

The Guide's Forecast - volume 6 issue number 46

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **May 20<sup>th</sup> – May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

**Fisheries Update:** Spring Chinook are on their way so make sure that you have the tools you need to put more fish in the creel! Our technical report #1- Willamette River Spring Chinook Tactics and Locations for the Boat Angler is a real hit and a real help! These reports and several more are available at: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/techrpt.shtml>.

Sturgeon fishing in the gorge remains a "best-bet" for Columbia River anglers. Quality sized keepers and oversized fish are again showing in good numbers this week. Shad season remains closed until Sunday when anglers can go get some fresh bait for the oversized fish or just have a great day with the best crab bait that swims!

The estuary opener produced some great results but has since slowed dramatically. Guides are finding good success but some days, they have to work long hours for them. Judging from their size, they have been eating well. Shrimp remains a top bait.

The ocean would be another great bet this weekend for bottomfish, halibut and crab except the ocean forecast is calling for a lot of chumming and one might question the safety of your vessel in such conditions. I recommend staying off the ocean through the weekend at least!

Steelhead season on the mainstem Columbia also opens on Sunday from Rocky Point in the estuary to the I-5 Bridge so beach plunkers can get after them. Passage at Bonneville Dam however indicates a slow start to success for these folks. Shad fishing will also open on that date, allowing anglers to harvest a portion of these prolific fish for crab and sturgeon bait.

The Deschutes River closed to chinook fishing on May 15th due to the poor springer numbers. It had just opened on April 15th.

Spring chinook fishing is slow on the lower Willamette. The run estimate was adjusted Wednesday, May 18th, from the original 117,000 to a more realistic 80,000 to 90,000.

The Clackamas is high and muddy, Fishing is slow on the Sandy River.

High water has anglers struggling to find and entice fish on the Santiams, but a few spring chinook and summer steelhead are being taken by anglers with the right stuff.

North coast salmon fishing was tough this week but a nice tide series starting over the weekend may change things dramatically. Water levels on the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers may also draw in fishable numbers of springers by the weekend. A rare occurrence for this time of year.

Sturgeon fishing in Tillamook Bay has slowed and crabbing has become a bit more sporadic as well. Bottom fishing out of Garibaldi was great last week but again, with the ocean forecast, I advise against it.

Big surf will also hamper perch anglers on north coast beaches.

Big sturgeon are being landed on the lower Umpqua as anglers release oversized in search of one **short** enough to keep. The Umpqua and Rogue Rivers are both suffering from the results of rain storms on the Southern Oregon coast which has stalled the fishing upstream.

Young anglers of excellence featured this week include McMinnville High School sophomore Blake

Paulsen, 16, who won his age division (15-18) in the Oregon B.A.S.S. Jr. Bassmaster State Championship held Saturday, May 7th at Cottage Grove Lake and Nick Rubeo, 12, of Hillsboro who landed an 8.11-pound smallmouth at Hagg Lake on Monday, May 9th, virtually securing himself the new Oregon State record.

Once confirmed, the smallie, above, will be the fifth consecutive Oregon State record to come from Hagg Lake, Ray Currie, 69, who caught **two** of those five record smallmouth bass, believes there may be more to come from those waters.

Trout have been stocked this week in Big Creek Reservoir, Big Creek Reservoir, Cape Meares Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Hebo Lake, Loren's Pond, Lost Lake (Clatsop County), Molalla Creek Reservoir, South Lake, Thissell Pond, Town Lake, Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, Huddleston Pond, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Blue River, Blue River Reservoir Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Foster Reservoir, Hills Creek, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, upper McKenzie River, Mid Fork Willamette, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, Santiam River North Fork, and Trail Bridge Reservoir.

The Guide's Forecast's Washington edition is coming to fruition as requested by our numerous readers and **pro guide Kevin Newell (360-430-2521)** is doing a bang-up job of making it happen. Enjoy the fruits of his labor and for our free version subscribers, here is a re-cap of the Washington report:

#### **Mid Columbia River Fishing Report – Pro Guide Jeff Knotts (509) 366-4052**

The Umatilla closes Friday at midnight for salmon. Just like the many other fisheries, it never really got cooking. Paterson bass fishing is just about as good as it gets.

#### **Kalama River Fishing Report -**

We fly fished the Kalama on Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> and the water looked good but it was flowing a little high. We didn't hook up with anything; partly do to our mid afternoon start. Some springers were caught that day by bait anglers but not the numbers we had been seeing. There are still winter steelhead available and the summer steelhead are starting to show up.

