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FALL PANFISHING IN EASTERN WA

Photo by Eric Magnuson

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EDITOR'S CORNER:

Fall has arrived and I'll be honest – it's hard to focus on fishing when there's pheasant flushing all over the place here in Great Falls. That said, I am super excited because by the time this edition hits the stores, I should have my new boat. After living here for three years driving by the Missouri River every day, I decided it was time to get a boat made for river fishing. Around Great Falls the Missouri slows down and changes from a trout fishery to a warmwater fishery. Pike, walleye, sturgeon, and catfish are all species that anglers target. For that, a riverboat with a jet motor is just the ticket to find those deep holes and backwater eddies.

After a visit to The Elephant Boys in Spokane, I found the perfect boat for my needs – a 16-foot Lowe jon boat with a 35 hp jet, trolling motor, and fish finder. The cool thing is Elephant Boys don't sell already built boats, they build them in their shop from the hull up. Which means I'm getting just the boat to fit my needs. Check them out if you're in the market for a custom new boat, they are worth the drive to Spokane.

Good luck with your Fall Fishing Adventures!

Mike Carey - mikec@nwfishing.net @Michael Carey Northwest Fishing



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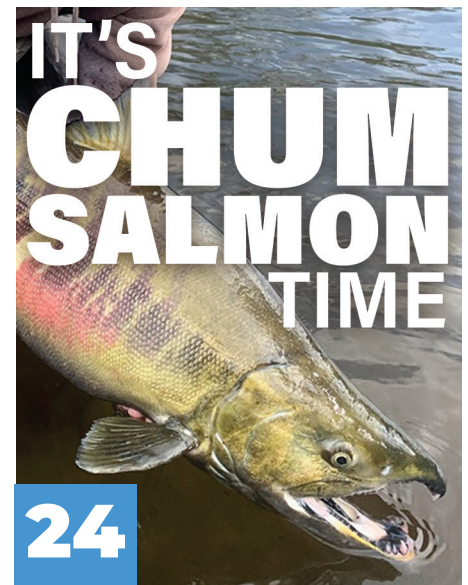
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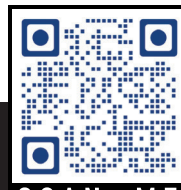
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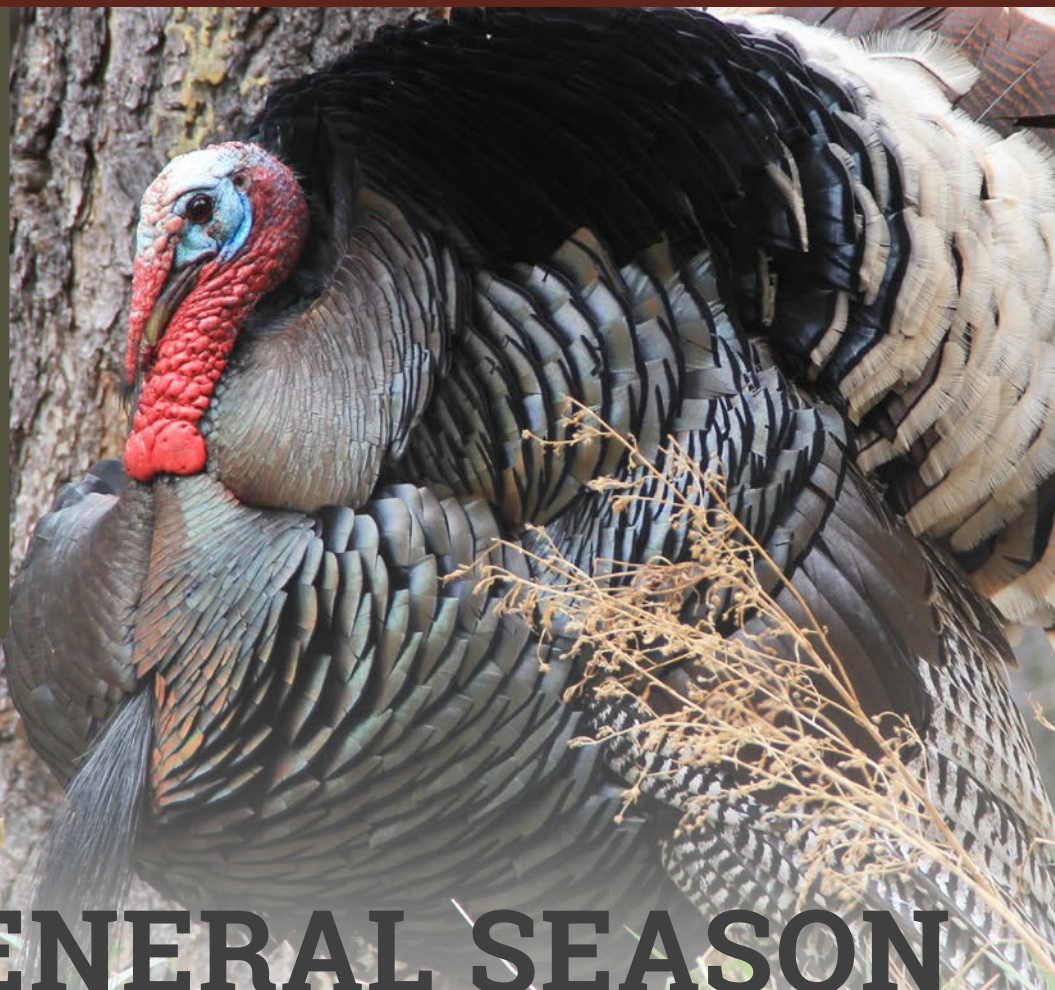


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FALL TROUT

TECHNIQUES

BY HANNAH PENNEBAKER

Conventional wisdom dictates that trout fishing usually slows down in the heat of the summer. Trout prefer cold water temperatures and go off the bite when the water gets too warm for comfort. Around October, water temperatures cool down and the bite starts to come back on. The fish have been feeding and growing since spring, so they're usually feistier and bigger. They're a ton of fun for kids and adults alike. Fall in the Pacific Northwest can be the best time of year to catch trout! Read on to learn how you can reach your limit on these tasty fall treats.

