

The Guide's Forecast - volume 6 issue number 8

## **Northwest Oregon's most complete and accurate fishing forecast**

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 20<sup>th</sup> – August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

**Fisheries Update:** The Buoy 10 fishery is underway! Before it gets red hot and rolling, take advantage of a professional in the field and get a copy of technical report #4- ***Columbia River Estuary Salmon Fishing for the Bank and Boat Angler*** for the upcoming Buoy 10 season! This report and several more are available from our secured web page at:  
<http://www.theguidesforecast.com/techrpt.shtml>.

The Buoy 10 fishery will be intense this week. Rightly so as it will be the best fishing of the season so far. Chinook may dominate the catch this week simply because they are forecasted back in greater numbers. The limit in the river remains just 1 chinook/person over 24 inches in length. The Tule strain of Chinook are usually the first to show but there will be plenty of upriver brights to be had in the catches as well.

Ocean fishing out of Astoria remains good but some days, you end up going through a whole lot of bait to get your fish. There are some good areas to target Chinook in the ocean but most anglers gravitate to the south for coho.

Ocean crabbing is closed.

Water temperatures are too warm for steelheading success in the mainstem (lower) Columbia but a few fish are beginning to get caught in the hardware fisheries of the mouths of the Cowlitz and Kalama Rivers.

With the Willamette running low and warm, sturgeon closed to retention and only smallmouth fishermen finding any action, there's not much going on in the lower river. Clackamas and Sandy steelheaders are finding entertainment elsewhere. North Santiam fishermen continue to be frustrated by uncooperative steelhead.

The entire Columbia River is open the catch and release sturgeon fishing only.

North coast salmon opportunities include ocean salmon out of Pacific City and Garibaldi and Nehalem Bay. It's mostly a coho show in the ocean but the fish are putting on some real weight. Chinook are available throughout the entire lower Nehalem system up to Roy Creek.

Tuna fishing has been rewarding for larger albacore 40 miles or more offshore out of Depoe and Yaquina Bays. Bottom fishermen must release all cabezon as of Wednesday, August 18th.

Steelhead fishing has stalled at the Umpqua but smallmouth bass are being caught by the score. Winchester Bay offers fine chinook fishing in the lower bay and offshore.

Kokanee fishing is good at Green Peter, fair at Odell. The only trout stocking taking place this week is at Badger Lake and Spring Creek.

**Soapbox Update:** "We're one fish away from a zero bag limit" is the motivation behind Fishermen's

Rally, and demonstration to governing officials that "sport fishing means business." A combined effort of Northwest Sport fishing Industry Association, Northwest Steelheaders, Pacific Coast Federations of Fishermen's Associations and Salmon For All hopes to organize 250 vehicles pulling boats from Fishermen's Marine at Delta Park to Holiday Park in Portland at 8 A.M. on Wednesday, September 8th. Call 503-631-8859 or 503-325-3831 for information or to get involved. Additional information may be found here: \*<http://www.ifish.net/Sportfishingrally.pdf>

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Fishing on the Columbia is about to break loose! Success has dramatically improved in the river this week with numerous Chinook and a smattering of coho beginning to show in the river. Earlier in the week, some of the best bites were taking place at the Buoy 10 line - particularly in the Washington side of the Buoy. Most guides have been following the incoming tide back to the bridge with good action all the way up. On 8/17, there was a good bite around the church on the Washington side of Desdemona Sands. The water from 22 to 26 feet was producing the best and both spinners and herring were producing although most of the guides have already started using spinners with great success. Some of the popular colors include white front/chartreuse & green tip and the standard red/white with brass or white back. The bridge bite has also been consistent on the Washington side of the river. Morning outgoing tides have not been friendly to anglers as is usually the case when the warm temperatures of the Columbia have the most influence on lower river fish. When cooler ocean water penetrates the river, fish are more apt to bite. The beginning of the outgoing tide is also productive as there is still some ocean influenced temperatures near the rivers mouth. The Oregon side has been producing some catches but the best fishing has been taking place on the Washington side.

