on the gill cover.
Habitat Around docks, weeds, logs and other cover in most warmwater lakes, ponds and rivers.
Fishing Tips Fish around cover with worms, grubs, crickets or small jigs. Great for beginner fly anglers with small poppers. Very popular for ice anglers using small jigs tipped with grubs.

Yellow Perch

One of the most widely distributed, popular and delicious panfish in New York State.



ID Distinctive yellow sides and black barring. Average 8-10", but fish over 14" are sometimes caught. Beware of sharp fin rays and gill covers.
Habitat Found in a variety of waters from shallow weedy ponds to deeper lakes.
Fishing Tips Use small tube or curly tail jigs, live minnows and worms. Very popular to fish for through the ice on small jigs tipped with grubs.

White Perch

Common in many freshwater ponds and tidal streams of Long Island and New York City.



ID Silvery gray body that lacks horizontal stripes; white underside. Average 5-9" in lakes and ponds. Can exceed 12" in tidal waters.
Habitat Primarily found in murky ponds and lakes. In tidal streams, they are most often caught in late winter and spring.
Fishing Tips Commonly caught on worms, grubs, small lures or flies.

Common Carp

Carp are becoming popular with anglers who enjoy a challenge and a strong fight.



ID Large, heavy scales and two short barbels at the corners of the mouth. Can reach 30+ pounds.
Habitat Most lakes and ponds and many tidal streams; prefers warmer water with a soft bottom.
Fishing Tips Fish with worms, corn or bread dough on bottom.

Brook Trout

Also called speckled trout, the brook trout is New York's official state freshwater fish and Long Island's only native trout.



ID Dark olive-green background with light wavy markings on the back and tan or red spots on the sides. Rarely exceed 9" in streams. Native populations still exist in several streams.
Habitat Live in small to moderate-sized streams in cool, clean water.
Fishing Tips Long Island's most popular brook trout waters are limited to fly fishing only.

Rainbow Trout

A colorful native of the Pacific Coast, rainbow trout have been introduced into many coldwater lakes and streams in New York State.



ID Pink stripe along their sides during the spawning season; black spots on back, dorsal (top) fins and both lobes of tail fin.
Habitat Stocked in select waters in Nassau and Suffolk counties.
Fishing Tips Commonly caught on flies, spoons, spinners and live bait. Spoons and spinners work well for stocked fish. Can generally be found in deeper, colder water of lakes and ponds (especially in summer months). In rivers and streams, fish behind large woody debris and around undercut banks. Prefers faster water than other trout species.

Brown Trout

The wary brown trout is one of the more challenging trout to catch.



ID Brown with black and often red spots on sides. Average 9-15", but can grow over 18", especially in tidal streams.
Habitat Primarily found in streams but also in ponds and lakes. Stocked in select waters in Nassau and Suffolk counties.
Fishing Tips Can be caught on a variety of flies, spoons, spinners and live bait. Spoons or spinners work well for stocked fish. Can generally be found in deeper, colder water of lakes and ponds (especially in summer months). In rivers and streams, fish behind large woody debris and around undercut banks.

Brown Bullhead

Nocturnal, feeding most actively at night.



ID Broad, flat head and dark barbels (whiskers); range 8-14".
Habitat Bottom of lakes, ponds and rivers.
Fishing Tips Worms and other live bait fished on the bottom. Fishing is usually better in the evening.

Weigh Your Fish with a Ruler

Search the table below for the size and species of fish you caught to find its average weight. Remember, if you wish to practice catch-and-release, the fish's length can be quickly marked on your fishing rod, landing net, boat seat or any handy object that can be measured later when a ruler is available.

Length (in)	Pumpkinseed and Bluegill	Black Crappie	Yellow Perch	Largemouth Bass	Smallmouth Bass	Trout	Chain Pickerel
7.0	4 oz						
8.0	7 oz	4 oz	3 oz				
9.0	10 oz	7 oz	5 oz				
10.0	14 oz	9 oz	7 oz	8 oz	8 oz		
11.0	1 lb 4 oz	13 oz	9 oz	11 oz	10 oz		
12.0	1 lb 10 oz	1 lb 1 oz	12 oz	14 oz	13 oz	10 oz	
13.0	2 lb 3 oz	1 lb 6 oz	1 lb 0 oz	1 lb 2 oz	1 lb 1 oz	13 oz	
14.0		1 lb 12 oz	1 lb 5 oz	1 lb 7 oz	1 lb 5 oz	1 lb 1 oz	
15.0		2 lb 3 oz	1 lb 10 oz	1 lb 13 oz	1 lb 10 oz	1 lb 5 oz	11 oz
16.0		2 lb 11 oz	2 lb 0 oz	2 lb 4 oz	1 lb 15 oz	1 lb 9 oz	14 oz
17.0		3 lb 4 oz	2 lb 7 oz	2 lb 12 oz	2 lb 6 oz	1 lb 14 oz	1 lb 1 oz
18.0		3 lb 14 oz	2 lb 15 oz	3 lb 5 oz	2 lb 13 oz	2 lb 4 oz	1 lb 4 oz
19.0				3 lb 15 oz	3 lb 5 oz	2 lb 11 oz	1 lb 8 oz
20.0				4 lb 10 oz	3 lb 14 oz	3 lb 2 oz	1 lb 12 oz
21.0				5 lb 7 oz	4 lb 8 oz	3 lb 10 oz	2 lb 1 oz
22.0				6 lb 6 oz	5 lb 3 oz	4 lb 3 oz	2 lb 6 oz
23.0				7 lb 5 oz	5 lb 15 oz	4 lb 12 oz	2 lb 12 oz
24.0				8 lb 7 oz	6 lb 12 oz	5 lb 7 oz	3 lb 3 oz
25.0				9 lb 10 oz	7 lb 10 oz	6 lb 3 oz	3 lb 10 oz
26.0						6 lb 15 oz	4 lb 1 oz

