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The Fish Sniffer

Since 1982

American River Map Feature



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31 Years
Serving
Sportsmen

VOL. 32 - ISS. 3

Jan. 18 - Feb. 1, 2013

SEE OUR NEW BAJA
ROUNDUP SECTION ON
PAGES 28-29

Our
31ST
Year

"The Magazine For West Coast Sportsmen!"

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STAFF TACKLE

What We're Using

Paul Kneeland - fished Union Valley Reservoir with John Brassfield and Rob Bundy of Auburn in John's 18 Duckworth. They caught rainbows to 14 inches and mackinaw to 7 1/2 pounds using a new Seeker 8' downrigger rod rigged with an Daiwa ICV15 Accudepth line counter level wind reel loaded with 8 lb test Yozuri Hybrid fluorocarbon line. They trolled large broken back Flatfish in rainbow trout pattern for the mackinaw, right on the bottom in 50 to 60 feet of water at 1.4 mph boat off the Canon downriggers.



Ernie Marlan - fished with David Hammond of Delta Pro Fishing on the California Delta. They targeted sturgeon in shallow water that ranged from 5-8 feet deep. They caught and released an oversized sturgeon that measured in at about 69 inches while using Shakespeare Ugly Stick rods with Shimano Tekota 500 reels spooled with 50 lb. test Power Pro braid. They also caught a shaker sturgeon that was a few inches short of the slot limit. The bait of choice, fished on Eagle Claw Lazer Sharp Kahle hooks tied to 80 lb. test P-Line CX leaders, was a combination of eel and pile worms.



Cal Kellogg - Trolled Folsom Lake with Jim English of Auburn on December 30. The pair landed a total of 12 rainbows including 4 handsome holdovers to 17 inches and a lone spotted bass weighing 2.5 lbs. Cal and Jim employed Berkley Tactix and Will Fish Tackle kokanee rods matched with round baitcasters from Shimano and Abu Garcia. The hot setups included Sep's Side Kick dodgers, Sep's Strike Master dodgers and Sep's willow leaf flashers teamed with threaded night crawlers. The trout were scattered from the surface to 10 feet deep.



Folsom Lake Stinks, But The Fishing Is Pretty Good!

I have thought it for a long time and now I've said it... Folsom Lake stinks! First of all if you want to go there and drop a boat it will cost you \$22. That's \$22 thrown into the bureaucratic



Fish Sniffer Editor Cal Kellogg shows off a felsty Folsom Lake holdover rainbow that he fooled with a threaded nightcrawler pulled behind a set of small Sep's willow leaf flashers on December 30. Photo by JIM ENGLISH, Fish Sniffer Staff.

abyss also known as the California State Parks. Ouch!

Once you've paid your fees the next thing you'll have to contend with is the lake's ever fluctuating water levels. Sometimes the lake is drawn down so much that a 5 mph speed limit is imposed and all the ramps are closed, save for a small ramp at Granite Bay that drops you into a narrow finger of water that eventually leads into the main lake, assuming the wind doesn't catch your canvas top and push you up on the bank. Yikes!

At other times the lake is high enough to afford launching at ramps in the lake's arms such as at Rattlesnake Bar, but the folks at the State Parks in their infinite wisdom choose to lock the gates and leave the fee stations unstaffed, effectively keeping the people of the state from using land, water and facilities that ultimately belong to them... THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA... Crazy!

Yet with all these drawbacks and horse manure, I still visit Folsom on a regular basis. Why? It's the



WHAT'S HOT?
FRESHWATER
by Cal Kellogg

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Governor Brown and Secretary Laird Easily Win Cold Dead Fish Awards

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Lake Camanche Trout Action Heating Up

As we all know, the dead of winter can be a pretty dismal time for fishing action. Water temperatures drop, and the fish tend to shut down - making for cold frustrating days on the water. Some folks pack it in for the winter, opting to keep their rods at bay until the spring fishing bite takes off.

Well, if you are like me, then you can't stand to stay off the water for two or three months at a time (crazy - right?) Luckily for us, we do have some nice winter time options not too far from home. My favorite choice this time of year is to troll the waters of foothills reservoirs for trout, such as those at Lake Camanche. These fish stay active all winter long, providing great action for anglers willing to brave some chilly days on the water.

Depending on the water temperature, I'll choose to troll Lake Camanche either fast or slow. When the water temperature is below 54 degrees, I tend to opt for a slow trolling pattern. This typically means I'll troll using my electric motor going somewhere between 1.3 and 1.6 miles per hour GPS speed.