TROLLING

Don't winterize the boat just yet! Now is the time to troll big spoons and spinners. The fish are looking to pack on some pounds before winter and are more likely to strike large presentations. Try trolling size 7 jointed Rapalas. Bold colors such as fire tiger and chartreuse are great in the fall. Now is the time to experiment with something different. This is my favorite time of year to use large trolling flies. That said, the usual techniques such as Mac's Wedding Rings paired with small dodgers and lake trolls will work very well. I'd recommend trolling faster than you would in the spring or

summer. The fish are more energetic and willing to chase down a lure. How deep you should set your lures is where things get less certain. Sometimes they're on the surface, and other days they're in the mid-water column. This is where having a decent fish finder will be important. Be adaptable and always have a plan B!

SHORE FISHING

No boat? Have no fear, fall trout cruise the shoreline and you have a good chance of bringing home your limit. Dough baits are always a reliable option, though not the most exciting way to fish. On 2 pole endorsement lakes, I like to soak dough bait with

1 rod and throw spinner or spoons with another. Fall trout are eager to bite on hardware!

Not all lakes have good shore access. Some have pay-to-fish docks, such as Lake Tanwax, Mineral Lake, and Clear Lake. It's a good idea to have a backup plan if the fish aren't biting at your lake of choice. Check the stocking reports and take a look to see if any of your local lakes have tagged fish in them. You can win cool prizes from WDFW for catching a tagged fish, and there are plenty still left.

CATCH N' COOK!

Once you've got your catch home, the fun part begins: cooking it! I learned how to smoke fish by smoking trout. You can smoke them fileted or butterflied. I prefer to smoke filets so I can fit more fish in the smoker but butterflying them is easy and less time consuming. You can make a dry or wet brine—I have recipes for both, depending on how I'm feeling. Dry brines don't take nearly as long to work their magic, especially on small trout. Wet brines are more forgiving and allow for more flavor options. Smoked trout works well in dips, pastas, and on

bagels. Add maple syrup or honey about 30 minutes before taking it off the smoke for trout candy. I like to munch on my smoked trout candy as a high-protein snack while hiking and fishing in the fall. Fall trout are also good baked, fried, and grilled. I like to use the seasoned fish fry from Winco's bulk section. Dip the fillets in a beaten egg, coat in the fish fry, then gently place in hot oil until golden brown. They're great dipped in sriracha mayo! For a healthier snack, try lightly oiling the fillets, then shaking some lemon pepper seasoning on. Bake at 350 degrees until fully cooked. You can also wrap whole trout in foil with some butter and garlic, then throw it in the oven or grill for an easy and delicious meal.

As you can see, fall trout are not only fun to catch, but delicious to grill and smoke. This is a great time to introduce kids to fishing! The weather isn't too hot and there's no need to be on the water at the crack of dawn. Shore fishermen and boat anglers alike have an excellent chance of coming home with limits of these aggressive, tough fish. We hope to see you out on the water this fall!



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SILVER SALMON RIVER LOCKJAW STRATEGIES

BY JASON BROOKS

Standing at the river's edge and surveying the waters, a loud splash disrupted the silence of the day. Coho or silver salmon are known to roll and jump often, and this gives away their location. This fish was in heavy cover where downed logs had created a log jam and there was no way to get to it without risking gear being lost to the sunken trees. But it meant that fish were in the river and that was good enough to load the tackle into the drift boat and launch for a day of searching for more coho.

Rowing down the river, which was calm and quiet, we came to a large back slough. The water here was stacked up from the previous winter's floods that cut the side channel deep but now the water was shallow at the outfall creating a lake of sorts.

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This is known as “frog water” and coho prefer to sit here and rest until they regain energy to continue upriver. With a lot of fish holding in the stagnant waters, one would think these fish are easy to catch but anglers often forget that these are resting fish and that means they are lazy and often lockjaw.



The term “lockjaw” means salmon unwilling to bite. Unfortunately, when anglers come upon a dozen or more fish that are lockjaw the temptation to snag becomes overwhelming.

Not only is this illegal but also it hurts the runs of coho because these are resting fish and when snagged they exert energy they are trying to use to head upriver and spawn. When a fish becomes too tired to move it simply dies because water needs to flow through the gills and if the fish cannot move and it is released into slow or stagnant water it will suffocate and die.

So, how do you get fish to bite when they are all lockjawed? The answer is simple and that is to find fish that are not lockjawed. Seems silly to say that but it is true, you will not get a lockjawed silver to bite. This does not mean giving up fishing for the day but instead knowing that there are biting fish, or a bite might turn on throughout the day. Back to the stagnant waters of the slough.

These fish are resting but that also means they will get their energy back and will bite. If you have ever thrown a spinner or twitched a jig in this water when it is clear enough to see the fish, then you will notice a fish or two out of the school will start to give chase. These are fish that are done resting and have energy and are just waiting for the right conditions.

