



Get Outdoors Florida! is a coalition promoting outdoor experiences to help Floridians have healthier lifestyles and develop an appreciation for our abundant natural resources.

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Go Fishing on Father's Day

By Bob Wattendorf

Father's Day is one of the most meaningful days of the year to me, and a great one to celebrate outdoors with your family. I was blessed with a very supportive father who, along with his loving wife, encouraged three sons to live responsibly and enjoy nature. One of our often-told family stories has my Dad racing to the hospital on the day I was born. It seems he and my two older brothers had gone fishing in the local quarry. A family friend took my Mom to the hospital – because I decided it was time to make an early appearance – and then went to the quarry to round up my Dad and brothers. To hear my eldest brother tell the story, the part he remembers most was a big “yellow catfish” caught that day.

The fishing memories made subsequently with my Dad all have a poignancy brought about by the mind-cleansing pleasure of being on the water and sharing real quality time. What person that has ever had the pleasure of going fishing doesn't remember their first fish? How many of us recall memories like that and think of our fathers or grandfathers?

Now for me the tide has changed; it is the moments I spend outdoors with my wife, children and grandchildren that bring me the greatest joys and inspire me to ensure they will have a healthy future and the opportunity to enjoy nature to the fullest.



“Spending time with family and getting outdoors, being active and reconnecting with nature, are the essence of a life fully lived.”

Recent attention has been given to what many of us have known for a long time: Spending time with family and getting outdoors, being active and reconnecting with nature, are the essence of a life fully lived. GetOutdoorsFlorida.com will take you to a variety of links about the health, school, social and environmental benefits of nature-based recreation. The site also suggests outdoor activities and events and tips on how to get started enjoying an outdoor lifestyle.

So what are you doing this Father's Day? How about using the opportunity to reconnect with your family and nature by getting outdoors? You can simply get out in your backyard, or visit a state park, national forest or wildlife refuge, take a hiking or biking trip as a family, or go fishing or birding.

Looking for a Father's Day gift? How about a fishing license – the ticket to a year's worth of quality stress-free relaxation – or better still, how about giving a promise of spending some time together? The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (see www.TakeMeFishing.org) has a Father's Day coupon offering a day of fishing. Angling dads can use it to tell someone how they really want to celebrate the holiday – on the water. Get outdoors this weekend with your family and make some memories.



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