

EASTERN SIERRA FOCUS

By CJ Webb

STAY ALERT DEER MIGRATION - Mule deer are starting to migrate to their summer grounds at lower elevations and crossing the roads. This seasonal event causes accidents and death, so please vigilant and watch out for deer browsing on shrubs near or along the roadside.

Weather Conditions – The weather was great and pounded the snow until around the 16th then dumped about 5 inches of snow on Conway Summit with more at higher elevations. Going into the 8th straight day of snow/rain/wind and Friday brought a break and then it continued through Memorial weekend and more expected mid-week with a high pressure building off the coast. Free-range skiers have taken over the area since both Tioga and Sonora passes are not open. But even the number of skiers have diminished with the consistent unpleasant weather that "Mother" has seen fit to provide.

Fishing Tip: Tom Rosenbauer's 8 Tips To Becoming a Better Fly Fisher:

1. Observe everything. Look around every time you catch a fish and figure out why it was there and why it ate at that particular time. Look at the sun angle, the surrounding terrain, current threads in rivers, or highways on the flats.
2. Tie flies. I don't think anyone can be truly on top of their game until they understand how a fly is constructed and what it's supposed to do in the water.
3. Tie your own leaders. In fresh or salt, knowing how to modify a leader to make it behave better is best understood if you have tied a bunch of knotted leaders first. Even if you are starting with a commercial knotless leader, you will eventually need to modify it.
4. Improve your casting. No matter how good you think your casting is, it is not good enough. Take a lesson from someone who is a better caster than you. Don't be too proud.
5. Don't be an asshole on the water. In rivers, give people as much room as you possibly can, even if you end up in water you don't really like. In the salt, find your own school or your own flat. Someone else got there first. Get over it.
6. Delight in every fish you catch- no matter how small. If you can't get excited about an 8-inch brook trout, you don't really get it.
7. Don't sweat it. The fishing will never be as good as you anticipate. The weather sucks? You didn't catch a fish as big as you thought? You are just setting yourself up for a deficit of confidence—and fun.
8. Stop being so serious. Never take your fishing or yourself too seriously. You are just a tool with a silly pole playing with fish. How stupid is that?

News:

CALIFORNIA DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE **2020 Proposed Fishing Regulations**

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Inland/Trout-Plan/Regulation-Simplification>).

Please watch for any announcements when The Department will schedule more meetings after they compile all the public input via letters and e-mails.

Legislative News:

AB1387 - Assemblymember Jim wood of Santa Rosa authored Assembly Bill 1387 that will transition California's calendar-based fishing license to one that is valid a full 365 days from the date of purchase. The bill, sponsored by the California Sportfishing League (CSL), is co-authored by Assemblymember James Gallagher of Yuba City and a bipartisan group of 12 other legislators. If passed, it will:

1. replaces the current calendar-based system for a fishing license that is valid a full 12 months from the date of purchase and with payment of that fee equal to 130% of the fees for issuance of resident or nonresident calendar-year sport fishing licenses, as applicable.
Note: As I understand it, this is only for the first year to recover any loss of license revenue for converting from calendar to 12 consecutive months, i.e., a \$48+ license would be \$58 plus change.

2. The Department shall provide applicants the option to sign up for automatic renewal by automatic credit card or debit card payment or electronic funds transfer. If passed, the 365-day license will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2021. It was referred on April 9th with a 14-0 vote and sent to Appropriations and heard on 04/24/19 and amended 5/20 as above and sent back to the Approp. Comm. for a 3rd reading, and is now on the Assembly floor for 80 members to vote on it. Go to: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billCompareClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1387

If you read the amended bill and believe this is beneficial to all concerned, one or the other, please contact your local Assemblyman and provide support.