The right conditions can be anything from enough time to recover to a shot of rain bringing up the river just enough to make it easier for them to migrate. Anglers often head to the river early to get the “early morning bite” but what is really happening is the water has cooled off from a brisk fall night and the fish are more active. As the day heats up the water also warms, and this means less dissolved oxygen and therefore tired salmon. One way to beat the lockjaw is to fish on cool days, after it rains, or early in the day.

Sometimes, our schedules do not line up with the perfect conditions and anglers can only hit a river when the conditions are all wrong for active fish. You can still beat the lockjawed effect by looking for parts of the river where the fish

are active. For coho this can be a deep hole where the water is cooler, and boulders churn the flowing water creating dissolved oxygen. Same with riffles and holding areas in the shade. One hot fall day we were floating a coastal river and working on our sunburns when we came across a long stretch of water. The current was moderate, and the bank had overhanging trees. Peering into the shadows we saw coho stacked up in the shade, swaying their tails in the current and we thought they were just resting. Tossing a jig and a few quick twitches later a fish slammed it hard and erupted out of the water. These were not lockjawed fish but ones that were just staying out of the bright sun and being protected by the overhanging branches. They were also not in “frog water” but instead in a moderate current where they could sit and let the

water run through their gills.

Log jams are notorious places for coho and for eating gear. It is the hardest place of all to catch salmon. Look for deep holes often created by the log jams and watch the fish, or when you see the splashing and rolling as this often means fish are active. A tired fish will sit and rest, but an active fish will be splashing and rolling as it uses energy to do this. Why salmon do this is still unknown with several theories but one thing that is known is that fish that are active are not lockjawed. Be careful parking the boat over a log jam in current but if you find one that is in a soft part of the river then you can oftentimes move the boat over and tie up to the log jam. The key here is to let the hole rest because it is likely the fish moved out once you put the boat

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over them. Coho like log jams because it is covered and they feel safe from predators here; the boat will become part of that cover once the commotion stops. Several times we have looked over the edge of the boat and seen coho underneath, sitting there just like they do in other cover. Techniques vary and sometimes you can get a “lockjawed” silver to

bite—though the fish was just resting and is now recovered-by using a bait that it simply cannot resist. Such techniques are often the presentation of bait like cured eggs. If you have ever hoverfished, then you have caught resting fish using eggs. This technique which is extremely popular in the Columbia River Gorge is done at tributary mouths where the colder

water from the tributary is dumping into the warmer Columbia. The fish will stack up here to rejuvenate in the cooler water and the bite is often very subtle. Floating eggs under a bobber is a top technique to get resting coho to bite. Back to the frog water slough, it is best to float fish it first and see if there are any resting but willing biters in there.



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Twitching jigs and swinging spoons or spinners are for active fish. Use these techniques where fish that are more active, such as in runs, riffles, and deep holes. Yes, they also work in stagnant waters but again you will notice that out of the entire school of fish, only a few will chase down the lures. This means having patience and knowing that the fish will eventually get their strength back and bite. Same with moving fish, be ready for a long lull in action and then all a sudden the "bite" is on. It is likely fish moved upriver and to your location. One cold November day we

were fishing the Satsop River and anchored by a small back eddy along a cut bank. We stayed there all day long twitching jigs and occasionally, a pod of coho would make their way upriver. This was announced by one of us hooking a fish and then it would be "on" for a few minutes with everyone catching a fish or two and then the coho simply moved on.

Lockjawed coho are hard to catch and the best way to catch them is to look for fish that are willing to bite. Knowing when they are lockjawed and not harassing them is the best technique you can do

to catch more fish. Find willing biters and leave the tired fish alone. Wasting time on them only hurts the run and will cause you to become frustrated. When you make your way to the edge of the quiet river, pause and look around, listening for the splash of a coho. These are the fish you can catch.



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Fall Panfishing

IN EASTERN WA

A TREASURE AWAITING EAGER ANGLERS

BY ERIC MAGNUSON

As the vibrant hues of summer give way to the crisp, golden tones of fall, Eastern Washington transforms into a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts. For many, this time of year means hunting or hiking through the scenic landscapes. However, for anglers in the know, fall represents one of the best opportunities for panfishing in this region. Panfish, including species such as bluegill, crappie, and perch, become particularly active as the temps begin to drop, offering a fantastic fishing experience.

THE APPEAL OF FALL PANFISHING

Fall is a transitional season, and for many fish species, it signals the need to feed aggressively, putting the feed bug on for the winter months ahead. For panfish like crappie and bluegill, this means moving from

the deeper waters they inhabited during the hot summer months to shallower, more accessible areas where they can feast on minnows, insects, and other aquatic creatures.

Anglers targeting panfish in the fall can enjoy several advantages:

Reduced fishing pressure

As fall arrives, many anglers turn their attention to hunting, leaving lakes and rivers quieter, and less crowded. The reduced fishing pressure can make panfish less wary and more likely to bite.

Ideal weather conditions

The mild temperature of fall provides a comfortable environment for fishing. The oppressive heat of summer is gone, and the cold chill of winter has yet to set in, creating the perfect conditions for a day on the water.

Spectacular scenery

There's nothing quite like spending a day on the water surrounded by the stunning fall foliage of Eastern Washington. The golden leaves of cottonwoods, aspens, and maples reflect off the glassy surface of the lakes, creating a breathtaking backdrop for any fishing trip.

