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Plenty of catches for Father's Day

Just because meteorologists are calling for sunshine this weekend doesn't mean the fish will be on the bite. The only way to truly find out is to test the waters; and since Sunday is Father's Day, take Pop with you.

Whether the old boy prefers saltwater fishing to sweet or vice versa, there is no shortage of fish. On the salty side, everything from striped bass and bluefish to porgies and fluke are there for the taking, while trout, salmon and largemouth bass have been entertaining freshwater anglers both in New York and New Jersey. And, should you decide to fish New Jersey waters this weekend you won't have to purchase a fishing license. New Jersey's "Free Fishing Days" are Saturday and Sunday, and if you're not sure where to go, visit www.njfishandwildlife.com/ffd.htm.

New York's free fishing days are June 28-29.

If you're headed to the Garden State, think about setting the hook on salmon. Since 2006, the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife has been stocking landlocked salmon in Lake Aeroflex in Sussex County, Waywayanda Lake in Passaic County and, more recently, Tilcon Lake in Morris County.

The daily creel limit is two at 12 inches or larger.

Regardless of where you go, waters are going to be stained and that includes Long Island's Carman, Nissequogue and Connetquot rivers. Although the Connetquot

hatchery remains closed, the DEC did stock more than 2,500 brown trout earlier this year – not that you can keep any. The historic river is strictly catch and release.

Without a doubt upstate streams will be roily, but even when waters are muddy, trout can be caught on spinning lures such as Phoebe's, Panther Martins or Mepps.

I don't know if lure selection is on the curriculum for Saturday's free fishing clinic at Deep Pond Schiff Scout Reservation in Wading River, but you can call Ann Ezelius at (631) 444-0283 to register and find out.

A similar clinic will be held during the fifth annual Raritan Bay Festival at Conference House Park, Pittsville St., Staten Island on June 28, from 11:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Contact Melissa Cohen at (718) 482-4022.

Speaking of clinics, the Beaverkill Angler in Roscoe is offering free Orvis Fly Fishing 101 classes every Saturday and Sunday in July beginning at 10 a.m. To register call (607) 498-5194.

And, should you spot any illegal activities on field or stream, call (631) 444-0250 or 1-800-TIPP-DEC. That's how the DEC's Division of Law Enforcement nailed a commercial boat captain and his crew last August for illegally spear fishing in waters off Valiant Rock in Block Island Sound.

According to Region 1 Director Pete Scully, the boat captain recently pleaded guilty to unlawfully harvesting 926.5 pounds of striped bass and was ordered to pay a \$15,000 fine.



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