CDFW 'Buy a Stamp' to help a Game Warden

Officials at the CDFW are urging anglers to contribute to a Warden Stamp Program that helps game wardens and the enforcement of fish-and-wildlife laws. According to the CDFW, purchase of the \$5 stamp will "procure vital equipment, protective gear, and training for wildlife officers and enhance the department's K-9 Program." Information on how to make a donation is available at: www.wildlife.ca.gov/wardenstamp

CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

The June 12-13, 2019 meeting agenda for the California Fish and Game Commission is now available at

<http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=169143&inline>

Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Stocking

Updated trout releases will be on their web-site (<http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FishPlants/>) or call their specific region (Inland Deserts 855.887.1275)

CDFW has an updated free downloadable app for

Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations application at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/regulations>. It tracks your current GPS location and will tell you the regulations of the water where you are standing and regulations for waters within a designated area or approximately a five-mile radius. Take a look, it's very handy.

TIDBIT'S - What's Hot in Angling Maps & Apps

FISHIDY - New location-based app and online community that features interactive mapping technology, data-rich fishing maps, and social networking to help you identify the most productive water and navigate straight to local hot spots. The latest release incorporates a strengthened map-based user experience, downloadable maps for offline use, and a fishing insight feature that delivers all of the knowledge necessary to make smart fishing decisions. Download the FREE Fishidy mobile app to learn more. Great APP!!

C-MAP - Anglers looking for inland fishing detail should check out the new **Precision Contour HD** charts. These charts combine data from professional lake surveys, C-MAP Genesis Social Maps and traditional lake maps to deliver extremely detailed statewide fishing maps. Already available for Alabama and Tennessee, the Precision Contour HD chart for North Carolina is slated for a July release. *C-Map* Genesis is the most powerful lake and coastal mapping system on earth. Catch more and bigger fish with angler contributed Social Map data. Go to <https://www.genesismaps.com/>

DEEPER (fish finder) / **LAKEBOOK** is an angler's personal journal for mastering his fishing. Every scan and depth map anglers create with their Deeper fish finder is automatically saved to Lakebook and accessible from any device. It can mark points of interest, take pictures, write notes in the Deeper app and see them grouped together by water-body and location in Lakebook. For a more detailed analysis, anglers can drill in on a certain point on their map to see associated scans, GPS coordinates, and depth measurements.

AT THE BENCH: New materials

Alpaca wool processed and dyed means washing or scouring, which is very aggressive and thorough to remove grease, dirt and the rest (burrs, muck, stones, dust, sticks, seeds, etc.) Processing wool can include treatment with strong acids and alkalis - ending up with a roll of dry, off-white fiber ready for dyeing and/or

spinning. Vicuna dubbing contains no contaminants, no bits of organic stuff, no grease, and the color is obviously regular. Alpaca is long, two or three times the length of typical sheep's wool, up to six inches. It's fine and smooth, and softer than most type of sheep's wool. The mix is good and well prepared using simple hand-stacking to blend two or more colors. This is a good seal substitute; in fact it handles and ties pretty much like seal. It's a good choice!

Veniard Razzle Dazzle Chenille

This is just a small cactus chenille a twisted core which traps bright, flashy fibers perpendicular to the core. It ties like Fritz Chenille. Scrape the fibers from a short length at one end, tie in and trap the bare core, wrap the chenille around the hook and try to sweep the fibers tailwards as you wrap, then trap down the core and cut off. The size suggests smaller hooks, maybe size 10-14 depending on what you want. It's tough, simple and inexpensive at \$2.50/package at Veniard.

Fishing Report

LOWER OWENS is at **275.3cfs** as of 5/28.

The flows have been holding steady for a couple of weeks now and the fishing has responded. Hatches are getting stronger and the fish are hungry. Midges are the ticket early with crane-flies midmorning. Midday are caddis and mayfly hatches. Stoneflies start around noon. The only catch is that the most productive times are not consistent from day to day. Not a whole lot of surface activity. Recommended DRIES: Griffith's Gnat #20, Extended Body BWO #20-22, Para Adams #18-20, Elk Hair Caddis #16-20, Parachute Caddis #16-18, Brooks Sprout baetis #18-22, and Yellow and tan Stimulators #14-16 NYPH: Zebra Midge #18-20, Baetis B/H #18-20, Barr's Uncased Caddis #14-16, Tungsten Caddis #14-18, Birds Nest Olive or Natural #12-16, Stonefly nymphs - #14-16, Barr's Flashback BWO #18-22, Kingrey's Cold Turkey Baetis #18-22, and Chamois Caddis #14-18.