Active fish

As water temps cool, panfish metabolism remains relatively high, encouraging aggressive feeding behavior. This is a stark contrast to the lethargic bites often experienced in the summer.

THE BEST PANFISH SPECIES TO TARGET IN EASTERN WASHINGTON

Crappie

Crappie is a favorite among panfish enthusiasts due to its delicious, flaky meat and relative abundance

in Eastern Washington waters. Two species, black crappie and white crappie can be found, though black crappie tends to be more common. During the fall, crappie often schools up in large numbers, making them easier to locate and catch.

Best spots

Moses Lake, Eloika Lake, Newman Lake, and Sacheen Lake are well known for their healthy abundance of populations. Look for crappies in areas with submerged structures such as fallen trees, docks, or rocky points where they seek shelter and forage.

Techniques

Casting small jigs with plastics, or bait, is highly effective for fall crappie. A slow steady retrieve near submerged structures often entices strikes. Night fishing can also be productive especially when using lights or lanterns to attract the crappie.

Bluegill & Sunfish:

Bluegill and other sunfish species, such as pumpkin seeds, are abundant in Eastern Washington and provide great action for anglers of all skill levels. They are often found in shallow waters, especially around weed beds,

submerged vegetation, and docks.

Best spots

Eloika Lake, Newman Lake, Sacheen Lake, and Loon Lake to name a few, are excellent choices for targeting bluegill and sunfish. These lakes offer plenty of fishing availability, making them perfect for both boat and shore anglers.

Techniques

Bluegills are notorious for their love of small, natural baits. Worms, crickets, and small jigs work wonders, particularly when fished below a bobber.



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Small flies, in the nymph patterns, can also be effective and add an extra way to approach these fish.

Yellow Perch

Yellow Perch are another panfish targeted by fall anglers in Eastern Washington. Known for their aggressive nature, and flakey tasty filets, perch are often found schooling up in deeper water, usually inhabiting a large mud flat looking for bloodworms, but don't overlook the shallows as temps drop and baitfish move toward the shore.

Best spots

Silver Lake, Moses Lake, Sacheen Lake, and Eloika Lake rank among prime locations for yellow perch. These waters provide plenty of food and cabbage where these perch can hide, and hunt. (Don't forget Long Lake.)

Techniques

Perch can be caught using a variety of methods, but jigging small spoons tipped with small plastics, or bait tends to be the most effective way. Vertical jigging from a boat can be best, especially when you

locate a school of perch on your fish finder.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL FALL PANFISHING IN EASTERN WASHINGTON

Use light tackle

Panfish have small, soft mouths and are easily spooked by heavy tackle. Light spinning rods, small reels, and 4-6lb test lines are ideal for detecting subtle bites and presenting small baits effectively.

Look for structure

Panfish are actually drawn to structures that provide cover from predators and access to food.



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Fallen trees, weed beds, rock piles, and boat docks are all excellent places to find schools of panfish. Use a fish finder to locate submerged structures that aren't visible from the surface.

Experiment with lure colors and sizes

Different panfish species and even individual fish can have a unique preference, so it's good to experiment with variations of lures, with different colors and sizes. Or even trying to figure out what they are feeding on, and match the hatch.

Stay Mobile

If you're not getting any bites in one spot, don't be afraid to move around. Panfish schools can be highly mobile, especially in the fall, so covering more water can increase your chances of finding active fish.

Adjust your depth

Panfish can often be found at varying depths depending on water temperature during the day. Start shallow and gradually move deeper as the day warms up. Fish can sometimes be found surprisingly deep even in cool months - and don't overlook the suspended fish in the middle column.

THE FALL PANFISHING EXPERIENCE

Fall panfishing in Eastern Washington offers a unique blend of excitement and tranquility. The crisp air, vibrant fall foliage, and the serenity of the lakes make for a peaceful escape from the everyday hustle and bustle. For those who enjoy the challenges of light tackle and the reward of a well-earned catch, there's no better time to get out on the water.

Whether you're a seasoned angler or a beginner looking to experience the thrill of fishing, Eastern Washington lakes and reservoirs offer plenty of opportunities to reel in some of the best and most enjoyable fish the region has to offer. With a bit of patience, and the right gear, and a sense of adventure, you'll find that fall panfishing in Eastern Washington is more than just a past time - it's a cherished tradition waiting to be discovered. So grab your fishing rod, pack your tackle box, and head out to the waters of Eastern Washington this fall. The panfish are biting, and the experience is one you won't want to miss.



KELP GREENLING

BY JOSH DEBRULER

Spanning from the Aleutian Island that make up the Alaskan archipelago, all the way down to the coastal waters of San Diego California, there is a small predatory fish that patrols the kelp beds and rocky structures that make up much of the US west coast. Unlike its close relative, the lingcod, this petite little predator enjoys a life that's largely void of the constant bombardment from sports anglers. This small saltwater fish is the Kelp greenling. And though it's not targeted by anglers the same way many other bottom fish along the West Coast are; due to its small size and lack of spiny armor, the kelp greenling is constantly being pursued and preyed upon by lingcod and even halibut.

DESCRIPTION & LIFECYCLE

Adult greenlings range from 10-21 inches and rarely grow to be more

than 4.5 lbs. Both males and females tend to have colorful markings, with the females typically having a brown to orange body with black and grey spots, while the males typically have a dark grey body with blue spots around the head. The females can lay up to 12,000 eggs between November and January. This occurs three times throughout the spawning season and the deposited eggs will stick together in large clumps which the males will guard till the larvae stage. Kelp greenling can live up to 25 years of age.

