



2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Sportfishing Program

NEW FOR 2025

SPRING 2025

TEXAS 4-H VIRTUAL SPORTFISHING PROGRAM

Program Highlights

- Fish in YOUR location
- Earn YOUR Sportfishing Certification
- Test YOUR knowledge in the 4-H Sportfishing Skill-a-thon contest
- Live EDUCATIONAL programs
- FRESHWATER and SALTWATER Divisions
- Upload pic of YOUR catch in FishDonkey Tournament app to win PRIZES

Registration
Register via 4HOnline
February 15 - March 15

Late Tournament
Registration - \$100
March 16 - April 30

Participation Fees
4-H Youth Grades 3-12
\$50 per Tournament Division
\$5 Skill-a-Thon Contest

Clover Kids Ages 5-8
No Fee to Participate

Questions? Contact
Dr. Jheri-Lynn McSwain at
jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

- Follow the Texas 4-H Virtual Sportfishing program on either Facebook page:
 - 2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Fishing** This FB page is a private group that you will need to receive permission to join.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1202432833284039>
 - Texas 4-H Natural Resources**
<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=texas%204-h%20natural%20resources>

SPRING 2025

4-H VIRTUAL SPORTFISHING PROGRAM OPTIONS

Participate in some or all...

Live Educational Programs
March 20, April 3, & April 17 via Zoom link
No charge - registration required via Google below

Freshwater & Saltwater Division Tournaments
April 5 - May 30 (register via 4HOnline)
\$50 per division per 4-H angler; no fee for Clover Kids

Texas 4-H Skill-a-thon Virtual Contest
May 15 - 31 (register via 4HOnline)
\$5 per 4-H youth

Earn your annual 4-H Sportfishing Certification by doing all 3!

Click **HERE** to enroll in Texas 4-H or register for tournament & skill-a-thon

Click **HERE** to register to participate live or receive your Zoom recording

Questions? Contact
Dr. Jheri-Lynn McSwain at jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu

- Live educational programs** will be conducted via Zoom during March and April for youth and adults to participate. A question-and-answer session will be provided at the end of each program. Presentations will be recorded and emailed to those who register in advance but are unable to attend virtually.
- Update to Wild Card contest to a **weekly drawing** by division. Results to be posted on the FB pages.
- Three-placing limit** on top awards by contest leaderboard.
- Tournaments will provide for **8 weeks of fishing** during spring and summer.
- 4-H youth have the opportunity to earn their **Texas 4-H Sportfishing project certification and pin**.
- A belt buckle to be awarded Spring AND Summer Freshwater and Saltwater Grand Slam Champions.

Jheri-Lynn McSwain, Ph.D.
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2025 Virtual Sportfishing Program Calendar

SPRING CALENDAR

February and March

Feb 15 -Mar 15 Regular Registration
 Feb 15-Apr 30 Set-up FishDonkey Profile
 Mar 16-Apr 30 Late Registration
 Mar 17-28 Check-it-Stiks Mailed
 Mar 20 Zoom Program 1

April and May

Apr 3 Zoom Program 2
 Apr 5 Spring Tournament Opens
 Apr 17 Zoom Program 3
 May 15-31 Complete Sportfishing
 Skill-a-thon Contest
 May 30 Spring Tournament Closes
 at 11:59 pm

June

Jun 14 Placings Released
 June 23 Prizes Released
 June 23 Skill-a-thon Results
 Released

SUMMER CALENDAR

May and June

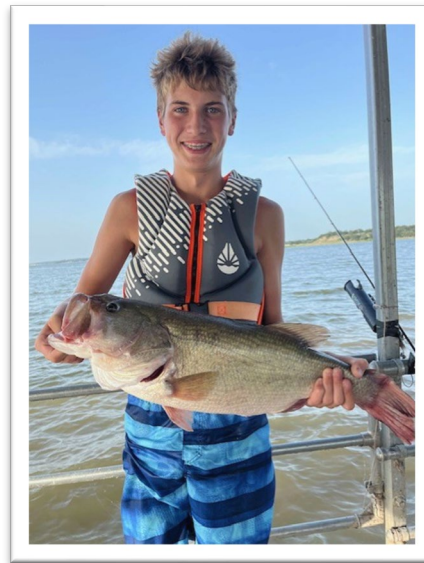
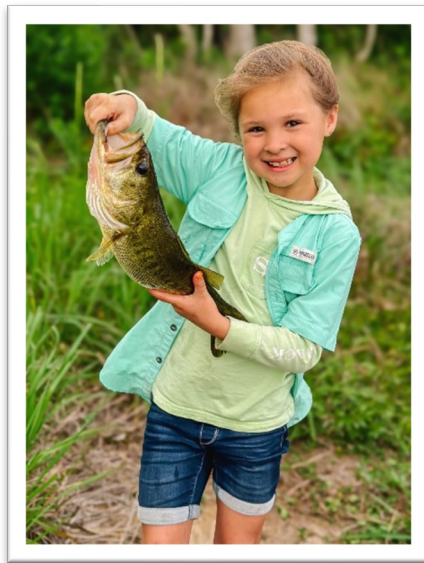
May 1-31 Regular Registration
 May 1-Jun 30 Set-up FishDonkey Profile
 May 29 Zoom Program 1
 Jun 1-30 Late Registration
 Jun 1-10 Check-it-Stiks Mailed

