

## FISHING

Nelson County offers many fishing opportunities along its rivers, lakes and streams, among them being the Tye River, the James River and the Rockfish River. *(Virginia Fish and Wildlife Licensing required.)*

Visit [www.dgif.va.gov](http://www.dgif.va.gov) for fishing rules & regulations.

### **Tye River:**

The Tye River is a 35.4-mile-long tributary of the James River in central Virginia originating on the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Nelson County, and is fed by the Piney and Buffalo rivers. It joins with the James River near Norwood, in Nelson County, VA. The Tye River is home to dozens of species of fish and other aquatic life, including largemouth bass, smallmouth bass and bluegill. Browns, rainbows and brooks can be taken on a fly by the studious angler. The Tye River is also stocked with catchable-sized trout periodically by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries from October through May. *(See the Trout Stocking Plan and their stocking schedule at [www.dgif.va.gov](http://www.dgif.va.gov))* Virginia Fishing License required. Trout license also required between October 1 and June 15.

Public Access points to the Tye River include along Rt. 56 bridges, from the bridge on Cub Creek Rd. off Rt. 56..... however be aware that permission may be needed from private property owners for nearby car parking.

### **James River: (Upper and Middle)**

From the confluence of the Jackson and Cowpasture Rivers in Botetourt County, downstream to Richmond, the James River offers a wide range of angling opportunities and settings. Smallmouth bass are the dominant game species, but spotted and largemouth bass can also be caught.

Smallmouth bass fishing can be good throughout the river. Both the mountain sections (upstream from Lynchburg) and the piedmont sections (between Lynchburg and Richmond) generally provide good fishing. Other species are also plentiful in the James River, including channel catfish, flathead catfish, and various sunfish species (redbreast, bluegill, and rock bass). Flathead catfish appear to be more numerous upstream from Lynchburg, and channel catfish are more numerous below Lynchburg. Muskies are also annually stocked in the James. These fish are scarce, but some very large fish can be caught. Most of the muskies are found upstream from Lynchburg.

Overall, the James River offers an excellent fishing opportunity for whatever you might want. Canoeing is the best way to access the river. Small boats (such as john boats) can also be used at most access points. Bank and wade fishing access is also available throughout the river. Virginia Fishing License(s) are required.

[Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries - Public Boating Access:](#)

[Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries - Float Trips on James River:](#)

[James River Association – James River Maps](#) PDF maps online, but waterproof maps can also be ordered for various sections of the river.

## **James River (WMA) – Wildlife Management Area**

The area fronts one of the better stretches of the James River for fishing. Anglers land smallmouth bass, various sunfishes and channel catfish. This section of the river is popular for float fishing. A one acre pond provides a variety of sunfish for those — perhaps with young anglers — not interested in fishing the river. The ramp access makes the area an excellent "put in" or "take out" point for James River canoeists. For fishermen, a number of trout stocked streams are nearby, west of the management area in Nelson County. A boat launching ramp provides year-round access to the James River.

The area is located approximately 15 miles south-east of Lovingston in the southeastern portion of Nelson County, near the community of Wingina. Access is from State Route 56, between Lovingston and Buckingham Court House, on Route 626 travel easterly following road signs.

*The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) requires an Access Permit for visitors to department-owned Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and public fishing lakes effective January 1, 2012, who are age 17 and older, unless they possess a valid Virginia hunting, freshwater fishing, or trapping license, or a current Virginia boat registration.*

## **James River State Park**

One of Virginia's newest state parks, James River State Park has 1,500 acres with three ponds for fishing: Branch Pond, Green Hill Pond and Taylor Pond in addition to freshwater fishing on the James River. Where fishing is permitted, valid Virginia fishing licenses are required. Specific licenses are required for saltwater and trout-water fishing. Please call the park in advance for specifics.

