

# EASTERN SIERRA FOCUS

By CJ Webb May 2021

**2021 Inland Water Fishing Regulations** have changed, so download the app to see if there are any changes to the waters you enjoy fishing.

<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 pretty thorough. This will probably make the new regulations easier to understand.

Eastern Sierra waters above 7000 feet saw some weather this past week in the form of snow-rain-light hail thunder and lightning which may or may not help with the fire season. Inyo Forest has already set their fire regulations for camping, so make sure to check with the local Inyo National Forest office for their guidelines if you plan to visit there. 1.760.873-2400 or [www.fs.usda.gov/Inyo](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Inyo)

**STAY ALERT DEER MIGRATION** - Mule deer are migrating to their summer grounds in large numbers at lower elevations and have moved up higher. This seasonal road crossing causes accidents and death, so please stay vigilant and watch out for deer browsing on shrubs near or along the roadside early morning and at dusk. This is really important as the migration seems to be heavier this year so please stay alert. Part of the usual herd are already 2 miles from the lakes.

## **Fishing Tip: by Landon Mayer**

### **High Dirty Water of Spring Run-off Pt II.**

**Wiggle Rigs** – *“Nymphing isn’t the only way to catch fish during high flows; it’s also the best time to catch trout with streamers and other swimming flies. With so much debris and other inanimate objects in the water, it’s important to make your flies move and wiggle to give the appearance of life. Swimming prey species such as leeches and crayfish are often washed into the food line by high water, and these are two of my favorite flies what I call a wiggle rig”* stated Landon Mayor. Landon says, *“using the steelheader’s ‘wet fly swing,’ cast your line and flies across stream, allowing your flies to swing on an arc across the current. During the first half of the swing you are often biding your time as the flies descend toward the river bottom. It is the second half of the swing where the line and flies are near the river bottom, and your flies are swimming back toward the shallow edges, where you’ll get most of your strikes.”*

*“I use a full-sinking line or a 200-grain sinking-tip line for this, and a short leader of 2 to 4 feet of 0X tippet. The short leader keeps your flies close to the line and close to the bottom.”* He also says to *“use a nonslip mono loop to tie on your wiggle fly. The loose loop gives*

*your fly the maximum possible movement. Some of my favorite patterns are rust/olive Meat Whistle, olive/black/rust Pine Squirrel Leech, or Lawson’s Cone Head Wool Sculpin (#6-8).”* (Part III Dry-Dropper/June)

### **Legislative News:**

**AB 817** - Assembly Member Jim Wood of Santa Rosa authored Assembly Bill 1387 in 2019 and was reintroduced as AB-817 and state this legislation will transition California's calendar-based fishing license to one that is valid a full 365 days from the date of purchase and a mobile phone app that makes fishing easier and more accessible. AB-817 is also different because of its sponsor. In years past, such proposed legislation had been sponsored by CSL, but this year, the Coastal Conservation Association of California (CCACAL) has picked up the torch to sponsor the bill.

In 2020, our CA Fish & Game Commission approved our state R3 program, which is designed to "Recruit, Retain, and Reactivate" (R3) new anglers and hunters in California. The 365-day license served as one of the critical steps in getting more anglers fishing. CDFW is completely onboard with R3 and growing this program with the 365-day license in place.

### **UPDATE of AB-817: (The last two)**

#### **Tracking Notifications:**

AB-817: Sport fishing licenses: electronic display: 12-consecutive-month licenses. On 20-MAY-21 the following history action was applied: "From committee: Amend, and do pass as amended. (Ayes 16. Noes 0.) (May 20)."

#### **Tracking Notification:**

AB-817: Sport fishing licenses: 12-consecutive-month licenses.

On 24-MAY-21 the following history action was applied:

"Read second time and amended. Ordered returned to second reading."

### **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: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/wardenstamp>

### **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)

### **AT THE BENCH: New materials!**

UV glint and hint, Hemingway's UV Ice dubbing. A medium-fine textured synthetic dubbing. UV Ice has a fine gleam, and subtle flash. The texture is like a finer Lite-Brite, meaning very narrow, flat strip fibers and this can be teased fine and slim, the fibers are not long, maybe 101.5cm, with a nice tendency to cling to one another. Working with this dubbing has some shorter fibers falling out, but not a problem, dubs slim and is easily controlled. The palate of colors is subtle, much more pastel than typical tying colors. The colors mix fairly easy and mix well with natural dubbings like hare and squirrel. Comes in a 12 color dispenser box or single-color packs. Google Hemingway's UV Ice dubbing.