June - August

Jun 12 Zoom Program 2
 Jun 14 Summer Tournament Opens
 Jun 26 Zoom Program 3
 Jul 25-Aug 10 Complete Sportfishing
 Skill-a-thon Contest
 Aug 9 Summer Tournament Closes
 at 11:59 pm

August

Aug 23 Placings Released
 Aug 30 Prizes Released
 Aug 30 Skill-a-thon Results
 Released



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Short, informative programs with a Question-and-Answer session for youth and adults pertaining to the 2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Sportfishing Program will be provided at no fee to participate; however, you must register to receive the link to participate.

New! **March 20 @ 5:30 pm – Program Orientation**

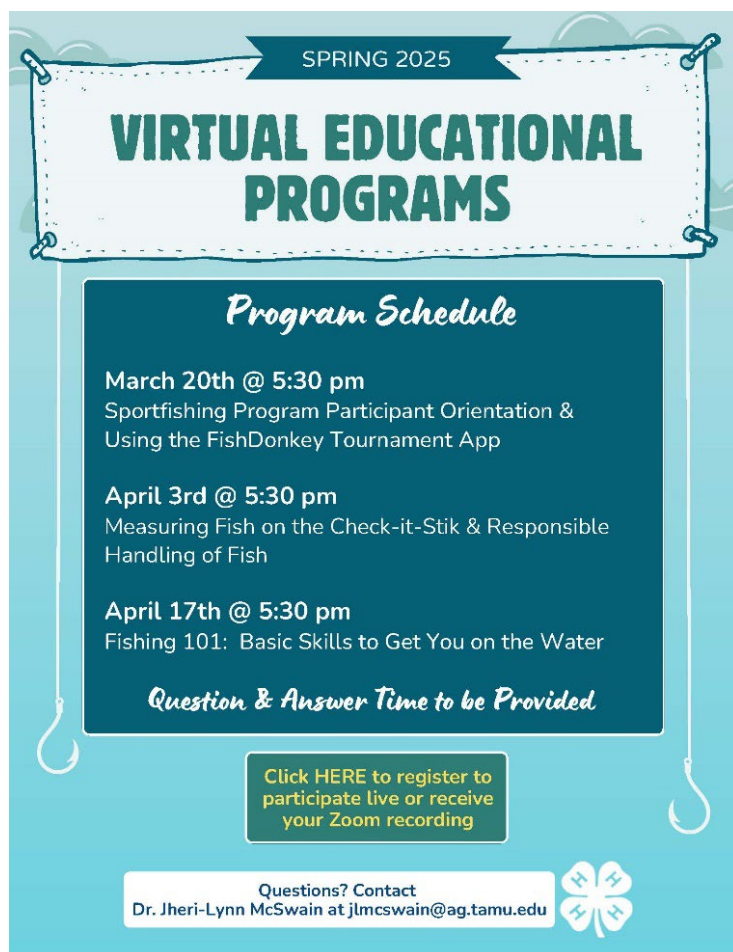
- Reviewing the Program Rules of Play
- How to Use FishDonkey Tournament App
- Q&A

New! **April 3 @ 5:30 pm – Measuring & Handling Tournament Fish**

- Using a Check-it-Stik
- Measuring Freshwater and Saltwater Fish
- Responsible Handling of Fish
- Q&A

New! **April 17 @ 5:30 pm – Fishing 101: Basic Skills to Get You on the Water**

- Types of Equipment
- Knot Tying
- Lures and Bait
- Q&A



SPRING 2025

VIRTUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Program Schedule

March 20th @ 5:30 pm
Sportfishing Program Participant Orientation & Using the FishDonkey Tournament App


April 3rd @ 5:30 pm
Measuring Fish on the Check-it-Stik & Responsible Handling of Fish

April 17th @ 5:30 pm
Fishing 101: Basic Skills to Get You on the Water

Question & Answer Time to be Provided

Click [HERE](#) to register to participate live or receive your Zoom recording

Questions? Contact
Dr. Jheri-Lynn McSwain at jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu



Click [HERE](#) to register to participate in any or all of these live Zoom programs!

<https://forms.gle/8xgLEYPUKsZJVixd6>

All programs to be recorded and emailed to registered participants.

RESPONSIBLE HANDLING OF FISH

Not every fish is a "keeper." You may catch a fish that's under legal size or too big to fit in your cooler. You may land a magnificent trophy and decide to return it to the water so that you — or some other lucky angler — will have a chance to catch that fish again. Whatever your reasons for choosing live release, you want to give your fish the best possible chance of survival.

How to Begin

- Set the hook quickly to reduce likelihood that fish will swallow the bait.
- Play and land fish as quickly as possible. Playing fish to exhaustion can harm the fish.
- When fishing in deep water, bring fish in slowly to help it adjust to changing pressure.
- Consider using barbless hooks.
- Keep your release tools close by.

Handling Your Catch

Proper handling protects both you and the fish. Some fishes have sharp fins or teeth that can cut you. See Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) [Angler Education pages](#) for tips on how to handle different species.

