

Muddling Along February 22, 2015

### Chemainus River

The Chemainus River crosses the Island Highway south of Nanaimo close to the Crofton road and near Russell's Farm Market. A page I found on the web gives directions on how to reach different parts of the river and gives some good information about the river as well. (Bob Kissinger also is a goldmine of information about the upper Chemainus River).

Chemainus: The Unknown River. Ted Burns. (copy this into Google Search . . . for some reason the link doesn't work from this page!)

The river is open for fishing year round but has many closures of specific sections. Very small runs of summer run and late winter/spring run steelhead do exist but there are no hatchery fish in the river. Remember that if you are trying for a steelhead (catch and release), you still need to have a freshwater fishing license and a steelhead stamp.

There are also small runs of coho in October/November but only one jack coho (less than 35cm) may be retained from October 15 to March 31. (good luck on finding a coho after the end of November!)

As always, you will be faced with release of any cutthroat or rainbow trout you catch because there are unlikely to be any hatchery marked fish in the river.

The tidal portion of the Chemainus is open from October 26 to July 14. 4 chum may be retained and a hatchery marked coho (very unlikely!). There is a small run of chum, generally smaller than the chum in the Nanaimo and other rivers. There are rumours of coastal cutthroat which will be in the lower portions of the freshwater section and in the tidal section of the river when food sources are available (use egg patterns from October through December (trout beads are legal here), flesh flies when dead salmon start showing up after spawning, fry/smolt patterns in February to April and insect patterns in the warmer months.)

There will be a Chemainus River walkabout sometime late April early May to look at the estuary and the wildflower display. Keep your eyes on the newsletter for more information closer to the time!