



Central Kenai Peninsula Fishing Report 8-15-2014



The hustle and bustle of summer is coming to a close, and we are transitioning to the more relaxing pace of fall. It is always a bitter sweet feeling for those of us on the Kenai Peninsula. The kings and sockeye that draw such ferocious crowds are mostly gone now, and we are entering what many locals believe is the greatest season of all- FALL!

Silver salmon are starting to invade the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers, but a bunch of recent rain has caused near flood level high water conditions. Despite that, fishing is still pretty good, and is expected to improve as the water begins to drop and clear up. During the high water, focus on the backwater areas. Eddies, the downstream side of inside corners, behind islands, and back channels will be your best bet to find slower moving water during the minor flood we are currently experiencing.

Oh, and another great thing about even years is that you can catch a whole bunch of pink salmon, aka humpies, no matter what you are fishing for! While some consider them a nuisance, they can keep the action going all day long and can be fun for kids, beginners and even experienced fishermen alike! Try throwing spinners with a slow retrieve, trolling small plugs, or stripping & swinging streamers in the slow water areas of the river where pinks congregate.

Trout fishing with beads and flesh flies is heating up as well. 8mm fresh beads and 10mm fresh roe beads have both produced some very nice fish in the middle and lower sections of the Kenai.

Middle & Lower Kenai

The Middle River (Skilak Lake to Bings Landing) and Lower River (Bings to Cook Inlet) sockeye fishing has essentially ended. A few fish can be taken here and there, but most are starting to blush and moving into spawn season. Silvers and pinks are starting to hit the River in good numbers. Casting spinners and spoons are the most popular techniques, but don't be afraid to throw bright streamer patterns on your fly rod as well. Strip your fly low and slow and wait for the bite! Remember- silvers prefer to take the path of least resistance, so stay out of raging currents and you can find some success! And the further you go up river, the less pinks you will get into as well!

Trout fishing has been fair to good- with the high water conditions making it more of a challenge. Fish are moving closer to the banks to grab up the remnants of the salmon carcasses. Beads were starting to pick up, but the high water levels are making bead fishing more of a challenge. Try larger flesh flies tight on the bank near cleaning stations and areas where salmon are being caught and cleaned. As the water drops and clears, trout fishing should start to seriously heat up on both beads and flesh. Don't be afraid to add a weight or two in this high water. And hang on- some of these rainbows have been gorging all summer and are getting BIG!

Upper Kenai

Moving up to the the Upper Kenai (Kenai Lake to Skilak Lake), sockeye fishing is essentially over- you can still get a fish or two here and there, but most are fairly well blushed out and ready to spawn at this point. Some silvers are being taken on the fly stripping bunny leeches in slow or still water. We expect silver fishing to pick up as water conditions improve and we get later into the silver run.

Tout fishing has been slow to decent, with the high water conditions making it a challenge. Seek out slow moving pocket water for best results, and don't be afraid to lengthen your leaders and add a few extra split shots! Flesh is still productive, and we are moving closer to the prime time bead bite!

Summary

While other folks are packing up their boats and rods for the season, others are just getting warmed up... so grab some rain gear and a beanie because the Silver Salmon and Rainbow Trout fishing is likely to get better and better for the next month and beyond. Don't miss it!!!

Fishing report compiled by Brendyn Shiflea of Pretty Fly For a White Guy with in river action reports and pictures submitted by guides Lee Keuper of Alaska's Angling Addiction, Mark Wackler of Fishology Alaska, and Kyle Kolodziejski of Keen Eye Anglers. All are current or past board members of the Kenai Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

