



Carp-O-Rama 2019

Photo, John Burkhart

# FISH TALES

## Spring 2020

# NEBRASKA

- GAME  PARKS -

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## Spring 2020 Events?

### HOW TO KNOW IF AN EVENT IS BEING HELD OR CANCELLED

Given the current uncertainties of the Corona Virus, our intention is to continue event planning in hopes that this crisis will be short term. But, we will use the most recent recommendations to ensure public safety in regards to actually holding events.

**All coordinated events are canceled through May 31st.** We are hopeful that summer events are still possible.

To determine if a scheduled event is being held, there are two options.

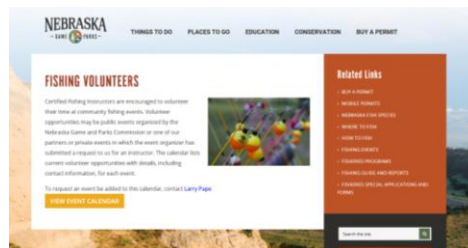
**The best method to determine the status of an event; Consult the Nebraska Game and Parks website activities calendar.**

The CALENDAR can be accessed on any page of the NGPC website it is located in the black bar on the top. The

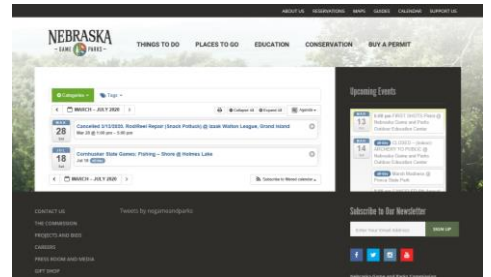
For the Volunteer Calendar of these and many more events see website: [outdoornebraska.gov/fishingvolunteers/](http://outdoornebraska.gov/fishingvolunteers/)

calendar shows every event that NGPC is having. You can simplify the view by unselecting all the categories except Fishing and Fishing Volunteers.

Or, search for Fishing Volunteers in the website search box. It will lead you to a page that looks like the image below.



The calendar dates page will look similar to the image below. If you chose, you can add activity categories by selecting the drop down box in the upper left-hand corner. Canceled events will be noted on the Calendar.



**A simple but not always available method is to contact me by phone or email.**

Feel free to call at any reasonable time. If I'm not available, leave a message (no text) and I will return your call as soon as possible. Emails are acceptable but I cannot guarantee a response within 24 hours, especially over the weekend. I do not use Facebook Messenger. [larry.pape@nebraska.gov](mailto:larry.pape@nebraska.gov) 402-471-5447

## OUTDOOR DISCOVERY AND EXPO PROGRAMS

**Cancelled. Platte River State Park ODP, April 15-16, Wednesday and Thursday**

**Cancelled Scottsbluff ODP** (at Wildcat Hills State Park), **April 28-29, Wednesday and Thursday.**

**Cancelled. Kearny State Park ODP and EXPO, May 7-8 School Days, May 9 Public Day**

## YOUTH FISHING INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

**YFI Training Dates:**

**Cancelled. March 29, Sunday, 2-6 PM,** Lincoln, Nebraska Outdoor Education Center

**Cancelled. April 26, Sunday, 2-6 PM,** Lincoln, Nebraska Outdoor Education Center

**Cancelled. May 6, Wednesday, 6-9 PM,** Kearney, Fort Kearney Historic Park Visitors Center.

## TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM

**Cancelled.** Fishing field trips for Trout in the Classroom are being held across the

state in from April 15<sup>th</sup> through May 24, 2020. [Grace.Gaard@nebraska.gov](mailto:Grace.Gaard@nebraska.gov)

## FAMILY FISHING EVENTS

We are very hopeful that after June 1<sup>st</sup>, we can hold our annual Family Fishing Events. If all goes well, 2020 will again include advanced fishing technique programs.

Family Fishing events are possible because Youth Fishing Instructors show up to make them happen. There is no formal sign-up or event tasks. We all just show up and help a family or two go fishing. It's simple, easy and rewarding!

**Discover Fly Fishing** programs will be held at: Bowling Lake, Lincoln - June 2 and July 16. Fontenelle Lake, Omaha - June 10. Kramer Lake. Bellevue – June 25. Mormon Island, Grand Island – July 29.