#### **Snake River Fishing Report – Pro Guide Pat Long (509) 751-0410**

According to Pat, "The Snake River region is still in a high water state with some tough conditions. We are doing quite well on sturgeon on the upper Snake and bass fishing has also been fair to good in the sheltered locations (bays and back channels protected from the main flow)."

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – As I mentioned last week, I am not one to jump down the throat of our beloved state fish agency but this prolonged closure of the mainstem shad fishery is absolute bull! The closure will finally be lifted on Sunday. Here is the official press release:

CLACKAMAS – Oregon and Washington fishery managers decided Tuesday to reopen Columbia River to shad and hatchery steelhead angling effective 12:01 a.m., Sunday, May 22, because risks to imperiled wild chinook stocks are extremely low.

Daily catch limits and other regulations remain unchanged from those listed in the 2005 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations. The mainstem Columbia River from Buoy 10 to McNary Dam remains closed to the harvest of spring chinook.

Fishery managers last week postponed the season openings because of the potential risk to spring chinook listed under the federal Endangered Species Act from anglers who hook a chinook when targeting other species. The shad fishery in the mainstem Columbia River was slated to re-open this week

from the mouth at Buoy 10 upstream to Bonneville Dam under rules listed in the 2005 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations. The steelhead fishery between the Rocky Point-Tongue Point line and the Interstate 5 Bridge also was slated to open this week.

During a Columbia River Compact teleconference Tuesday morning, Oregon and Washington fish biologists predicted the number of spring chinook entering the Columbia River destined for locations above Bonneville Dam to be 82,400, which is up slightly from last week's estimate of 78,800. The pre-season forecast was for 254,100 spring chinook to enter the Columbia.

Fish managers set Columbia River fishing seasons based on the number of fish expected to return from the ocean and the allowable impact to wild salmon and steelhead stocks listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. "Impacts" include direct and unintended mortalities associated with handling and releasing wild fish. The allowed non-Indian impacts for ESA-listed Snake River spring/summer chinook and Upper Columbia River spring chinook are 2 percent for runs greater than 82,000, but drops to 1.5 percent for runs less than 82,000.

Additional information and current regulations on open fisheries can be found in the 2005 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations and the ODFW Web page at [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/ODFWhtml/Regulations/2005\\_reg\\_changeshtm](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/ODFWhtml/Regulations/2005_reg_changeshtm). Additional information about the Columbia River spring chinook season is found on ODFW's Web page at [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/OSCRP/CRM/action\\_notes.html](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/OSCRP/CRM/action_notes.html).

So, for the between the lines interpretation, the Oregon and Washington Departments are saying that the use of small spoons such as Dick Nites may have a serious impact on listed Snake River wild Chinook passing through the gorge right now. We all know this not to be true and therefore, it is unreasonable to ask sport anglers to remain off the fishing grounds until both a sport and commercial shad season is safe to conduct. What really burns us sport anglers is the fact that the commercial fleet has already surpassed their impacts to the listed fish and have eaten into the sport allocation- again! So, the results are the commercial fleet will fish their 5 inch mesh nets for shad and "incidentally" take a few Chinook. What's wrong with this picture? Hopefully, this is something we can change in the future! As our readers can see in the press release, steelhead season will open Sunday as well allowing anglers to take advantage of the few that are in the system. Numbers should increase into July but don't expect great results anytime soon.

Sturgeon fishing on the Columbia remains the hot ticket item. Easy limits are still coming from fishing guides mostly from the gorge area. **Pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)** reported a great day of oversize fishing on 5/18. He had out avid angler John Weed and they had a good time landing 5 oversize fish using fresh shad for bait. Since the Columbia is closed for shad, all of these fresh baits are coming from the Willamette River. Keeper fishing in the gorge is great also with some guides reporting the release of several keepers, shakers and a few oversized fish during the retention days (Thursday-Saturday). Effort remains really light during catch and release days in the gorge. Smelt is the best bait but in short supply. Eel is now illegal to use as well as Columbia River caught shad. Also the sanctuary is closed from Beacon Rock to Bonneville Dam- does anyone else see a dangerous trend forming? Dan suggests sticking to the faster flows for the best action for both oversize and keeper fish.

