



September 2022 Rooster Tails Newsletter

Message from the Board of Directors

Fellow Rooster Tails:

As we sit watching the fires in our state, and particularly in our neighborhood, let's take a moment and reflect on how quickly life can take an unexpected turn. Be sure to protect yourselves from the heat and smoke and be sure check in on your friends and family that are directly affected by the fire. We all will hold those directly affected in our thoughts. Be safe.

Our speaker for this month's breakfast is **Mike Walker**, the club's Vice-President. Mike will talk on smoking fish and would like members to bring their favorite brine recipe. Mike also suggested we print out copies so we can share with attendees. We are assuming there are no state secrets involved! See you on the 16th!

Registration for the Jackpot contest, raffle ticket sales and "for sale" table continue. We can always use more help on the Board of Directors so if interested please let us know. See you on the 16th for the breakfast meeting at the Auburn Elks Lodge. Doors open at 7am, breakfast at 8am, speaker at 9am and the raffle will follow the speaker.

If you would like to submit a report of your recent fishing trips, please send one to info@roostertailsfishingclub.org We would love to add it to our newsletter. Photos are welcome!

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you Friday the 16th!

CLUB UPDATES

- If you would like to participate in the Jackpot contest, sign up at the Friday meeting or contact Ed Pigeon at 707-480-3326 or info@roostertailsfishingclub.org.
 - A For Sale table will be set up in the back for members to sell off unwanted fishing gear.
 - Rooster Tails Board of Directors Meeting - September 12
 - Rooster Tails Monthly Breakfast Meeting - September 16
 - Rooster Tails Board of Directors Meeting - October 17
 - Rooster Tails Monthly Breakfast Meeting - October 21
 - October Breakfast Meeting will feature Mike Peckham of MJP River Adventures and Guide Service speaking on fishing Pyramid Lake
 - November Breakfast Meeting features James Netzel of TightLines Guide Service
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Will Fish Tackle Report by Craig Newton



9/9/2022

Warm to hot temperatures are slowing most bites. The ocean Salmon bite is slowing but the fish are large. Kokanee, trout, and landlock kings are available at many local lakes. Kokanee are working their way to spawning condition. Water temperatures are high so coldwater species are deeper. Many anglers and guides are gearing up for a mid to late September salmon run. Striped bass are on the bite in the lower delta.

BULLARDS BAR: Kokanee are being caught at around 90 feet on the wire. The fish will be moving up the Yuba River arm as they begin their spawning activities. Simple presentations of dodger/hoochie or spinner combos is doing the trick. Darker colors and greens have been better as the sun gets overhead. Limits are the rule for those who find the fish.

COLLINS LAKE: Water temp is 78.9° on the surface but the water is clear. The lake is 43' from full. An extended planting season is being planned, assuming a target surface temperature of 68° is reached.

FOLSOM LAKE: King and Trout action continues with large kings up being boated. Larger presentations like shad and anchovies are getting the big Kings to bite. Kings and rainbows are being caught trolling speedy shiner at the dam and up to the south fork. Dodgers and rolled shad or anchovies are working as well. The kings will begin their journey up the south fork soon, so the mouth of the south fork and east will be the areas to look for late summer kings. Bass action continues to be good.

ENGLEBRIGHT: Trout fishing is good at Englebright over the last month. The water quality is good and fishing for hold over rainbows is a good option. Dodger/flasher worm combos and long line Rapalas are working well early and late in the day for trout. There are still a few Kokanee to be had but they are moving up the river to stage up for the spawn.

HELLHOLE: The kokanee fishing has improved with fish ranging from 12-15". Check the roads before heading up to see how they are affected by the fires.

OROVILLE LAKE: Kings are being caught at 90 to 100 feet using 8" flashers with cut plugs loaded with tuna or bait heads rolling a anchovy in 200 to 350 ft of water at 2-2.3 mph. Check with the lake on ramp conditions before you go.

PYRAMID LAKE: The October 1st opening is on my calendar.

DELTA: Striped Bass fishing continues to be good with trollers getting multiple hook ups on deep diving Yo-Zuri Crystal Minnows. Summer is usually when we see a slow down for Delta stripers but that has not been the case this year. Fishing in the lower delta continues to be good with the fall run coming.

SACRAMENTO METRO: Reports continue of a few fish being caught around the mouth of the American. Many anglers are waiting for the water temp to lower before heading out. Usually that would be around the middle or end of September.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY: The bay continues to produce good numbers of keeper halibut. Live bait is the rule but trollers are getting their share as well. Fishing around Angel Island on an outgoing tide and the south bar on an incoming tide have been very productive lately. The north bar outside the Gate has been producing as well on an outgoing tide.

