

Dave Graybill

The Fishin' Magician

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The sockeye season on Lake Wenatchee has ended, but the Chinook season on the upper Columbia continues. Fishing has improved for anglers fishing on the Columbia. This is the time of year that good catches can be made even above the Brewster Pool.

Rollie Schmitt, who lives on Lake Wenatchee, invited me out for my final trip last week, and although we only had a couple of hours available, we still landed three nice sockeye. Some of our fish were showing signs of nearing spawning, but the fillets were still gorgeous. Anglers showed up at Lake Wenatchee right up to the closing bell, and fishing continued to be very good. There are a whole lot of anglers with a good supply of prime fillets of sockeye in their freezers. I told Rollie that I was actually happy to see this fishery come to an end, as it will give us time to hit some of the areas small streams with our fly rods. We both really enjoy fishing the White River, from the trail head at the end of the road, down stream a mile or so. If you plan to fish this stretch, you will need a trailhead parking permit, and these are available at the Forest Service offices.

Summer run salmon fishing on the upper Columbia is at its season's best, with improved fishing being reported from Chelan Falls to the Brewster Pool. Anglers are having good success fishing Super Bait Plug Cut lures in all locations. I had a good morning myself fishing with the Hartley Family, who were auction winners, at Chelan Falls last week. We hooked three fish, but only landed a jack. A large fish took my Plug Cut Lemon Lime and just about spooled Zach before I

could get the other line cleared and get the boat headed down stream. We got the fish right next to the boat and could see it was a dandy, when it took one last dive and broke off. The flasher shot out of the water smacked me on the chin, leaving a bleeding cut! This has never happened to me before, so at least I have something to remember that fish by. I felt horrible about losing the fish that was well over 20 pounds. Oh, well. That's fishing. I plan to get back up to Chelan Falls very soon and see if I can do a better job of getting fish in the boat. Wish me luck!

This is a good time of year to look for kings in places that have been ignored earlier in the season. One of the spots, that's good in the afternoons, is right above Wells Dam. There is a launch about two miles above Wells. Anglers troll along the debris barrier and

off the rip rap on the service road to the dam. I have seen some dandy kings come from this area. I was fishing here last year with my buddy Brian, and we had a fish in the boat fairly quickly. Then we hooked a big fish. The drag on my Abu Garcia Revo Toro reel was all the way down, but the fish still ran under the debris caught on the barrier. There was nothing we could do about it, and had to cleat off my line to break off my gear. That's the trick of fishing up here. If you catch fish near the barrier, better get it away from there as soon as you can.

There are a couple of other spots I like to look for kings later in the season. One is just around the corner from the Brewster Pool, and many know it as "Pelican", as there is a large flock of these birds resting on the shallow point here. There is a nice run from this point up to where the river takes a big bend. The water is very shallow on the far side of the river here, but there is plenty of 20 to 30 feet of water that the kings like off this bank. I spend most of my time toward the bottom of this run, but have caught fish at the top of it, right where the water drops off at a shallow "riffle", too.

The next spot up has a white pump as a land mark. Trolling along here, in about 50 feet of water can be very productive. This particular area can continue to produce fish when the bite down below, at Pelican, has shut down. Further up here, where the river runs up against a large rock bluff, the bottom drops off to over 100 feet. Kings like to hold in this deep cold water, and

I have hooked some really big ones in this hole. Later on anglers fish clear up to the bridge below Chief Joseph Dam. I like to back-troll bait wrapped plugs through there in the fall.

Anglers who have been frustrated with releasing wild Chinook on the upper Columbia may want to travel down to the Snake River. Starting on September 1st anglers will be able to catch and keep three adult hatchery fall Chinook and six hatchery jack Chinook per day. They can also catch and keep three hatchery steelhead per day. They must stop fishing when their limit of three hatchery steelhead has been reached. This is a barbless hook fishery and all wild fish must be immediately released without being removed from the water. You can see all the details about this fishery by going to the WDFW web site, and looking under Latest News on the Home Page.

I wanted to let everyone know that I have had a good response to the trip I am offering to Costa Rica in December. We still have spaces left, though, and if you have an interest be sure to call Shari at Journey Travel and Tours: 1-877-335-1153 right away.

Reach Dave at:
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