Although the estuary fishery kicked off with a bang, fishing has since slowed and results do vary. On the opener most guides reported excellent action for keepers and shaker fish. Best success is coming from the Tongue Point area for anglers using sand shrimp. The fish remain in the shallower areas and waters upstream of Tongue Point are producing the best. Water will be a bit trickier to negotiate this week as extreme minus tides will expose sandbars not usually present during low tides. Be careful! Marker 3 has been one of the most productive areas and the edges of shipping channel upstream of Tongue Point is also an option. The fishing below the Astoria Bridge is reported as very slow. Guides report that it is very

difficult to keep a bait fishing with all the sculpin and crabs working it over. Bait has been hard to find at times and the price of sand shrimp has gone up with rising fuel costs. Anchovies and shrimp were both working well but shrimp tends to produce better results in the shallows while anchovies are a better option in the deeper water.

Halibut fishing remained great out of Astoria but ocean conditions have changed for the worse and safe fishing may be several days away. Bottom fishing remains good along the south jetty but not as hot as it was a few weeks ago. Again, be very wary of the big ocean forecasted through the weekend. It will make it hard to effectively fish against the jetty.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Sturgeon fishing will likely remain the best in the Columbia River gorge. It is surprising to most how well this fishery has heated up in recent weeks for keeper sized fish. The oversize action should pick up when the shad fishery opens up on Sunday as fresh bait will be readily at hand. Stick to the swift water for best action. As good as the keeper fishing has been in the gorge, it is bound to slow down at some point. The fish may get some indication of a better food source in the estuary as schools of baitfish are beginning to enter the lower river.

Estuary fishing will only get better but remains spotty at this time. Stick to the water above Tongue Point and be prepared to move around a bunch as fish are well spread out. Keep in mind that the fishing is always most productive on the first part of outgoing and the first part of incoming- it's just a matter if you anchored in the right place! It's too early to rely on smelt as a productive bait. Wait until the water warms and the fish move deeper. That will be several weeks from now.

Keep your offshore boat at home this week as ocean conditions are not favorable for a fun trip to the salt! Crabbing in the lower Columbia should be fair although not many commercial sized keepers will be available since the grounds have been picked over pretty heavily throughout the winter months!

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – About 20,500 springers have crossed at Willamette Falls as of May 16th, the latest data available. Daily numbers are once again on the upswing. On that date in 2004, the count was 67,000. Water temperature is 56 degrees with the visibility just over three feet. The big push of springers is way overdue, causing speculation as to whether or not it'll really happen this year as it has in years past. The water temp and visibility is somewhat lower in Multnomah Channel. Fishing is spotty to slow everywhere on the lower river.

The North Santiam River which is normally turning on at this time of year has instead slowed with roiled, cool water from recent rains. It remains to be seen if the fishing will turn on when the water drops and clears.

On the South Santiam, some anglers have done well, particularly in the morning hours on bobber and eggs. The crowds are typical at the dam with bobber and eggs the rig of choice for spring chinook.

**Pro Guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** wrote on 05/16 with a little brighter news, "The Santiam is picking up. The Steelhead counts remain a little behind, but look for that to change soon. Currently an average day is three to five chances a day, with some springers in the mix. It can be good, but bites seem sporadic at this time. When you find them, we pick them off and then search until we find some again. The Santiam summers love jigs. Black with a red head, or the old standard pink and white or pink and peach are good. Also, both the springers and steelhead respond to shrimp very well."

**The Guide's Forecast** – The ODFW downgraded the Willamette run from an estimate 117,000 to a more realistic 80,000 to 90,000. That makes it official, folks: it's a slow year.

With rains this week, it'll take a break in the weather and a few days respite to determine whether or not the North Santiam will fish well. Anglers anxious for spring chinook and summer steelhead action need only look at

the Willamette Falls numbers. The North Santiam, although high, is exhibiting fair color but catching remains at a standstill at this writing on Thursday, May 19th..

The South Santiam will be hit or miss most days with the action slowing and crowds thinning since fish counts are so low.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – The Clackamas remained an unproductive destination again this week. Back fishers just downstream from the mouth remained idle.

Fishing has been very slow on the Sandy River. One fish in a long day should be considered far better than average at this time. The number of boats on the river gives an impression otherwise. A couple of anglers got lucky earlier this week with 30-pounders. Most are running half that size. A few summer steelhead are in the mix.

**The Guide's Forecast** – The recent rain has the Clackamas high and muddy, It was slow prior to this occurrence. There's good reason to try elsewhere this weekend with the blowout. About 25,000 springers are expected to run the Clackamas but if it happens during high, off-color water conditions, anglers won't get a chance at them.

