



# Fish Tales

## Spring 2015

**NEBRASKA**  
— GAME  PARKS —

## Spring is here, along with many opportunities to volunteer!

*Are you itching to feel those sunfish spines poking the palm of your hand? We hope so! Please consider contributing your time and expertise at the following events. Unless otherwise stated, contact Lindsey if you would like to attend an event.*

### Trout in the Classroom Field Days

We need Instructors to assist anglers at the pond and help students cast fly rods or tie flies. Students will fish in 45 minute rotations with up to 30 students fishing at a time and up to four rotations of students. All events are 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

### Aksarben Aquarium in Gretna

Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>  
Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup> (10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.)  
Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>  
Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> (9:30 a.m. – noon)

### Water Interpretive Center in Ogallala

Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Cops and Bobbers** The Columbus Police Department is hosting their second event on **Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>** from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. Contact Jeff Uhl at [jeff.uhl@columbusne.us](mailto:jeff.uhl@columbusne.us) or at 402-564-3201 if interested.

**Fishing For All** Among other activities, special needs middle- and high-school students from

Millard Public Schools will have the opportunity to fish at Two Rivers SRA. We need Instructors to assist anglers at the pond. Some students will need assistance with handling and operating a fishing pole. The event takes place **Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>** from 8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Free Fishing and Park Entry Day** takes place **Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**. The following parks typically host fishing activities. Please contact the park directly for more information.

Alexandria	Fort Robinson
Fremont Lakes	Louisville
Mahoney	Platte River SP
Ponca SP	Two Rivers
Victoria Springs	Fort Kearny

**Step out for Seniors Walkathon** On Free Fishing Day, the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging is hosting a fundraising event at Benson Park in Omaha. They would like to have a fishing expert on hand to provide guidance and information to anyone interested in doing some fishing. The event takes place **Saturday, May 16<sup>st</sup>** 10 a.m. – noon.

**Fishing with Arnold Elementary** At this annual event, we fish with nearly 300 second and third graders at Bowling Lake in Lincoln. The event takes place **Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>** 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Fishing Is Fun Clinic & Water Expo**, hosted annually at Lake Ogallala. Instructors are needed to help with stations in the morning and with mentored fishing in the afternoon. The event takes place **Saturday, May 30** from

8:30 a.m. – 2 a.m. MDT. Contact Scott Eveland at [scotteveland@nebraska.gov](mailto:scotteveland@nebraska.gov) or 308-289-0017 if interested.

**Kids Summer program in McCook** Mid-Plains Community College is hosting a fishing day at the city pond and is looking for an Instructor to teach casting and fish identification and take a group of 8 – 14 year olds fishing. This will be a 2- hour event on **Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup>**.

### LINDSEY CHIZINSKI

[lindsey.chizinski@nebraska.gov](mailto:lindsey.chizinski@nebraska.gov)  
402-471-5591

### MATT GRUNTORAD

[matthew.gruntorad@nebraska.gov](mailto:matthew.gruntorad@nebraska.gov)  
402-471-5447

### TORI MULLINS

[victoria.mullins@nebraska.gov](mailto:victoria.mullins@nebraska.gov)  
402-471-5591

### LARRY PAPE

[larry.pape@nebraska.gov](mailto:larry.pape@nebraska.gov)  
402-471-5447

**Do you need help with an event?**  
Contact Lindsey to put you in touch with other Fishing Instructors OR join the Facebook group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FamilyFishingNebraskaVolunteers/>

## Family Fishing Expands

Another summer of Family Fishing Nights is about to begin and we can't wait to see everybody. We'll be changing it up this year by adding 13 new locations to our regular schedule. Below you'll find a complete list of all 41 events, so mark your calendars and plan to attend! Additionally, a map of all of the event locations and dates can be viewed on the Nebraska Game and Parks website at:

[outdoornebraska.org/familyfishing](http://outdoornebraska.org/familyfishing). As always, these and other events are posted on the Family Fishing Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/familyfishingnebraska>.

**All events take place from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. unless otherwise stated.**

<b>Alliance</b>	Lainge Lake	7/22
<b>Auburn</b>	Rotary Island Optimist Lake	7/7
<b>Broken Bow</b>	Melham Park	7/29
<b>Columbus</b>	Pawnee Park East	6/3
<b>Curtis</b>	Arrowhead Meadows Golf Course	7/14
<b>Falls City</b>	Stanton Lake	6/4
<b>Fremont</b>	Johnson Lake	6/9
<b>Grand Island</b>	Mormon Island Lake #1	6/25 • 8/6
<b>Holdrege</b>	North Park Pond	7/15
<b>Kearney</b>	Cottonmill	6/24
<b>Lincoln</b>	Bowling Lake	6/17 • 7/21
	Holmes Lake	5/28 • 7/8 • 8/12
	Carp-O-Rama @ Branched Oak *	6/20
<b>Norfolk</b>	Skyview Lake	6/2
<b>North Platte</b>	North Platte City Pond	6/23
	Carp-O-Rama @ Maloney *	7/11
<b>Omaha</b>	Benson Park	6/10 • 7/22
<b>O'Neill</b>	Carney Park	7/28
<b>Ord</b>	Auble Pond	7/30
<b>Papillion</b>	Halleck Park	5/27 • 7/9 • 8/11
	Walnut Creek	8/16
<b>Pawnee City</b>	City Pond Park	8/5
<b>Scottsbluff</b>	Terry's Pit **	4/27 • 6/21 • 8/23
	Zoo Pond **	5/17 • 7/20 • 9/20
<b>Seward</b>	Independence Landing	8/4
<b>Sidney</b>	Legion Park Pond	7/21
<b>S. Sioux City</b>	Crystal Cove	5/26
<b>Sutton</b>	Clarks Pond	7/16
<b>West Point</b>	Neligh Park Lake	5/27
<b>York</b>	Recharge Lake	8/13