KELP GREENLING AS A FISHERY & AS A FOOD

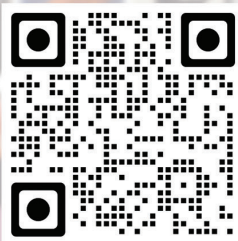
In general, Kelp Greenling are caught as by-catch by sport fisherman that are seeking lingcod, rockfish, and other popular bottom fish species. While some are retained for food, many anglers simply throw them back or utilize the fish as live bait for trophy-sized

lingcod. Historically in Oregon and California, near-shore commercial vessels retained bycatch kelp greenling to sell in local fresh seafood markets, yet a thriving market never developed for this greenling, so commercial pressure has remained low.

Although Kelp greenling likely hasn't been the star of the show on most people's fishing trips, they do provide a good fishery for a number of reasons: They are commonly found in Washington's nearshore waters and their numbers are thought to be healthy; for a small fish they put up a decent fight (remember, they are relatives to the lingcod); and finally, they are a delicious food- fish. I would put the flavor as something comparable to lingcod, yet the flesh, once cooked, is slightly less firm than these larger relatives.

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WHERE TO FISH


In Washington, the best areas to target greenling are on the straights of Juan de Fuca, and in coastal waters such as La Push and Makah Bay, though they can be caught to a lesser extent in the Puget Sound. Look for areas where healthy kelp beds meet rocky underwater structures and aim to fish at about 15-50 ft deep. A boat or a kayak will give you easy access to greenling habitat, but boats are not required for this fishery as you can fish for kelp greenling off of jetties or rock outcroppings.

HOW TO CATCH THEM

If you've fished for Cabezon, rockfish, or lingcod, you've likely already used gear that will entice a bite from kelp greenling. I prefer using a 1-2 oz laser minnow or a 1-2 oz lead jig head with a soft plastic grub. A variety of colors will work depending on what the fish are feeding on at the time. If fishing from a boat, dropping your lure to the bottom and vertically jigging will typically produce good results. While fishing from a jetty, you can cast, jig, and retrieve the same way you would work a buzz bomb from shore while targeting

salmon. Swim baits are also effective while fishing from a jetty or rock formations, and a weedless swim-bait setup will serve you well while trying to avoid hooking into the kelp. Since there's a high likelihood of landing a larger fish like a lingcod or cabezon while targeting Kelp greenling, it's a good idea to have a set-up that can handle larger fish. With that being said, you'll still want to keep your gear light enough to make some fun out of bringing in the smaller kelp greenling. My go-to set-up is a 7 ft medium light action rod, with 25 lb braided as my main line, swivel, then 2-3 ft of 20 lb mono or fluorocarbon for my leader.

With fall in full swing and many people wrapping up their summer bottom fishing season, I find October to be a good time to utilize some of the cooler weather for late-season saltwater fishing. If you'd like to add some variety to your catch and want to take advantage of the slower boat launches, go ahead and give Kelp Greenling a try. Just keep an eye on those tides and weather forecasts!



LAKE ROOSEVELT WALLEYE & TURKEY BONANZA BY MIKE CAREY

Looking out over the field, darkness still obscured our vision. Out there beyond the field we set up in we could hear the rapid gurgling, gobbling sound made by male turkeys in their tree roosts. Daylight would be coming soon, but meanwhile, I couldn't get the image from The Blair Witch Project out of my head. I subconsciously swiped at my nose, suppressing a cough, desperate to not make a sound. Daylight would be coming soon and I didn't want to be "the new guy" blowing our cover and scaring away our target. It was my first ever turkey hunt. Joining me, were Dave Mason of Toyota and Dan Gabriel of The General Store. Our host, Rick Wakefield, owner of Buck Canyon Lodge, had invited us on this Opening Day of turkey hunting to check

out the fine hunting he offers guests on his lodge properties. It was part of a "Cast and Blast" adventure Northwest Fishing Reports were enjoying. The "cast" part of the trip were upper Lake Roosevelt walleyes with Lake Roosevelt Charters.

I had arrived late Friday evening after driving across the state from Redmond to the lodge, located near the town of Gifford. In normal conditions it would have been a not-too-bad five-hour drive, however, a traffic accident going over the pass had set me back a good hour and a half. I arrived tired but excited for what the weekend had in store. Meeting up with the NWFR crew Aaron Borg and Rob Holman, I crashed into my comfortable fleece-covered bed in anticipation of a leisurely 6:30 start time with guides Scott and Todd of Lake

Roosevelt Charters. I was excited because of reports they had been posted about deep water jigging for walleye. The pictures of healthy catches of nice-sized eating walleye had my hopes up for bringing home plenty of one of the Pacific Northwest's tastiest fish, the walleye.

We met at the Hunters boat launch, which was high and dry, but still useable, if a little muddy. No matter, in short order we were off and cruising to a few preferred locations that Scott and Todd had been having success at.