The Sandy's a possibility if one keeps one's expectations low. It's a better bet than the Clack.

**North Coast District Fishing Report** – The second annual Bounty on the Bay event went off really well and we'd like to thank all those that participated and donated to the event. We'll update you with the fundraising numbers and hope that you can join us next year on Tillamook Bay. ALL monies will benefit the mission of the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership in which one of its primary objectives is to restore critical habitat in Tillamook Bay for our wild salmonids to rear in! For more information, log onto [www.tbnep.org](http://www.tbnep.org) and feel free to jump in whenever you can! The food was the highlight of the weekend as the fishing had not materialized like we had hoped. Although we anticipated good action in the lower bay for herring trollers, this bite had not happened even though the day before the fishing tournament, there had been some decent fishing for herring trollers along the inside of the north jetty at Barview. On Saturday, the only bite that seemed to be worth any weight was a 7 fish flurry that took place along the picket fence in the upper bay. One participant, Greg Hublou, landed 2 fish taking the prize for the biggest landed- a 20 pounder. I had the pleasure of fishing Buzz Ramsey, Rockaway superstar Rich Riley, Netarts resident Jim Mundell and Vancouver resident Paul Pettigrew . We only drew one strike and we weren't even looking when it happened! We saw very few fish taken along the jetty that day and we spent almost the entire day there. On Sunday, pressure dramatically dropped on Tillamook Bay and angler John Weed "strong-armed" me into taking he and his son Michael on the bay despite a poor report from the day before. We justified the day with an 8 a.m. start and fished hard until about 3:30. We managed 2 springers however although one was wild. We saw a few other fished hooked for about 10 boats and some anglers managed interest on trolled herring in the upper bay. This reportedly was the reason for Greg Hublou's success the day before at the tournament. We stuck to spinners but it is noteworthy that a number of Tillamook's springers have been taken on red/white spinners versus the standard chartreuse/green dot that historically has found favor with this species. Both our fish were taken on the red/white size 8 spinners available from BC Angling Post at the Oregon City Shopping Center. Overall, it was another mediocre week on Tillamook Bay for spring Chinook. Although it is too early to tell, some are beginning to wonder if this run will mimic the downturn witnessed on the Columbia River.

Here, John Lollar of Portland holds a springer "from a coastal stream near Tillamook" taken on May 11th. Photo by Jesse Zalonis:



Not a huge group of anglers drifting these days but **pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** offers up this input. "The Nestucca is slow. Steelhead seem to not be here at all, and the Chinooks seem to be spread around and in very small groups. The river was full of people over the week-end, and I neither saw nor heard of a single fish caught. Typically Memorial Week-end is a good push, so we will see in about a week. Most of the fish we have seen here have been on k13 or k14 size Kwikfish in either the purple and pink, or chartreuse and green."

Jesse continues, "Thank you to all who came for the river clean-up. There was a small turn out, but who was here worked very hard, and came out with an unbelievable amount of trash. Please do us all a favor. If you use a resource like a water way, think of the beauty, savor the moment that you have a huge privilege as to being able to be there, and pick up the trash that you do see, and please take out what you bring in. If we are not careful and mindful of these things, we could lose the right to be there. I personally believe this to be extremely important to us all."

A few anglers tried for sturgeon with the favorable tide series but results were not outstanding. Effort has certainly lightened up on the bay for sturgeon as it seems most of the fish have headed to more productive feeding grounds in the lower and upper Columbia River.

Halibut fishing out of Garibaldi was everything that I had hoped. I ventured out 24 miles to "halibut city" with hard core anglers Jerry Sweet and co-captain Roger Truax. The conditions were ideal for an easy limit and it doesn't get much easier than 4 keepers by 8:15 in the morning. The fish were plentiful and all you had to do was keep your baits on the bottom to get hit. We used 40 ounces of lead to descend 900 feet into the ocean and some had more "fun" than us young bucks with the use of an electric reel versus raw power? Really though, these fish are not hard fighters and the deep water makes for a less than desirable sportfishing experience. Make no mistake, I am in it for the flesh- "white gold" we termed it many years ago! The fish did grill up nicely that night! Halibut fishing remained great through the weekend but by Saturday, the seas had got angry and only the hardcore seasoned anglers had a good time. Most of the fish hitting the dock were around 25 to 30 pounds in size but some larger 40 pounders were witnessed by anglers willing to put in extra effort. New regulations this year allowed for a catch and release option so anglers could be a bit more selective. New regulations also disallowed retention of any rockfish species while having a halibut on board. Some anglers had a real hard time throwing back some monster ling cod caught while angling for deep water halibut.