STREAMERS: Big and ugly, seriously. Pick your favorite large streamer and chuck it everywhere. You will catch fewer fish but there's a chance to catch much larger fish this way.

ROCK CREEK LAKE -

The road is currently plowed to the Lake and the resort is open. The lake is about 50% ice free and lots of snow in the area. The road to Mosquito Flat will melt out naturally and it may be a few weeks before that happens.

UPPER OWENS - Flows are at **72cfs** as of **5/28**. Water Conditions: Fair. The Upper Owens River has been fishing fairly well for the most part and it hasn't changed much. The flows have dropped slightly since last week and it will probably stay that way until it warms up.

Midges have been hatching in the morning followed by Baetis and caddis hatching mid day through the early afternoon. Small streamers have still been a shop favorite for the Upper Owens River. But indicator rigs with midge, Baetis, and or caddis imitations have been the most consistent as far as numbers.

Recommended Flies: **DRIES:** Stimulator #16, Extended Body BWO #16, Elk Hair Caddis #16-18, Parachute Adams #16-20. **NYMPHS:** #12-16 Bead Head Prince Nymph, #16-18 Pheasant Tail, Flashback Hares Ear #14-16, Olive birds nest #14-16, zebra midge #18-22, Jujua baetis #18-22, Splitcase BWO #18-22, Olive WD-40 (standard or flashy) #18-22. **STREAMERS:** Meat Whistle, D's Hoover Mover, Tan Sculpzilla, Olive or Black Woolly Bugger, Olive Slumbuster, Olive Baby Gongga, Olive Double Gongga. A sink tip or full sink type 3 is recommended; otherwise add some split shot to help your bug get down in the water column.

CROWLEY LAKE - Conditions and hatches are fair to good. With the weather systems of the last 8 days, the water temperatures have dropped back down into the lower 50's. With the weather pattern of the last week I've heard good reports from last Monday and Tuesday but nothing for the last 2 days. The fish still seem to be in the same locations so we'll just have to see what happens. The fish have moved into shallower water (10'-13') but you'll also find them all the way out to 25' with 16'-18' the most productive. They are getting more concentrated although they're still moving around so don't be too impatient. I saw the first of the mayflies this week so don't be afraid to try some #16-18 mayfly nymphs late morning. The perch are already moving towards the shallow water to spawn, 9'to12'. The best areas seem to be both sides of Sandy Point all the way up to Green Banks and out to Christmas Bay. The south end seems to be a lot slower but worth exploring.

Recommended Flies: Copper Clown, Albino Baron in grey or black. Also the larger blood midges have started showing up in the north end.

HOT CREEK - Water condition is good. The meter says 41cfs as of **5/23**, these flows are at Mammoth Creek, Hot Creek flows out of the hatchery are constant and at **62.8cfs as of 5/28**, Hot Creek is still fishing very well. Hatches have been fairly minimal but fish have been ready and willing to eat a variety of subsurface imitations such as midges, Baetis, scuds, and caddis. All of these imitations have been successful at producing fish. With the weather staying cooler, the flows have dropped quite a bit, but with all the precipitation that could change soon. **DRIES:** Parachute Adams #16-20, Griffith's Gnat #18-20, High Vis Hatchmatcher #18-20, Brooks Sprout Baetis #18-22, Parachute Extended Body BWO #18-22. **NYMPHS:** Flash back Tungsten Black Beauty #18-22, Tailwater Tiny Olive #18-20, Micro Mayfly Olive #20-24, Tungsten Psycho #16-20,

Radiation Baetis 18-22, Olive Scuds #16-18, WD40 #18-22, Zebra Midge #18-22. **STREAMERS:** Slumbuster Olive, Crystal Bugger, Olive Bopp leech.

