

# P R E S S                      R E L E A S E

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May 4, 2015

## **Great Park Pursuit Connecticut State Parks Family Adventure Begins May 9<sup>th</sup>**

### **May 9<sup>th</sup> is “Free Fishing Day” in Connecticut**

*No fishing license will be required – Excellent opportunity for everyone to try fishing for free*

May 9<sup>th</sup> is a great day to be outdoors with your family – first day of Connecticut’s **Great Park Pursuit, Connecticut State Parks Family Adventure** and **Free Fishing Day** across the state.

A “Family Fishing Day” is scheduled as part of Connecticut’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection’s (DEEP) “**Great Park Pursuit Connecticut State Parks Family Adventure**” at Gay City State Park, Hebron. Open to families and children, this free event will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and will include fishing on the pond, fish sampling, fish stocking, a fish fry, and fun activities for all ages.

In addition, the Hammonasset Chapter of Trout Unlimited will host its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual “Youth Fishing Day” concurrently at Gay City State Park and participants will rotate through three different stations – Fly Casting, Fly Tying, and River Ecology.

“Free Fishing Day is a great opportunity for experienced anglers to encourage family members and friends to join them outdoors for a day of fishing – no fishing license required, open to residents and non-residents alike, said DEEP Commissioner Robert Klee. “Tying it in with the Great Park Pursuit gives families a chance to fish side-by-side with expert anglers for an exciting fishing experience in one of Connecticut’s 107 state parks. Along with Great Park Pursuit participants, we also hope that visitors will come to our state and try out the many fishing opportunities Connecticut has to offer.”

The **Great Park Pursuit** is a part of the agency’s **No Child Left Inside®** initiative, now celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year, focusing on introducing families to the outdoors, building the next generation of environmental stewards and showcasing Connecticut’s State Parks and Forests. The Family Fishing event is free and no registration is required. For more information on “Family Fishing Day” email [diane.joy@ct.gov](mailto:diane.joy@ct.gov) or call DEEP at 860-424-3973. More information on the “**The Great Park Pursuit Family Fishing Day**” can be found at [www.NoChildLeftInside.org](http://www.NoChildLeftInside.org), email [diane.joy@ct.gov](mailto:diane.joy@ct.gov) or call DEEP State Parks at (860) 424-3200.

“The Great Park Pursuit has been so much fun over the past nine years – seeing families come back year after year and watching their children grow has been heartwarming and it is wonderful to welcome new families who want to learn about the outdoors and recreational adventures that await them in Connecticut’s State Parks and Forests” added Commissioner Klee.

There are a number of fishing events in addition to the Great Park Pursuit that are scheduled to take place on **"Free Fishing Day."**

Other fishing events for this coming Saturday include:

- **Day on the Farmington River, Whittemore State Recreation Area, East River Road, Barkhamsted, CT** – Come enjoy a day on the river with the Farmington Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited beginning at 10:00 a.m. Fish, hang out and have lunch. If you are new to the sport, there will be plenty of experienced anglers there – ready and willing to take you on the river. If there is inclement weather please check Farmington Trout Unlimited website at: <http://fvtu.org/?p=593>
- **Merwin Meadows, Wilton CT- Fly Fishing Clinic.** The Mianus Chapter of Trout Unlimited is offering a free Fly Fishing Clinic at Merwin Meadows Park in Wilton between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Fly casting, knot tying, aquatic insect identification and a late barbecue lunch are on the schedule. More information can be found at [www.mianustu.org](http://www.mianustu.org). For reservations email [jyates@mianustu.org](mailto:jyates@mianustu.org) or call 203-216-7078.
- **Mirror Lake, Hubbard Park, Meriden, CT- Carl D'Addaraio Children's Fishing Derby.** Annual children's fishing event sponsored by the Meriden Rod and Gun Club and the City of Meriden with prizes in various age groups for biggest fish and most fish caught. Each child also gets a free hotdog and soft drink. Some of the top prizes include bicycles. This event is rain or shine and registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and the derby starts at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon. For more information contact Mike Roberts at [michaelroberts@mindspring.com](mailto:michaelroberts@mindspring.com)

Anglers should be aware that although no licenses are required, all other Connecticut fishing laws and regulations apply on "Free Fishing Day." Anglers are advised to check fishing regulations in the 2015 Connecticut Angler's Guide, found online at [www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide](http://www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide). Print versions of the guides are available at more than 350 locations statewide or by contacting DEEP's Inland Fisheries Division (860-424-FISH).

Additional fishing and fisheries related information can be found on the DEEP web site at: [www.ct.gov/deep/fishing](http://www.ct.gov/deep/fishing). Fisheries and Wildlife can be found directly on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CTFishandWildlife](http://www.facebook.com/CTFishandWildlife).