

Jodie Kidd urges families across the UK to give fishing a try this summer



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Jodie Kidd, the model and racing driver is urging all families to 'give fishing a try' as part of National Fishing Month to beat the boredom of the school holidays and learn a new skill.

National Fishing Month has released more than 250 free angling events across the country. Steps have been taken to improve inclusivity, with a calendar that features family-friendly, women-only and wheelchair-accessible events.

Fishing has surged in popularity since the pandemic, and has seen increased interest from women, a recent campaign by the Environment Agency profiled women anglers and the benefits fishing can bring to all.

Freedom to fish

With many holidays cancelled this year, families are looking for things to do closer to home. A recent OnePoll survey for the Angling Trust revealed that a quarter of people (26%) have enjoyed spending more time outdoors since the pandemic because it gives them 'a sense of freedom' and allows them to entertain the kids (17%). Of those keen to give fishing a try, (33%) say it provides an opportunity to spend quality time with family and friends.

As part of National Fishing Month, Jodie Kidd enjoyed a fishing lesson with her son and Angling Fishing Coach Kevin Holborne.

Jodie said:

It's been fantastic to spend time in the great outdoors with my son as part of National Fishing Month. It's a free activity during the school holidays which is fun for all the family, we

loved learning a new skill and challenging each other too.

You'll soon be hooked, and the beauty of fishing is that it's not just about catching a fish. I can bond with my son, talk about his day and we both feel like we've spent quality time in nature, which is very tranquil and rewarding. It's taught me to slow down and get maximum enjoyment from the outdoors, what better sense of freedom is there?

Heidi Stone, Environment Agency Fisheries Partnerships Manager:

We're thrilled that Jodie is taking part in National Fishing Month this summer. Fishing is a fantastic way to spend time with loved ones and connect with the natural environment around us.

All income from rod licence sales goes into improving the environment for our fisheries to make fishing a great experience for all. We hope that National Fishing Month will show anglers the clear wellbeing benefits of fishing and that they'll return to the banks regularly.

Andrew Race, Chairman at the Angling Trades Association said:

We created National Fishing Month to inform the general public about angling and the social, psychological and environmental benefits of angling. The aim of NFM is to increase participation and diversity amongst anglers and to engage people with decisions surrounding access, environmental policy and wildlife management. NFM offers an unrivalled opportunity for people to engage with the outdoors and get a taste for fishing at the same time.

As the country takes angling to its heart this year, I still remember the first time I went fishing with my grandfather at an early age - by creating opportunities to experience these moments throughout the month, we hope to support angling in going from strength to strength.

Clive Copeland, Head of Participation at the Angling Trust said:

This year we're making it easier than ever for families to go fishing for the first time. Our 'Get Fishing' events are the perfect day-out for all, no matter age or ability.

Anglers who currently own a rod licence can also take a friend on a free fishing trip as part of our 'Take a Friend Fishing' initiative this summer. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the sport alongside someone more experienced.

John Ellis, National Fisheries and Angling Manager at the Canal & River Trust said:

We're passionate about families getting the most out of the waterways and CRT are hosting a series of events on our canals to celebrate National Fishing Month through our 'Let's Fish' programme of events.

Experience fishing for the first time with one of our qualified coaches and get set to make the most of staycation summer.

Last year, the Environment Agency sold 1,019,723 individual freshwater rod licences to adults living in England, compared to 882,989 in the previous year 2019/20, an increase of 16%. This boom in sales has allowed the Environment Agency to fund even more vital restoration work to protect fish stocks, increase biodiversity, create and restore over 3,000 hectares of fisheries habitat, and sustain a healthier water environment. Thanks to rod licence income, the Environment Agency and its partners improved over 1,700km of rivers between in 2019/20.

For more information about National Fishing Month or to find a local free event near you, visit www.nationalfishingmonth.com

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