**Discover Catfishing** will be offered at Holmes Lake, Lincoln–Jun 16 and July 7.

## Where to find 2020 Family Fishing event details, locations, dates and times.

Call or email me and I will send you the **Printed Brochure.**

[larry.pape@nebraska.gov](mailto:larry.pape@nebraska.gov), 402-471-5447.

**Family Fishing NGPC Website.**

<http://outdoornebraska.gov/fishingevents/>

**Fishing Volunteer and Fishing Event Calendars.**

[www.outdoornebraska.gov/fishingvolunteers/](http://www.outdoornebraska.gov/fishingvolunteers/)

**Volunteer and Family Fishing Facebook.**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/familyfishingnebraskavolunteers>

## Staff Highlights

### Nolan Watkins (education assistant, summer 2019)

If you happen to be visiting Rock Creek Lake in southwest Nebraska, stop into the Hatchery and visit with Nolan. Nolan accepted a Hatchery Technician position with Nebraska Game and Parks and began work in March. The next time you see an NGPC fish stocking truck, wave, it may be Nolan.

### Natalie Luben

Natalie may be a familiar face as she is re-joining the Aquatic Education team after her departure in 2014. Natalie also worked with the Nebraska Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit conducting angler surveys on the Salt Valley Reservoirs around Lincoln. In addition she conducted angler surveys and participated in the Aquatic Invasive Species project at Lakes McConaughy and Ogallala. Natalie is an outdoors enthusiast and is frequently engaged in activities such as fishing, camping, hiking, boating, and canoeing. She also has a green thumb and spends a considerable amount of time in her yard maintaining, developing, and extending her flower gardens. She is also

an indoor flower gardening enthusiast and maintains a collection of Orchids and Violets. Natalie loves the companionship of pets and has a small menagerie consisting of two Cats, a Dog, two Ferrets, a Painted Turtle, a Bearded Dragon, two Water Dragons, and several fish tanks.

## State Fish Art Competition

### Entry deadline extended to April 30<sup>th</sup>

The contest was inspired in 1997 by a 5th grader's homework assignment. She discovered there was little information on all the different state-fish in the U.S. The annual international contest has since been around for over 20 years educating kids, teachers and parents on aquatic resources, conservation and fish.

Beginning this year, Nebraska became a sponsoring state for the competition. The competition is open to all school aged children of Nebraska. The fish subject of the art piece must be one of the official United States or Canadian Province fish. (Can you name Nebraska's State Fish? See the end of this article for the answer.) The student's artwork is judged based upon their age group and is to include a short essay about their subject fish. Nebraska's



first place artwork for each age group is then forwarded to the national competition held by Wildlife Forever.

The First Place entry from Nebraska in 2019 is by Julia McNamara. The Humuhumunukunukuapuaa is the state fish of Hawaii.



The State Fish Art entry deadline for 2020 has been extended to April 30<sup>th</sup> due to the Corvid19 crisis (normally March 30<sup>th</sup>). This will allow for school schedule disruptions, and also afford students an opportunity for an "out of school" activity.

Please forward this information to any student or teacher that may be interested. The following website is very thorough in describing how to enter. Please feel free to contact me with questions.

The channel catfish is the official fish of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Tennessee.

[www.StateFishArt.org](http://www.StateFishArt.org)  
[larry.pape@nebraska.gov](mailto:larry.pape@nebraska.gov)

## Cornhusker State Games, Shoreline Fishing Tournament July 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 AM – Noon, Holmes Lake, Lincoln

If you have ever wanted to participate in a fun, laid-back, no-pressure, anything-you-catch-counts fishing tournament, the Cornhusker State Games Shoreline Fishing Tournament is for you! Sign up soon for a discounted entry fee.

Each entry is eligible in two different competitions; Casting Accuracy where you will cast at hoop targets, and Largest Fish where your collection of fish count towards bronze, silver and gold medals.

Competitors are grouped by age category, 7-10, 11-15, 16-18, and 19 & over. During the Largest Fish competition, medals are awarded for the biggest stringers (based on length) of bass, bluegill, catfish and crappie. Any legal fishing method is allowed as long as you are located on the shoreline of the designated fishing area.