- Minimize the time fish is out of the water (no longer than you can hold your breath.)
- Leave fish in the water if you can and use a tool to remove the hook.
- If possible, keep the fish from thrashing without using a net. If a net is required, use a rubber-mesh landing net instead of abrasive nylon.
- Avoid removing the slime/mucus layer, which protects fish from parasites and infections.
 - Try to keep fish off the ground or floor of a boat.
 - Use a wet rag or glove, or wet hands before handling fish.
 - Turn fish on its back and cover its eyes to calm it.
 - Don't put your fingers in the eyes or gills.
- Smaller fish (< 5 pounds) can be vertically held by the lower jaw, either by hand or with grippers. Hold larger fish horizontally and support with two hands.

Removing the Hook

- Use needle-nose pliers, hemostats, or a hook remover to remove the hook and protect your hands.
- Back the hook out the opposite way it went in.
- [Watch this video](#) to learn how to remove a hook embedded deep within the fish.
- For a larger fish in the water, slip a gaff around the leader and slide it to the hook. Lift the gaff upward while pulling downward on the leader.
- Do not jerk or pop a leader to break it. This can injure vital organs in the fish.

Letting it Go

- Place fish in the water, gently supporting the mid-section and tail until it swims away.
- Resuscitate an exhausted fish by moving it or facing it into the current, gently forcing water into the mouth and over the gills.
- Watch the fish when released. If it doesn't swim away, recover it and try again.

See complete information from Texas Parks and Wildlife at <https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/fishing/catch-release-tips>

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TOURNAMENT

Step 1: 4-H Enrollment

- Be enrolled in 4-H as a youth member (3rd – 12th grades) or Clover Kid (K – 2nd grades) for the 2024-2025 year.
- If you are not in 4-H, join by setting up your family profile on 4HOnline at <https://texas.4honline.com> or contact your local county Extension agent for assistance with enrollment in your county 4-H program.
- Not sure who your county agent is? Click this link to enter your county name and find contact information: <https://agrillifeextension.tamu.edu/counties/>

Step 2: Tournament Registration

Spring Tournament Details

- **February 15-March 15, 2025**
Regular Registration will open on 4-H Online <https://texas.4honline.com>
- **March 16-April 30, 2025**
Late Registration period
- **April 30, 2025**
Last date to register to participate in the spring program. Only those registered on 4-H Online by the deadline will be eligible to participate.
- Select **2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Sportfishing Tournament – Spring** from the event list.
 - Register and compete as an individual angler (4-H member or Clover Kid).
 - **4-H youth anglers (grades 3rd – 12th):** You may register for either division or both. The entry fee is per 4-H angler per **division**.

➤ Freshwater Division:	\$50 Regular Registration	\$100 Late Registration
➤ Saltwater Division:	\$50 Regular Registration	\$100 Late Registration

Note: We are unable to issue any refunds once your payment has been submitted.

Registration Gift

- *First-time registered 4-H anglers will receive a FREE official Check-it-Stik® if enrolled during the REGULAR registration period and if not previously received one in a past 4-H fishing skill-a-thon.

**4HOnline registration submitted, payment received and cleared, and FishDonkey judging app profile set-up.*

SPRING 2025

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Program Registration and Dates

- Enroll in Texas 4-H @ texas.4honline.com
- Register via 4HOnline in **2025 Spring Texas Virtual Sportfishing** program for tournament
- Download the **FishDonkey Tournament App** to a mobile device (your phone or your parents) (4-H Youth ONLY)
- Participate in **Sportfishing Educational Programs** via Zoom, live or via recording (see schedule)
- Fish in **Virtual Tournament** April 5 - May 30
- Test your knowledge in the **NEW Virtual Fishing Skill-a-thon** contest May 15 - 31. Register via 4HOnline in **2025 Sportfishing Skill-a-thon Contest**
- Follow us on Facebook @ **2025 4-H Virtual Fishing** or **Texas 4-H Natural Resources** or website for updates, placings & winner list @ <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/sportfishing/>

[Click HERE to enroll in Texas 4-H or register for tournament & skill-a-thon](#)
[Click HERE to set up your FishDonkey profile](#)

- **Clover Kids (grades K-2nd)** participate for bragging rights and a certificate.
- Photos of Clover Kids with their “big fish” can be posted to the **2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Fishing** Facebook page by emailing to jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu
 - Clover Kids are not eligible to compete and **DO NOT** set-up a profile on the FishDonkey tournament app.
 - There is no fee for their participation, however, they must be registered on 4-H Online.

Registration Gift

- Registered Clover Kids will receive a 4-H fishing lure at the conclusion of the program.

Summer Tournament Details

- **May 1-May 31, 2025**
Regular Registration will open on 4-H Online <https://texas.4honline.com>
- **June 1-30, 2025**
Late Registration period
- **June 30, 2025**
Last date to register to participate in the summer tournament. Only those registered on 4-H Online by the deadline will be eligible to participate.
- Select **2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Sportfishing Tournament - Summer** from the event list
 - Register and compete as an individual angler (4-H member or Clover Kid).
 - **4-H youth anglers (grades 3rd – 12th):** You may register for either division or both. The entry fee is per 4-H angler per division.
 - Freshwater Division: \$50 Regular Registration \$100 Late Registration
 - Saltwater Division: \$50 Regular Registration \$100 Late Registration

Note: We are unable to issue any refunds once your payment has been submitted.

