

# Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb

Everyone has a wish list, a new rod, Ross reel, clear sinking line with perfect knots, and a money tree to provide these goodies. Well trout are no different. Their needs or epicurean delights are simple to learn and are a good investment in time. The largest ugliest bug providing the best nutrition on a constant basis without having to expend much energy is what a trout would put on his list to Santa. If I were a trout, God forbid, I would prefer a darkish gold caddis in huge numbers, a morsel with the silhouette of an angel, that is, if I were a trout. This symmetrically designed bug has been the staple of most of the waters I fish in some form or another. And how do I know this? I visit places that produce enormous amounts of heat (restaurants) and check out the screens on their open windows to see what is seeking heat to sustain them through the night until the sun arrives to warm their body.

Of course, there are larger uglier bugs that trout would enjoy, but are random, and I believe caddis are a huge staple in the trout's diet due to their numbers.

The best imitation you will ever find for a Caddis is made from a mammal that sheds water, is silky to the touch and a fast easy tie. Can you guess it? Next issue I'll give you the name and instructions.

## **Weather Conditions**

Typical Eastern Sierra high-pressure system moved into the area with temperatures ranging from 43 to 53 in the am and 70 to 77 degrees during the day. There is still some snow at upper elevation in the shaded areas if you feel the need. Also, there has been a bit of smoke in the air for the past couple days putting a slight haze over the mountains, but it has not bothered the fishing or the catching in the slightest.

## **Legislation – No news**

**Lawsuit** – Update on any waters that have not been cleared for Southwestern Flycatcher habitat is still pending. See report. The invasive New Zealand Mud Snail is still lingers and it is imperative that fly fishers help prevent the spread by NOT WADING.

**UPPER OWENS** has been average in trout size and flows and clarity good. Work various areas and get away from all the traffic to locate those beastie boys in the deeper pools when some shade or undercut banks. Pheasant Tails, tiger, olive zebra midges will get a lot of action under an indicator as in a stimulator (orange or tan). Hope for a good breeze to have some blow-by for the mosquitoes.

**ROCK CREEK LAKE** has been good, and fish are still taking black olive Matukas and large streamers but some caddis action late in the day. Mosquito Flats is running high with tricky stream fishing, and the voracious mosquitoes are getting some great meals. Road is clear all the way up to the trailhead. Slower water will show results with ants and hoppers.

**CROWLEY LAKE** still suffers from algae bloom but should be dissipating fairly soon allowing catch and release fishers more area to fish now that bait is illegal after July 31<sup>st</sup> (hoorah, oops did I say that). Reports state that deeper parts of the lake have been producing in the 13 to 15 foot range. Also, a few hefties showing up near the inlets in shallower water. Use Callibaetis adults and spinners, damsels, and my ever-favorite, the BWO adults/spinners (blue winged olive). Also try stripping damsels, perch imitations and colorful Hornberg imitations. Go deep with bright sun and shallower when there is cloud-cover.

**MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN** - Lake Mary and George have warmer water so try chocolate wooly buggers. Water temperature is rising and floating is comfortable, use Elk hair Caddis #14, #16 Parachute Adams #16, Stimulators, and Beetles #14, Prince nymphs #16, and pleasant tails 14-18,

**HOT CREEK** water conditions are good with days seeing 68cfs and hatches excellent with Caddis, midges and PMD' in the pm. Fishing early and late on dries, scuds, WD40's, stones and SJ worms. Constant afternoon breezes so be ready to change up when conditions change. Parachute Adams, Chernobyl ants #10-16, CDC Caddis or spotlight caddis. Olive birds nests in #18, Stalcups Caddis #10, and Flashback Optimidge, #18-20 Zebra midges, and #16-18 Flashy scuds in olive and dark olive./ Try some big streamers and Doc's in black. Arrive early or stay late and action will be optimum.

**SAN JOAQUIN** conditions are great, but move out of the populated areas to get into some nice fish with dries. Try Stimulators, large bushy wulffs, Royal coachman, or even Sierra Bright Dots sizes 14 to 16's. Get in early so you can drive your car and not take the shuttle.

**JUNE LOOP** – Silver Lake was overstocked when DFG cleared it from possible Willow Flycatcher habitat. They must be jumpin' for joy down the canyon. Probably anything will work that resembles trout food, but the standard streamers and caddis patterns will work early and late.

**LUNDY LAKE** beaver ponds are still producing with small dries early and late with a slight breeze on the water try Griffith's Gnat with a red head. The Saddlebag hike via this route has melted and snow on the switchback section of the trail is gone. Water is clear with the lake level still very high. Flies doing well are olive crystal flash buggers, olive leeches, grey ghosts, and some good caddis action early and late when the breeze comes down canyon.

**VIRGINIA LAKES** has season tickets for tubers using a nymph under a stimulator or large Caddis pattern due to the huge numbers on the water early and late. Some die-hards are still using olive flashy buggers with a full sink as the water temp is fairly consistent down to about 10 feet and it is still getting grabs. Also try Twin Lakes Spec., and loads of dries along with black ants, black gnats, Griffith Gnats, and Rickard's AP emerger, and Wiggle Tails. I've been using dries or emergers just under the surface, and took out a couple youngsters to wean them from bait to a fly-bubble and they did real well using a Renegade, brown bi-visible and blue winged olive. Yeah, now that's fishing with a lot of action for kids and it keeps them totally interested. Just got two more heading down the path of a fly-rod. NOTE: Some reports stated that it was a slow start, but don't believe everything you read. Get to the source!

**GREEN CREEK** has not been stocked this summer due to the logistics and constant abuse the stock trucks get if the road has not been graded. Discussion is ongoing. Will keep you updated if anything changes. **BRIDGEPORT REZ** or as some say "the other lake" has been doing well when the fish move into the cooler waters near inlets and channels near them. You might be in for hold-over surprises, so practice on your knots. Check the weed beds using streamers and near the east shore late when the "cruisers" come out. Use some perch patterns, midges or caddis near the weedy areas.

**EAST WALKER** – Flow currently is at 270cfs (cubic foot per second) and the mosquitoes are sadistic. Check your broker to see if there is stock available in Cutter's, might be a good investment for your portfolio. Caddis may put you into poundage. Early and late as usual and try those 2 fly rigs with midges. It is wall to wall bodies on great days, but you can make your own day, trust me. Learn some basic stream/river technology to improve your chances i.e., where the best oxygen is during peak heat of the day, preparation, equipment to bring, flies suited for time of day and water temperature, etc.

**WEST WALKER** – Water is at 180cfs, and there's a lot of flat water to fish, and use one fly rig with tiger, crystal or flashback Zug. If no results, move and use a two fly rig with stimulator as the top dog. This is standard for most of the summer until the terrestrials arrive which is in a few days.

**SADDLEBAG** opened on the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, and has been producing on Twin Lakes special in olive, dark rust, and an olive body/black tail with flash. Two fly rigs have done well on the north shore from watercraft and single bugger on the east shore.

See you on the water! CJ (10 7)