Crabbing out of Garibaldi has been hit or miss lately. In a 2 day time frame, we hit 45 keepers for the fundraiser while the next, we had to scratch for 9. Ocean crabbing was the best although most of the crab in the keeper size were females. Fresh salmon carcasses are hard to beat but not in high supply. I crabbed north of the north jetty up to Twin Rocks. There was a great deal more pressure in the ocean upon the halibut opener and it seemed to spread the success. Ocean conditions closed the bar during

peak ebb for several mornings and afternoons this week keeping crabbers "at-bay". Bay crabbing was sporadic with best results coming from Lyster's corner and the lower end of the south channel.

**The Guide's Forecast** – A weak tide series will dominate Tillamook Bay the late part of this week making the best springer option on the lower end of the bay using herring. Hopefully, the ocean will cooperate allowing anglers the option for fishing the newly defined control zone off the mouth of the bay. Spring Chinook should really start staging in the lower estuary of Tillamook and just outside this week as they prepare for the best tide series of the spring season by the weekend (5/21 – 5/28). The best time to fish for springers is the second half of the outgoing tide. In the early part of the tide series, this will be during the early part of the morning. After a 6:30 or 7:00 am low slack in the upper part of the day success will be minimal for most of the incoming tide. There are just not enough springers to expect big results on the flood like we witness in the fall although opportunity does exist.

Spinners will be the ticket and although the chartreuse green dot has been the standby springer color, the red/white blades have been producing good results lately. You will want to put in your best effort in the upper bay around the Memaloose Boat Ramp. Most anglers will stay in this area due to the low water we will be experiencing. Boat drivers get a bit intimidated when all they see is a lot of sand bars around. Passage to the middle bay is perfectly feasible but you DO need to know where you are going. If you don't know where you are going, I recommend bringing a pair of hip boots and take it slow. You don't want to be clamming during the peak part of the bite! I have every reason to believe this will be the best weekend/week of the spring Chinook season on Tillamook Bay yet! It's always the first significant tide series after the middle part of May!

The Wilson and Trask were up a bit on the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>. The river forecast is for a continuation of a river rise making drift boating a good option on the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers over the weekend. The Trask gets most of the hatchery springers but also most of the springer pressure. Forecasts are calling for only a moderate rise in levels making for some ideal opportunity. The Cedar Creek to Hwy. 101 drift is the best option on the Trask and the Mills Bridge to Sollie Smith float on the Wilson as well. On the Nestucca, it is best to stick to Three Rivers to Cloverdale since most of the hatchery spring Chinook take a turn into Three Rivers.

Although it seems sturgeon fishing has slowed down in Tillamook Bay, it may be an option late next week as anglers await the peak part of the tide to fish for salmon. The beginning half of the outgoing may be fair for sturgeon anglers in Tillamook both the upper and middle bay. Crabbing on Tillamook Bay is sporadic and likely will drop off with the new influx of fresh water. The ocean will be too rough for crabbing!

The ocean looks to be downright dangerous over the weekend. Swells are forecasted to subside to 10 foot by Saturday (14 foot on Thursday and Friday) and the wind is forecasted to blow from 10 knots on Saturday to 25 to 30 on Thursday and Friday. I do NOT recommend halibut fishing this weekend and the bar will likely remain closed with wicked weather like this in the forecast. Ah.....winter has finally arrived! Obviously, ocean bottom fishing is not a great option either!

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Offshore salmon fishing opened for chinook on May 18th with virtually no effort or reports due to storms and high seas. This fishery is scheduled to remain open through Halloween. The offshore coho fishery will open on June 18 for a quote of 40,000 hatchery fish.

All-depth halibut is opened today, May 19th through Saturday, May 21st. The next opening will be June 2nd through the 4th and 9th through the 11th. Halibut may be fished inside the 40-fathom line anytime. For detailed information on when and where for halibut fishing, use this link:  
[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/regulations/sport\\_fishing/index.asp#halibut](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/regulations/sport_fishing/index.asp#halibut).

The entire Oregon coast remains closed to razor clamming and the taking of mussels. The domoic acid levels are high enough that certain areas in bays and estuaries are now affected. Call 800-448-2474 to check before stalking the elusive bivalve.

