

It goes good with chocolate milk

Posted on Aug 15, Posted by [Webmaster](#) Category [John Sloan - Outdoors](#)

We were a little late getting to the dock because we had to stop in Hendersonville for donuts and chocolate milk. It didn't matter. The fish were waiting.

I can still hear her first squeal, "I got one daddy, I got one." Her blonde ponytail bobbed and she almost reeled the fish right through the end of the rod.

I believe Rachael was five at the time and it was a day for just the two of us. Rachael wanted to go fishing with daddy, so, we went. I had a friend with a small pond stocked with bluegill. They were fat and hungry. He also had a few catfish in there and they provided a lot of squealing on the end of a light spinning rod.

I do not know how many we caught that day. I know my hands were sore from getting finned taking them off. I kept just enough for a family fry that night and I knew it was time to quit when Rachael asked if we had enough for supper yet.

I fished quite a bit with my kids as they were growing up and continued to fish now and then with Jason as an adult. I always feel good when I see a dad, mother, or family with small folks fishing. You can usually tell if they are doing it right if dad does not have a rod in his hands. He has other jobs.

You see, dad, when taking a young one fishing, should be a busy man. He should have made sure, no matter where they went or what they fished for, they would catch a reasonable number of fish. Usually, it doesn't matter what kind. Dad will usually be the hook baiter and the fish taker offer. He has to open cold drinks and unwrap snacks. Dad should be a busy man.

If a lasting fishing relationship develops, great, if they, as did Rachael, outgrow fishing with

daddy, okay at the very least, you had that day, right? Think how many dads don't even have that? Think how many kids don't have that? Think what an opportunity you had to show a kid things you take for granted. How many kids have seen a Great Blue Heron spear a minnow? How about an Osprey in full flight or a log full of turtles? What a chance to explain on their age terms, the food chain and where we fit in.

I have written on this subject many times. I do so because it is dear to me. I wish I had done more of it. With me, as it was with so many dads, I was too wrapped up in my own fishing or hunting. I was always going here or there, running wide open for my own needs. I wish I had slowed down and taken the time to take my kids crappie fishing or to White Oak after the monster bream. I did, in later years, take Jason down there bass fishing. Perhaps, some day soon, we will go again. I hope this will make a dad out there somewhere stop and think,

"Maybe I'll take the kid out this weekend and catch some bream." I hope so.

Once, many years ago in Maine, I took an 11-year old, daughter of a single parent household, on a trout-fishing trip. She had never been fishing. Tackle companies donated spincast equipment, some local outfit donated food and a local fishing club arranged for us to fish a stocked trout pond outside Bangor. Each of the dozen or so big-name, professional outdoor writers there "adopted" a kid for the day. At the end of the day, my young charge, just before she fell asleep on the ride back to the church, said, "This has been my best day ever. I wish I had a daddy."

Yes, of course I teared up. Who wouldn't? Maybe someone who never took a kid fishing. Rachael says fishing goes great with donuts and chocolate milk.

Tags: Untagged