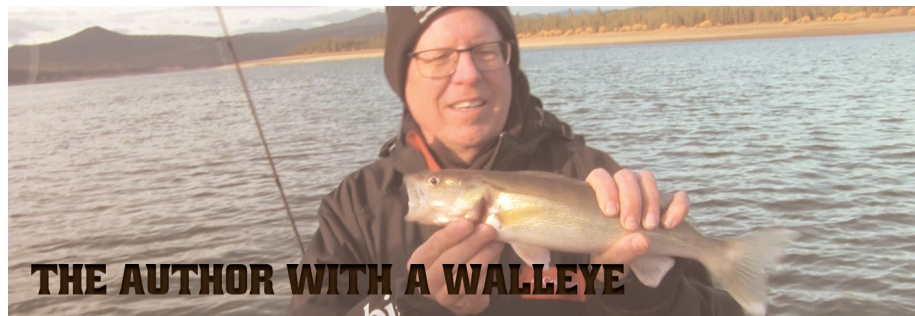
I don't know that Lake Roosevelt Charters were the first to deep jig for walleye, but I can say they were the first charter I'd ever seen promoting the fishery. I remember being instantly intrigued – jigging up walleye from 121-50 foot depths was so foreign to

any other walleye technique I was familiar with that I just had to see and experience it for myself.

We pulled up to our first location and Todd handed out rods loaded with 20-pound Power Pro and one ounce, round jigs. To the jig he added a 4-5" curly tail plastic, and then a half a night crawler threaded several times with just a one inch tail sticking out. Again, very different from the traditional nightcrawler set up of a bottom walker and worm harness. Todd instructed us to let out our line until we made contact with the bottom.

"The trick to this fishery is you have to feel the "tap tap" of the jig as it bounces off the bottom. If you don't feel that contact you aren't fishing. Also, don't make big jigging motions – 5-6" is plenty. The fish are deep and cold, they aren't chasing after bait."

I let my line out and at 120 feet could see the braid go slack. I closed the bale and reeled up the slack, starting gently upward motions of my rod tip, raising and lowering and being sure to keep in contact with the bottom. If I felt nothing I let out a little line until again making contact. I continued this technique



for a few minutes and then felt the distinct tug and heaviness of a fish on the other end of my rod. Setting the hook, I reeled with steady pressure and soon enough brought up my first ever deep-water jigged walleye, a nice 15" "eater".

Over the next two days the NWFR gang would catch a lot of these "eaters". Looking over the vastness of this stretch of the upper Lake Roosevelt and seeing the low angling pressure, I was not surprised at the steady numbers we caught over the next two days. This fishery, while not untapped, is definitely under-utilized. The bites came pretty steadily throughout the day. As with most fishing, we had periods of fast fishing and then slow, but over-all it was pretty consistent. Along with the good numbers of fish we noted they are definitely smaller than what we have caught on the lower stretches of the Columbia River. Our fish averaged mostly 13-15" with

a few fish on either side of those sizes. Todd noted that there are big walleye to be had, but yes, the vast majority were these eater class fish. I'm OK with that – nice stringers of white-fleshed walleye are always welcome at my table! I did notice that the flesh of these upper Lake Roosevelt walleye are a whiter shade than fish we had been catching in the lower reaches of the Columbia.

When it comes to deep water jigging for walleye, wind is your enemy. Current is not an issue on this stretch of the Columbia, but wind will cause the boat to get pushed too fast and, just like salt water jigging, you'll lose contact with the bottom. When this happens you'll find yourself letting out more and more line in an attempt to maintain bottom contact. It's time like this where a good captain knows ways to increase your chance for success.

Captain Scott deployed two large sea anchors, instantly slowing our drift down to a manageable speed. Another strategy is to find shallower water to jig in. Having a bow mounted trolling motor will also serve you well when the wind starts up. Finally, although there aren't a lot of spots to get entirely out of the wind, guys who fish these waters a lot know the winds and places to move to when the winds do come up. Just one more reason for considering a guide the first time you fish these waters. We fished until around noon, at which

points the winds from the front blowing through made it too tough to fish effectively anymore. It was a decent enough morning. We were looking at around a dozen fish in the boat, and many lost as well. When you're fishing at 120 feet deep it's essential to keep a steady pressure on the fish, even with barbed hooks. Fortunately there is another common trait of the winds in this area – they tend to die off later in the afternoon. Scott and Todd were more than happy to bring us in and take us out after a couple hours siesta time.

So, after getting a power nap we were back out again, fishing from 4-7pm.

This bite was actually better than the morning bite – don't put your gear away! In short, there are fish to be had throughout the day if you're willing to be flexible.

Darkness slowly gave way to dawn and the gobbling reached ever higher intensities. Soon we heard the first "whoosh" of a bird flying over our blind. Rick quietly announced –

"The birds are starting to come off the trees where they roost. It won't be long now. Get ready!"



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I was anxiously anticipating my first opportunity at a turkey. Dave and Dan were old hands at tom hunting and they had given me a primer on Tom Hunting 101 Essentials. I knew the shot I needed to make was a head or neck shot. Hitting the body of a turkey is a low proposition shot. The feathers are thick and hard and act like armor making a “head shot” almost essential. My hunting skills thus far had been limited to pheasants and ducks – which in my experience were fairly easy to knock down, assuming I could hit them! But turkeys – head shots on a bobbing head? I was little intimidated...

“Toms coming from the right”. Rick’s whispered warning had me turning my head to the right and seeing – nothing. I turned and looked straight in front of me and there were three large toms strutting around the decoy Rick had set up. How did those large birds get there so quickly without me even seeing them?!?!?

We three hunters slowly raised our guns to level, waiting for the three toms to separate enough that each of us had a clean shot at one bird. It seemed like forever as I hoped the birds wouldn’t startle and run

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off. Just then Rick gave the single to fire and in unison the three hunters let loose a booming volley of number 4 shot at each bird. It took a fraction of a second to travel the 15 yards to our targets and instantly two birds went down, and the third staggered, then rose into the air, flying over our blind. Three hunters, three shots, three birds! We came out of the blind and tracked down the third bird in the field behind us, around 30 yards away. Claiming this last bird we returned to the other two toms and admired our kills. The birds were all in the 25 pound range, gorgeous feathers and long beards. It was 6:30am and we were done for the day, with plenty of time to go back to the launch and get in more walleye fishing!