**Fine-Curly and Insecty** - Sybai natural dubbings. Three materials here: Fine alpaca Dubbing, Camel Dubbing and Deer Dubbing.

**Fine Alpaca** is a light, fine wool-like dubbing. Staple length is a couple of centimeters, the fibers slip and slide against one another, but very new fibers fall out as you work with it. Teases our slim and twists onto the thread fine and smooth. This material is low density, so it might be an ideal dry fly dubbing as well.

**Camel Dubbing** is shorter and curlier. The staple length is relatively short, one centimeter long, plus or minus. There is some fiber loss but wrapped it teases out sparsely yet still twists onto thread nicely and good dubbing for smaller flies.

**Deer Dubbing** is straight cut deer hair – messy! This is a fine soft deer; the fiber length varies, up to a three or so centimeters long. Very clean stuff, no under-fur that you can see. Deer will always be a messy dubbing medium. Two ways to dub this: in a loop, or just twist onto thread. Prepare the hair by rolling, crushing and crumbling the fibers to get them tangled, then tease out a pinch and either twist it around tying thread or slip into a dubbing loop and twist. Once dubbed, a few crumpled deer hair fibers look so like insect legs – fairly robust insect – looks great.

Go to [www.chevronhackles.com/stockists](http://www.chevronhackles.com/stockists)

**Mopping Up** – Veniard MOP Chenille comes in two sizes and finishes, in 4mm and 6mm, in plain and speckled colors.

The original Mop Fly material came literally from a type of dusting mop. That original stuff meant cutting “Fingers” from the mop, which were twisted loops of chenille. Veniards stuff is fairly simple chenille, tighter twisted and better built than conventional chenille's.

A cut end can be burned or sealed with a drop of glue, but doubt either is actually needed. You can strip the core ready to be tied in, but the chenille fiber does not come out that easy.

Original Mop flies, Wotsits, and the like use bright fluorescent colors – green, yellow, orange, etc. This Veniard chenille comes in a slightly wider range of

colors including black and white. Speckled chenille adds a nice twist – for those of us who would prefer something less neon colored, though I don't know if I'd describe speckled chenille Mop flies are imitative, fast and seam to catch fish.

**LOWER OWENS** is 328cfs as of 5/27. Water conditions, fishing conditions and hatches are good to very good. It is still a little dirty starting about 9 gates down but getting better. Hatches have been a lot shorter in duration, but the trout don't seem to care. The one change, late afternoons are picking up with mayfly's #16-18 and caddis hatches bringing more fish to the surface. Midges are working early with Mayflies and Caddis mid-day to mid-afternoon. There is a larger mayfly (#16-18) that is now coming off mid-day. Not great dry fly action but the nymphing is so good it's hard to complain. The flows have been up for over a week now, so the fish have settled down. Just remember what spots the fish were in before and move to find the corresponding water now. Drop offs that were 6" deep are now 1' + and holding fish. As mentioned earlier, later in the day is improving and should continue as it warms up. On a side note, guides have been reporting Tricos on Hot Creek (only 3 months early). If they're hatching up there maybe more news in the next couple of days. DRIES: Extended Body BWO #18-22, Hi-Vis BWO #18-22, large dry with #22-26 midge emergers and adults, Stimulator #8-12, Para Caddis #16-20. NYMPHS: Pheasant Tail #14-22, Hares Ear #16-22, Zebra Midge #18-22, Olive Hot Spot Jig #18, B/H Prince #10-14, Chamois Caddis #14-18, Bottom Roller Phsyco Rhyco #10-14, Uncased Caddis Green #14-16, Juju Baetis #18-20, Glass Bead Micro May Olive # 20-24, Caddistrophic Pupa #16-18, Gold Bead Epoxy Stone #8-10. STREAMERS: Wooly Bugger Olive & Black #10-12, Mini Sculpin Olive & Black #10-12.

**Owens River** annual clean up was held in Bishop on May 1st with 150 people filling a huge dumpster. Coffee and baked goods were provided for all volunteers at the Pleasant Valley Campground along with some great swag.