\* 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

\*\* 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Find a summary report of participation at 2014 Family Fishing Nights at <https://fishingnebraska.wordpress.com/volunteers/resources>.

## Incentives Update

Visit <https://fishingnebraska.wordpress.com/volunteers/resources> to view updates to the Youth Fishing Instructor Policy Manual.

After reviewing expenditures on the gift card incentives program in a two year trail period, we find it necessary to revise the program to better fit our budget. Changes include the following: gift card values cannot exceed \$50 in a calendar year, and hours cannot be accrued for more than two calendar years. The value and dispersal of gift cards remain at the discretion of the Youth Fishing Program and are not guaranteed.

You are encouraged to review the Policy Manual in its entirety, particularly if it has been some time since you attended a workshop.

## Fishing Activity Trailer stationed in Columbus

The fifth and newest Fishing Activity Trailer, made possible through a generous donation from Fishing Instructor Mary Ann Niemoth of Hastings, rolled out of Eagle Scout Gabe Pribil's garage in January. It is stationed at the Police Department in Columbus under the stewardship of Fishing Instructor Jeff Uhl.

Fishing Activity Trailers located in Scottsbluff, North Platte, Kearney, Columbus and Lincoln are available to Certified Fishing Instructors and NGPC Staff for any type of fishing event. Reserve a trailer by submitting a trailer request to Matt Gruntorad. To check availability and download a trailer request form, go to the *Trailer* tab at [fishingnebraska.wordpress.com](http://fishingnebraska.wordpress.com).



*Gabe Pribil, of Lincoln, works on construction of the interior shelving in the newest Fishing Activity Trailer, stationed in Columbus.*



## Instructor Spotlight: Dave Hoffman

*Interviewed by Tori Mullins*

**What is the most exciting aspect of fishing for you? Why?**

Fishing (and camping) with my grandkids (a grandson, 3 years old and two granddaughters, five and ten years old). We are not just fishing, we

are creating family memories. Why? Life seems to pass so quickly, and if you blink you will miss it. You just need to pack up the kids and grandkids in the car and get out and experience life in the great outdoors.

**As a Fishing Instructor, what is your most rewarding moment?**

The most rewarding moments at an event is seeing the excitement when a young child catches their first fish. They can feel the fish pulling on their line and the excitement begins. I teach catch and release after pictures are taken. Parents usually bring their camera, and I always try to get the whole family in the picture. This creates great family memories. I would like to share two other rewarding moments; they were helping at an event with special need kids and also senior citizens.

**What advice might you give to a newly Certified Fishing Instructor?**

Be prepared and have fun. When a fish is caught, I take time to talk about the fish and explain body parts and functions. I always try to get kids comfortable handling worms, most times just holding the worm in their hand. I got my younger granddaughter comfortable by telling her to pick up a worm and set it in Grandma's lap. You should have seen the look on my granddaughter's face taking the worm over to Grandma. Make sure Grandma is not your ride back home.

**If you could fish any body of water in the world, which one would it be and what would you fish for?**

I would like to go to any body of water where the fish are biting. I fished at a private lake with my kids and grandkids and the largemouth bass would hit your line as soon as you put the line back in the water. The bass would come up out of the water splashing and the kids experience a very active fish on the end of the line.

**Tell me about the one that got away! (Remember, we're talking fish.)**

My experience is not so much the one that got away but the one I didn't catch. Last summer fishing with my grandson, he had just received a new, small kids fishing pole, and he and Grandpa went fishing at Pawnee Lake. We were both sitting along the shoreline enjoying the evening. I had two fishing poles all set up for catching that big trophy fish, and my grandson was sitting next to me with his little fishing pole with a small piece of hotdog on the hook. After a short time, my grandson had a bite and he starts bringing in his line just cranking the little handle on his little rod and reel just as fast as he could. He landed a 3.75 lb. largemouth bass, about 20 inches. My grandson gave me this look like 'Grandpa, that's how you catch a fish.' Life doesn't get any better.

**What is your favorite angling method?**

I like using my small open reel with my short ultra-lite pole. I have a friend that makes small artificial bait that works quite well in catching a mess of crappies.

**And lastly, what is your favorite fish?**

I enjoy catching rainbow trout. They are such a colorful fish and are just fun to catch.