- **Clover Kids (grades K-2nd)** participate for bragging rights and a certificate.
- Photos of Clover Kids with their “big fish” can be posted to the **2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Fishing** Facebook page by emailing to jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu
 - Clover Kids are not eligible to compete and **DO NOT** set-up a profile on the FishDonkey tournament app.
 - There is no fee for their participation, however, they must be registered on 4-H Online.

Registration Gift

- Registered Clover Kids will receive a 4-H fishing lure at the conclusion of the program.

The poster is titled "SPRING 2025 CLOVER KID PARTICIPATION". It features a list of details in a dark teal box, a call to action button, and contact information at the bottom. A speech bubble on the left says "Be sure to read all the details on judging entries!".

SPRING 2025

CLOVER KID PARTICIPATION

- Email hero pics with fish caught to tournament director at jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu for posting on Facebook pages
- A 4-H fishing lure will be mailed to Clover Kids at the end of program
- A Texas 4-H Sportfishing certificate will be mailed to youth emailing at least one hero pic with fish and participating in the educational learning programs
- Clover Kids are **NOT** eligible to compete and **DO NOT** need a FishDonkey profile

Be sure to read all the details on judging entries!

Click **HERE** to download detailed rules of play

Questions? Contact
Dr. Jheri-Lynn McSwain at jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu

If you are a **Clover Kid**, SKIP TO STEP 4.

Step 3: Download Tournament Judging App (4-H Anglers, Only)

- 4-H Anglers: After your payment has been accepted in 4HOnline, go to [FishDonkey](#) to download the app to your mobile device and/or computer.
- There is no fee for participants to use this app.
- Set up your profile in FishDonkey. Select the Division you chose in 4HOnline (Freshwater and/or Saltwater). If you registered for BOTH divisions, make sure you set up a profile in both.
 - 2025 Spring Texas 4-H Virtual Reel ‘em in – Freshwater
 - 2025 Spring Texas 4-H Virtual Reel ‘em in – Saltwater
- On the app, use the tutorial to practice how to measure and upload pics.
- **Questions? See FishDonkey App Tip sheets on the last page for additional information.**



Step 4: Fish the Tournament – Judging Criteria under Rules & Guidelines

Spring Event

- On April 5, 2025, at 12:00 a.m. the app will open for you to begin uploading your pictures of your fish to be judged and posted to the official leaderboard.
- The spring tournament closes on May 30, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.

Summer Event

- On June 14, 2025, at 12:00 a.m. the app will open for you to begin uploading your pictures of your fish to be judged and posted to the official leaderboard.
- The summer tournament closes on August 9, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.

Want to PLACE? Then Be Sure to Follow ALL Rules below! Violation of any rule listed will result in disqualification of the fish entered.

HOW TO MEASURE & PHOTOGRAPH FISH

Fish must be photographed with an iphone, android or tablet, **with the app open**, and fish laying on a **Check-It-Stik®** brand measuring board. Only Check-It-Stik brand is accepted – no exceptions!

- Photograph must be clear and measurement on board must be legible.
- You may hold your fish on the board, just be sure to NOT cover the mouth and tail with anything that blocks these views. Mouth of fish must be **closed**. Beginning of snout or lower jaw of fish **must** be touching the front of the measuring board.



Mouth closed & tailed pinched

- Lay the fish on its side and pinch the tail fins together to get accurate length in photograph. If a catfish, lay the fish on its belly and pinch the tail to get accurate length.
- Fish longer than the length of a Check-it-Stik should be measured on the measurement board in conjunction with a tape measure from the start of the board to the end of the fish. See example below.



Fish longer than the Check-it-Stik measured with tape measure

- Do not run the tape measure under the fish – the whole tape from beginning to end of tail must be visible.*
 - Pictures without a Check-it-Stik used as the starting point for measurement will not be judged.
 - You must use the **video feature** in FishDonkey to document the measurement of your fish from the nose to tail – move slowly to ensure all is captured in the recording.
- Photos must be taken with the FishDonkey app open as this will timestamp the photo when taken.
 - Pics taken with the FishDonkey app open can be “pushed” through to load on the leaderboard by opening your digital live well in the app on a later date (they will be timestamped on the date taken).
 - Don’t have internet to upload at your fishing spot? No problem, remember they are timestamped when you take them in the app so you can upload from the app when you have internet or even from a computer. Just make sure they are all uploaded from FishDonkey before close of the tournament.
 - Pictures CANNOT be uploaded from your camera file. They MUST be taken within the FishDonkey app. We CANNOT accept photos emailed.
 - Each photo submitted must also include a separate “hero” pic that documents the face of the youth participant with the fish caught (examples: posing, on measuring board, holding).
 - The tail of the fish must be pinched for soft-tailed fish. For hard-tail fish: the tail of the fish must be slanted so that one tip of the tail is at the measuring point on the Check-it-Stik. See example below on how to measure fish from Texas Parks & Wildlife Outdoor Annual.



