

Annual Ice Fishing Derby at Island Lake provides mid-winter fun for all

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When it gets cold, the lake freezes ? and that means fishing enthusiasts have another opportunity to get out on the lake, literally, and try to hook a big fish at the 15th Annual Island Lake Conservation Area Ice Fishing Derby.

The event is held in partnership with Credit Valley Conservation, Credit Valley Conservation Foundation and the Friends of Island Lake.

The derby got underway on Saturday, Feb. 8, with an early morning start.

?We're looking forward to another great ice fishing derby at Island Lake this year,? says Yasmine Slater, CVC's superintendent of Conservation Parks. ?The derby is a great opportunity for experienced or first-time anglers to get on the lake and have fun. Our goal is to promote fishing at Island Lake, help people connect with nature and raise money for projects around the park.?

Participants compete for up to \$2,500 in cash prizes in the adult category. This includes big catch prizes for the top three Northern Pike, the largest Yellow Perch, and the largest Black Crappie.

Youth prizes are available for the top three longest fish of any species.

Competitors can register online or by phone until Feb. 17. Registration will also be available at the park's rental shop until noon on Feb. 17.

The adult category is open to anyone 15 years of age or older. Tickets are \$35.

The youth category is open to those 12 years of age or younger. Tickets are \$10.

Daily admission to the park is an additional fee.

You must have a valid Ontario Fishing License to take part in the derby.

A portion of the derby falls during Ontario Family Fishing weekend on Feb. 15-17. A fishing license is not required on those days.

Ice rod and ice hut rentals are available and bait is available at the rental shop.

In addition to the ice fishing derby, Island Lake Conservation Area also hosts a summer Bass Derby.

Funds raised support projects that protect, restore, and enhance nature at the park.