### James River State Park

751 Park Road, Gladstone, VA 24553

<http://www.dcr.state.va.us/parks/jamesriv.htm>

434-933-4355 [jamesriver@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:jamesriver@dcr.virginia.gov)

800-933-PARK [www.virginiastateparks.gov](http://www.virginiastateparks.gov)

Camping, Cabins, Boat Access, Hiking Trails, Fishing

## **James River : Nelson County Access Points**

Midway Concrete Ramp (In James River WMA off Rt. 743; Northeast of Wingina)

Wingina Concrete Ramp (Rt. 56, South of Wingina)

James River State Park Boat Ramp and also a Canoe/Livery Landing

## **Bent Creek to Wingina**

Distance: 12.4 miles

The concrete ramp at Bent Creek is best suited for canoes or small boats and is located just upstream from the Rt. 60 bridge. At James River State Park, you'll find a boat ramp (Dixon Landing) and a canoe landing. A boat ramp (Dixon Landing) and a canoe landing is available at James River State Park. At Wingina, a concrete ramp is present at the Rt. 56 bridge. However, trailer-launched boats can only be

used during high flows, due to a steep dropoff at the end of the ramp. Typically, this float is a series of long, shallow pools interspersed with short, easy riffles. Smallmouth bass and redbreast sunfish will provide most of the fishing through here.

### **Wingina to James River WMA** (Wildlife Management Area)

Distance: 2.2 miles

Wingina provides a ramp for small boats/canoes, and a good concrete boat ramp is present at the James River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) (follow the signs from Rt. 626). This is a short and shallow float. During low flow periods, the river gets quite shallow through this section. The best fishing action comes courtesy of smallmouth bass and redbreast sunfish.

<https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/waterbody/james-river-upper-middle/>

### **South Rockfish River:**

The Rockfish River (South) is stocked with catchable-sized trout periodically by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries from October through May. (See the Trout Stocking Plan for their stocking schedule at [www.dgif.va.gov](http://www.dgif.va.gov)) The Rockfish is an excellent smallmouth stream and also holds bluegills, perch and fallfish. It can be accessed at several points from U.S. 29 south and along Route 602.

*Virginia Fishing License required. Trout license also required between October 1 and June 15.*

### **Other Locations:**

#### **Montebello Camping and Fishing Resort**

Take the kids to Montebello and catch some Rainbow Trout in the fee base trout ponds. An assortment of fishing poles in both adult and children sizes, fishing line, a variety of lures as well as live and artificial bait available in the country store. No license required. 15072 Crabtree Falls Highway, Montebello. 540-377-2650

#### **Montebello State Fish Hatchery**

The Montebello Fish Hatchery is a few minutes west of Crabtree Falls (off Rt. 56) with separate holding pens for the different species of fish, as well as the different sizes. This hatchery produces and stocks streams around Virginia with 150,000 Brook, Rainbow and Brown Trout each year. 359 Fish Hatchery Lane, Montebello, VA 24464. 540-377-2418 *Fun for kids too - see where these fish come from!*

#### **Lake Monocan Park**

A 20-acre lake and park located at Stoney Creek in Nellysford. Snack bar, paddleboats, canoes, kayaks, fishing equipment, standard road bike rentals, horseshoe pits, sand volleyball court, sandy beach, lounge chairs, picnic area and outdoor charcoal grills are available. Some fees apply. Lake Monocan is open Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day – Not open on Saturdays for non-members of Wintergreen Resort.

Wintergreen Resort members and all registered resort guests have complimentary access to Lake Monocan Park. You will need to present a proper ID or pass for complimentary access.

Public Lake Access Sunday – Friday only. Fee.

On Saturdays, Lake Monocan is only open to Members, Guests of Members and Wintergreen Resort guests. An access fee cannot be paid for entrance on Saturdays. More information available at [www.wintergreenresort.com](http://www.wintergreenresort.com) 434-325-8180

### **Lake Nelson**

801 Lake Nelson Lane  
Arrington, VA 22922  
434-263-7130

Lake Nelson is a 40-acre impoundment located in Nelson County, Virginia. This reservoir is owned by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) and is managed primarily for fisheries related activities. Facilities available at this reservoir are a boat ramp, parking area and portable toilets which are available March-September. Fishermen are likely to catch largemouth bass, channel catfish, black crappie, bluegill, and redear sunfish. The lake is open 24 hours a day. Outboard motor use is prohibited but electric motors are permitted. (From Arrington, Rt. 655 East (1.4); Left on Rt. 812 (.8) to Concrete ramp)

