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Collins Lake Map Feature



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SEE OUR NEW BAJA
ROUNDUP SECTION ON
PAGE 26-27

Our
35th
Year

"The Magazine for West Coast Sportsmen!"

Rig Up With Fluorocarbon For More Steelhead!

Sometimes it's the seamless drift of a single egg through a furious flow that triggers a strike. Other times it's a textbook drop-back presentation with a glob of bait or a wide-wobbling plug. Every so often it's making the perfect pass while pulling spoons or body baits through a school of baitfish. And then there's the moments the subtlest presentation of live bait at the lake's floor is what it takes.

The target species we're talking about? Steelhead – one of the hardest fighting fish swimming the Great Lakes, Pacific Ocean and their tributaries.

With just a few, minute tweaks in your technique, you'll find these anadromous rainbow trout (that's a 'bow born in freshwater, which swims out to the sea to live its adult life and then heads back to the very flows it started life to procreate) aren't really all that hard to fool. And using fluorocarbon leaders is one of the easiest ruses no matter what tactic you decide to

use.

The hardest part about catching a steelhead? Well, that's

actually being able to land a steelhead.

These fish turn hot headed the millisecond you set the hook. Leaps and bounds that measure multiple feet out of the water? Oh yeah! Rips through a river so wild they can burn up a brand-new drag? It's a heart-breaking fact. Battles often last mere seconds because the chrome-colored fish you just hooked blasted its way into a log jam or around a boulder faster than a silver bullet? You better plan on it...

Overall, if you only land half the steelhead you hook it's a tremendous day.

And it's the finesse needed to fool these fish followed by the manic mayhem once

hooked why diehard steelhead anglers rely on Seaguar's 100% fluorocarbon STS Salmon and STS Trout/Steelhead leader lines. These leaders deliver incredible abrasion resistance, withstanding impacts against ragged rocks and wrapping and slicing into downed trees.

Ever lose a salmonid, reel in and find your hook or lure's gone and the end of your line is all spiraled up? That's the telltale sign of knot failure, which is a

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Steelhead like this beautiful fish are widely regarded as the hardest fighting fish in fresh water.

Photo by DR. JASON HALFEN, The Technological Angler.

GONE FISHING
by
Dr. Jason Halfen



Fish Sniffer field editor and Delta fishing guru, Jack Naves tempted this 18 pound Sac River king with a polished Silvertron spinner.

Photo by JACK NAVES, Fish Sniffer Staff.

Your Guide To Sac City Salmon!

The chinook salmon run is the most anticipated fishery in the in the Sacramento Area each year. Some anglers start as early as the opener in July, hoping to intercept some initial fish blasting through.

The problem with fishing in the Sacramento Region is that on some days, you have a better chance of winning the lottery than you do of hooking a salmon. Salmon fishing can be broken down into two basic requirements.

First off, decent numbers of salmon have to be present if you are going to stand a chance of hooking one. You can't just pick a single salmon off of a spot like you would be able to do while largemouth bass fishing. There needs to be a lot of them moving through.

In addition to being present, they actually have to be biting when your lure goes whizzing past. I used to do a lot of salmon fishing in the early 2000's when way more salmon were present in the river system. I can tell you even on days when salmon were rolling everywhere, we still would only catch them during a few brief

bite windows each day.

Now imagine fishing when only a few schools of salmon move through all day. Were they biting when they passed you? If not, welcome to Skunksville.

To start this season off, my choice of days to fish hadn't been great. All of my trips were those "you missed the morning bite", or "should have been here yesterday" type of deals. When I found myself questioning my own techniques, I had to take a time out and remind myself of the basics. Don't overthink fishing for river salmon! If they are there, it'll happen.

Armed with some newly polished Silvertron spinners and a fresh mindset, I returned the Sacramento River with Gil Perez of Sacramento this October. The red glow of sunrise provided a beautiful backdrop to start our trolling journey. We trolled downstream, starting above the Garcia Bend area.

As we approached the Freeport Bridge, two anglers in a boat were photographing a freshly caught king salmon. "They're in

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WHAT'S HOT
by
Jack Naves

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STAFF TACKLE

What We're Using

Paul Kneeland - fished Davis Lake with Richard Percy of Peardale in the Fish Sniffer 21' Rogue Jet Coastal. They caught fat rainbows to 22 inches and 3 1/2 lbs using a Cousins 7'6" ultra light graphite downrigger rod with an Abu Garcia Revo MGX Extreme level wind reel loaded with 6 lb test Yozuri TopKnot fluorocarbon line. They trolled red Sockeye Slammers and red/white Dick Nite spoons off the Canon Downriggers 5 to 10 feet deep at 2.0 mph.



Cal Kellogg - fished the West Delta for striped bass with Sam Evans. Cal used a 7' Lamiglas Certified Pro baitcasting rod matched with an Abu Garcia 7000 narrow Big Game reel spooled with 65 lb Yo-Zuri braided line for fishing filleted shad on a sliding sinker rig. The anglers landed and released several small striped bass to 24 inches.



