



# 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.



## Stillwater State Park



[www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com)

[www.vtstateparks.com](http://www.vtstateparks.com)

802-828-1000

0517/500





## Fishing at Stillwater State Park on Lake Groton

**Lake Area:** 422 acres **Lake Max Depth:** 35 feet

**Fish Species:** Smallmouth and largemouth bass, chain pickerel, yellow perch, brown bullhead and various panfish.

**Habitat:** Lake Groton features clear water and a primarily hard bottom consisting of sand, boulders and gravel or cobble, though softer bottom is found in some of the lake's inlets and outlets. Boat docks and the lake's many boulders and rock piles provide shady ambush spots that predatory fish, such as bass and pike, like to wait in to ambush their next meal. Additionally, the lake does have some native aquatic vegetation that provides habitat for the lake's fish species.

**Park Fishing Tips:** Fishing a clear, northern waterbody like Lake Groton can be simple and very productive. Present your lure or live bait of choice with accurate casts toward any visible underwater cover such as rocks, weeds, dock posts, laydown brush or tree limbs etc. Also fish near any sharp depth changes – such as where deeper water might cut in towards the shoreline or a point of land. A basic nightcrawler and bobber rig is tough to beat for the various fish found in Lake Groton, but if you want to fish with lures, consider baits with more natural colors and finishes that fit in with the clear, rocky bottom of the lake. For example, consider fishing a subdued brown or green-pumpkin jig on the bottom to imitate bottom-dwelling crayfish, or try a metallic-bladed spinner to mimic small, fleeing baitfish. Remember, fishing is often about “matching the hatch” and making your lure and presentation imitate the prey as closely as possible!

**Nearby Fishing License Dealers:** You can purchase a fishing license at the park office, at Seyon Lodge State Park or Ricker Pond State Park in Groton, or online at [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com).

## 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.

Stillwater State Park has a gravel boat launch onsite at for camper use. Boulder Beach State Park offers small vessel launching. Both launches are open only during Vermont State Park season between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

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](http://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](http://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](http://www.vtstateparks.com).
- For a complete fish stocking schedule, information on fishing regulations, or to buy a license online, visit [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com).

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

