

Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

The Fishin' Magician

There are benefits to the colder weather we are experiencing in Central Washington. While some complain and have had enough, others are glad to see it and are sharpening their ice augers and packing their sleds to head out to area lakes to go ice fishing. I did a survey of some of the more popular ice fishing lakes in our region earlier this week. This is what I learned.

Up north in the Methow Valley, there are folks fishing through the ice on Patterson and Davis lakes. Patterson is known for good catches of perch and rainbow in the winter. Bob Jateff, biologist with the Department of Fish and Wildlife in Omak, told me that while he hasn't had reports of red hot fishing, anglers are doing well on the winter lakes. He said that Patterson is producing lots of 7- and 8-inch perch, and Davis fair catches of 11- and 12-inch rainbow. There are carryover rainbow in both of these lakes, but many are taken prior to the freeze. He mentioned that the parking area at Patterson has been plowed and there is good access to the lake.

I haven't fished Davis Lake, but have fished Patterson a couple of times. Perch here are fat and healthy, and we have caught some nice 10- to 11-inch fish. Patterson doesn't get much fishing pressure during the spring and summer, and although 12-inch rainbow are common, we have always caught a few rainbow on our perch baits that were 15 and 16 inches. Dave Eichler has been with me at Patterson and raves about the quality of the trout from this lake. He says the meat looks and tastes like a kokanee. He loves them. We always had good luck on Patterson with meal worms and Keith Roe jigs.



Dave and his son Evan called me with a fishing report while they were at Fish Lake, near Lake Wenatchee. Evan has been getting near limits of perch here, and when he called me later in the week he had already started on another good catch. He said he had five fish in the ice, and they ranged in size from 9 to 11 inches. These are nice perch for Fish Lake. He said that it was very busy on Fish Lake on Saturday, with probably 150 people on the lake. He has been using wax worms and maggots and catching mostly perch. When I visited the lake earlier in the week I checked with some anglers that were fishing at the bottom end of the lake, and

although they had some perch, they were mostly catching rainbow of about 11 and 12 inches. It is not unusual for anglers to catch triploid rainbow through the ice on Fish Lake. A good number are left over after the summer and fall fishing.

Bob Jateff also mentioned that the ice is good at Rat Lake, near Brewster. Anglers are catching fair numbers of 11- and 12-inch trout here, too. There are some carryovers available at Rat Lake, but it opened to catch and keep fishing on December 1st so anglers had open water for over a month and took good numbers of bigger fish.

Ice is thick enough to walk on at Moses Lake, and anglers are starting to catch the jumbo perch. While ice fishermen celebrate catching 9- and 10-inch perch on most of our lakes, Moses Lake produces many that are over 12 inches and a surprising number that are 13 to 15 inches. The area near the 1-90 Bridge is where you will find most of the activity on Moses Lake. There are fair numbers of walleye taken through the ice in the winter here, too, and Swedish Pimples are a standby lure for both walleye and perch.

I also checked in with the folks at Big Wally's to see if the ice fishing had begun at the Coulee City Marina. What I learned is that the ice had just formed on the inlet and wasn't safe yet. Another week of cold weather should put a safe cap of ice on this popular winter perch fishing spot and anglers will be able to find out if the fish are still coming into the marina inlet.

I drove down to Pasco to spend some time at the Tri-Cities Sportsmen's Show and was amazed at the big crowd that it drew. The parking lot was overflowing, and the people I talked to said that it had been very busy here this year. It was fun talking to the people I know at Tiffany's Resort on Curlew Lake, and Lazy-Daze-Retreats in Northport, and many others that I get to see at these shows.

This weekend the Washington State Sportsmen's Show in Puyallup will be going on. I know many anglers and hunters from our region head over to this one. This is a really big show, spread out over several buildings at the Puyallup Fair Grounds. You will see some familiar faces from our area at this show, and tons and tons of vendors offering products and services from all over the world.

I will be heading over the mountains to be a part of the Seattle Boat Show again this year. The show opens on Friday, January 24th and runs through February 3rd. You will find me at the Bob Feil Boats and Motors booth. My new boat for the season, a Kingfisher Discovery 2025 will be rigged for fishing and all logoed up for the show.

It is going to be a busy couple of weeks for me. I will be having fun at the shows on the west side and getting some ice fishing in when I can. I hope to see you out there!

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