Summer steelhead have not yet started entering the Siletz according to reports earlier this week.

**Pro Guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)** reports following a bottom-fishing excursion off the Central Oregon coast, " ... fished one day out of Depoe Bay for bottom fish. Fishing was not as good as a month ago, but still fairly decent. Just had to run around to find pockets of fish. Then halibut fishing was excellent on Thursday as calm seas made for an enjoyable trip. Those of us that went to Chicken Ranch out of Newport spent a lot more time running than fishing. Friday had some great sturgeon fishing in the Gorge on the old standby of smelt (yes have some left from last year) and a piece of squid. The water is really zipping now, so it takes 18 to 20 ozs. to stay down. Weather forecast for the ocean this week is poor so I will concentrate on sturgeon. Next week there are extreme tides on the coast so boaters need to be extra careful when crossing the bars."

Kremers sent this photo of Ken Harrel holding a dandy cabezon:



Sturgeon fishing is good and improving but as the season progresses, the greater percentage of fish hooked are too darned large to keep. Wade through the oversize to land a keeper. Upriver, there's nothing to attract fishermen as the rain has the Umpqua out of shape. Sunny skies are forecast for the weekend so it remains to be seen if the water will drop and clear sufficiently to fish it. Shad will be the first specie available with improving water level and clarity, They're in solid and should provide plenty of action.

If anything, conditions on the Rogue are even worse than the Umpqua as only now is the weather moderating after repeated bashings from wind and rain on the Southern Oregon coast. At previous weather breaks, spring chinook fishing has been good. Hopefuls should start at the Hatchery Hole at the first opportunity, venturing elsewhere as conditions improve. Although springer counts have been fewer than normal at the Gold Ray Dam facility, the numbers have been improving this week. Two chinook may be kept per angler per day on the Rogue, one of which fish may be wild up to three unclipped fish annually.

**Central and Eastern Oregon –** With spring chinook counts just recently breaking the 60,000 mark at Bonneville, chances of a re-opener on the Big River are nil and the impact is being felt upstream. The depressed fish counts and low catch rates on the Deschutes resulted in a spring chinook closure on May 15th following a brief, lackluster 30-day season.

Avid anglers and regular contributor Jerry 'Dobe' Harding shares his experiences this week, "Since I am kind of a fair weather fisherman and it has been raining almost everyday here in central Oregon for the last month and a half, I haven't been fishing much. However, I did camp out at Wickiup Res last Friday night and fish on Sat morning the 14th. There were a few hearty souls on the water Friday PM, but most of the boats were beached or on trailers and the people that were fishing said it was pretty slow, only getting 4 to 5 Kokanee per rod for an all day effort. Rained hard Friday evening but Saturday morning was only partly cloudy. We fished till 1 PM and caught 6 Kokanee for the two of us by trolling a wedding ring tipped with white corn and a night crawler. Both behind flashers with no weight about 75 feet behind the boat. No one seemed to be doing much better including the people jigging. The kokes seem to be scattered as we caught them in the Deschutes arm to the center of the lake. Still raining here Monday morning, think I will go metal detecting out around Fort Rock valley."

**Brought to you by The Washington Guides Forecast Editor and Pro Guide Kevin Newell (360-430-2521)**

### **Mid Columbia River Fishing Report – Pro Guide Jeff Knotts (509) 366-4052**

The Umatilla closes Friday at midnight for salmon. Just like the many other fisheries, it never really got cooking. Paterson bass fishing is just about as good as it gets. Fish brown Yamamoto Senko's or brown curl tailed grubs with black or purple flake. The bass have spawned so now is good time to get those 14-18 inch dinner fish.

### **Lewis River Reservoirs Fishing Report**

Merwin is still producing Kokanee for those willing to work for them. Limits are being had by some anglers but not all. The fish are still scattered throughout the lake which makes them hard to find in decent numbers.

### **The Guides Forecast**

Fishing should continue to improve as the water warms.

### **Kalama River Fishing Report -**

We fly fished the Kalama on Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> and the water looked good but it was flowing a little high. We didn't hook up with anything; partly do to our mid afternoon start. Some springers were caught that day by bait anglers but not the numbers we had been seeing. There are still winter steelhead available and the summer steelhead are starting to show up.

### **The Guides Forecast**

The Kalama currently has good visibility with a hint of color to it, this combined with good flows should make for some decent fishing especially if these recent rains brought a fresh push of fish.