Ocean fishing has been really fun the last few days. Friendly ocean conditions and staging salmon have provided ample action for most anglers. Both directions out of the river mouth have been producing results with mainly Chinook coming from the north and mainly coho coming from the south. On 8/16, we fished about 4 miles south of the south jetty in 70 to 100 feet of water going through about 100 baits! The short Chinook and wild coho were outright plaguing us and the short strikers were driving this guide to frustration! Thankfully, my guide buddies supplied me with extra bait so I could finish up my limit by 1:30. Some guides did take early limits of salmon from the ocean that day but I guess I just landed on all the smaller fish. Even further south (approx. 7 to 8 miles south of the south jetty) the sardine seiners were in the middle of a ball of bait and trollers working this water came up with some impressive numbers of salmon. Spoons don't seem to be working as well in the ocean as they have been but not many people are trying them.

On 8/17, we fished the ocean to the north as we heard about a good Chinook bite just north of the north jetty. Anglers need to exercise caution when crossing this area of the bar as the bulk of the river current swings to the north side of the river entrance here often times causing some treacherous conditions. We fished the shallower 22 to 40 foot water right along the Long Beach Peninsula and were having consistent success with Chinook. We took 5 ocean Chinook in no time but some other guide boats finished up with their 2 Chinook/boat limit by about noon. Although the bite was not hot for anyone, almost all of the fish were Chinook with very few coho and undersized Chinook. Remember that the ocean limit switched to 2 Chinook/person with the new minimum size limit of 24 inches. There was a good bite at Buoy 2 on 8/16 but there was also a good rip there that day. The bite on 8/17 was much slower at Buoy 2 and the CR Buoy and there were many jellyfish present as with most water south of the mouth. The jellyfish were non-existent north of the river mouth. Also, most of the Chinook were being taken closer to the surface than down deep. Numerous fish came at 10 to 18 strips of line on herring.

River crabbing has slowed down due to the increase in pressure. Keepers are getting culled daily from the lower river after a long reprieve in July.

Sturgeon effort is next to nil but some lucky salmon anglers are putting in some time in the lower river pursuing them. They are only having sporadic results using herring for bait.

Fishermen launching on the lower Columbia may get late and specific weather, water, bad conditions and fishing reports on their car radio as AM 1610 has been revived. The transmitter ceased operation when salmon fishing restrictions closed the Buoy 10 fishery in the mid-1990s. This low-wattage radio station has a range of four to five miles from the Hammond Boat Basin or approximately from Buoy 10 to the Astoria-Megler Bridge.

**The Guide's Forecast** – For updated buoy reports, Keep your eye on the buoy report at: [http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station\\_page.phtml?station=46029](http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_page.phtml?station=46029). When the prevailing swell is coming from the west on a strong outgoing tide, the bar is going to be rough. A weaker tide series will be on us next week but the timing of the runs is such that the fishing should be wide open despite the tide series. There are good numbers of Chinook and some coho present in the river right now but both species will increase significantly in numbers this week in the Astoria area. Although coho numbers are forecasted to be down, limits of salmon (1 chinook/1 coho or 2 coho) in the river will be a real possibility this week. When high slack happens at sunrise- which happens on Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup>, anglers will have their first real opportunity for some great fishing. Cooler water temperatures will allow for some productive fishing on the first half of outgoing tide. It will be critical for anglers to be well prepared as time will be of the essence during this short window of opportunity. Both sides of the river should produce well for Chinook and coho and I recommend starting as high as the bridge at high slack and working your way downstream as the tide nears low slack. Be sure to position yourself at or near Buoy 10 for the low slack Chinook bite- it will be a good place to be all week.

Ocean anglers will also have friendly bar crossings if the weather cooperates. Strong minus tides are the main factor besides a westerly swell for rough bar conditions. If you wish to target Chinook, turn right out of the Columbia River mouth and troll the shallow water along the Long Beach Peninsula. Don't plan on white hot fishing but a 2 Chinook limit will be possible as long as the quota remains. If you are looking for more action and a better chance at coho, go to Buoy 2 to check the availability of salmon and either finish up your limit there or head south 4 to 7 miles into 70 to 180 foot of water for coho and smaller Chinook. Most of the fish have been coming at 10 to 25 strips. Keep in mind the general rule that the later in the day you fish, the deeper you should be targeting salmon. Always keep one or two baits high in the column however going somewhere between 6 to 12 strips.