CONVICT LAKE – Marvel wet flies are perfect for catching the big ones in the lake. The best way to use the fly is to thread your line through a 1 1/2 in. plastic bubble and a swivel large enough not to be pulled through the bubble. Attach a 5 to 6 ft. leader to the swivel using 4 to 6 lb. test line. Tie your fly to the leader and fill the bubble completely with water. Cast your fly out into the water. The bubble will sink about 3 inches per second. Reel the fly in slowly with a twitch from time to time. Strike any unusual pull or drag as fish sometimes bite softly. Marvel flies are available to purchase in the general store.

Derby Details - Round-Up at the Lake Derby is going strong. Quite a few fishermen have already caught their 14" fish and are in the drawing for resort prizes worth up to \$6000. There is still plenty of time to enter. The entry fee of \$15 includes a 2019 pin and a 14" ruler. The store staff look forward to signing you up. Round-Up Derby t-shirts are for sale in the store and online. We have a limited number of them, so grab one before we run out!

MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN –

The road to Lakes basin is still **CLOSED** for the winter but you can call the **Visitor Center Info (760) 924-5500 for an update.**

SAN JOAQUIN – Currently the river is running at **248cfs as of 5/28** but the river access is closed; call **Visitor Center Info (760) 924-5500**

JUNE LOOP – No report for June or Gull, but I would stay with streamers and work them deep and cruise the weedy areas where there are slight drop-offs you just might catch a large trout cruising surface water near the shoreline.

Silver Lake - A few float tubers were out this past week using Olive Matukas and had some very good luck with streamers. It looks like another up and down week of weather but summer is in sight and we can only hope for warmer consistent days.

Grant Lake has been producing some nice brown trout but not many fly anglers on the water due to the wind. Try streamers along the south shore and work toward the trees using long pulls with short bursts.

LUNDY LAKE – Water level is rising and should reach capacity in a couple weeks, also the resort is open from 8am to 3pm daily but not much news as to anglers on the water other than shore fishermen tossing bait or lures. The road is clear all the way to the restroom with a couple of muddy spots near the trailhead. Ponds look great (a little low) with a few bugs on the surface and a quick toss of a black midge got tugs and a good look at small brookies.

VIRGINIA LAKES –

Road to the parking lot of Big Virginia is open and saw some traffic over the weekend with ice fisherman still dunking, jigging, and enjoying the skiers on the mountain. All fish taken were on bait or jigs. The ice on the Virginias is starting to show some blue here and there when it's not snowing so it shouldn't be long before the heat kicks in and more water becomes available to anglers, maybe 2 weeks plus for Big Virginia and Trumble Lake will thaw first then Little Virginia. Caution is the word while the ice is melting and covered with fresh snow making it unsafe.

BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR –

Bridgeport has had some really good days and some more difficult days this week, on the good days, when the wind didn't keep most of the anglers off the water. There has also been some decent action stripping streamers like Seal Buggers, Matukas and Woolly Buggers.

KEN'S SPORTING GOODS - Accident - Ken's has had a bit of a set-back yesterday, there was an accident and a pick-up truck drove through the front of the gift shop side of the store May 6th. Thankfully no one was injured; including the driver, however there is extensive damage to the store. We are thankful the driver was not injured and we hold absolutely no ill will towards him. May 26, 2019 - The structural engineer has finished up the plans for a temporary fix to the front of the gift shop and as of Friday we have secured the building permit from Mono County. Our contractor is going to start the fix on Tuesday so we hope to have the gift shop portion of Ken's open for business by next weekend! After this temporary shoring fix gets us up and running we will work on getting the engineering done for the permanent fix which will likely happen this fall. Hopefully next week we will be able to get rid of those orange cones out front!!

