



Orange County News

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District Attorney David Hoovler Announces the Fourth Orange County District Attorney's Office Youth Fishing Derby

"Get Hooked on Fishing, Not Drugs"

Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, announced the launch of the fourth District Attorney's Office Youth Fishing Derby. The Derby will run from April 1, 2024 through September 2, 2024 and is open to children between the ages of four and eighteen who are children or grandchildren of Orange County residents.

The fishing is great in Orange County, so give it a try! In 2015, almost 45,000 fishing licenses were sold in Orange County. That year, of the 62 counties in New York State, only two counties sold more fishing licenses than Orange County. Last year, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation stocked about 38,880 trout in Orange County waters. In addition, the Orange County Federation of Sportsmen stocked trout in waters with public fishing access. There are 86 named lakes in Orange County and hundreds more unnamed lakes and ponds that contain several species of fish of interest to the angler. Orange County also has many miles of rivers and streams to fish as well. The Hudson, Delaware, Neversink, Ramapo, and Wallkill Rivers and several small streams have public access to good fishing. If you do not own a boat, no problem. There is plenty of shore fishing in many state, county, and town parks in Orange County.

Fish, large and small, call Orange County home. There are large striped bass in the Hudson River during the spring run. The New York State freshwater record striped bass, which weighed 60 pounds, was caught in the Hudson River in Orange County in 2014. Greenwood Lake has muskellunge, walleye, and bass ready to test your skills as an angler. The Wallkill River is loaded with smallmouth bass and rock bass. Try small topwater lures here for exciting action! If you are a novice or first-time angler, Orange County lakes, ponds, and streams are heavily populated with panfish that are easy to catch. Bluegills, pumpkinseeds, yellow perch, bullheads, and crappies are found in almost all the lakes and ponds in the county. Try worms under a bobber using light tackle and do not be surprised if a large bass or pickerel grabs your bait instead! Try Rutgers, Moodna, or Woodbury creeks for trout. Flies, small spinner baits, worms, or salmon eggs are used to catch rainbow and brown trout in those streams.

Fishing teaches many life lessons, such as patience and how to deal with success and failure. Several U.S. presidents were accomplished fishermen and used fishing to relax from the stress and responsibilities of their office. Participants will also learn to enjoy and respect nature and, by spending more time with family and friends, will alleviate some of the boredom and anxiety caused by the stress in life. It is that boredom and anxiety that has led so many of our young people to turn to drug use or gang activity. Sports and other worthwhile activities can help deter

young people from those bad choices. The Derby will encourage our young people to go fishing and enjoy the outdoors and hopefully avoid drug use.

The Fishing Derby is part of District Attorney Hoovler's community outreach program. This contest began during COVID-19 and continues to help young anglers make good choices. Participation in fishing skyrocketed with New Yorkers during the COVID-19 crisis, because that activity could be enjoyed at almost any age, in the outdoors with friends and family, while social distancing. The Fishing Derby will encourage the youth of Orange County to participate in an exciting outdoor sport that can be enjoyed for a lifetime. Remember, any fish entered in the Derby, big or small, has an equal chance to win a prize for the contestant.

CONTEST RULES: Entry into the Youth Fishing Derby is free. All fish entered in the contest must be legally caught from anywhere in New York State. Contestants must adhere to all current New York State fishing regulations. Fresh and saltwater fish are eligible to be entered into the contest. To enter, email a photo of the contestant holding the fish, as well as the child's first name and an adult contact phone number, to dafishingcontest@gmail.com. Each angler can enter up to three fish during the contest, to have multiple chances to win. Ten winners will be drawn at random from all entries received during the contest dates. Each angler is limited to one prize package. All photos entered in the Youth Fishing Derby becomes the property of the Derby.

PRIZE PACKAGE: Each winner will receive an Orange County District Attorney's Office limited t-shirt and a Mystery Tackle Box Bass Fishing Kit. Bonus prize: The first winner drawn will also receive a \$100 gift card. Prizes can be picked up at the District Attorney's Office by the winners in Goshen or will be mailed to them at the conclusion of the contest.

"I wish good luck to all our young anglers," said District Attorney Hoovler, "and I hope that you enjoy your time in our great outdoors. Please always remember safety! Wear a life vest when in a boat or near deep water. Be careful with hooks and other fishing tackle. Look where you cast and behind you, to avoid hooking someone by mistake. Remember sunglasses to protect your eyes from both the sun and from hooks that might pop loose from a hooked fish. Remember that good anglers don't litter, because it hurts our wildlife habitat and can lead to the loss of public access for fishing. Have fun and stay safe, and maybe I'll see you on the water this year!"

DA Hoovler helping the Orange County Federation of Sportsmen to stock trout