

# FISHING GUIDE

## About Fishing in the Catskill Mountains

The Catskill Mountain streams offer some of the finest fishing in the Northeast. We have hundreds of miles of beautiful, quiet and well-stocked trout streams. Most permanent streams in the higher elevations boast natural trout populations. Brook trout, descendants of the original wild populations, are still widely distributed. These brightly colored natives are found in the smaller, higher elevation streams. Rainbows are found irregularly throughout the mountains. They are dominant in some of the larger waters including Catskill and Esopus Creeks. Rainbows tend to be the most acrobatic of the three trout species on the end of a line and they provide colorful diversity to Catskill fishing. Brown trout are the mainstay of the Catskill trout. Their extensive distribution, potential for large size and a well-founded reputation as a challenging adversary have given the brown top-billing with most of today's anglers. Stocking is the best-known management tool used in Catskill streams. Each year, the DEC stocks fingerling and yearling trout throughout the mountains, primarily in mid-to-large size streams where trout are capable of living and growing, but where natural reproduction is limited.

Perpetual fishing easements have been acquired on many of our streams including the Beaver Kill, Esopus Creek, Catskill Creek, East and West Branches of the Delaware and Schoharie Creeks. These easements, which allow fishing only, are posted with bright yellow and green PUBLIC FISHING SIGNS on the stream bank. There are many parking areas along the stream beds. The nearest public fishing parking is right behind the Emerson!

## Seasons

- Trout season opens beginning of April and closes the end of September.
- Small and Large Mouth Bass Season begins at the end of June ending on November 30th.
- Walleye, Northern Pike and Pickerel are in season from the beginning of May through mid-March. Panfish, Yellow Perch, Bullhead and Crappie are in season all year.

## Fishing Locations

**Esopus Creek** – Right behind the Emerson! This Creek was revered by Native Americans for its abundant supply of food and for its beauty. Trout from the Esopus had been a dietary staple since the earliest days of settlement in the Catskills. By the 1840s the Esopus' trout fishery was beginning to attract anglers from outside the region. Today the upper Esopus still attracts many anglers who flyfish for trout, particularly because the state land around it in the Slide Mountain and Big Indian-Beaverkill wilderness areas makes it more accessible than other streams in the region, with a number of public parking areas. In the late 19th century it became the first place in the Catskills where rainbow trout were successfully stocked, and the population of that fish has since become indigenous to the point that it is considered one of the most productive



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wild-trout streams in the Northeast. The state augments it with regular stockings of brown trout as well. Because of that species' preference for later spawning dates in the fall, trout season along the Esopus extends until November 30, a month and a half later than most other streams in the state.

Historically, the Esopus is known for its spring run of large rainbows, as well as for the abundant number of smaller rainbows that inhabit its waters. The best time to fish for these large rainbows, some in the two to four-pound range, is from the 1st of April to May 15th.

## **Woodland Valley Stream**

Turn right on to Route 28, then left on to Woodland Valley Road just west of Phoenicia. There are public fishing rights along the length of the stream, and fishing from the Woodland Valley Bridge is a lot of fun.

## **Ashokan Reservoir**

DEP permit and fishing licenses are required for the Ashokan Reservoir. This large body of water has some great bass and trout opportunities from shore or in a row boat. Early May fishing from shore off the points will give hours of great entertainment catching spawning bass. Mid June and September offer excellent trout fishing with fish being caught up to 10 LBS.

## **Wilson Lake**

Wilson Lake provides a great opportunity to catch fish either from shore or from a rowboat (no gas motors allowed). This shallow lake gives anglers a chance to catch a variety of fish species including: largemouth bass, bluegills and chain pickerel.

## **Onteora Lake**

Onteora Lake is a small narrow waterbody that has great access and good fishing opportunities. The shoreline is undeveloped and has a fairly steep drop-off. Onteora Lake can provide some really good action for anglers targeting bass. The bass like to hang around the shoreline structure, especially the trees that have fallen into the lake.

## **Fishing Guide:**

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*The locations listed in this guide are off Emerson Resort & Spa property. The Emerson is not responsible for any change in hours, access and/or environmental conditions.*