To enter the tournament, visit the website listed below. Note that the entry fee is not collected or received by Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The entry fee supports Cornhusker State Games to facilitate the Shoreline Fishing Tournament.

[www.cornhuskerstategames.com/sports/fishing-shore/](http://www.cornhuskerstategames.com/sports/fishing-shore/)  
[larry.pape@nebraska.gov](mailto:larry.pape@nebraska.gov)



## Take 'em Fishing 2020

Share the joy of fishing with a family member or friend!

Fishing is a great way to relax, have fun and enjoy the outdoors. And it's even better when you have company.

Our Take 'Em Fishing program encourages you to introduce – or reintroduce – someone to the sport of fishing.

Submit a photo of your adventure online at [OutdoorNebraska.org/TakeEmFishing](http://OutdoorNebraska.org/TakeEmFishing) and you'll be

entered to win a number of prizes, including outdoor gear and Nebraska state parks stays.

The program runs from April 15th through September 15th, 2020. Complete details can be found on our website.

More friends that fish = more possible fishing trips. And the more trips you take, and the more folks you introduce to fishing, the more times you can enter our prize giveaway.

So think about your family and friends – and Take 'Em Fishing with you!

*Note: The prizes for this summer will include two fishing kayaks donate by **Nebraska Fish and Game Association**. One of these kayaks will be specifically given to a Certified Youth Fishing Instructor that participates in the Take 'Em Fishing Nebraska program.*

## The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

*(Excerpt from Going Fishing, Chapter 9)*

The motivation for the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation had its origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with sportsman's concerns over the extinction and near extinction of several species. This model rests on two basic principles; Fish and Wildlife belong to all U.S. Citizens, and Fish and Wildlife should be managed so their populations are present forever.

**Who owns and takes care of the wild fish swimming In the Platte River, Lake McConaughy or any pond or stream in Nebraska?**

We do! The citizens of Nebraska are the owners and keepers of all the fish, frogs, crayfish and other aquatic wildlife that live in our waters. The responsibility to ensure equitable, sustainable and responsible use of wildlife resources also belongs to Nebraska citizens. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is tasked by the citizens of Nebraska to manage their wildlife.

**Who pays for the management of the aquatic wildlife swimming in Nebraska?**

We do! More specifically, the anglers that purchase fishing permits pay for the fisheries management practices used to ensure healthy and abundant aquatic wildlife. Anglers pay for the management of the parks and natural places in which our aquatic wildlife exists. Anglers are the citizens that make quality fisheries possible for all Nebraskans. The citizen-ownership-of-wildlife concept was established

early in our nation's development. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, it was recognized that many of the United States' animal species were under threat of extinction. To aid in the protection of animals, the Pitman-Robertson Act of 1937 placed an excise tax on firearms and ammunition that is solely used for the protection and restoration of animals and their habitats. Due to its popularity and success, in 1950 the Dingell-Johnson Act (also called Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration) placed an excise tax on sport fishing equipment (rods, reels, fishing line, lures, etc.). Sport Fish Restoration funds are returned directly to the states based upon a formula that includes the number of fishing permits sold. The reimbursement returned to Nebraska per permit is approximately equal to the value of each permit sold. This publication was paid for by Sport Fish Restoration funds specifically dedicated to Aquatic Education. *Added note:* The Youth Fishing Instructor Program is also possible due to this funding!



## Social Distancing and Fishing

**Dig your own bait.**

Now is obviously not the time to hold an EXPO with hundreds of kids. But, that does not mean we cannot maintain our own sanities and get out to fish for ourselves; if done wisely.

YFIs, let's not isolate ourselves. Share your fishing adventures on our Fishing Volunteer Facebook Page. [facebook.com/groups/familyfishingnebraskavolunteers](https://facebook.com/groups/familyfishingnebraskavolunteers)

Social distancing means that we will physically separate ourselves to avoid sharing pathogens. Stay home if you do not feel well or are high risk health-wise. Maintain a distance from others. A six foot fishing rod is a good gage. Avoid high traffic public places. Dig your own worms instead of buying them at the store. Do not shake hands, hug or kiss your fellow anglers...

We will *Take 'em Fishing* when we can!