



The Rooster Tails Fishing Club of Northern California, Inc.

Educate ~ Entertain ~ Enhance

Volume 9, Issue 7— July 2019

Rooster Tails Fishing Club of Northern California, Inc.
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Captain Fishin' James Netzel—Expert Kokanee Fishing Guide

- Tactics for Fishing Stampede for Kokanee
- Active Supporter of Purple Heart Anglers
- Flying an American Flag means Veterans on Board

The Rooster Tails Fishing Club has invited **Pro Fishing Guide, Captain Fishin' James Netzel**, owner of Tight Lines Guide Service, for a special presentation on his tactics for fishing Stampede Reservoir Kokanee. **Arrive at 7:00 a.m., Friday, July 19st Rooster Tails breakfast meeting held at the Auburn Elks Lodge, 195 Pine Street at Lincoln Way, Auburn, 95603.** Reservations are not required, but breakfast attendees are encouraged to arrive early for close parking and good seminar seating. Hot free coffee will be waiting for you to share and one-on-one conversations with James and fellow Kokanee anglers.

Unlike the recreational fisherman, state licensed pro fishing guides like James are independent entrepreneurs that have invested thousands of dollars in their guide-boats, fishing electronics, tackle, and have spent virtually hundreds of hours perfecting their fish catching expertise. James is no exception developing winning Kokanee strategies and sending his clients home on hundreds of limits. **This will be an informative presentation you don't want to miss!**

James has been fishing since he was able to hold a fishing rod and a profishing guide

since 2012. He specializes in Kokanee, King Salmon, Stripers, Trout, Land Locked King Salmon, and Mackinaw on waters including **Stampede Reservoir**, Folsom Lake, Sacramento River, Oroville Lake, Donner Lake, Lake Tahoe, and the Delta.

James is proud to hold something that is very important to remember and honor our veterans for the sacrifices they made for us. If you see James' boat on the water flying an American flag, that means he has a veterans on board. Be sure to stop-by and say, "Thank

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Judy Miller, Editor
Thank you for reading our newsletter!

Calendar of Events

July 19
Speaker—James Netzel
Tight Lines Guide Service

July 24
Stampede Reservoir
Adventure Travel
Camping & Fishing

August 16
Speaker—TBA

July 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Kokanee - What You Need to Know

We are hopeful the following information will help you bring home a limit of this special salmonid, Kokanee! The following research contains a combination of scientific facts, first-hand fishing techniques, and expert opinions about Kokanee from various fishing guides, biologists and dedicated Kokanee anglers.

What is a Kokanee Salmon?

Kokanee is a word originating from the Okanagan language used by a group of ethnically and linguistically related indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast. Kokanee salmon were experimentally introduced into northern California in the mid-1940s. The success of these introductions has since blossomed into a growing sport fishery in many coastal and central valley lakes and reservoirs. Lakes of the Pacific Coast, Siberia and Japan were the original fresh water homes of kokanee salmon, which, for one reason or another, became land-locked and unable to migrate to the ocean like their cousins, the sockeye salmon. The Kokanee salmon spends its entire life cycle in fresh water and dies after spawning as does the ocean-going anadromous sockeye (*anadromous means, lives and matures in salt water and spawns in fresh water*). There are many strains of Kokanee, depending on the particular parent sockeye salmon run which contributed to the land-locked variety. Today, hatcheries and egg-taking sites on reservoirs, where Kokanee runs now occur, regularly provide millions of eggs to fish and wildlife agencies, many of which are shipped to many supporting water impoundments to supplement trout fisheries throughout the United States.

Kokanee Life Cycle

Kokanee are also known as silver trout, sockeyes, silversides and most commonly as land-locked salmon. They have a life cycle which spans from two to seven years, depending on the particular strain, with most reaching adulthood in three to four years as do other salmon varieties. They are late summer or fall spawners that choose tributaries, outlet areas or the gravels around the shoreline of a lake or reservoir in which to complete their life cycle. Growth and size in a particular body of water depends upon the abundance of **plankton**, their major food source, and also upon the numbers of other fish species competing for this food. Adult kokanee will range in size from 8" to 20"+ with most in the 9" to 14" class. Larger lakes and reservoirs where concentrations are small produce the largest fish, some to three and four pounds. 'Koks' will feed on insect larva or nymphs, but not in their preference to plankton. At other times, they will also feed on insects, tiny plants, and small fresh water shrimp when available.

So What's Plankton?

Kokanee routinely dine on their favorite species of fresh water forage called *Daphnia* which are small, planktonic crusta-



Quality Stampede Reservoir Kokanee

-ceans commonly called 'water fleas' because of their salutatory swimming style which resembles the movements of the common terra flea. They live in various aquatic environments ranging from acidic swamps to freshwater lakes, ponds, streams and rivers. Kokanee will swim through swarms of plankton and filter-in these small creatures through special combs located on their gills called 'gill rakes' crustaceans commonly called 'water fleas' because of their salutatory swimming style which resembles the movements of the common terra flea. They live in various aquatic environments ranging from acidic swamps to freshwater lakes, ponds, streams and rivers. Kokanee will swim through swarms of plankton and filter-in these small creatures through special combs located on their gills called 'gill rakes'.

