

Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb

Fishing tip:

Nature shortchanged trout by giving it a pea-sized brain to deal with predators like us, intelligent in most cases. Even though the trout isn't very smart, it certainly can hold its own against all my scholarly fishing buddies and me. So why is there is so much cerebral work devoted to catching a creature with limited intelligence? Trout have to determine what to eat and what not to eat with everything that drifts, floats or passes in front of them and inspects everything as if they have an IQ of 180. It's simply through selectivity, they peruses the same thing numerous times, and recognize what has worked prior but does take in some odd stuff and obviously spits it out. It basically has to pass muster. This means it has to move in the same manner, dead drift rising to the surface, or fluttering on the surface and if it doesn't move as the trout expects it won't make the top 10 on their menu. Trout generally require characteristics that resemble their food source, body length, height of the wings, the symmetry is proportionate, and matching the color, as that is the very last thing you want to match. Trout flies that look similar in shape may not be what they are targeting. Select some flies and place them on a flat surface and back up about 3 or 4 feet and squint your eyes and match the proportions. Most match-the-hatch guys omit important details like legs, beards, thorax bulges, and the length etc. and it's important to notice these details when you are squinting at your flies. Don't tie or use flies that "you" think look good, seine the water and take a better look at the bugs from all sides, it might just improve your success.

Weather Continued high temperatures in the Eastern Sierra are about to change by the 28th, with wind driving a low pressure system into possible snow showers on Tuesday and/or Wednesday.

Legislation and/or News ~ September 4, 2009 WON

The Fish and Game Commission has proposed elimination of the need to wear your fishing license in full display above your waist while fishing – a law that has caused undue hardship on almost every angler since its inception. See web-site for wording. (www.fgc.ca.gov/regulations/new2009/proposedregs09.asp). The law will remain in effect until officially removed at a later date. I will continue to wear my license in full display.

Please check the regulations prior to fishing unfamiliar water as to any gear restrictions, size and limits.

ROCK CREEK LAKE has been good with most of the fish sitting in deep water due to the lake temp, so use full sink with black woolly buggers, and blue damselfly. Dries are working, so try olive Hornbergs.

CROWLEY LAKE moss is worse than ever and it depends on which way the wind blows as to where you will be able to fish. Fishing is good when you get into the right waterway so try streamers, perch fry and leeches, but check with the experts at Crowley Lake Marina or in Mammoth for the latest info.

UPPER OWENS has also been fishing well when you find the right spot. Fish are a tad small but keep working it until you find the main channel where they are holding and use dry/dropper, Copper John, soft hackles, pheasant tails, and prince nymphs with your best presentation. Use sizes 20-24.

CONVICT LAKE has had a good breeze on most days so fish the same southwest corner near the aspens, go deep, deeper and the deepest you can handle and start from there up to see where the trout are holding. Water is warm all over, but is changing soon.

MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN - Twin and Mamie are doing great on brown and olive Docs Twin Lake Special (DTLS), Olive Matuka, or a leech pattern with a nymph dropper #16 or #18. Pick your best working nymph.

HOT CREEK is fishing well; water level is low and weed beds are showing. Fish early and late with dries (vary your colors in sizes 20-24, also small WD40's, PT flashback (22-24), gray baetis patterns #20-24, scuds, and small caddis emergers. Large foam ant patterns and try some small hoppers. There is always a afternoon breeze so be prepared for everything.

SAN JOAQUIN – You can drive down to the meadow in your own vehicle now. You'll have to do some extra walking to get into fish as the water level is low and warm, so look for pools and keep a low profile while using Yellow Sallies, Royal Coachman, Parachute Adams and definitely Olive elk hair caddis #16.

JUNE LOOP – Gull has been doing well on brown Twin Lakes Special, with or without a Pheasant Tail dropper, and June has done well on burgundy or olive leech patterns, the "staple" Hornberg (green) with a prince nymph dropper. Go deep and I'm not kidding.

LUNDY LAKE has been doing fair from boats and tubes and is got their last load of Alpers last week. Their last day open was Sept. 13th. Work with Hornbergs, olive crystal flashy buggers, wiggle nymphs in olive or rust, and try some ants near the inlet and south shore near the aspens.

VIRGINIA LAKES had been good to great after Alpers trophies arrived along with the supplement fish and 400 pounds from Fish and Game. Just about anything worked for over 8 days, but the continued warm weather has plagued most of the Eastern Sierra without any relief driving the fish even deeper than last week. Flies working are black stripped-down version of a woolly bugger with some flash in the tail, and you'll probably have to drive it down with full sink with a slow strip. Try a 2 fly rig with a hare's ear over a scud pattern, or a blue wing olive parachute, gray hackle peacock, or fur body black ant. Also, black gnat parachute, and Selby's Black Bitch.

EAST WALKER – Flow is currently at 98cfs and fishing quite well. Early is the best time to use PMD's, and trico's. Nymphs working are blood midge, WD40's, tiger, crystal and small caddis patterns in the afternoon in the 1st mile down from the dam. Elkhair Caddis in #16 or 18, small yellow sallies over any nymph will work. Fish only when temp is below 67 degrees, it's healthier for the trout. Current temp is 60 as the nights are cooling down the day-time water temperature.

WEST WALKER – Water is at very low 38cfs but standard for this time of year, so look for flat water and fish the pools and curves, and use a two fly rig with large attractor and tiger, crystal or flashback Zug as the bottom fly with a shorter distance between flies. Try some terrestrials, hoppers, ants, etc.

SADDLEBAG LAKE - The lakes basin is a bit slow except for Saddlebag, and it is doing well on the east side and heading toward the resort using a full sink with olive and or olive/black woollies. The stream is running fair and some nice brooks, browns and bows can be found in deeper pools so keep a low profile, they are spooky.

See you on the water....cj 9.9