



New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation
365 Canal Street, #1120 | New Orleans, LA 70130 | 504/524-4784 | 504/524-4780 fax
www.NewOrleansOnline.com - The City of New Orleans' Official Tourism Web Site

Lea Sinclair
Communications Director
504/524-4784 ext. 212 (office)
504/491-5330 (mobile)
lea@notmc.com

Vanessa Mayfield
Public Relations Account Executive
504/210-1304 (office)
504/444-6746 (mobile)
vanessa@notmc.com

CITY PARK BIG BASS FISHING RODEO & 'FISHTIVAL'

Big fish and big fun in New Orleans' City Park

New Orleans, LA – Founded in 1946, the City Park Big Bass Fishing Rodeo & Festival is one of the country's oldest freshwater fishing rodeos. It is held annually in March and attracts hundreds of anglers who try to land some of the largest fish in New Orleans.

The rodeo was founded by Paul Kalman, a local who spent many days of his childhood fishing the tree-lined banks of the City Park lagoons with a cane pole. Kalman borrowed a scale from a local grocery and started the rodeo in 1946 then grew it to more than 1,000 participants by the '80s. He passed away in 1987 but his legacy lives on in the Paul Kalman Award which is presented to the angler less than 12 years old who lands the largest bass.

By 2005 the rodeo continued to grow and added "Fishtival," a new event which brought a festival atmosphere and featured exhibits, raffles, a silent auction, music and food. That same year, the floodwaters from Hurricane Katrina wreaked havoc on the lagoons and changed the entire ecosystem. Through the help of grants and biologists, much of the fish stocks in the City Park lagoons have been restored and the rodeo continues.

The fishing categories include: bass by fly rod/reel fishing, bass by spinning/spincast/baitcasting, junior anglers (for children 12 and under), team event-Rio Grande Roundup and Champion's Challenge. There is also a bonus event where anglers can win cash prizes by catching a number of stock tagged redfish in Bayou St. John.

Those who aren't fishing will still find plenty to do at the Fishtival which features music, food, educational exhibits and fun events for children. Visitors can hang out with characters dressed up like estuarian creatures, learn to throw a cast net, participate in a casting contest and learn to tie flies.

With more than 11 miles of lagoons, City Park boasts a large fish population. Some of the common species include Largemouth Bass, Blue Catfish, Redspotted Sunfish, Bluegill, Spotted Gar, Speckled Trout and Redfish. Some of the record fish pulled out of the City Park lagoons include a 52-pound buffalo fish in 1976 and a 44-pound blue catfish in 2005.

The New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation promotes the city as a leisure tourism destination throughout the year. NOTMC's annual marketing campaigns include strategic print, broadcast, and Internet advertising and public relations. Web sites: www.NewOrleansOnline.com; www.NewOrleansMuseums.com; www.HearNewOrleansMusic.com.

###