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Temperature Sensitivity of Kokanee

Kokanee prefer water temperatures of about 50° or colder, which is why many anglers fail to catch them. In some lakes they will spend the summer concentrated in a very narrow band of 50° water. If an entire lake is warmer than 50°, they will be found close to the bottom or near underwater springs or in old river channels, where the coolest water is available. Downriggers are essential for reaching these deep water and often bottom hugging schools of fish. Kokanee can die if they stay in temperatures over 55 degrees for extended periods of time. When actively feeding, if the food source is in a warmer area, they will follow it for a short time then descend into cooler water. Find the right temperature and you will find the Kokanee. Schools of Koks can be easily spotted on a decent fish-finder since they have larger air bladders than other fish reflecting a sonar signal. Without using your electronics properly to locate where Kokanee are holding, chances are you will be randomly trolling just enjoying the scenery.

Kokanee Senses

Hearing:

Kokanee are attracted to moving objects that they can hear in the water. They are very territorial, so they will come to investigate. They are aggressive and attack the first thing they encounter that they see as the invader in their realm.

Sight:

Kokanee see color and strike at colors they do or do not like depending on the day, hour, or minute. Remember, Kokanee feed on plankton, not big orange or pink things in the water. The goal is to get them to strike out of anger and frustration that this 'thing' is in its territory.

Smell:

Like all salmon, Kokanee have an incredible sense of smell that can work both for and against you. Make sure that you

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Kokanee - What You Need to Know—continued from page 2

have plenty of Nitrile gloves on your boat. If you touch your gas can or motor with a gas or exhaust smell, you are done Kokanee fishing for the day. Always keep in mind when you are touching something, your hair (*what does your shampoo have that will keep Kokanee away?*); your face (*do you wearing a face lotion odor that will Kokanee away?*); bug spray (*the same type of smell problem*); and of course the major anti-Kok-catching odor is the use of sunscreen spray or lotion. Make sure all your rods, reels, bait, lures, and other tackle are covered or up-wind before applying sunscreen, especially anything being sprayed, otherwise you might as well head for the dock.

Bringing Home Your Perfect Table Fare

Although hard-fighters, Kokanee are a very fragile fish. Never keep your catch in a live-well or on a stringer. If you squeeze them too hard you can actually make marks in the meat.



Daphnia plankton

The delicate flesh is also very susceptible to heat and will deteriorate without being quickly cooled. However, Koks are one of the best eating fish around if you take care of them. The best way to preserve the quality of this cold water fish is to create an ice-bath when you first get to the lake. Use 2liter plastic bottles filled with frozen salt water allowing a little gap of an inch or two at the top of each bottle for expansion. Salt water will hold colder temperatures longer. Place 4 or 5 of the frozen saltwater bottles in your cooler and add some lake water as soon as you get to the lake to allow it to get cold. Then, when you get your catch in the boat and rods back in the water, cut the gills to bleed the Kokanee, carefully slide them into the cold water to preserve the wonderful delicate flesh for that gourmet dinner.



Kokanee gill rake

Shoepeg Corn – What You Need to Know

By Gary S. Gordon, Fish With Gary™ Tackle Co.

All fish have nares, which are scent detecting tubes on the snoot (nose) of the fish. A fish's ability to detect scent is flat out amazing, often measured in the parts per million. And salmonids are probably near the best in scent detection. For thousands of years, fishermen have used bait on hooks to persuade fish to bite. Some awesome kokanee fisherman or fisherwoman discovered a long time ago that kokanee will bite a lure baited with white shoepeg corn. And that discovery has been passed down many years to the present time. What has not been passed down is why white shoepeg corn works so well. (*The name "shoepeg corn" is derived from a shoemaking-term used during the 19th century. Shoepeg corn kernels resemble the wooden pegs used to attach soles to the upper part of shoes*).

It turns out that white shoepeg corn has an amino acid that is actually a bite stimulant for kokanee, something that apparently yellow corn does not have. White shoepeg corn also manages to stay on the hook fairly well at kokanee trolling speeds. My own research has revealed another interesting



characteristic of white shoepeg corn: it stays white all the way down the water column without any fade. As such, it presents a clearly defined target for the fish to attack. (*For doubters, take a kernel of white shoepeg corn into a dark closet and shine a black light on it*). Over the years it has become popular to add additional scent to the corn by brining it first. Such scents have included anise, garlic, vanilla, and a host of others. Savvy kokanee fishermen would have more than one type of scented corn to entice the kokanee; in case the first one didn't seem to work, they would have a backup. I know that making up different scent combinations is part of the wonderful pre-fishing ritual. Some even dye the corn different colors. More ritual.