EAST WALKER – The flows on the East have been bumped up to about **337cfs as of 5/28**. The gauge might be damaged as the visual gauge on the river shows a cfs that is 100-50 cfs different than the online flow rates. Fishing Conditions and Hatches: fair to good. With the weather being the way it has been, hatches have been fairly minimal. Your best shot at success is to fish subsurface. Both streamers and nymph rigs have been the most consistent. We have been having the most success with small Baetis and midge imitations both from size 16 to 20. There are tons of caddis in the water, so it wouldn't be a bad idea to try some caddis larva imitations as well. The most productive area is the upper mile between the dam and the bridge as this water is a bit more angler friendly than the lower stretch. There seems to have been an increase in streamer action with the higher flow and for nymphing you should be able to

size up a size or two on your bugs, 14's, 16's and 18's instead of just 18's and 20's. Also try patterns with a bit of flash are always a good choice. As far as streamers go we have been using larger articulated patterns such as the Double Dirty Hippy or Double Gongga.

RECOMMENDED DRIES: Big flies to get fish to come up and eat them. Stimulator #8, Parawolf Purple #10, Chernobyl Ant #6-16, #20-22 dark mayfly patterns. **NYMPHS:** Copper Zebra #16-22, BH Prince Nymphs #12-16, Olive Birds Nest #10-16, Caddis Larva #10-18, Stonefly Nymphs #6-10, Hogan's S&M #16-20, Pocket Water Baetis #18-20, black Two-bit Hooker #18-20, Kingrey's Cold Turkey Baetis #18-22, rubber leg stonefly #8-12. **STREAMERS:** Meat Whistle #2, D's Hoover Mover Rust #4, Hornbergs #10-12, White Woolly buggers #10-14, and Orange Jawbreaker #10. Additional patterns to try are Sculpzilla, Double Bunny, Moal leech, Zuddler, Hell Razor Craw, Prince, Pheasant Tail, Rainbow Warrior, Rainbow Assassin, Wd-40, Flashback Emerger, San Juan worm, Squirmy Wormy, Silver Streak

TWIN LAKES BRIDGEPORT

Not many fly anglers up there lately but typically this is a good time to fish the inlets with streamers like Twin Lakes Specials, Seal Buggers and Matukas with a soft hackle or Zug Bug dropper.

HONEYWELL POND – The pond didn't see any anglers this week mainly due to the weather and also have been getting a significant amount of wind lately. With the colder weather the weed growth should have slowed down so things should be good as long as the wind lies down. Give Ken's a call if you want to make a reservation out there!

SCEIRINE RANCH - There hasn't been anyone on the ranch this past week, it should be fishing pretty much like the California and Rosachi sections of the East Walker. As stated above the flows make things more difficult but not impossible. Report from Ken's in Bridgeport.

KIRMAN LAKE – Jim R. talked to a couple guys who made the trek up to Kirman this week, they weren't able to catch any fish but they did say there were some cutts up in the spring channel attempting to spawn, or maybe just hanging out up there. That's good news that there are some fish still in there. They didn't see any brookies up there but they probably wouldn't be in there this time of the year anyway. Hopefully Kirman will start getting back on track for the future.

WEST WALKER – Still no reports lately, but I've seen a few people fishing where the flow is soft and easier to fish. Water is dirty and running high at **467cfs as of 5/28**. With the colder weather the snow melt has slowed down the flow but the water is still pretty cold

and the action has been fairly slow so far. The weather has been crazy but when it warms up again the flows will increase and once the run-off is done things should improve greatly.

SONORA PASS - Crews are working on the road and no completion date set. There is only a small section of road that has not been plowed, but with the additional snow over the last 8 days it may take additional time to get it cleared. A young woman that just did that portion of the PCT provided this update.

BODIE ROAD - Open

Monitor Pass - **Currently** open but subject to storm closure.

TIOGA PASS - Crews are working on the road and currently at the Entrance Gate and a tentative completion date has been set for early to mid-June.



See you on the water and keep 'em wet. CJ 19/5