

# Dave Graybill

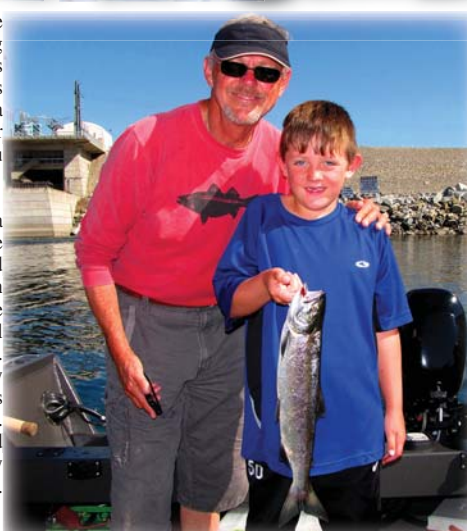
## The Fishin' Magician

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The top news in our region is still the incredible numbers of sockeye that are arriving in our local fishing areas on the Columbia River. There are other options out there, though, and I got to sample a few of them this week. Hot weather will make spending time on the water a challenge. Remember to keep your fluid intakes up, wear tons of sunscreen and take a dip once in a while if you can!

The sockeye counts at Bonneville Dam are down to a mere trickle, but I'll be the total will reach 600,000. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has bumped the daily limit up to include eight salmon, six of which may be sockeye. Please look at the news release as there are separate openers for certain areas. If you want to fill your freezer with these prized fish, better hone your skills. Even though they are abundant, it doesn't mean that they are jumping into the boat. My brother Rick Graybill has just published a great booklet on how to fish for sockeye. It provides incredible details and lots of photos and descriptions of where to fish for them. You can get a copy at Hooked on Toys in Wenatchee, or order on at [www.hookedontoy.com](http://www.hookedontoy.com).

I made my first attempt at sockeye fishing last Friday. My fishing buddy Rollie Schmitten and his grandson Noah and I started at Chelan Falls fishing for kings. It was very slow that morning; I saw just one net out the whole time we fished there. We then ran up to Wells Dam and joined the parade of boats working the eddy opposite the boat ramp. Fish were being caught here. We could see them flipping around on the surface at times, and when we ran through a bunch of them we sometimes got a fish. We were using the standard size 0 dodger and hoochies, baited with shrimp, and I found that the darker hoochies seemed to be working



better than the pale pink, and leader length wasn't too much of a factor. We got fish on leaders that were 12 inches, and some that were at least 18 inches.

One thing that was dramatic, though, was the use of scent. If I wasn't getting bites, I would bring the rod in, change the shrimp to a fresh one, and then gave it a dose of Graybill's Guide Formula (which brother Rick created decades ago). I was using the Craw Anis flavor, as that's what I had on the boat at the time. It made a huge difference. When I started doing this the number of bites we got improved

dramatically. I was using my extended handle kokanee net, and we still lost more than half the fish we hooked. I may tie up some rigs with a trailing treble and see if I can put more fish in the net. Sockeye are like catching kokanee. They go crazy when they get near the boat and often shake the barbless hook. There are literally swarms of sockeye along the edges of the eddy at Wells. If you aren't getting fish you need to adjust your technique until you do. Change color, leader length, and pour on the scent. That is what changed the day for me.

Not everyone fishes for salmon, so I ventured out and tried some other fisheries that I know are popular this time of year. The first thing my wife Eileen and I did was run up to Fish Lake, near Lake Wenatchee and try the perch fishing. It was great. We did a little exploring, looking for a good school of fish. When we put Minn Kota on Anchor Mode, just around the corner from the Cove Resort, in about 25 feet of water and the action was very steady. I gave up on trying to fish with two rods. By the time I reeled in a perch on one rod the bait was stolen on the other. We caught over 70 perch in an afternoon, and kept 20 for the pan. The fish we kept were all about 9 inches. According to Scott West, owner of the Cove Resort, the perch fishing is much better in the morning and it usually calm then, too.

The next day we hooked up the Smoker Craft and headed for Banks Lake. Our trip was delayed, though. A friend passed us in Baker Flats and called to say it looked like we were going to lose a wheel! I turned around and headed for Bob Feil Boats and Motors. Although it was just 7 a.m. the crew was there and they found that my lug nuts had worked loose and they had it fixed in no time. Some may think that getting this type of service is unusual, but I

know of many others they have helped, saving their fishing or boating day.

Anyway, we made it to Banks a little later than planned and found the smallmouth bass fishing amazing. We cast Senkos to the shores and were into fish everywhere we went. The 4-inch green and white was a real winner, and the 3-inch pumpkin with black flake was also irresistible to the smallmouth. We landed over 50 fish, and had about eight that ranged in size from a pound to close to 3 pounds. Of course Eileen got more big fish than I did. I like to fish Banks this time of year. Not only is the fishing hot, there are many sandy beaches where you can stop and take a dip if you want. That helps when it's a hundred degrees!

I made another jaunt to the Teanaway River. Even though I arrived in the early afternoon, the trout were biting. I caught a bunch of smaller rainbow and one cutthroat of about 10 inches up the valley. Then I caught bigger fish, including one cutthroat of 13 or 14 inches lower on the stream. I lost another fish that must have been 18 inches or better.

I have more sockeye trips planned, and I'll let you know if I find a rig that they really like. Also, there are some other popular summer fisheries to explore. I will keep you posted on what I learn!

Reach Dave at:  
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