**ROCK CREEK LAKE – No Report – very sorry!**

**UPPER OWENS** – 53 cfs as of 5/27. Temperatures have stabilized but the water is still cold and with the snowmelt the water is off color, especially below Hot Creek. The water is now very dirty below the Hot Creeks (it braids out into 4 channels) and off color above. Yes, the Cutthroats are moving up but not in large numbers. If you like the idea of quality fishing with increasing numbers of fish there are some very important facts to consider. 1) Unlike the rainbows the cutthroat will spawn below the ranches. 2) They also spawn later so they actively moved up after opening day. Actively spawning fish are in the shallow tailouts

between the holes so any fish in these areas should be left alone. You should also **refrain from wading through these areas; try to stay at least knee deep and preferably waist deep to avoid crushing the eggs.** One of the big problems is that fish hooked on the redds will quite often release their eggs/sperm during the fight or while being released. If you're going to fish during those times the best place to fish is the drop-offs below the shallow tailouts. A lot of fish will be sitting there picking off the food dislodged by the spawners digging out the redds.

Not much new to report, a few Tricos early along with the midges in the morning. There have been mixtures of small and larger mayflies with caddis midday and then caddis in the afternoon. The fishing has definitely slowed so a lot of the fishermen have moved on to greener pastures making it a lot more peaceful. The river below the bridge has opened with good but vague reports about good nymphing but slow on dry flies. The bite is getting earlier now so beat the crowds and get the first grabs. The resident fish have been keying into the mayflies and midges, so we suggest trailing a midge (#18-24) or mayfly (#16-22) behind an attractor nymph to keep the action rolling between each lake fish. There have been some sporadic hatches of larger mayflies coming off mid-day. On calm afternoons the dry fly fishing can be productive but be ready to throw size 18 through 22 dry flies. Streamer fishing has been OK. Recommended Flies: DRIES: Griffiths Gnat #20-24, Parachute Extended Body BWO #18-22, Elk Hair Caddis #20-22, Para Caddis #16-22, Missing Link #16-20. NYMPHS: Zebra Midge #16-22, Prince Nymph #12-16, Copper John #14-16, Tungsten Jig Baetis #18-20, Harrop's Surface Emerger #20-22, Roza Pink Tag Jig #16, Clearwater Emerger #18-20, S&M Nymph #20-22, Medallion Midge #20-24, Bling Midge #22-24, Jiggy Caddis #14-16. STREAMERS: Shock Collar Leech #10, Woolly Bugger White, Olive, or Brown #6-14, Punk Perch light or dark #10-16.

**CROWLEY LAKE** – Water conditions are good and fishing and hatches are fair to good. Lake Elevation is at **6769.8 as of 5/27**. When the wind has been down, going 10'-16' deep has been good but the best spots are spread out. There seems to be 2 choices, shallow means bigger fish and perch while deep means all trout but not as big. The perch must be getting closer to spawning because the numbers caught are increasing. Some reports said that 18-30 feet has been good but more quantity than quality. Best locations have been Green Banks, Leighton Springs, Sandy Point, off the McGee Bay float tube parking with the north end getting better. Hilton Bay is picking up also. Dries: Nymphs: Shaft Emerger #14-16, Albino Baron #14-16, G/B Opti Tiger #16-18, Optimidge Olive/Dun #16-18, Double Bead Zebra sliver/black small, B.H. Chiron Blood #14-16, V Rib Red #14-16. Streamers: Crystal Bugger Black

#8, Marabou Leech Burgundy or Brown #12, Perfection Perch #4, and Hornberg #8-14.

**HOT CREEK** - Water condition is good. Flows are at **48cfs as of 5/27**. With the great weather the fishing has improved, along with the crowds. The fish are finally eating lots of scuds. Also, there's a pretty good mayfly hatch around the mid-morning. Try everything from tiny little Tricos (8-10 am) to big BWO (blue wing olive) 11-1. Yes Tricos, only 3 months early. Caddis is showing up more and more from the morning on. The dry fly fishing can be good depending on the time of the hatch. Right now, nymphing is the preferred method. Please be mindful of other anglers as there are plenty of spots to fish on Hot Creek. The fish (including the bigger ones) seem to be moving into the faster, shallower water so shorten up and keep your drifts real short. The fish are in there and they're hungry. And the weed beds are coming back with a vengeance. Recommended Flies: DRIES: R.P. Emerger #22, Hi-Vis Baetis #18-20, Yellow Stimulator #8-16, Mother Shucker #24, CDC Baetis Dun #16-20, Para Caddis #18-22. NYMPHS: Tungsten Psycho #20, T Midge #24, Zebra Midge #18-22, Grey/Olive Scud #16-18, Tailwater Scud Tungsten #14-18, S&M nymph #16-18, Tungsten jig Baetis #16-20, Pheasant tail and Hares ear #14-18, WD 40's #20-22, Pheasant Tail #16-20, Little Brown Bug #16-18, Medallion Midge #18-22, Buckskin #16-20, Brassie #18-22, Rainbow Warrior #18-20, Barr's Emerger #16-22, Deep Six Pupa #18. STREAMERS: BH Bopp Slump Buster, Perfection Perch #4-8, Punk Perch #10-16, Hornberg #10-14.

