



TECH BULLETIN

CENTRAL OREGON

HIGH MOUNTAIN LAKES

Compiled from the Diaries and Logs of the Luhr Jensen Fishing Research Team.

Lying like a magnificent string of sparkling blue pearls on the throat of the Cascades are the high mountain lakes that run through the central part of the beautiful state of Oregon.

Such names as East, Paulina, Odell, Detroit, Big Cultus, Crater, Diamond, Crescent, Waldo, Davis, Wickiup, Marion, Olallie, Suttle, Lemolo, Summit, Miller and Lake of the Woods . . . all evoke visions of "the big one" to those who love to fish them.

This Tech Bulletin will help you pick the right lures and provide you with some special techniques to help make your high lakes fishing adventure an angling success.

There are several species of fish available for the catching throughout this series of lakes . . . brook, cutthroat, brown, and rainbow trout; kokanee salmon, Detroit Lake chinook salmon and, in the case of Odell, Crescent and Big Cultus Lakes, even some trophy-size mackinaw (lake trout).

Following is a rundown on these various fish species and techniques proved productive for catching them.

KOKANEE

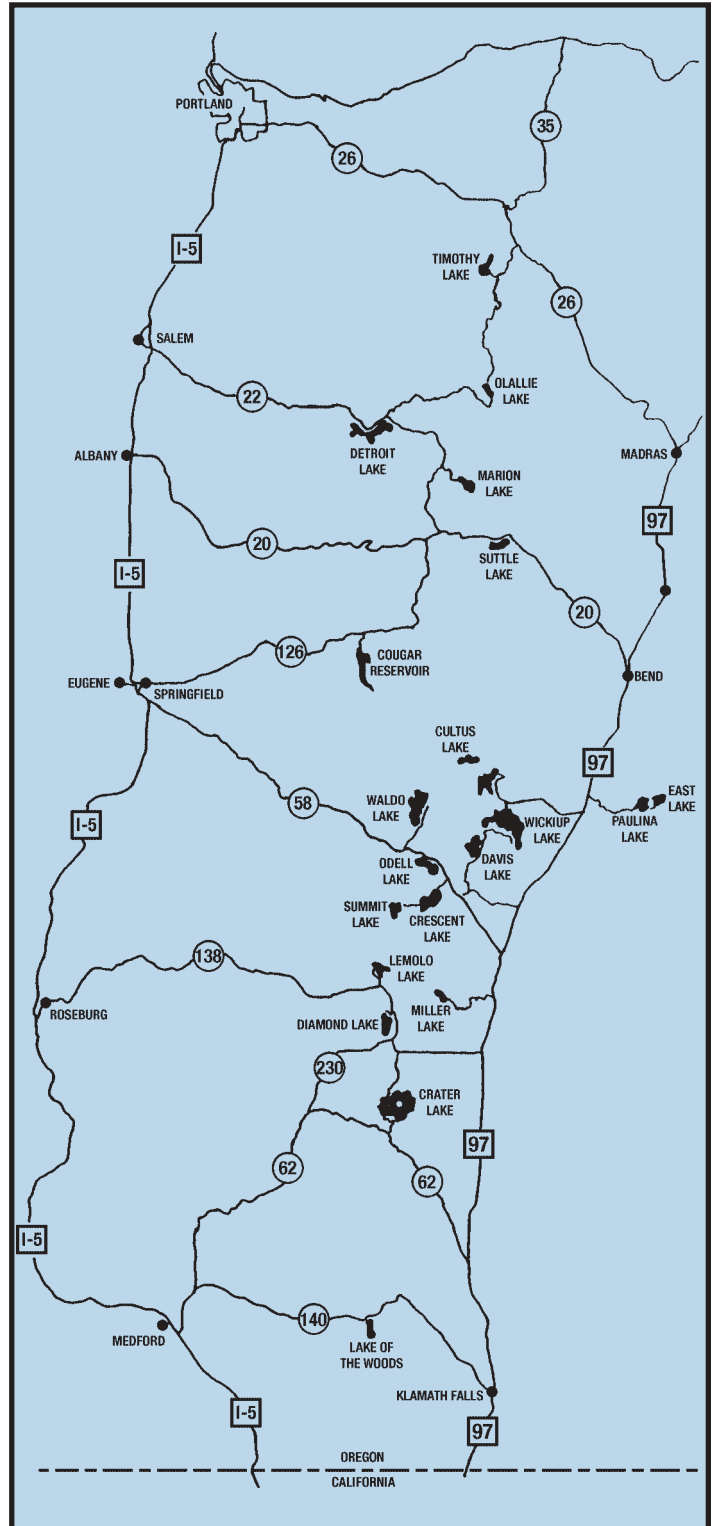
Fishing for these landlocked little red salmon begins with opening day, usually the last Saturday in April and continues until the lakes close October 1. Early season finds the kokes in large schools from near the surface to down as deep as 60 feet. Later in the season, after the water temperature has risen, you'll find them near the surface early in the morning and late in the evening. During warm summer days, they often are found from 25 feet to the bottom but usually near 100 feet or more down.