Example Hero Pic

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

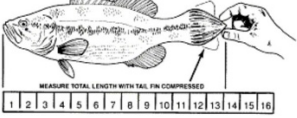
Parks Hunting Fishing Boating Game Warden Activities Wildlife More...

Outdoor Annual > Fishing > Measurement Tips

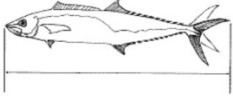
Measurement Tips

How to measure fish:

1. Place the fish on its side with the jaw closed.
2. For soft-tailed fish, squeeze the tail fin together to obtain the maximum overall length.



3. For hard-tailed fish, turn the tail to obtain maximum length.

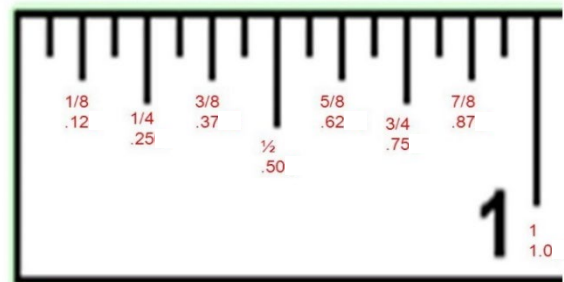


4. Measure a straight line from the tip of the snout to the extreme tip of the tail fin.

Note: Mouth closed and tail-pinched (soft tailed fish) or slanted (hard tailed fish) according to TPWD. Be sure to follow this guideline.

How to Read an Inch in Decimals

- Enter the length of your fish in whole number and 2-digit decimal place, i.e. 10.25
- Do not round up the numbers.
- The last black line that the end of the pinched/slanted tail touches is the measurement to be recorded.
- When fish are judged, the length you enter will be verified and confirmed. If length entered is more than documented, tournament judges will modify.



Supplies Needed for Participation

- Rod and reel
- Bait and/or lure
- Phone or tablet to take your fish pics in FishDonkey. Or you can take the pics with phone/tablet in FishDonkey and upload through your computer with internet
- Check-it-Stik® measuring board (can be purchased at Academy stores or via online shopping venues). Enroll during regular registration and you will receive one for FREE!
- Fish net (optional)



Check-it-Stik

TOURNAMENT JUDGING RULES

Reasons for Disqualification

The numbers below (1-7) will be listed on the leaderboard comment section for feedback as to why a fish was disqualified.

1. Evidence of fish caught by means other than rod and reel.
2. Incorrect fish species entered in a category.
3. Fish not measured on a Check-it-Stik brand measuring board.
4. Mouth open (small gap between lips is permitted) or mouth/lips/snout of fish not touching the front of the Check-it-Stik.
5. Unpinched or non-slanted tail fin according to TPWD guidelines.
6. Blurry picture or cannot see measuring numbers in photo or entire body of fish is not in the photograph.
7. No hero picture submitted.

SPRING 2025

VIRTUAL TOURNAMENT APRIL 5 - MAY 30

Judging Rules

4-H YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

1. Fish caught by rod and reel
2. Correct species of fish caught
3. Fish photographed laying on its side, on a Check-it-Stik brand measuring board (except for CATFISH which are measured on their belly) in the FishDonkey app
4. Mouth/lips/snout of fish is CLOSED and touching the front of the Check-it-Stik
5. Tail PINCHED - soft-tailed fish species
Tail SLANTED - hard-tailed fish species
6. Fish pic must include entire fish with legible measuring board numbers
7. 4-H youth photographed in FishDonkey app posing with their fish (does NOT need to be on Check-it-Stik for this photo) (This is called your HERO pic!)

ALL OTHER FISH DISQUALIFIED FROM JUDGING
Click [HERE](#) to download detailed tournament rules

Other

Fish lengths posted less than their actual length will be verified as that entry length.

Safety and State Fishing Regulations

- There are bag limits and length requirements on keeping fish caught in Texas. It is the responsibility of the angler to read and abide by these regulations. Be sure to follow all Texas regulations regarding fishing licenses, bag limits, length requirements and other rules <https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/fishing/>
- If you catch a fish that is shorter than the legal limits to keep, you MAY photograph and use in the tournament. However, as soon as possible after taking the photo, release the fish back into the water so that you are abiding by state fishing regulations.
- Each 4-H family entered is responsible for the safety of youth anglers during the tournaments.