**CONVICT LAKE** – No Report

**MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN** – Road is not open and Forest Service expects it to be open around Memorial weekend.

**SAN JOAQUIN**

Running at **141cfs as of 5/27** but San Joaquin River access is closed and won't open until early June due to the contract with The Mountain and the winter use.

**JUNE LOOP** – No Report

**LUNDY LAKE** – Reports were mixed due to heavy wind in the canyon again and only 2 reports from fly fishermen near the inlet and along the south west corner using dark olive streamers, and woolly buggers, and reports of a couple hatches along the back trail to the Brookie ponds.

**VIRGINIA LAKES** – All lakes thawed between May 4<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup>. Weather has been very unsettled over the last 12 days with two snow storms dropping 10 inches of spring snow meaning great moisture to keep the fire danger down. Not many fly anglers probably due to the

lake's temperature and only being able to stay in the water no more than 60 to 75 minutes at a time. This will start to change as the moon moves past "full". The only report I had was on Big Virginia and he said he was using woolly buggers with some luck mostly near the inlet and I told him to switch to Richard's Seal Bugger and he knew what that was, but he didn't report his results. The midge hatch has been "going off scale" the past 4 days, and it's unbelievable. I'm expecting to see more hatches within the next week and very excited to hit the water. But it's not only here as I've had reports from friends that have seen the hatches everywhere and not only midges but some early caddis as well.

**BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR** – With the weather being so erratic this past week the fishing on the reservoir was also kind of erratic. We had some good reports from fly anglers stripping streamers down near the dam, as well as fishing midges under indicators. Report from Ken's.

**EAST WALKER** – Flows have been in the 100's most of the week but currently at **58.7cfs as of 5/27**. The weather has been inconsistent but it looks like it will settle down soon. Patterns to try: Zebra midge, Dark Lord, Darth Baetis, Perdigon nymph black/orange/gold bead, flashback emerger, Top Secret midge, Silver Streak, Rainbow Warrior, Parachute Adams, Chubby Chernobyl, Blue Dun, Blue Wing olive.

Flows have come up considerably but still 50% of normal but that combined with cooler temperatures should improve the fishing.

SO, it is up to us to protect this fishery, or we can be more concerned with ego gratifying pictures and videos and watch the death spiral of a once great fishery. If you must **take pictures keep the fish in the water at all times** and debarb your hooks even though it's technically no longer required. Pinching your barbs will help released fish stay healthy and in turn keep a healthy population in the river. In spite of these changes the DFW has made to the regulations, hopefully the angling community will take it upon themselves to take care of this world class fishery.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** There have been some DFW personnel on the river conducting angler surveys which is really great to see; be sure to take a minute to talk with them about the regulations if you come in contact with them, also take a minute to fill out an angler survey sheet with comments, if you have a chance. Keep the e-mails going, the only way to get the regulations changed back to the way they were is to keep up the pressure. Go to the Walker River Outfitters website at: [www.walkerriveroutfitters.com](http://www.walkerriveroutfitters.com) for more information about getting involved!

**HONEYWELL POND** – No Report.

**SCEIRINE RANCH** - The ranch has also been very active lately with lots of nice fish caught. Like the California side, it's been mostly nymphing though there has been a few nice fish caught on dead drift crayfish this past week. They're still taking some dry/dropper rigs on the ranch as well. Report from Ken's in Bridgeport.

**KIRMAN LAKE** –No reports from Kirman yet, hopefully there are still some fish leftover from last year but it's hard to tell. Last year the fishing was pretty tough with just a few successful reports coming in for the whole season. Hopefully the DFW will be able to get some fingerling fish in there this year and get the fishery back on track. Report from Ken's in Bridgeport.

**WEST WALKER** – With the storms this past week it sounds like the West has been a bit blown out, it's probably fishable but it will be a bit tough until the water levels come down a bit. If you were going to give it a try find flat water with riffles and still side-water where fish will be holding to enjoy the buffet that is moving slower at the river's bottom than the top. Pull out your indicator and drop a Tungsten bead-head nymph about 15-18" and adjust as needed a #12 Prince flashback, or even a large Rainbow Warrior; it never hurts to try.