If you’re looking for a unique “Cast and Blast” adventure the spring turkey hunting and walleye fishing on Lake Roosevelt are not

to be missed. Buck Canyon Lodge is the perfect base camp to take off on your adventures. Hosts Rick and Wendy Wakefield have a beautiful lodge and offer full amenities including provided meals. Rick does guided turkey hunts for guests, or, if you’re not a hunter, stay at the Lodge and get in on the great walleye fishing with Lake Roosevelt Charters. Either way (or both) way you go you’re guaranteed to have a wonderful adventure.

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BY BRENT KNIGHT

FISHING



IT'S CHUM SALMON TIME

HERE WE GO...

Fall is upon us. The Sockeye have done their thing, Chinook have made their way into the rivers and are spawning, and the Coho are showing up until January in some places. Since it is an even year in the Pacific Northwest, we will not see a return of pink salmon this year. That leaves us with the fifth species of salmon, the Chum salmon.

Chum salmon, also known as dog salmon or keta salmon, is a species of anadromous salmon native to the coastal rivers of the North Pacific and the Beringian Arctic. The Chum is an often-overlooked species that is not targeted by recreational anglers quite like Chinook and Coho. The primary reason for this is that we don't usually

target or catch them in the salt, and they turn very quickly upon hitting the fresh water in our tributary rivers. Since they are not great table fair unless caught at the perfect time, we tend to focus on the other species that remain edible after they have spent weeks or months in the freshwater. It is important to note that Chum are targeted in the salt water up and down the Pacific Coast, but they are talked about much less than their coveted cousins, the Chinook and Coho. Chum salmon are typically commercially caught and marketed as canned or smoked products and exported to Asia and Europe. Their flesh tends to be lighter in color and oil content than other species of salmon, but its firmness

and flavor, if caught fresh, make chum salmon pleasant table fair.

One thing to be said for the mighty Chum however is that pound for pound, they are one of the toughest and hardest fighting salmon species. They can grow to nearly the size of Chinook with an average weight of 8-15 pounds, and large fish weighing up to 35 lbs. Chum have an ocean coloration of silvery blue-green with some indistinct spotting in a darker shade, and a paler belly.

When they move into fresh water the color changes quickly to dark olive green and the belly color deepens. When adults are near spawning, they have purple blotchy streaks near the caudal peduncle that resemble stripes that get

darker towards the tail. Spawning males typically grow an elongated snout or kype, their lower fins become tipped with white, and they have enlarged teeth. This may explain the nickname “dog” salmon. They are also sold for both dog food and are popular in Italy as food for prisoners.

As mentioned, Chum tend to transition and turn very quickly, even before they enter freshwater. Their flesh is not good for consumption when they begin to turn, but then again, to each his own. Also, Chum migrate, spawn, and die rather quickly, usually

within a period of a few weeks after entering fresh water. The key is to know when they show up and get after them while you have a short window of opportunity.

Since returns of Chum are dwindling in many of our rivers, we are often not allowed to target them and when we are allowed to, they often must be released. Check your WDFW regulations or call a local office for information on Chum salmon and ask about volunteer opportunities to catch them for broodstock programs that are being

used to restore the runs in some of our rivers.

I have participated in the broodstock collection on the Snohomish River system for the past few years, focusing on the Skykomish River. We catch chum and safely transport them to net pens that are located up and down the river. The fish are collected and taken to a hatchery where the milt and eggs are collected, and the salmon are reared for release back into the system. In my opinion, this is the most effective method to help Chum recover and increase the

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annual returns to our rivers. Chum Salmon are usually very aggressive once they enter the river. They will travel and hold in slow to moderate currents that are deeper than 4 feet. You can target them from the tidewater all the way up to their spawning grounds. Once they transition into spawning mode, and flood into the shallow spawning areas, leave them alone and let them do their thing. We really need them to procreate to ensure their long-term sustainability.

Catching Chum can be a lot of fun. They are aggressive fish and fight much like a Chinook. Chum mostly feed on plankton and shrimp in the ocean. Purple, pink, green/chartreuse are great colors for targeting Chum. Small hoochies work well. Tie up your hoochies with a 30-40-lb fishing line with short leaders of two to three feet behind an inline sinker or use hardware such as spinners with hoochie skirts to target the soft edges and corners. As with any salmon, you can catch Chum on pretty much anything and anywhere in the river but understanding their habits will increase your catch ratio.



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The following techniques will offer the shore and boat anglers some great options. You can try using a float/bobber and jig (tip with shrimp or prawn if allowed), twitching jigs much like Coho, casting or pulling plugs, drift fishing a corky and yarn tipped with prawn/shrimp or flavored with a scent such as herring, sardine, shrimp and anchovy which are awesome for Chums, or you can try your hand at throwing flies. I am a big fan of using hardware and my favorite is a Blue Fox Vibrax Size 5 spinner in chartreuse or pink with a

hoochie skirt. I find this to be the most fun and active method to cover water and entice a testy Chum to bite in pretty much any type of water. When they decide to bite your offering, it is game on.

Check the regs and get out there. Catching Chum is a ton of fun. You can catch your Coho for the BBQ and freezer and if allowed, wrap up your day on the water targeting some Chum for the fight of it. Have fun and good fishing!