Dan Bacher - fished for rainbow trout at Union Reservoir. He used a Berkley Ugly Stick GX2 6' 6" medium action spinning rod, teamed up with a Shakespeare GX235 spinning reel filled with 6 lb. test P-Line CX Premium Fluorocarbon Coated Line. He tossed out 1/8 oz. Yakima Bait Rooster Tails in Brown Trout, Fire Tiger and Rainbow color patterns and 1/8 oz. gold and black Panther Martins.



Spotlight on Conservation

Conference Committee
Rejects Westlands Drainage
Settlement Rider
See Page 22

WHAT'S HOT

Continued from page 1

here," I remarked to Gil. I ran half a mile upstream to see if I could get the school to bite, but it was no dice. We moved downstream to try a new area.

We made a pass, and still nothing. I chatted with a guy who said he had heard of only one caught all morning. "Not again..." I was thinking.

Just after high noon, the air warmed and the sun calmly glared off the water. In the distance, I could faintly make out some guys bleeding a salmon on a stringer. We pulled lines, ran upstream, and headed back through that same area. A few minutes into the troll, Gil thought he had a bite. I looked back, but all I saw was the sinker bouncing along the bottom. A few seconds later Gil said, "There he is!" and we were hooked up.

Gil held the rod high and kept steady pressure on the fish. When he got the fish to the boat, I quickly netted it. The salmon was a beautiful 9 pound hen with fresh scales... chrome in the box!

We continued trolling downstream and had barely put the rods in the water when my clicker started buzzing. The fish felt small and came off after about 20 seconds. Fish off!

After bleeding and icing Gil's fish, we ran back upstream and trolled down once again. Not ten minutes into the pass, I had another one on. It came in fast, and we got a brief glimpse of the fish before it shook free. Another little one, and another fish off!

Luckily, I didn't have much time to sulk over losing back-to-back fish because my reel once again started screaming. I could tell it was a bigger fish, and Gil had time to clear the rods. After a few minutes, I had the fish to the boat and Gil moved in with the net. "Ok, now" I said as I lifted.

The fish was almost in the net when it reversed course. The sinker tangled in the netting, and I uttered, "No-no-no!" to signal that the fish was out of the net. The 10 pound test dropper leader to the sinker snapped, as it



Gil smacked this quality 8 pound king while trolling the Delta with Jack Naves this October. Delta trollers have enjoyed some of the best salmon fishing in several years this season.

Photo by JACK NAVES, Fish Sniffer Staff.

is designed to do, and the fish sped away from the net. What happened next only took a split second to transpire.

The salmon swam away from the net, peeled some line, then reversed directions and jumped directly into the net. "He's in there! He's in there!" I shouted in excitement. Gil pulled the net to the side of the boat, and we had salmon number two for the day.

We had four bites within a 30 minute window, more bites than in all of my previous salmon trips for the year combined. It only went to prove if salmon are present and they are biting, you had better be ready to fish. Otherwise, you snooze you lose.

My fish turned out to be an 18.5 pound female, which provided not only a great deal of smoked salmon, but also a decent amount of roe to use as sturgeon bait. Just as fast as the bite had turned on, it turned off. We didn't see or hear of anything else caught, so we pulled lines and called it a day at 2:30 pm.

Will you experience a morning bite during your next salmon trip? Mid-afternoon? Right at dusk? The only way to find out is to get out there and fish. It'll happen.

FRESHWATER REPORTS:

CONTINUED FROM PG 19

SOUTHERN OREGON ROUNDUP cont.

Chinook salmon at the mouth of Daniels Creek, Isthmus Slough, and the Coos Bay City Boardwalk. There are a few wild Coho in the lower to mid-estuary. There is not a wild Coho season inside Coos Bay this year so all wild Coho must be released but anglers may keep an adipose fin-clipped hatchery Coho.

Chinook salmon are being caught throughout the Coquille River. Salmon anglers are having the best luck trolling cut plug herring behind a flasher in the lower river and spinners in the upper river. There is no wild Coho season in the Coquille River this year so all wild Coho must be released but anglers may keep an adipose fin-clipped hatchery Coho.

Water temperatures are dropping so smallmouth bass fishing should become very aggressive feeders before the winter rains flood the rivers. Smallmouth bass fishing has been good throughout the Coquille and South Fork Coquille rivers. Anglers are having success catching smallmouth bass on small spinners, crankbaits, jigs, and worms.

On the Rogue, Chinook are spread throughout the lower river and estuary. A few Chinook are showing off of Indian Creek waiting for fall rains to move up the creek and back to the hatchery. Boat and bank anglers are picking up Chinook side-drifting eggs in some of the deeper runs downstream of Agness.

On the middle Rogue, Chinook angling is now closed from Hog

Creek Boat Ramp to Cole Rivers Hatchery. Chinook fishing downstream of Hog Creek Boat Ramp is still open through the end of the year.

Steelhead fishing should be good with the lower water. In the Grants Pass area, Steelhead anglers should be aware of spawning Chinook and their redds and try avoid these sensitive areas. The best bet for summer steelhead is drift fishing small



The striper bite is still going strong in Delta waters. This beautiful bass was caught during late October trolling trip with Capt. David Hammond.

Photo courtesy of DELTA PRO FISHING, Elk Grove.

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