OCEAN SALMON: Capt. Brian Potter of the Sea Prowler reports fish are getting harder to find but they are bigger when you get them. The fish are south out of the Gate near Pacifica and north and offshore out of Bodega.



Try Downstream Trolling to Nab King Salmon on the Sacramento River - by JD Richey, Fishing Guide

(Article previously from the August 2018 RT Newsletter)

Since the opener a week or so back, things have been about like we expected... not a lot of fish around, but diligent (and/or lucky) anglers have been finding a few chrome fish to 30 pounds. One of the more popular areas to fish is from Discovery Park in Sacramento down to Isleton and my favorite way to approach this sluggish section of river is to troll downstream.

Why it works- In this area, the fish don't usually linger for long (except maybe around the mouth of the American). They're already above the salt-to-fresh acclimation zone and well below the spawning areas, so they're typically blasting through. Not only are the kings in these slack-water spots moving quickly, but they're also fresh from the salt and extremely aggressive biters.

By going downhill, you can crank up the trolling speed — which allows you to cover the water (and find fish) more quickly. I stick to 1 mph, but some of the guides I know do extremely well by throttling up to 2.3 mph and slightly higher. Since we're not trying to coax stale upriver fish to bite, going slowly isn't a priority here. This technique also works because kings down there are still so dialed into their ocean feeding habits that, when a plug or spinner goes whizzing downstream past them, it triggers the "eat me" response. All the salmon I catch this way turn around and chase the lure down — which doesn't exactly fit into the "they bite lures because they're annoying" theory.

For this method, I primarily pull sardine-wrapped **K14 Kwikfish**, which have a hyper, scared-to-death baitfish kind of action to them. Offshore, our kings eat a lot of small anchovies so I like the smaller plugs for that reason as well — it's sort of a match the hatch type of deal. Spinners like single and double bladed **Silvertrons** which work well when trolling quickly. The idea here is to go fast enough to keep the thing spinning but slow enough that you can read individual pulses of the blade on your rod tip.

Rigging Up — There are places I've found where trolling spinners or Kwikfish downriver without weight works just fine. However, I mainly stick to running a 3-way swivel off my main line, with a dropper for my sinker off eye number two and the leader coming off the third. There are no hard and fast rules governing the length of your droppers and leaders because it depends on the type of lures you're running and how much lead you've got on. What I can tell you is the lure should be running 1 to 3 feet up off the bottom with minimal contact with the riverbed. The fish are not line shy, so go heavy. I run 60-pound braid as my main line and then 40-pound Maxima or Berkley Big Game for leader. You never know when that 50- plus pounder is going to come-calling!

The Fun Part! - The bite you get when trolling downstream is quite different from the ones you get when fishing a more conventional method like back-trolling. When a king spins on a dime and chases down your lure, he'll often pick it up and continue swimming with you for a moment. This is known as a "slack line" bite and the only thing that will key you into what's happening is the rod tip will straighten up and throbbing (from the lure's action) will go away. At that point, you've got about a nanosecond to set up on him before the big slug spits out your hardware. For that reason, it's a really good idea to hold onto your rod all day — slack line bites are hard to capitalize on when you've got your stick in a holder. The other type of bite you may encounter looks more like a traditional takedown — the rod tip pumps a few times and then the rod doubles over. If you get this kind of strike, let the fish eat the lure until your rod really loads up and then stick it to him! While you may not see the limit-style action we used to back in past years, you've still got a shot at a nice king or two this month. Get out there and cover some ground by trolling downriver and you'll eventually get bit!

More articles from the past on salmon fishing

(Copied from the August 2019 Newsletter)

What You Should Know About the Salmon Highway

The 400 mile long Sacramento River has been called by some as ‘the big ditch’ that provides a watery-highway connecting the San Francisco Bay and Delta for salmon migrating to their natal spawning grounds. Like a California highway, the Sacramento River-bottom has many seams, undulating surfaces, and of course potholes created by centuries of rushing water.

But unlike us humans that despise all the cracks and crevices in our road-ways, migrating salmon often use the river bottom’s irregularities as aids to navigation. The river bottom topography provides protection from predators, moving colder water is more oxygenated, and they use deep holes for resting. Determining the location of the variations of the river bottom goes a long ways for salmon anglers to find moving schools of salmon and where they are holding. The obvious key to finding these areas requires prospecting time using your boat’s fish finder electronics that can be done before, during, or after the various salmon runs.

The ultimate purpose for salmon to return to their home streams and rivers is to reproduce and ensure the survival of their offspring. Simple enough... But why is returning to the natal site part of the process? Consider the alternative: swimming upstream to just any old river could have some pitfalls. A random river might not have suitable sites for spawning, but a salmon’s birthplace is already a proven success for spawning. It may not have mates of the same species. Or conditions might not favor that type of salmon. For all these reasons, we can see why salmon navigate their way home.