Angler Achievement Awards Program

The Angler Achievement Awards Program recognizes anglers who catch fish meeting the minimum qualifying weight or length for the species in the entered category. There are three categories: Annual Award, Catch-and-Release and State Record. For more information about the program, contact your regional DEC office, or search "Angler Achievement Award" on DEC's website: www.dec.ny.gov.

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Freshwater Fishing on Long Island and New York City



Photo Credit: Eric Feldstadt

Introduction

When it comes to having a memorable freshwater fishing experience, you don't need to travel far. Long Island and New York City offer a variety of freshwater fishing opportunities, many right in your own backyard. Whether taking a youngster fishing for sunfish, trying to catch that lunker bass, or casting a fly for an eager trout, Long Island and New York City have something for every angler.

Where to Fish

Trout Fishing Opportunities

Each year, DEC stocks more than 30,000 brown and rainbow trout in Nassau and Suffolk counties. Stockings take place in both spring and fall. Most waters have a year-round trout season which allows anglers to fish through the winter. While many of the stocked waters get too warm for year-round trout survival, a number of Long Island streams, mill ponds and kettleholes hold trout throughout the year. For anglers desiring premier fly fishing for trout in a beautiful setting, visit Connetquot River State Park, Caleb Smith State Park (Nissequogue River) or Southaven County Park (Carmans River). For a Long Island Trout Stocking List call 631-444-0280.



Warmwater Fishing Opportunities

Warmwater anglers can also find excellent fishing opportunities for many popular game and panfish species, including largemouth bass, chain pickerel, bluegill, pumpkinseed, yellow perch, black crappie and carp. Walleye and smallmouth bass can be caught in Lake Ronkonkoma and Fort Pond.



Photo Credit: Eric Feldstadt

Boat/Canoe Access

DEC has established a network of more than 20 boat/canoe launches, fishing access sites and angler parking areas throughout Suffolk County. Access to many other waters can also be found through facilities managed by local government or informal access points along the sides or ends of roads. Waters with rowboat or canoe rentals available are noted in the table. Gas powered motors are not permitted on any freshwater where boating is allowed on Long Island.



Photo Credit: Eric Feldstadt



Photo Credit: Todd Abner

Wading

Wading is a popular means of fishing on Long Island, particularly where boats are prohibited. Please be cautious when wading. Lake and pond bottoms range from hard sand to mud several feet thick, which can make wading treacherous. Some ponds also have steep dropoffs. Wading may not be permitted in all waters, such as those in New York City, so please check first.

Fish Health Advisories

Fish are nutritious and good to eat. When properly prepared, they are high in protein and low in saturated fats. Some fish, however, may ingest contaminants from the water they live in and through the food they eat.

The New York State Department of Health provides advice on the health effects of eating fish caught in New York State waters. Visit www.health.ny.gov/fish for more information or advice about eating the fish you catch.

Protect Your Waters

Help Stop the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species and Fish Diseases
Follow these simple guidelines to properly clean boats and fishing equipment.



1. INSPECT your boat, trailer and other fishing and boating equipment and remove all plant and animal material clinging to it.

2. DRAIN AND DRY everything that came into contact with water. Dry equipment for at least 5 days before using it in another water body. **Be sure to completely drain your boat, including baitwells and livewells.**

3. DISINFECT the boat's bilge area, all water-holding compartments, and other equipment with hot water at least 140°F or steam for at least 30 seconds if they can't be dried before launching into another water body.

IF YOU CAN'T DRY OR DISINFECT YOUR BOAT, thoroughly flush all water-holding compartments with water before launching. Don't let rinse water run into a water body.

Watch for these Aquatic Invasive Species of Concern



Scan the QR code for more information on equipment disinfection and how you can prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species: www.dec.ny.gov/animals/48221.html



Photo Credit: Ben Lombardo

Fishing License Information

All residents and non-residents 16 years of age or older must have a valid New York State fishing license. Before fishing in the marine and coastal district waters, or when fishing in the Hudson River and its tributaries for "migratory fish of the sea," (e.g. striped bass, hickory shad and river herring) anglers must enroll in the annual no-fee recreational marine fishing, registry. Note that anyone actually fishing or assisting another angler (no matter what their age) must have a fishing license, even if they release the fish that they catch. An annual New York State fishing license is valid for 365 days from the date of purchase. Anglers may also purchase a 1-day or 7-day license. Lifetime licenses are also available to New York State residents. Licenses are available from over 300 license-issuing agents, including major sporting goods and discount stores, tackle shops and many town clerks' offices.



Photo Credit: Kathy Feldstadt



Licenses may also be purchased online at www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6101.html and by phone at 1-866-933-2257.