### **Cowlitz River Fishing Report – Pro Guide Bob Barthlow (509) 952-9694**



**Kevin Smallwood of Spanaway Washington with a nice Cowlitz Summer Steelhead!**

According to Bob, "We fished the Cowlitz this last 5 days w/ only 1 skunk. We caught both Summer runs and Springers.

The Summers were caught below BC, bobberdoggin (sidedrifting slip dink floats and eggs) and the Springers were taken on M-2 SP's and spinners."



**Don Barthlow with his first Cowlitz springer of 2005 a nice fish that weighed in at 23 pounds!**

### **The Guides Forecast**

Bob Barthlow reports, "The good news is that this week Riffe lake will reach full pool, and TCL (Tacoma City Light) "should" release more water, if that's the case you will see the bite pick up. The bad news is that the Algae/Cottonwood gunk in the water is forming below BC, like it has the last 2-3 years. There must be a bi product from the hatchery causing this stuff."

### **Olympic Peninsula Fishing Report – Pro Guide Pat Graham (360) 374-5313**

Pat reports, "The Sol Duc and Quillayute have been putting out some nice Springer's, but it has been an early morning bite as the rivers are getting low and clear. The Hoh opens on the 18th. I have heard some good reports from the Indians netting. Should be a few Springer's around for the opener."

### **Snake River Fishing Report – Pro Guide Pat Long (509) 751-0410**

According to Pat, "The Snake River region is still in a high water state with some tough conditions. We are doing quite well on sturgeon on the upper Snake and bass fishing has also been fair to good in the sheltered locations (bays and back channels protected from the main flow)."

"The Clearwater Spring Chinook season is still open at this time and the river is producing a few fish, as with the Snake, conditions are far from ideal but still fishable. We expect an announcement from Idaho Department of Fish and Game in the next couple of days regarding the future of the Clearwater season. With as few fish as we have moving up river we may see a closure in the near future."

"Fishing for Channel cats and sturgeon on the lower river is good at this time and should hold up well for the next few weeks."

### **The Guides Forecast**

Pat reports, "As the water clears and starts to drop we should see some very good fishing for both sturgeon and bass. We are approaching the spawning period for the bass and I would expect to see some very good fish taken in the next couple of weeks if conditions improve."

"As the water temps climb into the 70s with the summer heat this lower river fishery will begin to slip until the early fall months. Reservoir levels are 4 to 5 ft. below full pool to increase water velocity through the slack water sections to enhance the out-migration of the smolts and as long as these flows stay up fishing will be excellent in these areas."

### **Yakima River Fishing Report – Pro Guide David Child (509) 962-5523**

Nothing to report.

**Northwest Bass & Panfish** - It's always great to see young people get enthused about fishing. This week, we feature two outstanding young anglers, both of whom deserve recognition and respect.

McMinnville High School sophomore Blake Paulsen won his age division (15-18) in the Oregon B.A.S.S. Jr. Bassmaster State Championship held Saturday, May 7th at Cottage Grove Lake. In the accompanying photograph, Paulsen displays his larger fish of the day. He will represent Oregon at the Jr. Bassmaster World Championship on July 23rd through 25th at Kittanning, PA. Congratulations, Blake, for an outstanding achievement.



See **Random Links** for more on the Junior Bassmaster World Championship.

Another angler, Nick Rubeo of Hillsboro, caught his 31-pound fall chinook in at the age of 10. He was pretty happy. He saved the jawbone of the 120-pound shark he landed. Now 12 years old, Rubeo will have his name in the record books after landing a smallmouth bass of mind-bending proportions from Henry Hagg Lake on Monday, May 9th.

At eight pounds, 11 ounces, this smallies firmly trounces the previous record of seven-14. Rubeo took the fish on a Super Fluke lure using eight-pound-test monofilament line. While yet to be accepted, there's little doubt this fish, the fifth consecutive State record smallie, will literally immortalize Nick Rubeo. The beastie was 24 inches long with an 18-inch girth. Note to readers: where can we get a photo of this pig?

Ray Currie, 69, who has taken two of the previous record smallie from Henry Hagg, remarked that there may be more to come. Ironically, bass fishing at Hagg remains slow otherwise.

The Willamette River has slowed a bit with the cooler weather but continues to produce decent numbers of smallmouth bass.

See **Random Links** for a list of warmwater and coldwater Oregon State fishing records.

**Northwest Trout** - Timothy Lake Kokanee are abundant, but small. Odell and Green Peter have been quite productive for kokanee on the troll.

