



CASTAWAY

Go online to get fish on your line

TROUT season officially opened yesterday in Pennsylvania. It's another sign that winter is in



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InSites

our rear-view mirror and it's time to get outside to enjoy the nicer days ahead. We live in an area where you're never too far from a fishing hole. The mountains around here are full of lakes, ponds and streams that are annually stocked with trout. Even if you live in downtown

Scranton, you're only a short walk from the Lackawanna River, which offers plenty of spots to cast a line.

If you're already hooked on fishing and want to find new places to try, or if you're looking to test the waters for the first time, takemefishing.org is a good resource. The website is full of information for anglers of all ages and abilities. The site is divided into two broad sections: How to Fish & Boat, and Where to Fish & Boat. Each section is divided into numerous subsections covering many aspects of fishing and boating.

The how-to resources include articles, images and videos on

beginner skills such as getting gear, tying knots, baiting, casting, hooking, landing and cleaning fish. There are articles on freshwater, saltwater, ice and fly fishing. Numerous species of fish are identified using detailed illustrations. The how-to articles for boating cover basics, such as types of boats, parts of boats, a glossary of terms, boating equipment, safety and navigation rules. There are links that allow you to get fishing and boating licenses and registrations, as well as review the rules and regulations, from all the states. As you dig deeper in the site, you'll find more in-depth information on fishing for specific species, types of bait and lures and how to use them, the best times to fish, different strategies and techniques, and specialized equipment. There also are stories and videos from

anglers describing the positive changes in their lives, such as peace of mind or stronger family bonds, that fishing fosters.

The main feature of the Where to Fish & Boat section is a large, interactive map of the United States. Markers on the map identify fishing spots, boat launches, bait and tackle shops, charter services and marinas. Clicking on a marker brings up information on the species of fish you can catch there, directions to the location and often photos of people with their catches from the spot. You can pan and zoom around the map to explore areas all over the country.

The site has a clean and contemporary design. The typography, images and videos are all of good quality. The navigation is decent but not exactly straightforward. Sometimes I'll find myself

going deeper and deeper into the site and uncovering new features and information, and other times I'll find myself ending up back where I was before. So it's not always easy to find exactly what you're looking for, but it's usually a pleasant trip as you search. Some of the articles don't appear initially to go deep enough into their subject to fully explain a technique, but often there's a video, link to another site or article, or more information elsewhere on the site that explains the subject in more detail.

Takemefishing.org can't compare with learning to fish by spending seasons on the water with your dad or grandpa — or your mom or grandma — but it can help enrich that experience.

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