

Super Sweet Water Fun

Tom Schlichter, Guest Author

Trout Fishing Hot Spots

Upper Twin Pond (Wantagh)

Massapequa Reservoir

Belmont Lake State Park

Argyle Lake and Carlls River (Babylon)

Twin Pond (Centerport)

Sayville Mill Pond (Sayville)

East and West Lakes (Patchogue)

Upper and Lower Yaphank Lake

Carmans River and Hards Lake (Southaven County Park)

Randall Pond (Ridge)

Kahlers Pond (East Moriches)

Laurel Lake (Mattituck)

Bass Fishing Hot Spots

Fort Pond (Montauk)

Fresh Pond (Hither Hills State Park)

Peconic River/Forge Pond (Riverhead)

Swan Pond (Calverton)

Patchogue Lake

Artist Lake (Middle Island)

Lake Ronkonkoma

Blydenburgh Park (Smithtown)

Southards Pond (Babylon)

Hempstead Lake

South Pond (Rockville Center)

Grant Park (Hewlett)

Editor's Note: Freshwater bodies in Southampton township are open to residents and anglers accompanied by a registered Southampton fishing guide. Anglers must apply catch-and-release techniques for all largemouth bass caught in Nassau County. See back cover for information about freshwater fishing access. The author does not endorse the trademark brands mentioned. Visit www.outdoortom.com for additional information about freshwater fishing

Long Island's freshwaters offer anglers a shot at monster largemouth bass, trophy trout, aggressive pickerel, giant carp, bullhead catfish and first-rate panfishing. Ranging in size from quaint millponds and trickling streams, to the substantial Lake Ronkonkoma, these water bodies provide fishing action that is sure to put a smile on your face. Best of all, freshwater access is abundant and many places offer at least limited, if not full access to the shoreline.

Monster Trout

Undoubtedly, the trouting jewels of the freshwater fishing frontier are contained within the parklands that surround the Connetquot and Nissequogue Rivers. Fishing at both locations is with 'flies' only. Beadhead patterns hold an edge over unweighted flies because they can settle deep into those wonderful pockets and runs. Reservations are required to fish in these parks and there is a fee. Both locations offer wheelchair/senior access and anglers can fish within a short distance from the parking facility.

Super Stockies

While premiere trout fishing is within the boundaries of the parks mentioned previously, there are opportunities to enjoy hot freshwater action in more than 30 stocked lakes and ponds that should not be overlooked. These waters are stocked with rainbow and brown trout each year.

Anglers fly fish in these waters, and many people also enjoy the ease of spin-fishing. Trout take a wide variety of lures including small in-line spinners, tiny plugs and 1/32 to 1/4 oz gold, silver or red/white spoons. Anglers preferring to use natural baits can try a juicy night crawler, wax worm, giant mealworm, live killie or shiner, corn kernel, or a pinch of Berkley PowerBait®.

On the Bassin' Front

Largemouth bass are renown for their competitive spirit. Most fish are in the 1 to 3 lbs class and a surprising number of 4 to 6 lbs fish are caught each year. Occasional catches of 7 to 8 lbs fish keep anglers hopeful that the next cast will land that "fish of a lifetime". It is likely the new State record bigmouth bass may come from Nassau or Suffolk County, and it could be a fish weighing almost 12 lbs!

The beauty of bass fishing on Long Island is that most lakes, ponds and watering holes offer a good chance to catch fish. The stocked



Photo by Tom Schlichter

trout ponds mentioned also contain a substantial bass population, and there are numerous ponds that support bass and panfish communities on Long Island. As a general rule, if a hole contains water, there is a good chance that bass and sunfish — and probably pickerel, bullhead, carp, perch and crappie, as well, are living in it! A Hagstrom® Atlas is a good investment for serious anglers to locate these freshwater bodies.

The Peconic River is a productive stretch of bass fishing real estate — Forge Pond and Upper Mill Pond in particular. The NYS DEC describes the area as "one of New York's premier bassing waters." Shallow and weedy, the Peconic is best fished with plastic worms rigged weedless style, and jig n' pig combos. A skilled angler can raise harrowing topwater smashes on twitch baits, Hula Popper, Jitter-Bug, Zara Spook or similar surface plugs.

Plan a trip to Lake Ronkonkoma if you prefer deep water bassing. Topping 243 acres with a maximum depth of 64 feet, it is Long Island's largest lake and a great place to fish deep diving plugs and tube lures. This lake (along with Fort Pond in Montauk) has been stocked with walleye over the years, and anglers presently catch fish up to 7 lbs on deep diving plugs, including Bill Lewis® Rat-L-Trap and Rapala® Shad Rap.

Practice Catch & Release

Long Island's freshwaters are small and quaint, and they provide a unique and intimate fishing experience. Please remember the importance of catch and release when you fish these waters, and release most of the fish that you catch to ensure future generations of anglers will be able to experience the same fine action that you enjoy today.