

Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb

Fishing tip:

There are some constants in fishing for improved success and generally speaking the time of day will influence trout activity. Fishing in low light condition, I've found from observation and experience that trout are more active early morning and evening. Fortunately being situated on a lake, I get to spend a lot of time observing trout activity and fly fishers. Tubers often ignore these general rules and will drag a streamer mid-day regardless of the conditions and complain that fishing is not very good. Low light conditions often hide a bad presentation, a fly that is a poor imitation of what the trout are taking, and they don't spook as easily. Exposure to predation is another factor that make trout wary during midday and you won't find too many trout sitting mid stream on a hot sunny day in a few inches of water. Trout are affected by light change and anglers should use their awareness to try and think like a trout, while improving their success.

Weather

Eastern Sierra weather is still warmer than normal and we are experiencing some afternoon thunderstorms with flooding in some areas with minimal lightning and thunder. Afternoon cloud cover has enhanced the catching in the backcountry, and the mosquitoes are dwindling in numbers for enjoyable hiking. Fires are still a constant threat and there are restrictions on open fires outside of Forest Service campgrounds.

Jeff Franke of Mammoth Lakes caught a 6lb golden 12 miles into the backcountry at an undisclosed lake on an undisclosed fly. I talked with someone who saw the picture of the fish and it definitely was 12 miles in.

Legislation

The Department is still experiencing stocking pains but are getting fish into the waters but "not as we are accustomed to". The Fish and Game Commission meeting was held in Bridgeport on the 12th and 13th and listened to public input to determine if the new catch and release regulations on the Upper Owens, Hot Creek and East Walker rivers need to be rescinded, and the Commission will probably make a decision at the October meeting in Concord. They stated that due to the water flows in low years these waters may not be suitable for year round angling. The mud snail is still being monitored across the road from Fish Springs Hatchery. DFG has requested two teams of six personnel to start testing the negative waters and this will not happen due to lack of funding.

NEWS: *The County, The Town Council, IMPACT, and others will be filling the need for additional stocking and has come up with some funding to provide 15 locations with trout to provide a better angling opportunity for everyone through the remainder of the peak season. Tim Alpers stocked some of the Hoefer strain brown trout into Little Virginia as part of the supplement fish.*

ROCK CREEK AREA and Mosquito Flats are doing fair to good and the mosquitoes are also decreasing. I've tried my new version of a mosquito larva in green and brown and lost all 6 of them to the

weeds, and got a lot of hits so back to the tying bench for a retry from the photo I took.

HOT CREEK – water is good and flow is down but there are numerous hatches going off most of the time especially with the cloud cover and thunderstorm activity over the area. Flies that have been working are baetis, PMD's Caddis, Yellow Sallies, terrestrials, emergers, and soft hackles are all getting grabs. Please stay out of the water to prevent the spread of the New Zealand mud snail.

CROWLEY is dropping but still very fishable. Reports say that McGee Bay is stacked with fish. Fish the mouth of the weeds at the north end using a dry/dropper rig and look for fish in the cooler water of the lake. Use a large dry over a calibaetis imitation. Also try some damsels.

CONVICT – No report.

MAMMOTH BASIN has been doing fair to good with the infusion of the browns from Alpers Ranch. Try your streamers; dries and some terrestrials are working. Fish deep where the trout are more comfortable due to the warmer air. Try a dry/dropper using PT's #16 hare's ear and emergers.

SAN JOAQUIN is doing well with small dries late in the day, and terrestrials during the day, with midges getting grabs in the am. It's prime time now and soon it will turn into a trickle due to lack of snowmelt and a low winter.

RUSH CREEK is starting low and water out of Gem is also minimal. I saw the dam from the air and didn't recognize it because of the low level. Try some standard dries in #16 or 18's and a Zug Bug.

JUNE LAKE is doing well and standard streamers in dark patterns near weedy areas of the lake will get hit, the west end and on the north east shore just west of the "beach". Watch for feeding trout early evening and tug Matukas, Wooly Buggers and Doc's Twin Lake Special in Black or Olive and a Maroon Mohair Leech are all doing the job. My favorite is an Orange Fish Hawk. Grey Ghost (my version) is also a good fly on June, and Silver Lakes.

GULL LAKE is getting weekly Alpers rainbows so it's open water for just about anything. Check with Gull Lake marina for the latest news.

SILVER LAKE - Most of the fish coming out are being taken near the Rush Creek inlet area. Grey Ghosts, Rainbow Hornbergs and black and Burgundy Woolly buggers for those Alpers browns.

LUNDY ~ No Report

VIRGINIA LAKES action has been steady and you will have to work for the fish. The plant numbers are dropping because of the distance of the hatchery where the fish are raised. Flies that have been working are Olive Elk hair Caddis, Mosquito, Black Gnat, large Black ant, Doc's Twin Lake Special in black and olive, and the gray ghost. Some emergers have been working and also WD40's in gray. Last couple nights the Phyllis Diller in cream and Klinkhammer did exceptional on 6x fluorocarbon tippet. Bear sightings have been ongoing since early June.

EAST WALKER flow is at 140cfs and has fluctuated since the 19th from 100cfs. The water is very warm and the fish are sluggish, it's my opinion not to fish the river unless you do it at daylight after the evening air has had a chance to cool overnight. Fish near overhanging branches or brushy areas near the water and use an Elk hair caddis or #16 PMD's.

BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR is clear and getting very warm and the fish are getting active. Fish are holding at about 8 feet of water off the marina near the Buckeye inlet according to guides. Damsels are the number one bugs of the Rez.

WEST WALKER flow is 57cfs. Stay on the top as the water is low and dries will work well along with loads of terrestrials and small midges for the bottom fly. It's a fun area near the flats above the first campground.

See you on the water. CJ (7.7)