Ocean crabbing is closed and river crabbing has slowed but you can still expect between 2 and 4 keepers per pot between Buoys 20 and 22 in 25 to 35 feet of water.

Catch and release sturgeon fishing is likely fair but no one is pursuing these fish.

Salmon and steelhead fishing upstream is relatively slow but there are some upriver Chinook and Tules coming from the mouths of the Cowlitz and Kalama Rivers. Wobblers and spinners are taking most of the fish.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – In the valley, anglers are finding

smallmouth action on the upper Willamette but that's about it. Water temperature at the Falls is over 70 degrees with the flow falling below 6,900 cfs. The last summer steelhead of the year was counted at the end of July at which time the total was 32,315. Despite a flurry of activity August 8th through 10th during which time 64 springers were counted, the year-to-date totals as of the latter date were 95,866. This is far short of the 2004 forecast of 109,000.

Steelheaders enjoying solitude on the North Santiam remain frustrated by unwilling quarry. Trout fishing has improved, however, particularly for fly fishers on the river above Detroit Reservoir.

Trout fishing is fair in the McKenzie as water temps top 60 degrees. Caddis, stonefly imitations and Pale Morning Duns have been effective. Despite the good numbers of steelhead downstream from Leaburg, the catch has been spotty.

**The Guide's Forecast** – No dramatic change is expected in the upcoming week. Rain showers may encourage summer steelhead on the North Santiam. Anglers trying should use tiny baits and lures.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – No report was forthcoming from the Sandy River this week, but that's likely due to a lack of interest in fishing which is only fair at best.

Clackamas anglers have been hard-pressed to earn a strike this week in the low, clear, warm water at this location.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Unless the showers forecast for the weekend develop into a water temperature and level altering event, there's not much reason for optimism for the Sandy and Clack in the upcoming week. Improvement will be dramatic in Fall but there are better locations in the short term.

**North Coast District Fishing Report** – Ocean fishing out of Garibaldi is holding up surprisingly well. Big coho (both hatchery and wild) are showing in North Coast creeks. Fish to 18 pounds have been reported lately and anglers are getting them from the Whistler Buoy right out of the mouth and north in front of Rockaway Beach. Avid angler **Pat Vining** reported good results going out 17 or 18 strips using frozen herring. He also noted the faster trolls seem to result in a better strike to hook ratio. **Don Reynolds**, another avid Garibaldi angler reported great results for large fish out of Garibaldi. Don states, "Took my son out today after fighting the fog yesterday. Hit coho at 200-220 straight west of Twin Rocks. Lots of natives but kept 4, 14, 11, 11, 9 and let go numerous natives (13) not to much problem with shakers out there, but we were using blue label and dropping 18 strips. Nice day on a flat ocean, what more could you ask for?" Almost 60% of the quota has been accounted for in this section of the ocean and catch statistics appear as if the season will go on for several more weeks.

Nehalem River Chinook fishing has also been good with the stronger tides and run timing bringing in good numbers of fish through tidewater. Herring trollers at the jaws and Wheeler, spinner trollers in Nehalem and bobber anglers upstream to Roy Creek have been taking fish in fair numbers this week. Of course the lower one fishes, the fresher the Chinook will be.

Offshore bottom fishermen should be aware that as of Wednesday, August 18th, all cabezon must be released. Over 15 metric tons have been taken this year compared to just over 10

metric tons in 2003. Although most bottom fish (such as canaries) will not survive after being brought to the surface from the depths of the ocean, the cabezon has no swim bladder. As a consequence, survival rate of released cabbies is quite good.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Weaker tides will make bar crossings more favorable this week for ocean going salmon anglers. Hatchery coho are still making a fair showing in the southern ports but Chinook are starting to make a stronger showing in most Oregon ports. Bigger baits and deeper trolling will effectively keep you fishing on Chinook. Frozen baits are the only choice for Garibaldi and they are working well for coho and Chinook.

