

Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb

Fishing tip:

When fishing the great caddis hatch at Hot Creek or Upper "O" or anywhere be sure to effectively fish your emergers to imitate hatching insects. The most important factor in the success of your emerger fishing is to imitate the natural behavior of the insect. This will determine fish or no fish. The correct size, shape and color are mandatory but you must make your fly behave like a real bug. There are different ways to fish emergers: close to the bottom, in the water column, at the surface or just below the surface. First you must determine where in the column the fish are feeding and meet them on their ground. If on the bottom, a Nymphing approach is needed with the appropriate swing at the end of the drift. If the fish are near the surface, a surface or film emerger should be used. If fish are in the middle of the column, a hanging nymph or a micro/indicator or 2nd fly approach should be used. Once you have determined where the fish are, make your fly rise, swim or drift as needed. Gary Borger ties a fly called a Wet/Dry and it is simplicity plus. It's a light wire hook, dubbed fur body and a wind of partridge, woodcock or starling for the soft hackle. The more realistic the behavior the more it will determine your success. Like most fly-fishing techniques, emerger fishing takes research, practice and patience and more practice-practice-practice.

Weather

Eastern Sierra weather finally arrived with the first snowstorm of the season leaving only a couple inches from the 4-day storm. Temps slowly returned to normal but the fishing has improved greatly due to the cooler weather. Evenings are cool.

Legislation

Governor "S" cut the Fish and Game budget by 12%, and I'm amazed that he would even consider this as his pre-election flyers to get him elected stated that he was in support of outdoor enthusiasts. Everything that the Department is experiencing in their budget with regard to stocking has not changed.

NEWS: Apparently funding was allocated for two biologists to start searching for mud snails, and they have done a few lakes to date. We are awaiting the results of these waters surveyed.

Judd Hanna turned in his resignation last week giving up his recently appointed position on the CA Fish and Game Commission. Apparently Hanna's support of the banning of all lead bullets in condor country made him the target of Republican lawmakers, who barraged Governor Schwarzenegger with 34 requests to have him removed and the Governor asked for his resignation.

ROCK CREEK AREA and Mosquito Flats are doing fair to good and the mosquitoes are gone. Try the ponds just below the outlet and walk down the stream with a Zug Bug, Prince, or Pheasant Tail. Lake fishing is fairly close to Virginia Lakes report, but the stream is a lot more fun.

UPPER OWENS can only be described as AWESOME for the entire summer. Flows are around 99cfs with good clarity. Fish move, as the sun gets high in the sky seeking deep cooler water so move accordingly. Nymphing in the am is best with a #16 Zug Bug, #16 Lightning Bug black or silver and a #18 tiger midge. Dries working are #10-14 hoppers, #10-16 Madam X, #14-16 Elk Hair Caddis, #18 e/c caddis, #20 Parachute Adams and #16-20 Griffith's Gnat. My choice would be olive larva lace nymph; orange soft hackle, LaFontaine cream bead head sparkle pupa and a black Copper John using a 2 fly rig soft hackle/pupa as the bottom fly. You don't want to miss out on this terrific fishery. I'm spending too much time here, oh well!

HOT CREEK – water flow is 5cfs, weeds are up creating some challenges but dry flies has been the way to go in the afternoon before the storm hit and still doing well. Try #18 dark deer hair

Caddis, loop wing Adams in the evening size #20 or 22. Please stay out of the water to prevent the spread of the New Zealand mud snail. **CROWLEY** is dropping but still fishable. Weed beds are toast but you will find trout in those areas chasing the perch fry. Water is clear to about 8' and Midging is probably the best way to go so try the North Arm, Green Banks shoreline and North-Landing Bay. Suggest using Blood Midge 14-18, #16 Black/red Optomidge, and #16 Stevies Wonder in Black.

CONVICT – No change from last report and so try some large streamers like Lobergs, Burgundy or olive/black wooly buggers, rainbow Hornbergs and Redeye Hornbergs.

MAMMOTH BASIN - Took a dive in action but should return in a couple days after the air temps warm in the basin. Try #10 Hale Bopp Leech wine or olive, #10 Doc's Twin Lake Special in olive or brown and a #12 Matuka with a #16 Zug Bug, or #16 Flashback PT as a trailer. Midges are still going off so try a #16 PT or Prince with #18 Optomidge in Gray/Black, and a #18-20 Tiger or Zebra Midge. Also, try some bushy standard dries sizes 16-20 CA Mosquito, #16 Stimulator and #14-20 Parachute Adams.

SAN JOAQUIN is low but fishing continues to be good. Fish all the curves keeping a low profile. Seven "bucks" will get your car into the valley. Saw lots of trout on the trip to the Falls, so try some small dries #18 elk hair caddis, #20 PMD's, Cahill light, and parachute Adams. Micro mayflies, olive AP nymphs, Zug Bug, Princes, PT's, and Copper Johns #18-20.

RUSH CREEK is under discussion to turn sections into a premiere fishery between US395 and Mono Lake. To see the entire proposal for the Rush Creek Pond Scheme go to

www.waterrights.ca.gov/hearings/mono-lake.htm. Water is low but still fishable, look for pockets and curves and stay out of sight with nice dries late afternoon before the sundown #18 or smaller.

JUNE LOOP is still getting Cutthroats and doing well and standard streamers in dark patterns near weedy areas of the lake will get hit, the west end and on the northeast shore just west of the "beach". Midges are still hatching in the loop and a few calibaetis are around in the am and afternoon. Tug streamers, leeches near all the inlets, outlets, need weedy areas.

LUNDY ~ No Report on fly anglers. I haven't been able to get in there even though it is so close. Sorry.

VIRGINIA LAKES action has been great with the lake turning over and the trout are much happier. Recent plants have been doubled and the first load of Tim Alpers IAG brown trout were stocked along with his beauty queens. Flies that have been working are Olive Matukas, Black Gnats, large Black Ant, Grey Hackle Yellow and Peacock, Doc's Twin Lake Special in black and olive. Also try some (James nor Eric) Leisenring spiders, March brown soft hackle or orange and partridge soft hackles. Also, Rickard's Stillwater nymph and a sheep creek are doing really well.

EAST WALKER flow is at 73cfs, which is down from 105 on the 15th. If you technique is good and your fly choice excellent, you will get tugs. Please only fish early morning and late afternoon when the water is the coolest in order to release the fish unharmed. Try some micro midges under a prince or vice versa.

BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR is just starting to cool and the fishing should turn red hot shortly as the fish are getting active. Fish are holding at about 7-12 feet of water and fish near the Rainbow point. Try damsels, caddis and calibaetis patterns and there are also a few scuds and perch fry in and near the weedy areas. Guides have suggested using a 3 fly rig and you can check with local shops for patterns, or email me (vlr@qnet.com) if you go.

WEST WALKER is 30cfs, which is up from 24 on the 15th. The best spot would be just past the bridge down to the first campground using large dries with a small dropper about 18" below depending on water depth and where fish are holding in the column, or use 2 small flies. Prince nymph has been a better bottom fly, but a good mend is the trick.

See you on the water! Cj 9.7