Razor clam season is here!



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A friend of mine suggested I do a story about the Alatheia Therapeutic Riding Center near Wenatchee and I'm so glad she did. I visited there this past week and met with the co-founder of this very special place, Nancy Grette.

Nancy and her husband Glenn started this non-profit organization at their home on Sleepy Hollow Heights in 2011. The two had purchased several horses they kept on their property but their children had grown and left home and they were pondering what to do. That's when a five-year-old girl who was physically disabled came out for a ride for her fifth birthday on one of their horses.

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The ride was an amazing experience for the child and Nancy said she knew what she was meant to do for the rest of her life.

After that Nancy and Glenn started offering weekly rides to disabled children and adults as a means of emotional and physical therapy. The word Alatheia is a Greek word from the New Testament that means "disclosed truth." It specifically comes from Ephesians 4:15 where the Apostle Paul exhorts all to speak the truth (alatheia) in love to one another.

In Nancy's words, "*It is a way of living, and the riding center is how we choose to speak truth.*"

The Alatheia Riding Center provides some 108

individuals the opportunity to spend an hour or more with and on their horses every week. This includes not only physically and mentally disabled children and adults but also combat veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The rides take place on their 12 Norwegian Fjord horses, a small, stout, and ancient breed known for their gentle temperament and sure-footedness. Nancy says these horses are very empathetic and reflect the feelings of individuals they come in contact with. She also explained the weekly rides offer therapeutic benefits for their riders in a physical, emotional, and mental way.

Nancy explains the reason it is a weekly program (as opposed to a one-time experience) is that you need continued exposure to the movements of the horse to get the benefit.

“Physically, when an individual is on a horse, for every minute, a hundred balance accommodations are going on in the body. You are developing balance, and coordination as well as large and small motor skills which is helpful for physical disabilities. Those with learning disabilities benefit from the socialization and peers and executive function of

the brain while those who suffer from trauma are ministered to by the horse in a way you can't explain. The horses are intuitive and in the moment and there is no judgement. People can be who they are with a horse.”

The rides happen in an indoor arena or on a trail overlooking the Wenatchee Valley. This non-profit organization has several employees who work right out of the Grette's home along with a number of volunteers. One group of volunteers is the barn buddies. These are young adults with developmental

disabilities who work at the ranch for two to three hours a couple of times a week.

Nancy says they started this program because they learned that once children were out of special education classes in school and on their own as adults, they didn't have much in place to develop further life skills. The Barn Buddies program allows these individuals, ranging from 21 to 40 years of age, the opportunity to learn how to work on a ranch or in a barn and socialize with other individuals.

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The Alatheia Therapeutic Riding Center has plans to expand from its current location soon so that it can increase the number of individuals it serves.

If you want to support this non-profit organization with donations or time as a volunteer contact them through their website at:

alatheiaridingcenter.com

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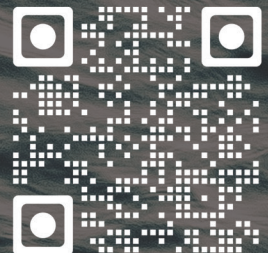
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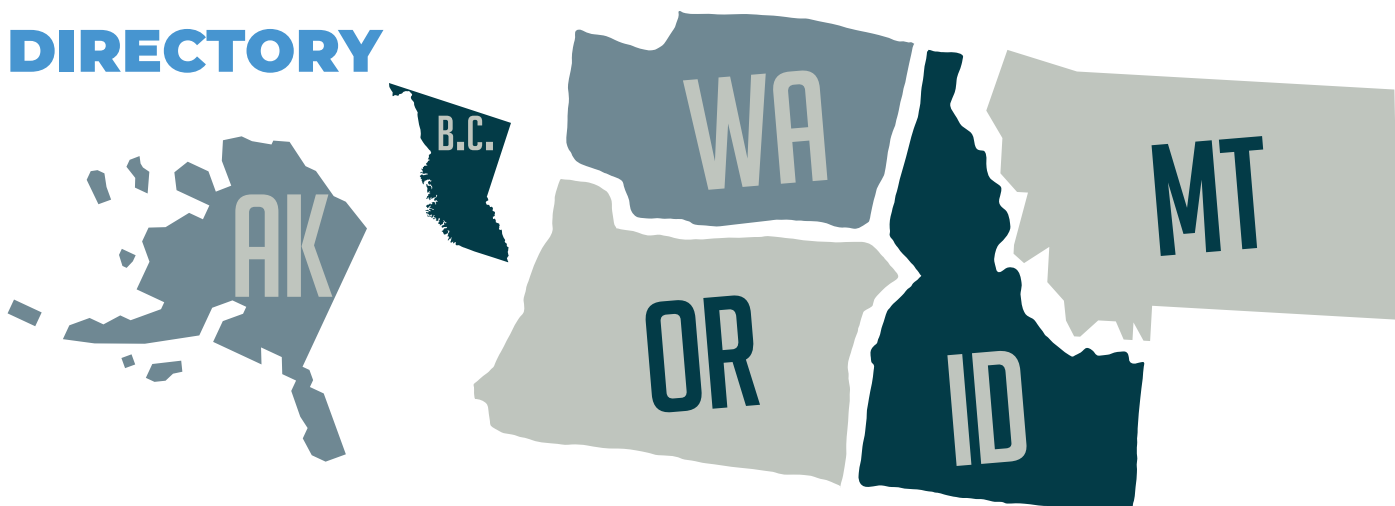
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