Bay salmon fishing in Tillamook is not quite underway but some fish are likely making their way into the lower tidewater sections of the major tributaries in preparation for fall rains. They can fall to bobber tossers and spinner trollers may also take a few fish under very sparse conditions.

The Nehalem will still be a good bet this week despite the weaker tide series. Anglers are encouraged to fish closer to the ocean for best success. Incoming and outgoing tide will produce nicely for herring trollers working the bottom of the bay for Nehalem Chinook at the jaws.

Ocean crabbing is closed here as well and bay crabbing is not very productive for the masses participating.

Rivers are too low for successful steelheading but some anglers still persist under these conditions. Small baits and light leaders are not just a consideration, they are a must!

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Anglers coast-wide are advised to brush up on fish identification as coho achieve respectable size and must have a healed adipose fin clip to be kept. Chinook do not have to be fin-clipped to be retained. Having plenty of bait on hand for plug-cutting is a good idea anywhere because trollers may expect to go through dozens between culling wild coho and fish which hit but don't 'stick.'

Several chinook weighing 40 pounds or more have been taken from the Siletz River this year, with the largest on August 14th when Ron Oliveria brought a 46-pounder to the scales Coyote Rock for a photo opportunity. Oliveria also took a 20-pounder the same day. Over 50 chinook have been weighed and photographed thus far in the month of August, and this is just at the Coyote Rock location.

With excellent chinook fishing available, there's not a lot of attention on other abundant species available on the Siletz River, but for those interested, summer steelhead fishing is good at first light upriver while some fine angling for sea run cutthroat trout is available in upper tidewater.

Summer steelhead fishermen on the North Umpqua are finding few fish while smallmouth anglers are enjoying some fabulous days with many smallies measuring greater than 18 inches. Top water lures are tempting bass in the mornings while soft plastics take scores of fish throughout the day. Chinook are available only in the bay with best fishing at the jaws as salmon are yet to enter the river in significant number. Offshore trolling has been quite rewarding.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Fishing remains slow for plug-pullers at the mouth of the Deschutes as steelhead remain stalled by warm water on the Columbia River. Despite year-to-date counts over 165,000 summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam, the Dalles Dam has seen only 41,000 of 'em. steelhead fishing up to Maupin is slow. Even the trout fishing has fallen off over the last week of hot weather.

**Northwest Bass & Panfish** - The water level at Henry Hagg Lake is dropping daily. Many bass fishermen prefer it very low and at this rate, they'll get their wish. The level is allowed to drop through Fall in anticipation of winter rains, which phrase sounds good in the Dog Days of summer, doesn't it?

**Northwest Trout** - Kokanee are cooperative at Green Peter where many anglers have enjoyed taking limits on the troll. Odell is reported as fair with few limits and most kokes coming from 50 to 60 feet of water.

**Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)** writes, "Fished Green Peter for kokanee last week Friday. Fishing was excellent early in the morning. This time of the year using downriggers is the key as the kokanee we caught were down between 45 and 50 feet. The two locations that worked for us. The first one is straight across the lake from the boat ramp on the east side. There is a ridge that extends out here and I usually find kokanee on either on the north or south side of this ridge in 100 to 150 feet of water. The second spot that paid off once the wind came up was a mile up in the Quartzville Arm on the road side. There is a covert that dumps into lake here and this always seems to hold kokanee. It is only a 100 feet here so kept on eye on your depth finder so you do not lose a downrigger ball. Also do not forget to put white corn on your lure or spinner."

The only trout stocking taking place this week is at Badger Lake and Spring Creek, both in the Deschutes watershed.

## Reader Email

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## Random Links

Saved by the bell, er, gavel. Fed's last-minute attempt to prevent fish-saving spill on Columbia trounced by court: [\\*http://www.cbbulletin.com/Free/21844.aspx](http://www.cbbulletin.com/Free/21844.aspx)

Become a Bass Pro in five easy steps:

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## Weekly Quote -

"When tensions and stress threaten to bring on nervous collapse, it's time to go fishing." - Dr. Jerome L. Sieger & Dr. Armin Thies

**GOOD LUCK!**