

Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

The Fishin' Magician

We've had great weather this fall. There have been some smoky days, but it has been mostly clear in Leavenworth, where I live. It was mostly clear where I fished this past week. I spent a morning in the Vernita area, shooting video for my Fishing TV Show. I also was on Blue Lake for an afternoon, with my wife Eileen, fishing for perch.

I left Leavenworth at 3:30 a.m. to get to the gas station at Desert Aire in time to meet Shane Magnuson, Upper Columbia Guide Service. He had two clients who were willing to have me on board with my video camera. They had traveled from the Tacoma area to spend a couple of days fishing the Hanford Reach and Vernita. We headed for the ramp at 5:30 and then ran a couple of miles down river, below the bridge.

We were jet-diving eggs before the sun was fully up and gave this some serious time, as it had been very productive for Magnuson lately. We watched a coyote scramble along the rocks on the shore. A deer browse in the sparse greenery. No salmon showed any interest in our eggs, though. Magnuson shifted gears and fishing location. He switched to Super Bait Plug Cuts and flashers and tried first the Reactor Hole below Coyote Rapids and then another deep hole further down stream.

As we passed other boats we got the "hands up" signal, meaning no fish from other anglers. Magnuson got some calls from cohorts on the river, and they reported the same. It was an uncommonly slow



day for the Hanford Reach this time of year. We did finally see someone hook up and shortly after we got a fish on and landed a 12-pound king. We put the gear out and trolled a little while longer, but since I had a meeting to attend in Moses Lake, we pulled the gear and headed back to the ramp at Vernita to dump me off.

I said my good byes and Magnuson said he would get me down for another session on the river. Driving to Moses Lake I took the short cut over the Beverly-Burke road, and stopped in George to pick up a sandwich. Just as I pulled off the road my phone rang. It was Magnuson. They needed just one more fish for their limit! He said they ran out from the ramp after dropping me off, put out the divers and eggs and after drifting about 100 feet down stream they hooked and landed a double. They got another fish soon after. I'm sure they got their last fish before they broke for lunch. It appears that they just needed to get me off the boat to change their luck.

I was told that the perch were biting at Blue Lake, so Eileen and I headed over there to fish for the afternoon. I was to meet a couple in Soap Lake at 6 to show them my Jetcraft boat so it allowed us time to sample the fishing and make the meeting.

We launched at the Blue Lake Resort and ran out to where we saw a few boats anchored. I putted around until I saw a good bunch of perch on my depth sounder and then threw out a buoy. I then put the bow mount down and when I got to the buoy I hit the Anchor Mode button on my I-Pilot and started fishing. I had to move a couple of times, as the fish I was finding weren't biting. That was the complaint from the other anglers. The fish were there but on this particular day the bite was very slow. One group had caught 94 the day before, but had next to nothing to show for their efforts this day.

We continued to move around and finally found a school that was hungry. We got just five fish before we had to leave, but they were very nice perch. One I tossed back but the other four were all 11 to 12 inches. That's some nice perch. Of course, just when we were getting into them it was time to leave. I sure want to get back to Blue Lake, though. If I could get more big perch like this when the bite was on I could get the makings for a lot of great perch meals.

The steelhead season for this year is yet to be announced but I expect it to come pretty soon.

There are already 15,000 over Priest Rapids Dam, and although that's fewer than we have seen the past couple of years it is above the 10-year average. At the Roundtable meeting in Brewster, Jeff Korth, Fish Manager from Region Two, talked about the upcoming season. He said it would open sometime from the second week in October to mid month, and would likely be a split season like last year. It would probably run through the end of November and then close. It would reopen in February and March as it did last year.

So, the timing for the free steelhead seminar at Town Ford on Wednesday, October 17th should be just right. I have Shane Magnuson coming again, and he will be providing his usual highly detailed description of how to rig for bobber and jig fishing for steelhead. He will also show those that attend some set ups for drifting Corkies and yarn, another effective method for steelhead fishing in our local rivers. I hope to have some other guests there to speak to the steelhead season this fall and winter. The seminar will begin at 6 p.m.

What a great time of year. There are big fall salmon to catch. Great fishing in our local lakes with steelhead fishing just around the corner!

Reach Dave at:
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