**Waters below 11,000 feet are mostly ice free due to the mild winter report from Bishop DFW.**

### **CALIFORNIA DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE** **2020 Proposed Inland Water Regulations for 2021**

Below is the link with all the changes on the CDFW web-site info page: Please provide comments to these changes for any water if you feel it would be detrimental to the resource. They need your input in order to make informed decisions on all these waters.

Every person or agency recommending that a regulation be added, amended, or repealed must submit a petition to the commission at the site listed: (<https://fgc.ca.gov/Regulations/Petition-for-Regulation-Change>) using this petition form. You can contact their office to see when the next meeting will be held to submit regulation changes on time and whatever is on the books today can be changed. Also include your comments to Governor Newsom at: (<https://govapps.gov.ca.gov/gov40mail/>). Here is the Executive Director's contact information: Melissa Miller-Henson - [fgc@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:fgc@fgc.ca.gov) (916) 653-4899 or (916) 653-7229.

### **Fly-Fishing Apps**

"Fish Head Nervous Water Apps LLC, \$6.99 iPhone and Android"

Not only the best app for steelhead rivers, but surf, and also helpful in most any trout-fishing situation around the country. It has a river directory with flows and where and when to find the best windows of action. It's handy



when you're actually packing to go fishing; it's quick, organized with the most pertinent information available.

**Orvis Fly Fishing Green Mountain** - Digital, iPhone, Android is a grand-daddy of fly fishing apps that is free and packed with tons of general interest fly-fishing news, advice, discussion and entertainment you'll never be able to digest it all. It has Tom Rosenbauer's podcasts, casting videos for every stream, flats, or surf situation; knot =tying instruction, fishing reports, up -to-date news feeds, fly pattern descriptions and recommendations with built-in links so you can buy flies you're interested in. It's sort of geared toward beginners, but its solid information and we could all use a little tune-up now and again. Loren Elliott

#### **The Pocket Fisherman by Magic Mobile**

This app will help you find out more about the specific species of fish, as well as regulations and records of 49 Continental states regarding fishing in their deep waters. The app also comes with a GPS map that tracks the nearest tackle shops and marinas. You can easily identify the fish by either searching for its name or looking at the gallery of fish images. It's the most comprehensive fisherman app so far as it comes with a summary of each type of fish, description, appearance, weight, natural habitat, and its average length.

**MONITOR PASS** - Was open but subject to storm closure and closed off and on the last 8 days due to two snow storms.

**SONORA PASS** – Was open but subject to storm closure and closed off and on the last 8 days due to two snow storms.

#### **TIOGA PASS - NOW OPEN AS OF May 27, 2021**

#### **Yosemite National Park to Re-Implement Day-Use Reservation System Beginning Friday, May 21, 2021**

Yosemite National Park - Beginning Friday, May 21, visitors to Yosemite National Park will need a day-use reservation to enter the park. The temporary day-use reservation system will allow the park to manage visitation levels to reduce risks associated with exposure to COVID-19.

Day-use reservations will be required for all users, including annual and lifetime pass holders. Each reservation is valid for three days.

Reservations are available on [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) beginning at 8 a.m. on April 21, 2021. Each day-use reservation is valid for one vehicle and the occupants of that vehicle. For more detailed information, please visit: <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/covid19.htm>

#### **CalTrans Highway work along US 395**

**Inyo County** - North of Cartago to South of Olancho, they will widen the highway to a two-lanes. Contact the Bishop Office to check on any change of start date.

**Mono County** - Upgrade signs, striping and guardrail repair as needed.

#### **Seasonal road conditions as of May 27, 2021**

Monitor Pass Hwy 89 - OPEN

Sonora Pass Hwy 108 - OPEN

#### **TIDBIT'S - Meteor Shower Calendar 2021**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>(no. per/hour)</u>
<b>July 29</b>	<b>Delta Aquariid*</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Aug. 12</b>	<b>Perseid</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Sept. 29, Oct. 7</b>	<b>Unnamed</b>	<b>50-100</b>
<b>October 21</b>	<b>Orionid*</b>	<b>10-21</b>
<b>Nov. 5</b>	<b>Southern Taurid</b>	<b>10-20</b>
<b>Nov. 17</b>	<b>Leonid*</b>	<b>10-20</b>
<b>Dec. 14</b>	<b>Geminid*</b>	<b>100-200</b>
<b>Dec. 22</b>	<b>Ursid*</b>	<b>10</b>

\* Strong moonlight will interfere with these showers.

Best viewing after Midnight looking to the East. Dates will vary slightly.

See you on the water CJ!