TOURNAMENT PLACINGS & PRIZES

Placings and Contests

- Unofficial individual placings will be posted on the contest leaderboards as fish are caught, posted, and verified
- by tournament director. You will be able to see your ranking in real time. Official placings will be emailed to participants after the close of the tournament.
- Each Division (Freshwater and Saltwater) has individual contests based upon species and judging criteria. See the attached Rules and Guidelines for specific information.
- In order to encourage a greater number of placings by individual youth, a three-placing limit will be used on all top awards for each contest and division.
- A Texas 4-H Virtual Sportfishing Grand Champion for both Freshwater and Saltwater divisions will be announced at the end of the spring and summer tournaments. The winner in each division will be determined on a grand total of inches of longest one fish of each species caught in the Slam contest in both divisions.
 - Saltwater Slam Grand Champion: longest trout + longest flounder + longest redfish caught in the spring and/or summer tournaments. Prize: 4-H Fishing belt buckle
 - Freshwater Slam Grand Champion: longest bass + longest catfish + longest panfish caught in the spring and/or summer tournaments. Prize: 4-H Fishing belt buckle

SPRING 2025

TOURNAMENT PLACINGS & PRIZES

4-H YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

- First time participating 4-H youth will receive a Check-it-Stik via mail
- Qualifying photos uploaded in FishDonkey will be judged and verified
- 3-placing prize limit for each contest leaderboard
- Official placings posted to FB page by June 14
- Ties broken by earliest pic of fish timestamped in FishDonkey
- Depth of prizes awarded are based upon number of 4-H youth registered
- Electronic gift cards (\$5 to \$300) will be emailed to 4-H youth receiving awards
- A 4-H fishing buckle will be mailed to the winner of the Spring Freshwater and Saltwater Slam

Be sure to read all the details on judging entries!

Click [HERE](#) to download detailed rules of play

Questions? Contact
Dr. Jheri-Lynn McSwain at jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu

Awards and Prizes

- Awards and prizes will be mailed or emailed to the address listed in 4HOnline after completion of the Spring program and then after completion of the Summer program.
- All awards and prizes to be determined by the 4-H Virtual Sportfishing committee. Awards are determined by the number of individuals registered for this tournament.
- Prizes can be gift cards from Bass Pro, Academy, other fishing-based stores. Additional prizes such as fishing equipment, lures, bait, shirts, caps, and cash will be awarded from sponsors for specific contests.
- Clover Kids participate for bragging rights and a certificate.
- Entry via 4-H Online gives permission to use the participant's name and photograph as needed for marketing and promotion purposes.

Questions

- For 4HOnline and registration questions, contact Carolyn Walton at the District 5 office via email at carolyn.walton@ag.tamu.edu or by phone at 903-834-6191.
- For tournament or FishDonkey questions, contact Dr. Jheri-Lynn McSwain, Extension Program Specialist – District 5 via email at jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu or by phone at 903-847-0598. Please leave a detailed message.

Freshwater Division Rules & Guidelines

Species

- You may enter fish from any of the 3 species listed below for the Freshwater Division. **All fish must be caught by rod and reel** (no trotlines, noodles, etc.).
 - Bass: Largemouth, smallmouth, spotted, Guadalupe
 - Panfish group: black or white crappie, sunfish (warmouth, bantam, green, dollar, red spotted, redbreast, longear, redear, orangespotted, bluegill, and sunfish hybrids)
 - Catfish: channel, blue, flathead
- You may enter all of one variety or a combination of varieties for judging.
- See link below to learn how to identify specific fish species in Texas. <https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/aquaticspecies/inland.phtml>

Location

- Fish anywhere permitted by law (freshwater, ponds, stock tanks, rivers, lakes, etc.).
- Fishing from a pier, edge of pond/lake/river, or boat is allowed for this event As long as the location is permitted by law. If private land, ensure you have landowner permission to fish.

Length Limits by Species

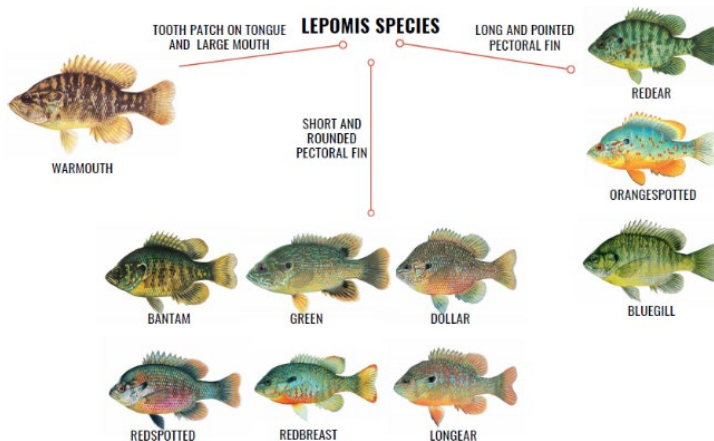
<https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/fishing/freshwater-fishing/>

Freshwater Judging Contests – More Ways to Win!

- Each of the pictures entered have multiple ways to qualify to win prizes.
- Each of the four contests have a separate leaderboard on FishDonkey. When you post the picture of your fish, it will automatically be entered into the contest in which it is eligible based upon species.
- The best part of FishDonkey is the app's ability to AUTO CULL your catches. Enter all your pictures and the system only adds your longest catch to the individual contest leaderboard.
- No need to upload your pictures for each individual contest.