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### **OTHER PONDS & LAKES**

Baldwin Pond (Waynesboro East) <http://www.fishermanresource.com/states/virginia/Baldwin-Pond-Waynesboro.php>

Davis Pond (Shipman area) <http://www.fishermanresource.com/states/virginia/Davis-Pond-Shipman.php>

Fish Pond (Lake) (Howardsville area)  
<http://www.fishingworks.com/lakes/virginia/nelson/howardsville/fish-pond/>

Hamilton Lake (Lovingston area)  
<http://www.fishingworks.com/lakes/virginia/nelson/lovingston/hamilton-lake/>

Payne Pond (Shipman area)  
<http://www.fishingworks.com/lakes/virginia/nelson/shipman/payne-pond/>

Ramsay Knox Pond (Howardsville area)  
<http://www.fishingworks.com/lakes/virginia/nelson/howardsville/ramsay-knox-pond/>

Saunders Pond (Arrington area) <http://www.hookandbullet.com/fishing-saunders-pond-amherst-va/>  
Stevens Lake (Arrington area) <http://www.fishingworks.com/lakes/virginia/nelson/arrington/stevens-lake/>

Visit [www.dgif.va.gov](http://www.dgif.va.gov) for fishing rules & regulations for access and fishing in these ponds and lake areas. Permission may need to be obtained from private property owners in advance.

## WINTERGREEN RESORT FISHING

Nestled in 11,000 acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Wintergreen is in close proximity to some of the best fly fishing Virginia has to offer. Wintergreen's Fly Fishing services are designed to accommodate the inexperienced to the expert angler. Wintergreen's Orvis-Endorsed instructors have the perfect classroom setting at Lake Monocan to introduce students to the art of Fly Fishing, or anglers can experience the thrill of fishing for trout in the mountains or smallmouth bass on the legendary James River with a knowledgeable and friendly guide. Due to limited availability, please call well in advance for bookings.

Wintergreen offers half and full day Fly Fishing Classes. Fly-casting instruction is based on The Orvis Progressive Method to Fly Casting and inexperienced to expert casters are welcome. All instruction includes the use of Orvis fly rods and equipment, and all classes are held at the facilities at Lake Monocan and on the private ponds in Stoney Creek.

Wintergreen also offers full day Float Fishing Trips for smallmouth bass on the legendary James River for spin or fly anglers. Boats accommodate 2 anglers plus the guide, and multiple boats may be available upon request.

For all Fly Fishing services, gear is provided. For more information regarding scheduling and rates, call **434-325-8180**. [www.wintergreenresort.com](http://www.wintergreenresort.com)

## Virginia Fishing Licenses and Access Permits

**License Fees, Information and Requirements** (LINK to <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/regulations/licenses.asp#fees>)

### **Buy Online**

The quickest and easiest way to obtain a fishing or hunting license or access permit is to buy it online! Just select the license(s) you want, pay with your VISA™ or MasterCard™, and you're on your way. You print your licenses after you pay, so there's no waiting!

### **Convenient Ways to Buy Your Licenses & Access Permits**

- [Online](#)
- Telephone: call 1-866-721-6911 (available Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM, except [holidays](#))
- In person: choose from hundreds of [license agents](#) located around the Commonwealth. Licenses are also sold by some clerks of the Circuit Court. (see Nelson locations below)

## **Customer Service**

Need assistance with your license purchase? Contact customer service by phone at 1-866-721-6911 or by email at [CustomerService@dgif.virginia.gov](mailto:CustomerService@dgif.virginia.gov). Customer service is available Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM, except [holidays](#).

## **Nelson County Fishing License Locations:**

Shady's Place	15819 Thomas Nelson Hwy. Lovingston, VA 22949	434-263-5024
Sunny Mountain Store	10761 Thomas Nelson Hwy. Lovingston, VA 22949	434-263-4080

## **LINKS:**

Virginia Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov>

FishVirginiaFirst (LINK) <http://www.fishvirginiafirst.com>

Fishing Itineraries: <https://www.virginia.org/listings/SuggestedItinerary/FishVirginiaFirstNelsonCounty/>