

Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb

I'd like to end this season with a bit of humor on "Indoor Casting" unknown author.

"The Angler anxious to improve his casting skills can profitably practice indoors. This is an ideal exercise, since it does away with the major inconveniences of fishing, such as cold water, bugs, tedious and costly trips to remote places, and the troublesome fish itself, while preserving the display of delicate skill that is the essence of fine casting technique. Seated by the fireplace with a Myers and hot chocolate or reclining on a comfortable casting couch in his own living room, the home angler can, depending on his level of experience, use simple gear and subtle casts to change television channels, turn on a light, snatch an detective novel off a distant shelf, procure a snack from the kitchen, or restrain an unruly child. And for those who miss the realism of stalking a quarry, the appropriate extra large fly may be used to have a little sport with the Avon lady, walk a pet in bad weather without leaving the house, or obtain produce from a neighbor's garden".

Weather Conditions: Second snow storm hit the Sierra mid October as the Aspens changed from yellow to dark gold/rust and then naked. Still looking for confirmation of the el Nino but NOAA states "The western half of the continental U.S. and central and northern Alaska could be in for a warmer-than-average winter, and forecasters with NOAA's Climate Prediction Center say a wavering El Niño, expected to have developed by now, makes this year's winter outlook less certain than previous years and looks like it is not going to show up as expected." "In fact, it stalled out last month, leaving neutral conditions in place in the tropical Pacific." stated Mike Halpert, Deputy Director of NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

Legislation - SB 1148 has changed the name of the California Department of Fish and Game to the Department of Fish and Wildlife signifying a change in the traditional focus. Good or bad for the resource has yet to be determined.

ROCK CREEK LAKE has been good, and fish are hitting a variety of wooly buggers and Loebergs with an olive bird's nest dropper, Crystal Humpy #16, and Taylor's Fat Albert #14. Mosquito Flats is low but running clear with most fish in the upper lakes and take small dries for some fun during the warmest part of the day.

CROWLEY LAKE is the lowest it's been in over 20 years, watch for islands between the marina and McGee Bay. It's only 3 feet deep 100 yards out from Sandy Point. Water temps are cooling fast in most of the lake so look for warmer water and you'll find fish. Fishing is fair and the Daphnia is almost gone but persistent in many places holding bigger fish. Try Sandy, Six Bays and Leighton and work your way in between the small fish in the shallows. Try extended body BWO among weeds near Owens mouth. Also nymphs getting grabs are red blood worms, Copper Tiger or beaded red/black Optimidge early and BH gray/black Optimidge #16 with bright sun overhead. Streamers: Perfection Perch, Rickard's AP olive emerger, olive or rust punk perch, Doc's TLS in cinnamon #12 (early).

UPPER OWENS water flows are up around 130cfs and tons of Mud Snails everywhere so clean all your gear with care and help prevent the spread. Section below the bridge to the monument closed as of OCT. 1st. Fishing is good and nymphing with attractors and a fair amount of weight is your best method. Try Stimulators, Elk hair Caddis #16-18, Missing Link (Mercer's) and Griffith's Gnats in #20. Nymphs working are olive bird's

nest, zebra midge #16-18, copper zebra midge, Tungsten Zebra midge #18-20, reddish/brown San Juan worm and Prince #14-18 **CONVICT LAKE** has been producing well with Alpers being stocked on the 25th and are hitting the Marvel, Prince nymph, Hares Ear, Copper Johns, Ants and Beetles. Check their site for the map and zones and find the best spot for that fly.

MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN water is still clear and cooling with overnight lows in the mid to upper 30's. Lakes are lower than normal for this time of year. Fishing is great all day so eyeball the inlets and outlets for feeding trout. Dries on your line should be Griffith's Gnat #20-22, Para Adams #20, Flying Ants #14. Nymphs to try, Copper John #16-18, Black Zebra Midge #20-22, Olive Bird's nest #18, PT #18 and Hare's Ear #16-18. Olive Matukas, Doc's Twin Lakes Special black or olive #10-12, Pop's Bugger olive, Rickard's Seal Bugger, are your best bets for streamers.

HOT CREEK – water is good and flowing at 20-26cfs and loads of weed-beds but this last blast of "cold" should clear the river somewhat. Water is off color from recent snow melt with tons of scuds, mostly gray and a good caddis hatch around mid afternoon. Dries to try, Para Adams #20-22, Olive Para Caddis #18-22, Olive Elk Hair Caddis #20, and EC Caddis #20. Nymphs needed are WD40 Black #20-22, San Juan worm #14 (red), BH flashback PT #20, Olive or Grey Scuds #18, Fox's Green Caddis Poopah #18, Nitro Caddis Tan #18-20. Forget streamers as the water is too thin. New Zealand Mud Snails are still around so it's imperative that fly fishers help prevent the spread by NOT WADING in the Creek.

SAN JOAQUIN – The Forest Service is continuing its clean-up efforts from the November 30, 2011 wind event that toppled thousands of trees in the Reds Meadow Valley, surrounding area and throughout the Inyo National Forest. A logging contractor is in the process of removing 3.5 million board feet of timber from the Reds Meadow Valley to help reduce the risk of wildfire and threat of insect or disease infestation. However, because of hazards associated with hauling the trees out of the valley on potentially slippery roads, for safety reasons the road will be closed to all public use, including bicycle, skier, snowmobile and pedestrian traffic, and access to Reds Meadow Valley will be prohibited when logging operations are in progress.

JUNE LOOP – has been doing great on black, and olive woolies, grey ghosts, and spruce flies. Also, Silver Lake has some sneaky hold-over Alpers so try some top water dries near Rush Creek for best results. Good reports on Rush Creek, give it a shot. Water is up a bit.

LUNDY LAKE has been good but some increase in the catching due to the snow melt above the canyon. Try the usual streamers on the south shore and tree area on the north shore about mid-lake.

VIRGINIA LAKES did well most of October until the first storm hit driving the trout down then a slight warming kicked up the catch and the 2nd storm hit slowing the catch to match a snail. Rickard's olive AP emerger, seal buggers, Hornbergs, and San Juan worms were the most consistent for catching.

EAST WALKER – Current flow is 67cfs but fluctuating daily due to snow melt above and is fishing fairly well. Nymphing has been the best producer but there is still some hot dry fly action as well when the air warms. Patterns to try are Rainbow Warrior, Copper John, Flashback emerger, Zebra midge, wooly bugger, Para Adams and E/C Caddis. Evening temps are

dropping as the sun goes down keeping the browns comfortable but a bit chilly for us. Dries to try are Trico spinners #20-22, Organza Trico #20-22, Griffiths Gnat 318-20, Yellow Humpy 318, Brook's CDC Baetis Emerger #20-22, spent Partridge Caddis #18, Para olive caddis #18, and Taylor's Fat Albert #10-12. Nymphs working are PT #16-22, Poxyback Baetis #20-22, Rainbow Warrior #18, WD40 #20, Black or Copper Zebra Midge #18, Nitro Caddis Tan #18. Rickard's Black Stillwater bugger is your best streamer for this time of year.

WEST WALKER – Water is thin and fluctuating between 10-27cfs, but catching is good in deeper pools. Try a large attractor/indicator and Tiger midge, crystal midge or flashback Zug as the bottom fly (dry-dropper). Terrestrials are still around so try black ants, and hoppers. Be slight in your presentation and have a lot of fun and stealth is still the best word!

See you on the water in 2013! CJ (12.10)