A family fish derby will take place at the Delta Ponds in Eugene on Saturday May 21st, 2005 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM with registration starting at 9:30 AM. No entry fee required and prizes will be awarded in this catch-and-release only event, For more information call Kate Darby at 541-346-5003

Plenty of stocking will take place this week with the following waters receiving State-raised rainbows: Big Creek Reservoir, Big Creek Reservoir, Cape Meares Lake, Coffenburg Lake, Hebo Lake, Loren's Pond, Lost Lake (Clatsop County), Molalla Creek Reservoir, South Lake, Thissell Pond, Town Lake, Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, Huddleston Pond, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Blue River, Blue River Reservoir Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Foster Reservoir, Hills Creek, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, upper McKenzie River, Mid Fork Willamette, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, Santiam River North Fork, and Trail Bridge Reservoir.

### Reader Email

**Kapt'n Ken Johnson**, long-time TGF subscriber and becoming a familiar contributor to readers, share the Blacktop Report, "Meldrum Bar Report, May 18th, 2005 : Fish are in the river but they're not in a biting mood. A check today at Meldrum saw a poor turn out for fishermen and no fish on the bank at the time of this writing. The Willamette is dropping, slowly, and looks pretty good...But...IT would look better if some Salmon were hitting the beach. I witnessed a couple of boats Shad fishing today. They were bringing a Shad to the boat about every 4-5 minutes. You now, it really depends on where you're anchored and if you're off 5' - 10' the "Schooling" Shad could be just a bit out of reach. You know what I mean...You anchor in your favorite spot and catch more Shad that you'll ever need...The guy next to you 10' away is catching very few yet using the same rigging and lures. Shad seem to swim in "slots" along their way upriver. If you're in the "slot" you're into fish. If you are NOT catching fish after 20 minutes, or so, MOVE! I usually give it about 15 minutes TOPS...Then I move over. Very few boats in the river with some guides back trolling right in front of the mouth of the Clackamas River, then sloooooowly drifting downstream back bouncing on the bottom. Nuttin' Honey...I was there about 3 hours and didn't see a single Chinook caught. The Blacktop boys were there all day, like they always are, but there were only TOW of them...Usually, this time of year you have to virtually fight over the best spot of about 12

available. Actually, everyone here is quite sociable here but it really is first come, first served. Crowding in doesn't win any friends, however, but with a little introduction these guys will welcome anyone into their mix!

Conclusion: Fish for Shad from now through June, or head to your favorite Trout Hole. We may have a late run of Chinook, like we did last year, and the Chinookers will drift in early June right up to the first of July.....Or NOT!"

Reader **Grant "Fish'n Magician" Lansing** sent this on May 14th, "Fished the Willamette below the falls yesterday afternoon. Water was very muddy and tide seemed extremely high. Stuck with Senkos and was able to bring in this 4lb 11oz Smallmouth. She was released unharmed."

Grant also sent along a picture of his shoe ... it's a size 13.



Visit the Fish'n Magician's website at \*<http://home.comcast.net/~glansing/fmhq>

Passed to TGF from **Barry Young**, Reader Cedric B. comments on an anomaly some have found in Fall chinook which may be of interest to some readers, "By the way, the spore that was found in many fall fish for the henneguya disease is the henneguyazschokkei spore. I spoke with a biologist by the name of Keith Bron at 503 842-2741 and he was not too concerned. I hope this is not a big deal or otherwise I am turning into a spore."

Write to the TGF staff:

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Doug Rees: [drees@TheGuidesForecast.com](mailto:drees@TheGuidesForecast.com)

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### Random Links

ESPN on the Junior Bassmaster World Championship:

[http://espn.go.com/outdoors/bassmaster/s/b\\_news\\_Jr\\_Bassmaster\\_kickoff\\_2005\\_Classic.html](http://espn.go.com/outdoors/bassmaster/s/b_news_Jr_Bassmaster_kickoff_2005_Classic.html)

Oregon Warmwater Gamefish Records:

<http://obpc0.tripod.com/id13.html>

Oregon coldwater gamefish records:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/ODFWhtml/InfoCntrFish/FishRecords.html>

Kokanee Basics:

<http://www.kokaneepower.org/articles/2.pdf>

How to catch large kokanee:

<http://www.kokaneepower.org/articles/3.pdf>

**Weekly Quote** – "And if the angler catches the fish with difficulty, then there is no man merrier than he is in his spirits." - Juliana Berners

**GOOD LUCK!**