## Winter Events

Rod and reel maintenance days were a blast this year. With hardworking crews, we cleaned and restrung nearly 300 fishing poles in record time. Special thanks to Jim Schmuck for repairing a box of old Zebco 33's - those reels just keep on giving! Also, a very special thanks to Scott Riha who provided his award-winning smoked pork chili. It was fantastic!



*Fishing Instructors gather at Aksarben Aquarium in Gretna to clean and repair Youth Fishing Program equipment.*

We hosted two ice fishing clinics in January and managed to have good ice on both weekends. We counted about 175 participants on the ice at Mahoney SP and 50 at Yanney Park in Kearney. Thanks to all who helped make these events successful; the participants really appreciated getting hands-on experience with the experts. Special thanks to Harold Fankhauser and the Nebraska Fish and Game Association for hosting a classroom workshop in Kearney prior to the clinic.



*Participants caught rainbow trout, bluegill and largemouth bass at Mahoney SP during the January 10<sup>th</sup> Ice Fishing Clinic.*

# Staff News

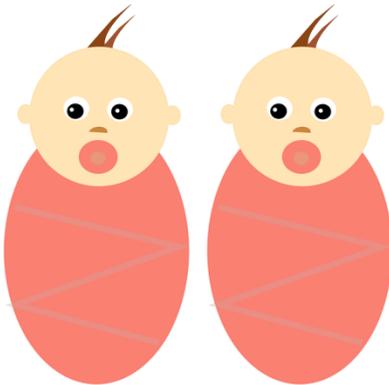
## Welcome, Zach!



Zach Morris joins us for the 2015 fishing season. Zach is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Madison where he studied zoology and conservation biology. Zach has previously worked as an English teacher to Chinese and Korean students and as a technician doing tallgrass prairie restoration. He is an avid outdoorsman and has most recently picked up flyfishing. Please

extend a warm welcome to Zach when he joins the team in April.

## Gruntorad guppies!



**From Matt:** The aquarium is about to get more crowded as my wife and I are excited to announce the expected arrival of two little guppies in August. No news yet as to their genders, but catfish beware; the Gruntorads are about to get a whole lot hungrier.

## Help us track your hours

Now is the time to make copies of the Self Reporting Forms available at <http://fishingnebraska.wordpress.com/volunteers/resources/>. This form is not required but provides you a method to track your contributed hours throughout the year, to ensure you receive credit for your time. **This form does not replace Activity Report Forms.** For more information on the details and purpose of this form, see the Holiday 2014 Fish Tales Newsletter article *Giving Credit Where Credit is Due*.



# Welcome to our newest Fishing Instructors

The annual spring Fishing Instructor certification workshop at the Aksarben Aquarium in Gretna took place on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Aquatic education staff used a new, interactive approach to training this year, and we were very pleased with the outcome. We encourage our current Instructors to attend an upcoming workshop to experience how the training has evolved and to network with new instructors.

We will likely host the next certification in Columbus, in honor of the newest Fishing Activity Trailer stationed at the Columbus Police Department. If you are unfamiliar with the Activity Trailers, this is also a great opportunity to see what they offer. Look for email notification once the workshop is scheduled and plan to attend if you are in the area.

In the meantime, please welcome 47 new Fishing Instructors to the team! This group is eager to get started, so let's all help them to get involved.

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| John Wirrick, Lincoln        | Chad Steele, Omaha            |
| Jane O'Connell, Bellevue     | Tiffany Polifka, Omaha        |
| Duy Tran, Omaha              | Douglas Smith, Amherst        |
| Rachel Nesius, Mead          | Vashan Jones, Bellevue        |
| Jeremy Langford, Plattsmouth | Brandon Johnson, Lincoln      |
| Pete Larson, Omaha           | Susan Walling, Wahoo          |
| Renae Prochaska, Fremont     | Jeremiah Brown, Fremont       |
| Dale Kopf, Nebraska City     | Michael Gude, Lincoln         |
| Joseph Craney, Bellevue      | Kenten Oltman, Firth          |
| Jeanne Hamilton, Lincoln     | Thomas Harrie, Waterloo       |
| Mark Hamilton, Lincoln       | Michael St. Cin, Lincoln      |
| Thomas Gerritse, Omaha       | Terry Stone, Omaha            |
| Ellen Donahoe, Lincoln       | Andy Miller, Omaha            |
| Lori Huebner, Cedar Creek    | Clancey Smith, Amherst        |
| Gerald Beck, Grand Island    | Daniel Deever, Omaha          |
| Becky Smart, Louisville      | Wade Lanum, Omaha             |
| Jess Meadows, Omaha          | Makaela Oltman, Firth         |
| Michael McGee, Omaha         | Jarred Donahoe Weihe, Lincoln |
| Billy Williams, Mullen       | Dan Timm, Murdock             |
| Clayton Darby, Pleasanton    | Travis Hazard, Springfield    |
| Jim Darby, Pleasanton        | Bob Elliott, Fremont          |
| Heidi Darby, Pleasanton      | Paul Smoot, Fremont           |
| Douglas Wells, Ashland       | Glen Rodick, Bancroft         |
|                              | Brandon Catalina, Lincoln     |