With this technique my lures of choice will be wiggle hoochies or night crawlers behind dodgers, or just plain grubs or trolling flies without dodgers. I'll run my downriggers at two to six feet deep, and on my top lines I'll use one or two split shots to get my lines just below the surface. My set backs are usually staggered between 75 and 140 feet behind the boat, creating a

nice top water spread.

When the water temperature is above 54 degrees, I'll troll on the gas motor between 2.6 and 3 miles per hour. My fast trolling setup consists of two rods in downriggers and two rods using side planers. Fast trolling I set my downriggers at four to ten feet deep. I'll normally run spoons such as Excels or Needlefish on these rods set back at 85 and 100 feet behind the boat. If you don't have downriggers, just put some split shots or a barrel sinker above your leaders and run top lines.

If I have a guest onboard, I'll run two additional rods on side planers set back at 120 and 150 feet behind the boat. On the side planer rods I'll run F07 and F09 Rapalas. The nice thing about fast trolling is that you get to cover lots of water, which puts your lures in front of more fish.

Whether you are trolling fast or slow, the fish at Lake Camanche seem to be keen on orange or white lures. When I can't find lures in the right colors, I'll add orange or white tape to

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GONE
FISHIN'
by Jack Naves

Gone Fishin'

• Cont. from Page 1

my lures to make my own color combinations. It always pays to have a few sheets of lure tape in your tackle box just in case one color combination seems to get hot on any given day.

The trout planting program at Lake Camanche usually starts in the late fall. The fishing action really hits its stride during mid-December. I look forward to fishing Lake Camanche every year when high runoff or cold water shuts down the striper bite in the delta. This past December, I was able to make my first trip to Lake Camanche during the current winter season.

My dad Bob Naves joined me on the morning of December 15 as we launched at the north shore facilities in the bitter cold of first light. I had the portable heater on high as we motored up the Mokelumne River arm and stopped just short of the bridge. I had just started to let out my second rod when I saw my first rod tip violently dipping towards the water.

I dropped my second rod and shouted, "There's a fish!" After a few jumps and dives, my dad netted the shiny rainbow which had slammed my Arctic Fox trolling fly. We put the healthy rainbow on ice and continued to troll throughout the morning, picking up two more fish for the cooler. I had started out using slow trolling techniques, figuring that the chilly morning temperatures put the fish a little slow on the take.

By ten o'clock, the bite had shut down and we decided to head out to the main body of the lake to try some fast trolling options. The water temperature had warmed up to 57 degrees, so I figured it was worth a shot to cover some new waters trolling fast. We made several laps around Big Hat Island and then made the run back to the causeway.

Just as we were leaving the causeway, dad's downrigger rod started to pump in a suspicious manner.



Fish Sniffer Field Editor Jack Naves with a healthy rainbow trout landed at Lake Camanche on December 15th. This fish slammed a F07 Rapala trolled just under the surface behind a side-planer.

Photo by JACK NAVES, Fish Sniffer Staff.



Jack Naves' arsenal of Lake Camanche lures. Slow-trolling lures are on the left and fast-trolling lures are on the right. Orange and white are hot-ticket colors, so use lure tape if you can't find the exact color you are looking for.

Photo by JACK NAVES, Fish Sniffer Staff.

He popped it out of the clip and sure enough, he had another nice rainbow that grabbed a black and white Needlefish. From then on the action picked up, and between noon and two o'clock we landed five more rainbows, mostly on Rapalas.

A huge storm system had been forecast, and by two o'clock dark clouds loomed ominously over the bow of the boat. We decided not to push our luck, and just as we pulled onto the highway rain started to speckle the windshield of the truck.

It had been a fun winter's day on the water, producing eight eating-sized rainbows, while four trout escaped to bite another day. Four of the fish were from recent plants, while the other half were healthy holdovers. We didn't pick up any lunkers, but I did talk to a guy at the ramp who had a six pounder in the boat.

Large trophy sized trout are planted at Lake Camanche every year. I've caught fish up to five pounds, and several friends of mine have caught monster trout in excess of ten pounds at Lake Camanche in recent years. When a ten pounder starts ripping line off our reel, your hands will warm up in a hurry!

If you don't want to spend all winter indoors tying kokanee leaders, then give a foothills reservoir like Lake Camanche a shot. Consistent action can be found all winter long, and the prospect of landing a trophy-sized rainbow will keep you in the boat - even when your toes start to get numb. You can tell your buddies you toughed it out (even if you are like me and you had your Heater Buddy cranked on high all day).

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