

## **Visit a National Wildlife Refuge for Fishing/Boating Week June 1-8**

Introduce your youngster to fishing, or come fish together as a family at a national wildlife refuge during National Fishing and Boating Week, June 1-8. Most states waive fishing license requirements for one or two days during the week and America's national wildlife refuges are great places to take advantage of this opportunity to get outdoors and connect with nature.

More than 270 national wildlife refuges and wetland management districts offer a variety of fishing opportunities throughout the country. Information about fishing on national wildlife refuges is available on an easy-to-navigate Web site:

<http://www.fws.gov/refuges/FishingGuide/index.html>

In addition, many national wildlife refuges around the country are holding special family fishing events during National Fishing and Boating Week. The following is a partial listing of just a few of the scheduled events:

### **Georgia**

**Banks Lake National Wildlife Refuge**, Lakeland, hosts its Youth Fishing Derby and CastingKids Competition Saturday, June 7 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m., for children 3-15. In addition to the CastingKids clinic and competition, youngsters can attend a knot tying demonstration; learn which knots are best for different test lines and how folks "grunt worms" for bait. Kids should bring a plain T-shirt, which will be decorated with free fish art, along with free fishing information and fun prizes. Refreshments will be available. For more information, contact the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center at 912-496-7836 or go to [www.fws.gov/okefenokee](http://www.fws.gov/okefenokee).

### **Indiana**

"Take A Kid Fishing" at **Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge** in Seymour on June 7 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. This event will feature special angling opportunities for youngsters in

a pond normally closed to fishing. It will include fishing, casting and fish art contests, door prizes, fishing lessons, craft activities, and lots of fun. Contact [Muscatatuck@fws.gov](mailto:Muscatatuck@fws.gov) or Donna Stanley at 812-522-4352.

### **Kansas**

**Quivira National Wildlife Refuge**, Stafford, holds its Kids' Fishing Day June 7 for children ages 14 and younger. The day starts at 9 a.m. with clinics on such topics as identifying fish, understanding the contents of a tackle box, boating safety, and knot tying. Fishing starts at approximately 10 a.m. Each child receives a certificate noting the size of their biggest fish caught. Lunch will be provided by the Friends of Quivira, and several door prizes will be announced. For more information, call 620-486-2393 or email [quivira@fws.gov](mailto:quivira@fws.gov) or the Friends of Quivira at [Friendsofquivira@hotmail.com](mailto:Friendsofquivira@hotmail.com).

### **Maine**

Some years, there are more than 300 participants at **Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge's** annual Children's Fishing Derby. This year, the refuge in Limestone will be stocking the fishing pond with 300 brook trout in advance of the event on June 7. Registration is from 8-9 a.m., when the fishing begins. There will be prizes for all, as well as refreshments. For more information, call 207-328-4634

**Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge's** 11th Annual Children's Fishing Derby will be held at Cobscook Bay State Park's Headquarters Pond in Baring, on June 14. Children 16 and under will find the pond has been well-stocked. Hot dogs, chips and drinks will be provided as will prizes in various categories. Participants must accompanied by a parent and bring their own tackle and bait. The derby runs from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. For more information, call 207-454-7161.

### **Maryland**

The 6th Youth Fishing Derby will be held at Hog Range at **Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge**, Cambridge, June 7 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Youth 15 years old and younger will compete for prizes in three age groups for the biggest fish, most fish and

most unusual fish. Kids can bring their own bait, lures and fishing poles or use those provided by the refuge. All registered youngsters receive a free hot dog, chips, soda and bag filled with fun things donated by sponsors, who also provided door prizes. Participants are invited to bring frogs for a frog jumping contest. Demonstrations and exhibits will abound. For more information contact Maggie Briggs at [maggie\\_briggs@fws.gov](mailto:maggie_briggs@fws.gov) or call 410-901-6124 or 410-228-2677.

**Patuxent Research Refuge**, Laurel, will hold their kids' fishing day on June 14. Fishing will be held from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. for youngsters 15 and under. The largest fish are weighed and measured, but refuge staff and volunteers enjoy taking photos of the kids and their catch, regardless of the size of the fish. Kids may fish in either Lake Reddington or Cash Lake, which has an accessible fishing pier as well as plenty of opportunities for shoreline fishing. For more information, visit <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/patuxent/events.html> or call 301-497-5766.

### **Minnesota**

**Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge's** Youth Fishing Day will be held on Saturday, May 31, from 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. The morning will be devoted to programs for some 200 kids from Minneapolis and St. Paul. After breakfast, the youngsters will be learn about fishing, bait and the like. After a lunch of hot dogs or fried walleye, open fishing will begin. The young anglers will fish for 90 minutes. Every member of the morning group will go home with a fishing rod, tackle, bait and pamphlets about fishing and the National Wildlife Refuge System. For information, call 952-854-5900.

### **New York**

**Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge**, Basom, holds its 17th Annual Youth Fishing Derby Saturday, June 7. The Derby is open to kids 17 and younger. Onsite registration starts at 7:30 a.m. and fishing is from 8 a.m. until noon. Free fishing related grab bags will be given to all registrants. Call 585-948-5445 for more information or visit <http://iroquoisnwr.fws.gov>.

## **North Dakota**

Children of all ages are invited to bring their parents and fish for fun at **Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge**, Dunn Center, on June 7 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A picnic lunch will be served, and door prizes will be given to all children. Only a limited number of rods and reels will be available; participants can bring their own fishing equipment. For more information, call 701-548-8110 or visit <http://www.fws.gov/lakeilo/>.

## **Oklahoma**

**Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge** in Jet hosts its National Fishing and Boating Week celebration Saturday, June 7, starting at 8:30 a.m. Kids 14 and younger can take part in the Annual Youth Fishing Derby at Bonham Pond. Fishing starts at 8:30 a.m. for children 9 and younger and will end at 10 a.m. (Children six and under must be accompanied by an adult.) At 10:30 a.m., the 10- to 14-year age group will fish. Contact the refuge for more information: 580-626-4794 or visit <http://www.fws.gov/saltplains/events.html>.

## **Tennessee**

**Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge**, Union City, holds a fishing rodeo Saturday, June 7 from 8 am – noon at the refuge's maintenance ponds. Kids 12 and younger fish free for prizes. Fishing will be allowed using live bait only. The youngsters will get free food, drinks and bait (while supplies last). Grand prizes will be given for the largest fish (length) for the following age categories: 6 and under, 7-9 years old, and 10-12 years old. Contact Information: 731-538-2481 or visit [tp://www.fws.gov/reelfoot/](http://www.fws.gov/reelfoot/).

## **Texas**

**Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge** will host the annual "Free Family Fishing Day" on June 7 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the Champion Lake Public Use Area. It is the only day in the year when no license is required to fish or crab in Texas public waters. Fishing poles and bait will be provided for those who need them. Experienced fishermen will help children with baiting hooks. All ages are invited. Bring a lawn chair, as seating is limited. Champion Lake is located at the end of CR 417, two miles east of FM 1409 in

southern Liberty County, approximately 10 miles south of Dayton. Call 936-336-9786 for more information.

**Vermont**

**Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge**, Swanton, sponsors a Fishing Derby for Kids Saturday, June 7, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. The derby is open to children 15 years of age and under. Call 802-868-4781 for more information.