Trolling techniques work well for kokanee, with most anglers using lead core line and a lake troll such as a **Ford Fender®** or **School-O-Minnows™** trailed by a small spoon such as a **Needlefish®**, **Super Duper®** or **Kokanee King™**. Some lakes have very clear water so a 24- to 38-in., 7- to 10-lb. test leader is recommended between troll and lure. Because kokanee have very tender mouths, we recommend using a rubber snubber such as Luhr Jensen's #001 **Rubber Trolling Snubber** in either **Fire** or **Natural** finish between the troll and the lure. This will take up the shock of the initial strike and prevent the hooks from tearing out. During warm weather, when kokes can be found near the bottom, a size 025 **Nordic™** jig in **Mother-of-Pearl**, **Silver/Blue Stripe**, **Silver/Silver Prism-Lite®** or **Chartreuse/Green Stripe** or a or 1-oz. **Crippled Herring®** in **Nickel/Blue Stripe** or **Nickel/Green Stripe** can be very effective.

One of the biggest mistakes made by many anglers is working a lure too fast. Most will not perform correctly at fast speeds and kokanee will generally not hit a fast-moving lure . . . they need to be tantalized by it. The best advice we can give you is to try slow first . . . then pick up speed as necessary.

RAINBOW, & GERMAN BROWN TROUT

The same trolling setups and lures suggested for kokanee also can be used successfully for catching trout. Some of the



hottest rainbow action comes while trolling near shore with a lake troll followed by a small spoon, or by a small, #60 or #70 **Hot Shot®** plug. Popular trolls include the Ford Fender **"Model T"** and the **School-O-Minnows™**. Rainbows often can be found along a lake's shoreline, particularly where a dropoff exists.

When fishing in the early spring, as the water first begins to warm up, troll a size #60 or #70 Hot Shot in **Black Scale**, **Frog** or **#0916 Black Glitter** along lake shores for best success. Use 4- to 8-lb. test monofilament line and place one small split shot 4 to 5 feet above the plug. Other effective lures



are **Krocodiles**[®], Super Dupers and K3 or K4 **Kwikfish**[®].

German browns can be found in Lemolo, Wickiup, East and Paulina Lakes. In fact, a record 27-lb, 3/4-oz. brown was caught in the spring of 1993 in Paulina . . . a new state record! Use color patterns representing chubs, white fish, kokanee or other species which brown trout normally prey upon.

MACKINAW

Odell, Crescent and Big Cultus Lakes are famous for their mackinaw (lake trout) with fish over 39 pounds available. Most "macks" run four to 10 pounds and can be taken with lake trolls followed by large plugs such as a **J-Plug**[®] or a large Kwikfish. One technique perfected by the Luhr Jensen Fishing Team which has produced consistent mackinaw results (after a concentration of fish has been located using a depth sounder) is jigging with either a size 025, 040 or 060 Nordic jig. Some of the team's favorite colors are **Glo/Fluorescent Green Stripe** and **Chartreuse/Green Stripe**.

NOTE: Strikes which come when working a Nordic or Crippled Herring almost always occur as the lure is falling. Hesitation in the descent of the jig, a twitch of the line, a "tap" or anything else unusual as the lure is falling is immediate reason for setting the hook. Many times you will be able to detect a strike, but will feel resistance as you begin to raise the rod. This too signals "set the hook!"

The use of premium quality, high-visibility line, such as Trilene[®] XT which also has high knot strength and

thin diameter in relation to pound test, is one thing that will aid you in detecting strikes as the jig is falling.

Some of the lakes in the Cascades are located at such high altitudes that they are often ice-covered into the middle of May. As the ice melts, leaving more open water, techniques other than trolling become effective. Still-fishing with Velveeta cheese, Berkeley Power Bait, worms, **Jenseneggs**[™] or fresh salmon or steelhead roe work extremely well. Additionally, jigging with a small spoon, such as a Krocodile, Super Duper or Needlefish can be very effective

To be most successful, your boat should be anchored from both ends, facing into the wind to reduce its movement. Also, try to keep your bait just off the mossy, weed-covered lake bottom, thus allowing the fish to more easily find it.

PROPER CATCH AND RELEASE METHODS

1. Play the fish in quickly so it is not too tired.
2. Handle the fish as little as possible and never let it flop on a hard or dirty surface.
3. Use hemostats or needle-nose pliers to back the hook out the way it went in. Barbless hooks make the process easier.
4. Never release a fish until it is fully revived and acts strong. A tired fish can tumble and get lodged in rocks or moss and suffocate. Carefully work the fish back and forth to pump water through its gills. You will know when it's ready to leave.
5. When taking a picture of your catch,

leave it in the water until the camera is ready and then gently cradle the fish in both hands as you lift it out of the water. Never put your fingers in its gills or squeeze it too hard. Keep the fish out of the water only long enough to take the picture.

6. Be gentle and release the fish carefully. **NEVER THROW A FISH BACK INTO THE WATER.**

LAKE TROLLING TIPS

1. **TROLL SLOWLY:** Big fish will not expend any more energy than necessary to catch a meal. Also, most lures will not perform correctly at fast speeds. The best advice is to troll slowly — the slower the better.
2. **VARY YOUR SPEED:** While slow is the password, this does not mean slow all the time. A lure running through the water at a constant speed, at a constant depth and giving off the same vibration pattern will not catch many fish . . . there's just nothing there to indicate an easy meal is available or that something is in trouble. Slowly, yes, but adjust your speed every few minutes to change the lure's speed and vibration pattern.
3. **WORK IN "S" CURVES:** Consistent trolling results require that you do everything possible to keep from running in a straight line. We recommend an "S" pattern because every time the troll and lure are on the inside swing of the boat, the lure will drop deeper and slow down. On an outside turn, it will speed up and rise. With each turn you will impart a different action to the troll and trailing lure, signaling "Meal Time" to nearby fish.

