



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

235 Promenade Street | Providence, RI 02908 | 401.222.4700 | www.dem.ri.gov | @RhodeIslandDEM

CONTACT: Mike Healey, 401-258-0787
Michael.Healey@dem.ri.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Thursday, May 4, 2023

ANGLING FOR A DEAL? HOW ABOUT FREE FISHING WEEKEND MAY 6-7

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) announces it will hold its annual Free Fishing Weekend Saturday, May 6, and Sunday, May 7. DEM invites Rhode Islanders and visitors alike to fish in the state’s freshwaters on both days for all species of freshwater fish without a fishing license, which costs \$21 for residents and \$38 for nonresidents, or a trout conservation stamp, which costs \$5.50. [Visit the DEM website](#) for a complete list of stocked waters. The Division of Fish and Wildlife will continue to provide daily stocking information through the second and third stocking rounds this spring.

Established in 1995, the program provides an opportunity to encourage people to experience freshwater fishing as a new outdoor experience and highlight some of state’s premier freshwater fishing areas. Free Fishing Weekend does not apply to saltwater fishing or saltwater licenses.

Freshwater fishing regulations on size/creel (possession) limits apply on May 6 and May 7. The daily creel and possession limit for trout is five from April 8 through Nov. 30 and two from Dec. 1, 2023, through Feb. 29, 2024. The creel/possession limit for trout taken in the Wood River between Route 165 and Barberville Dam at Arcadia Road is two fish from the second Saturday in May through the last day of February 2024. The minimum size of all trout or charr species taken from the waters of the state is eight inches, measured from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail. The creel and possession limit for domestic or landlocked Atlantic salmon in the freshwaters of the state is two fish per day and shall be included in the daily limit for trout, salmon, or charr. The minimum size for domestic salmon is 11 inches. No person shall take Atlantic salmon from the Pawcatuck River downstream of the Potter Hill dam. The taking of any fish in the freshwaters of the state by net, seine, trawl, cast net or gill net, or similar device — except for a dip net for the landing of a fish caught by hook and line — and the taking of baitfish are prohibited. For more regulation information, please refer to [the 2023-24 Freshwater Fishing Abstract](#) and [the DEM website](#).



Established in 1995 as an opportunity to encourage Rhode Islanders to experience freshwater fishing as a new outdoor experience, Free Fishing Weekend has become a popular spring pastime.

Information about stocked freshwaters and size and creel limits for all freshwater fish species also is available in [the abstract](#) and on [the DEM website](#).

Anglers who catch a golden rainbow trout through May 8 will be eligible to receive a golden trout pin. Simply take a picture and email it to dem.fishri@dem.ri.gov for verification. Submissions must be received no later than Monday, May 8, 2023, to be eligible. One pin per person limit. The DEM Division of Fish and Wildlife's [Freshwater and Diadromous Fisheries team](#) has stocked the following freshwaters with golden rainbow trout:

- Barber Pond, South Kingstown
- Carbuncle Pond, Coventry
- Carolina Trout Pond, Richmond
- Eight Rod Farm Pond, Tiverton
- Meadow Brook Pond, Richmond
- Melville Ponds, Portsmouth
- Olney Pond, Lincoln Wood State Park, Lincoln
- Peck Pond, Burrillville
- Shippee Sawmill Pond, Foster
- Silver Spring Lake, North Kingstown
- Simmons Mill Pond, Little Compton
- Tucker Pond, South Kingstown
- Watchaug Pond, Charlestown
- Willett Pond, East Providence

The use of external felt soled or any natural or synthetic porous material capable of absorbing water in any freshwaters in Rhode Island is strictly prohibited. This includes any waters shared with adjacent states in which Rhode Island fishing regulations apply. It is prohibited to enter or exit a state boat ramp with any vegetation attached to any type of boat, motor, boat trailer, or any other conveyance or equipment to curtail the spread of invasive aquatic plants.

DEM also reminds anglers that wearing a life jacket while paddling in Rhode Island will no longer be optional; it will be required, [according to new boating safety regulations the agency announced on March 23](#). The new personal flotation device (PFD) regulation states that all operators and passengers of canoes, kayaks, sailboards, kiteboards, paddleboards, and any other paddle craft must always wear a United States Coast Guard (USCG)-approved PFD while underway regardless of age.

For more information or to purchase a fishing or hunting license, visit DEM's online licensing portal at [Rhode Island Outdoors \(RIO\)](#).

For freshwater fishing updates, follow DEM's outdoor education page [on Facebook here](#) or call 401-789-0281. For more information on DEM programs and initiatives, visit www.dem.ri.gov. Follow [DEM on Facebook](#), Twitter (@RhodeIslandDEM), or Instagram (@rhodeisland.dem) for timely updates.

###