In recent years, studies have shown that in the open ocean environment, salmon use the magnetic field of the Earth to guide their migration. This helps them move from the coastal areas near their spawning grounds to rich feeding areas, and then back again toward the end of their lives.

Salmon use both the intensity and the inclination of Earth’s magnetic field to orient themselves in the ocean. Unlike their navigation by sense of smell, this ability appears to be genetically inherited by a salmon, not learned along its migration.

Young salmon learn the smell of their home stream, possibly even memorizing it at various points along the way, as they migrate toward the ocean. As adults returning to freshwater, when they encounter that familiar smell, it stimulates them to swim upstream. So there may be some ‘testing of the waters’ as salmon migrate home. If they swim up the wrong river, that memorized scent of their birth stream will fade, decreasing their drive to swim upstream. Then they may travel downstream for a bit, until they encounter that home stream smell again. The more they sense the smell of their birthplace, the more they swim upstream. It’s a bit like playing that child’s game of “hot and cold.”

There are still many unknowns in the famous story of the salmon swimming upstream. Evidence exists that salmon from different reaches of the same river will tend to migrate to the same stretch where they originated. But do they return to the very same nest site where they were hatched? How close do they get? At some point, that urge to return home will be up against other factors: selecting a nest site, selecting a mate, using remaining energy stores.

Four distinct runs of Chinook Salmon spawn in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River system, named for the season when the majority of the run enters freshwater as adults. Fall-run Chinook Salmon migrate upstream as adults from July through December and spawn from early October through late December. The timing of runs varies from stream to stream.

Late-fall run Chinook

Salmon migrate into the rivers from mid-October through December and spawn from January through mid-April. The majority of young salmon of these races migrate to the ocean during the first few months following emergence, although some may remain in freshwater and migrate as yearlings.

Fall-run Chinook Salmon are currently the most abundant of the Central Valley races, contributing to large commercial and recreational fisheries in the ocean and popular sport fisheries in the freshwater streams. Fall-run Chinook Salmon are raised at five major Central Valley hatcheries which release more than 32 million smolts each year. Due to concerns over population size and hatchery influence, Central Valley fall and late-fall run Chinook Salmon are a Species of Concern under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Jigging for River Salmon

(Copied From The August 2019 newsletter)

The fall run river salmon season is open on our Central Valley major Rivers with an anticipated large run of quality King Salmon. Most salmon anglers will be trolling or back-bouncing traditional salmon plugs such as the Flat Fish or Kwik Fish with a sardine or herring wrap. Others will be trolling various spinners such as Silvertrons, Blue Fox, and GVF Salmon Spinners. Pulling plugs or running spinners fishing for salmon is to elicit a strike by taunting the fish into attacking a menacing object.

Many anglers are skittish about a fishing technique called jigging because they are concerned that they may snag a nice fish which by law must be released. Jigging is a finesse fishing method of getting a mouth-hookup and requires some basic techniques to avoid foul-hooking the fish. The key to successful jigging is to illicit a strike by causing the jig to mimic a 'fluttering-fall' of an injured bait fish. Spawning salmon do not feed when they enter fresh water, but when jigging is done properly they are still 'programmed' to strike at crippled forage. The salmon angler that masters a proper jig presentation capitalizes on salmon ocean feeding habits with greater results than other fishing methods.

Just to be sure you are legally jigging, it is important for you to check [2020 DF&W regulations](#), but for this article, here are some guidelines:

Common jig-spoons are Gibbs Minnows, Hopkins spoons, Crippled Herring jigs, and even large Kastmasters. Most of these jigs come with treble hooks which should be switched out to a barbed Siwash single 2/0 to 4/0 hook.

Jig colors are a matter of choice, however on cloudy days, deep or muddy water use dark colors. On bright sunny days or clear shallow water, use bright colors including silver or white. Some jiggers will put a slight bend to the body of the jig to increase the 'flutter' as it sinks.

Basic jigging technique involves continually vertically raising the jig and allowing it to slowly settle (flutter) towards the river bottom. Remember, it is important to keep the rise and fall of the jig vertical and not allow it to swing-back on an angle. The boat can be anchored over a river-seam/ridge to wait for traveling fish, or from a 'dead drift' boat on slow moving deep water. Start by touching the tip of the fishing rod to the surface of the water slowing releasing line until the jig settles on the bottom. Retrieve some line with a couple of turns of the reel, than repeatedly raise the rod tip about two feet and then lower it again keeping the jig as close to the bottom as possible. It is important to minimize slack in the line as the jig descends which is necessary to detect a 'tick' or interruption of the fall. Salmon will strike as the jig falls, if the jig 'stalls' on the way down, set the hook and hold-on!

Reminder: Current CDFW regulations are no longer printed. Access current fishing regulations [here](#).