Leaderboard Contests

- Longest Bass or Catfish
- Stringer of 5 Panfish
- Freshwater Slam
- Weekly Wild Card



Smallmouth Bass



Largemouth Bass



Guadalupe Bass



Spotted Bass



Black Crappie



White Crappie



Channel Catfish



Flathead Catfish



Blue Catfish

SPRING 2025

FRESHWATER DIVISION TOURNAMENT

Species Permitted

- Bass (largemouth, smallmouth, spotted & Guadalupe)
- Catfish (channel, blue & flathead)
- Panfish group (black or white crappie and sunfish family)

Contests

- Longest Bass or Catfish
- Stringer of 5 Panfish (enter all panfish caught and app will auto cull your longest five)
- Freshwater Slam (one of each species must be entered to qualify for this contest)
- Weekly Wild Card (random drawing of all qualified freshwater fish. Results posted weekly on FB page)

Follow regulations on bag & length limits

Click [HERE](#) to download 2025 TPWD Outdoor Annual

Questions? Contact
Dr. Jheri-Lynn McSwain at jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu



Saltwater Division Rules & Guidelines

Species

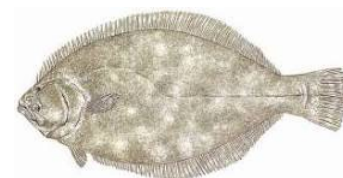
- You may enter fish from any of the 3 species listed below for the Saltwater Division. **All fish must be caught with a rod and reel.**
 - Spotted Seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*)
 - Redfish (Red Drum) (*Sciaenops ocellatus*)
 - Flounder (*Paralichthys sp.*)
- You may enter all of one variety or a combination of varieties for judging.
- See link below to learn how to identify specific fish species in Texas.
<https://www.takemefishing.org/fish-species/>

Location

- All waters within 9 nautical miles of the Texas Coastline as permitted by Texas law.

Length Limits by Species

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/fishing/saltwater-fishing/>



Flounder



Spotted Seatrout



Redfish (Red Drum)

Saltwater Judging Contests – More Ways to Win!

- Each of the pictures entered have multiple ways to qualify to win prizes. Each of the four contests below have a separate leaderboard on FishDonkey. When you post the picture of your fish it will automatically be entered into the contest in which it is eligible based upon species.
- The best part of FishDonkey is the app's ability to AUTO CULL your catches. Enter all your pictures and the system only adds your longest catch to the individual contest leaderboard.
- No need to upload your pictures for each individual contest.

Leaderboard Contests

- Longest Redfish, Flounder or Spotted Seatrout
- Saltwater Slam
- Redfish Spot Pot
- Weekly Wild Card

SPRING 2025

SALTWATER DIVISION TOURNAMENT

Species Permitted

- Redfish or Red Drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*)
- Flounder (*Paralichthys sp.*)
- Spotted Seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*)

Contests

- Longest Redfish, Flounder or Spotted Seatrout
- Spot Pot (enter the number of spots on ONE side of a Redfish (pic of fish on Check-it-Stik))
- Saltwater Slam (one of each species must be entered to qualify for this contest)
- Weekly Wild Card (random drawing of all qualified saltwater fish. Results posted weekly on FB page)

Follow regulations on bag & length limits

Click [HERE](#) to download 2025 TPWD Outdoor Annual

Questions? Contact
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SPORTFISHING SKILL-A-THON CONTEST

Step 1: 4-H Enrollment

- Be enrolled in 4-H as a youth member (3rd – 12th grades) for the 2024-2025 year.
- If you are not in 4-H, join by setting up your family profile on 4HOnline at <https://texas.4honline.com> or contact your local county Extension agent for assistance with enrollment in your county 4-H program.
- Not sure who your county agent is? Click this link to enter your county name and find contact information:
<https://agriflifeextension.tamu.edu/counties/>

Step 2: Skill-a-thon Contest Registration

Spring Skill-a-thon Details

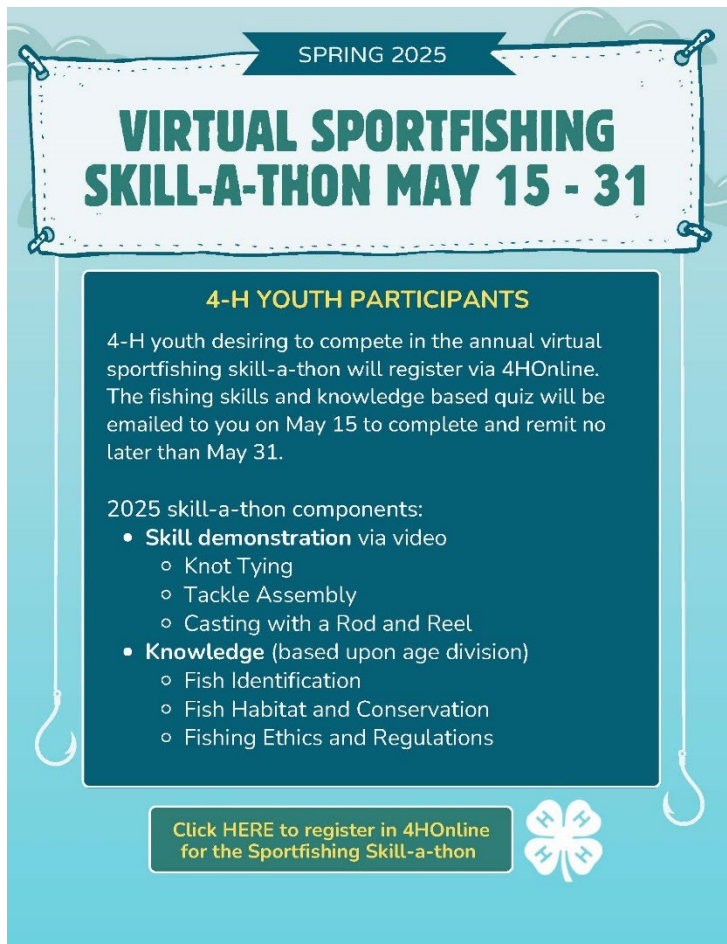
- **February 15-May 1, 2025**
Regular Registration will open on 4-H Online
<https://texas.4honline.com>
- No Late Registration
- Select **2025 Texas 4-H Virtual Sportfishing Skill-a-thon – Spring** from the event list.
 - Register and compete as an individual participant (4-H member).
 - Fee: \$5.00 per 4-H member

