



REEL FUN!

Fishing in Vermont State Parks

Fishing in Vermont State Parks Reel Fun for All Ages and Anglers!

Vermont has some of the highest-quality and most-diverse freshwater fishing opportunities in New England with great fishing to offer at most Vermont State Parks.

Forty-six of Vermont's state parks have fishing opportunities directly on site or within a short walk. And, the remaining six parks have fishing opportunities within a 5-mile drive.

We hope you will consider taking advantage of the phenomenal fishing that Vermont State Parks have to offer.

New to fishing? No fishing gear? No worries – we've got you covered!

Several Vermont State Parks offer "Let's Go Fishing" clinics where trained instructors teach and encourage beginners how to fish. The instructors teach fishing skills, how to use different types of tackle, the importance of good aquatic habitat, fishing ethics and fishing regulations.

Some Vermont State Parks are also participating in the "Reel Fun" initiative, a cooperative effort between Vermont Fish & Wildlife and Vermont State Parks to provide loaner fishing equipment—including rods, reels, line and tackle as well as guides to the local fishing—to help provide park visitors instant access to the sport of fishing.

Additionally, Vermont State Parks offer a range of rental boats for anglers to use including rowboats, canoes, kayaks and pedal boats.

Visit the contact station at your state park to find out more about how you can get started on a Vermont fishing adventure!



Tips on handling and releasing fish

While harvesting and eating freshly caught fish is an enjoyable part of the angling experience, catch and release angling can also be a rewarding pastime. In certain instances, regulations may actually require you to release your catch (see Vermont Fish & Wildlife Regulations Guide). Using the proper techniques when releasing fish will help ensure the fish will survive to be caught again. Here are some tips:

- Don't play the fish to complete exhaustion.
- Minimize the fish's time out of the water. If at all possible, keep the fish in the water while you remove the hook.
- Consider pinching down the barbs on your hooks to make hook removal much easier.
- If the fish is hooked deep in the throat, gills, or stomach, simply cut the line close to the fish's mouth. The fish may have a good chance of surviving, and the hook will eventually rust out.



Brighton State Park



www.vtfishandwildlife.com

www.vtstateparks.com

802-828-1000

0517/500





Fishing at Brighton State Park on Spectacle Pond

Lake Area: 102 acres **Lake Max. Depth:** 15 feet

Fish Species: Primary species include largemouth bass, brown bullhead, chain pickerel, yellow perch and various species of panfish, though brown trout and smallmouth bass are also caught occasionally.

Habitat: Spectacle Pond is a shallow, primarily soft-bottomed waterbody that is home to a range of warm water species, as well as brown trout, a cold water species. As the summer season progresses, a fair amount of aquatic vegetation, such as lily pads, will grow in different areas of the pond. This aquatic vegetation, in addition to other types of fish habitat like submerged trees and boulders, provides quality cover for predatory fish like bass and pickerel.

Park Fishing Tips: Try targeting largemouth bass, pickerel and panfish around shallow cover including lily pads, submerged weeds and submerged brush or tree limbs. Larger lures such as spinner baits, Texas-rigged soft plastics and top water lures are always good bets for bass and pickerel, while smaller offerings like a jighead tipped with a mini plastic tube or grub are great for catching panfish. However, a basic bobber and nightcrawler rig, or a small in-line spinner, are always great choices for a variety of fish species – both large and small. If you hope to connect with some of the more elusive brown trout or smallmouth bass that are less abundant in the pond, try fishing some of the pond's deeper shoreline spots or consider using a canoe or kayak to reach off-shore areas with cooler water and greater depths that are often favored by these two species during the heat of summer.

Nearby Fishing License Dealers: You can purchase a fishing license on site at the park office and at the Brighton Town Clerk in Island Pond, VT.

What kind of facilities do the parks have?

Vermont State Parks provide the perfect setting for many fun outdoor activities – hiking, wildlife watching, and of course tossing a line out and reeling in your next big catch. Most parks offer car-top launches for canoes and kayaks, and motorboat launching access areas are available across the state.

At Brighton State Park, you can put in your canoe or kayak right from shore or, for motorboats, head to the nearby Vermont Fish & Wildlife boating access area on Lakeshore Drive.

Whether you want to bring your boat and head out on local waters or fish from shore at a nearby fishing hole, Vermont State Parks have the facilities to make for a truly enjoyable stay.

What a deal!

The second Saturday in June is Free Fishing Day where anyone can fish anywhere in Vermont for free.

The rest of the summer, **you'll need a fishing license**, even at a State Park. Vermont offers inexpensive, short-term licenses for just a few bucks and kids under 15 can fish for free!

Or you can get a year-round fishing license that costs only as much as a tank of gas or a couple of movie tickets. But unlike gas or movie tickets, your fishing license lets you fish for a whole year, anywhere in the state, with just a single purchase. Buy and download it to your phone and you'll be all set.

See www.vtfishandwildlife.com to find out more.



Fishing licenses are available right at the contact office at many state parks and at authorized license agents. You can find a list of these online at www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

For more information

- For a full list of state parks, or trailered boat launches in Vermont State Parks, visit www.vtstateparks.com.
- For a complete fish stocking schedule, information on fishing regulations, or to buy a license online, visit www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

Or simply scan this QR code to buy a fishing license now.

