



Orange County News

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Contact: Ryan Greenbaum
845.615.3657, 845.415.0868c

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

"Get Hooked on Fishing, Not Drugs"

Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler on Friday, March 6, 2026, announced the launch of the sixth Orange County District Attorney's Office Youth Fishing Derby. The Derby will run from April 1, 2026, through September 14, 2026, 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! Every year thousands of fishing licenses are sold in Orange County. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation stocks about 38,000 trout yearly in Orange County waters. In addition, the Orange County Federation of Sportsmen stock trout in several 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 in as well. The Hudson, Delaware, Neversink, Ramapo, and Wallkill Rivers and several small streams have public access for fishing. If you do not own a boat, it's no problem. There is plenty of access to shore fishing in several parks located throughout Orange County! Harriman State Park and Bear Mountain State Park have good fishing opportunities for many species of fish. Winding Hills Park run by Orange County is also a popular destination for anglers.

Fish, large and small, call Orange County home. Large striped bass are in the Hudson River during the spring run. A New York State record freshwater striped bass, which weighed 60 pounds, was caught in the Hudson River on a blood worm in Orange County in 2014. Greenwood Lake has muskellunge, walleye, channel catfish and other fish 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 every lake and pond in the county. Try worms under a bobber using light tackle and do not be surprised if a largemouth bass or chain pickerel grabs your bait instead! Try Rutgers, Woodbury, and Moodna Creeks for trout. Flies, small spinner baits, worms, or salmon eggs are used to catch brook, brown and rainbow trout in these 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 learn to enjoy and respect nature and, by spending more time with family and friends, 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. This contest will encourage our young people to go fishing and enjoy the outdoors and hopefully avoid drug use and other poor choices.

The Youth Fishing Derby is part of District Attorney Hoovler's Community Outreach Program. This contest began during COVID and continues to help young anglers make good choices today. Participation in fishing is popular with New Yorkers since it is an activity that can be enjoyed at almost any age, outdoors with friends and family. The Youth 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 size fish entered in the contest, big or small, has an equal chance of winning 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 photos 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 contest become the property of the Orange County District Attorney's Office Youth Fishing 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.

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