In the past I endorsed using two kernels of corn on each of the tandem hooks in the lure. I have changed my philosophy a bit over the years. I found out that putting corn only on the leading hook helped prevent that dreaded "short" bite. A "short" bite is where the fish targets the trailing hook, hits

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Shoeppeg Corn—continued from page 3

it and does not get hooked. The same concept is where the fish will take a bite out of a worm that extends beyond the hook. Either way, the fish wins, and you get that wonderful frustration feeling. Placing the corn on the leading hook takes advantage of a fish's biology. Since a fish cannot see directly in front of its snout a distance of about two inches, placing the target scent corn on the leading hook will make the trailing hook invisible to the fish. The result is a higher percentage of hook-ups, and deeper penetration of the hooks. I have also studied the hydrodynamics of putting two kernels of corn on the leading and trailing hooks. At kokanee trolling speeds, using two kernels on each hook significantly dampens the action of the lure. This poses an issue. I want maximum action on my lure, and I also want to maximize the scent on my lure. Can I have both action and scent without compromising the action of the lure? And I also want to prevent the "short" bite.

The best solution finally emerges as being obvious all along. Pro-Cure has been making scents for years, and mostly we have used them in making our white shoeppeg corn brines. And they worked. But now Pro-Cure has created their scents with an available very sticky gel. In my opinion these scents are more powerful bite stimulants than anything that corn can produce by itself. I now use only a single kernel of undyed, and otherwise unscented, white corn on the leading hook only, and place some Pro-Cure gel on the beads of my beaded spinners. This gives maximum scent to my lure without interfering with its action. If I am using a squid or a hoochie, I place some of the gel inside the squid or hoochie body, again using but a single piece of white shoeppeg corn on the leading hook. I believe my success rate has increased using this setup. At the end of the day, do your best to rinse off the gel on your lures. Using generous amounts of hot water will help. I have now substituted my pre-fishing "brine the corn ritual" for a post-fishing "clean the lures ritual." I have found the gel scents of anise, kokanee special, garlic and especially bloody tuna to be excellent.

James Netzel—continued from page 1

you for your service," to the veterans he is providing fishing guide service. James is an active supporter of Purple Heart Anglers, a non-profit organization founded in 2009 to help aid in the healing of disabled veterans through fishing and hunting trips. **James provides a \$50 discount to any military veteran for a guided fishing trip.** Find out more about Captain Fishin' James by visiting www.fishtightlines.com.

The Rooster Tails Fishing Club's goal is to educate, entertain, and enhance the fishing experience of men and women interested in fish related subjects. Unlike other fishing organizations that concentrate on specific species such as bass or fly fishing for trout, the Rooster Tails pro-

Jackpot Fishing Contest

JACKPOT CONTEST					
2019	LENGTH	WEIGHT	WATER	DATE	ANGLER
Kokanee	14"		BULLARDS BAR	4-15	R. CORRAO
Landlocked Salmon	23 1/4"		FOLSOM	4-18	R. CORRAO
River or Ocean King Salmon	38"	28 lbs	SACTO RIVER	10-18	M. Mc KENDREE
Striped Bass	21"	3.14 lbs	DELTA	4-26	R. CORRAO
Rainbow Trout	20 3/8"		COMANCHE	4-3	R. NORTHAM
Brown Trout	28.15"	8.32 lbs	SHATA LAKE	5-4	BEV MIERKEY
Steelhead	30"		AMERICAN RIVER	1-12	J. LAMPKIN
Lake Trout (Mackinaw)	22"		DONNER LAKE	8-22	R. NORTHAM
Large Mouth Bass	23"	46.8 lbs	PRIVATE POND	8-28	RIK COX
Catfish					
Shad					
Crappie	14"		CAMP FAR WEST	5-21	SHAWN COLLAN
Halibut	32"	14.8 lbs	S.F. BAY	5-15	R. CORRAO

2019 names in Red — 2018 names in Black

KOKANEE—Ray Corrao, 14", Bullards Bar, 4/15/19
 LANDLOCKED SALMON, - Ray Corrao, 23 1/4", Folsom Lake, 4/18/19
 STRIPED BASS—Ray Corrao, 21", 3.14 lbs, Delta, 4/26/19
 RAINBOW TROUT—Richard Northam, 20 3/8", Camanche Lake, 4/3/19
 BROWN TROUT, Bev Mierkey, 28.15", 8.32 lbs, Shasta Lake, 5/4/19
 STEELHEAD, Jerry Lampkin, 30", American River, 1/12/19
 HALIBET, Ray Corrao, 32", 14.8 lbs., S.F. Bay, 5/15/19

vide expert advice from breakfast guest speakers on a variety of fish and fishing techniques. The Club has found one of the best resources for expert advice is from various full-time pro fishing guides that fish for a living. Members, non-member guests, and the general public that have attended the popular Rooster Tails Fishing Club's monthly third Friday breakfast meetings have benefited greatly by hearing professional fishing advice on tackle rigging, techniques, and strategies for catching fish.



James Netzel's boat, Tight Lines