

Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

The Fishin' Magician

I just can't keep away from Bridgeport and the steelhead fishing up there. My wife has Monday's off, and steelhead fishing is her favorite of all the different kinds of fishing that we do. She talked me into going back to Bridgeport, which wasn't too difficult, knowing that I will probably get busy and we won't have that many opportunities this fall. It turned out to be a great idea.

On our second pass, casting bobbbers and jigs, in one of spots that we usually start with, she hooked her biggest steelhead ever. On the first jump I could tell it was a good one, and it took several more jumps before we got it close enough to the boat to see if it was a hatchery or wild fish. It was a big hatchery fish, and she told me she wanted to net it herself. I was running the video camera, and thought, oh boy, this will be interesting. She tried and tried and just couldn't get the big fish close enough to the net and handle the long rod. I put the camera down and put the net under the fish. The fish was well hooked as it turned out, and what a beauty. It was a 31 1/2 -inch, bright hen, and probably weighed 12 or 13 pounds. I'm sure glad I got it on video and you can see her battle this fish on my Fishing TV Show early next month.

We made a couple of other drifts along this shoreline, and catching and releasing triploids and then I noticed she was cranking like crazy. I asked if she had a fish on, and she said yes. I turned to bring my gear in and my bobber was down. We



had a double and it got very exciting. She actually grabbed the camera and was taking footage while I fought and released my wild fish, and then of me releasing her fish. A double on wild steelhead, what fun!

We worked our way downstream and caught and released some triploids, and explored some other water. We didn't hook any steelhead in the new water, but I am sure I will later this season. It just looks too good not to hold fish.

I hadn't fished the bridge hole yet that morning. It just hasn't produced any fish for me yet this season. We ran up there anyway, and I saw that there wasn't anyone fishing from shore, which

hasn't been the case earlier this year. I set the boat up in the current made a cast, and down went my bobber. The fish ran down river and then made turn up stream and ran under the boat. I drove my rod as deep as I could off the side of the bow, and since I was kneeling and facing down I couldn't see it, but I could hear the fish jumping on the other side of the boat! I got Eileen to raise the motor and managed to work the fish around and get a look at it. It was a small hatchery buck, and we put it in the net. I ran back up and hooked another steelhead just below where I had hooked the first one. Wow, was I glad I decided to give this spot a try. Two fish in two casts.

Fishing on the upper Columbia for steelhead will only get better as the season gets in gear. More fish will settle into the holes all along the river, and when the water temperature drops the fish will be even more eager to hit jigs.

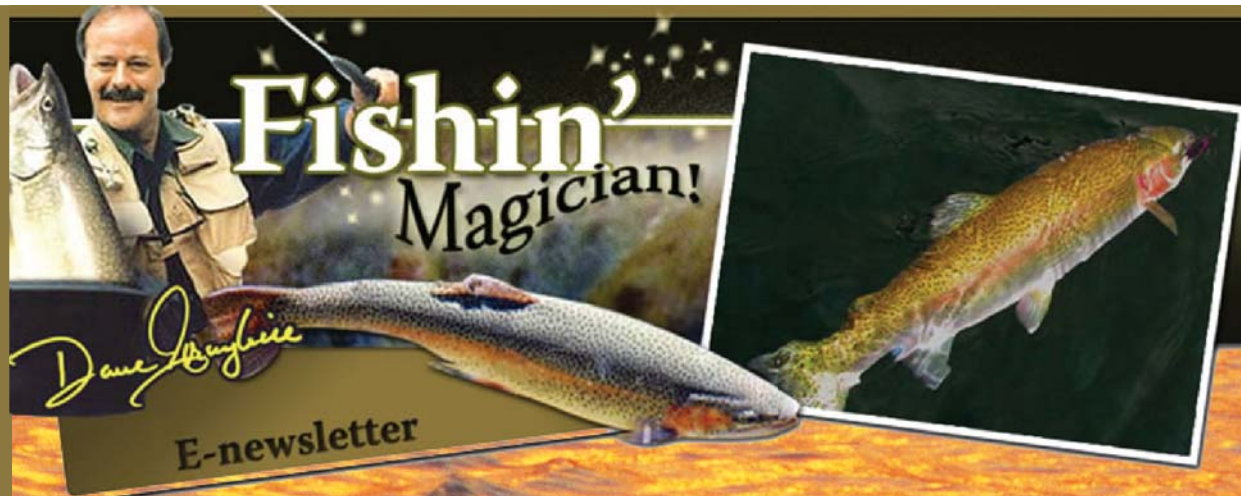
We knew that there was a bumper crop of fall Chinook headed for the Hanford Reach area on the Columbia River this year, and they did show up. So many kings have arrived to the upper Columbia that the season on fall Chinook in the Hanford Reach has been extended. Anglers can keep six salmon, two of which may be adults may be kept during the extended season, and both hatchery clipped and wild fish may be retained. Anglers can keep coho in

this stretch, too. The season, which was scheduled to close on the 22nd will now remain open through October 31st. I would encourage everyone to check the WDFW web site for the details about the exact area that will be open and the bag limits. Another season that will remain open through the end of the month is the annual fall trout fishing season on Jameson Lake. I have fished here in the fall many times and it is a great time to be on Jameson. There are lots of fresh plants being taken right now, but there are always some real whooppers taken in the fall season at Jameson. You can check in with both resorts on the lake by visiting my Anglers Directory at FishingMagician.com.

I am getting good reports from anglers fishing the Wenatchee River for steelhead. Fish are more spread out now and are being taken from the mouth all the way to Leavenworth. Water conditions are actually better since we've had some rain. The river was pretty low and clear and higher water will both move more fish up stream and give them a few more places to hide out.

I am anxious to get out on the Wenatchee myself. I haven't had a chance to fish either the Wenatchee or Methow so far this season. I have been having fun up at Bridgeport, and am in fact headed back up there again soon. There's a whole lot of steelhead season ahead of us and it's only going to get better!

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