Note: We are unable to issue any refunds once your payment has been submitted.

Step 3: Skill-a-thon Contest

- The fishing skills and knowledge-based quiz will be emailed to those registered in the Skill-a-thon on May 15.
 - Skill demonstration video with time limits will need to be recorded and emailed to jlmcswain@ag.tamu.edu no later than May 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.
 - Knowledge quiz (based upon age division) instructions will be emailed and quiz will need to be completed via Google link sent.
- Results of the contest will be released and published via Facebook by June 23, 2025.

Summer Skill-a-thon details will be released with the Summer Sportfishing Program information in April.



SPRING 2025

VIRTUAL SPORTFISHING SKILL-A-THON MAY 15 - 31


4-H YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

4-H youth desiring to compete in the annual virtual sportfishing skill-a-thon will register via 4HOnline. The fishing skills and knowledge based quiz will be emailed to you on May 15 to complete and remit no later than May 31.

2025 skill-a-thon components:

- **Skill demonstration** via video
 - Knot Tying
 - Tackle Assembly
 - Casting with a Rod and Reel
- **Knowledge** (based upon age division)
 - Fish Identification
 - Fish Habitat and Conservation
 - Fishing Ethics and Regulations

Click [HERE](#) to register in 4HOnline for the Sportfishing Skill-a-thon



SPORTFISHING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

SPRING 2025

VIRTUAL SPORTFISHING CERTIFICATION

Earn Your Sportfishing Certification

4-H YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

4-H Youth desiring to become a 4-H certified sportfishing angler will complete all **three** of the following:

- Fish in either the Spring and/or Summer Freshwater or Saltwater tournament and upload at least one qualifying fish and hero pic
- Participate in all 3 educational learning programs (live or watching the recording) and complete the Qualtrics survey for each program
- Compete in the the annual Spring or Summer Virtual Sportfishing Skill-a-thon.
- A Texas 4-H Sportfishing project pin & certificate will be mailed to youth completing all 3 program components

Great information
to add to your
Texas 4-H Record
Book!

Questions? Contact
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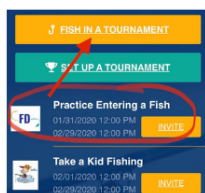




How to Join: Spring Texas 4-H

1. Download the FishDonkey App (or scan QR)
2. Tap FISH IN A TOURNAMENT
3. Tap the magnify glass and type in: Spring Texas 4-H
4. Select Spring Texas and follow the prompts to JOIN

➔ Practice First



Join the tournament called: PRACTICE. It may already appear on your home screen. Get familiar with the app's camera and video. This will also ensure you've given the app proper permissions.

What do I do when the event starts?

Open the FishDonkey App.
That's the home screen.
Tap on the event name.
Tap on Leaderboard.

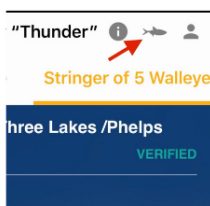
➔ Grand Slam

The app will auto-cull for you. It will toss out smaller fish when you enter a bigger one. You can upgrade the entire time.

Required Photos

1. Photo of you holding the fish
2. Photo of the fish on a measuring board

➔ Digital Livewell Waiting for photos?



The fish icon is your Digital Livewell. It will show fish that are waiting to get on the leaderboard. When you return to good reception, simply tap your livewell and leave it open until all fish are RECEIVED.

FISHDONKEY TIP SHEET



HOW TO ENTER A FISH

1. Tap ENTER A FISH / LEADERBOARD
2. That will open your camera. Take your required pics by tapping on the camera icon. You can take multiple pictures at once.
3. When you are finished taking all the pics and video release, tap the checkmark.
4. Enter the species and the length of your fish.
5. Tap SUBMIT.

Don't panic if you cannot see your name or photos on the leaderboard. Those fish entries are simply waiting patiently to swim upstream to an internet connection. Tap on your Digital Livewell (fish icon) and you will be able to see that your fish are waiting.

No Internet?

Open the app before you head out of range. Tap on the name of your tournament on the app home screen. That's all it takes to load your event for the day. Enter fish through the button ENTER A FISH. Your entries will be held in the fish icon. Open your Digital Livewell when you return to reception (fish icon)

FISHDONKEY TECH SUPPORT

Support@FishDonkey.com
Profile icon--> Contact Us
218.249.0847