

Osprey Lake Junket

Wayne Stewart

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At the end of April each year my brother and I meet up at the airport in Cranbrook and spend the next couple of weeks fishing various lakes in the area. This year, Ian came for a shorter time since he was lined up for a trip with some IWFFers to fish the Princeton area at the end of May. He invited me along.



I was a bit nervous since I usually fish alone and the thought of fishing with ten people was a little unnerving. My qualms were soon dispelled. I arrived at Osprey Lake a bit earlier than most of the crowd and found Bob and Don already getting their boats ready to go. They stopped what they were doing to help me get my boat in the water and pointed out my accommodations so I could get settled in. The rest of our party arrived not too much later and of course we were soon on the water.



This first venture on the water soon showed us that we were not going to be fishing for monster trout. The fish were plentiful enough but it was awhile before anyone caught anything over a foot long.



However, it was at this point that I discovered that my new companions were more than just pretty faces. With ten people fishing and willing to share ideas the lakes mysteries were solved at something approaching an exponential rate to what one might learn on their own.



We came off the water to a chicken dinner prepared by Don and Bob. It didn't take away from our enjoyment at all that the chickens were barbecued birds from Cooper's Supermarket in Princeton. The evening's fishing was interesting since as dark approached most of us headed back to our cabins. However, as we came towards the beach, Wayne P noticed that caddis were appearing in the shallows just in front of the cabins. From then till dark we fished dry flies. Once again, not much size but lots of action.

Day 2

We all stayed at Osprey for day 2 and it was pretty much a repeat of Day 1. Leeches of various sorts seemed to do



well during the day but interestingly, the champion fly of the evening was that old favourite, the Halfback which out fished newer patterns. And of course we paused for a spaghetti dinner mostly prepared by Ian. An aggressive male loon (that's his wife and kids in the photo) made the afternoon interesting as he cruised around and under the boat, slurping up released fish as fast as we let them go. He finally retired after choking down a 13 inch fish—I think that filled him up!

Day 3

Most of us headed to Link Lake, a short drive away. It's a smaller lake than Osprey with a mud bottom unlike Osprey's cobble bottom. Once again, older patterns outdid newer ones with Carey Special doing well. However, like

Osprey, fish were on the small side with the occasional fifteen or sixteen inches to liven things up. It was a



beautiful day . The lake did get a little busy as the morning wore on and the locals arrived. Still, an enjoyable day topped off with a fish dinner when we got back to camp with Wayne as chef. Andrew returned from a social call to Summerland with ice cream to top things off.



Day 4

We scattered to the winds on Day 4. Some of us headed for Link, some stayed at Osprey and Andrew and Wayne went off to far flung lakes elsewhere. along the Merritt highway. Osprey was uninspiring, the guys at Link did well on Careys and I've yet to figure out how Wayne and Andrew did. Their stories varied widely in the telling and I'm not sure if they caught many smaller trout or some larger trout or bugger all. I suspect the truth lay somewhere between. Dinner was smoky night with pans of roasted potatoes and carrots.



Day 5

A few people stayed at Osprey and the rest of us hit Link again. This was certainly Ian's and my best day of the trip and I know Andrew and Wayne did at least as well. It was the day for damsel nymphs. Even though only a few damsels were actually on the tules fish were targeting nymphs and I picked two 16 inchers right out of a few inches of water in the weeds. Action continued all day with a couple of serious feeding periods. To top it off, Andrew did a great mess of ribs for dinner.



All in all, great trip with good food, good company, and many fish. I felt that I had learned much not the least of which was to not abandon the old patterns. It was nice to fish with people who shared fishing info freely. I had met new friends and hopefully I'll get to fish with them again.



Wayne and Andrew wait for ferry to Tsawassen



Cabin one--the food has arrived



Eat your heart out, Burt Reynolds



Lunch on the sundeck



Harry continues the search for the elusive camp fish



Supper ready to eat



The view from the deck on Cabin 1



Geese, loons, eagles and osprey as well as numerous song birds made life interesting when the fishing was slow



A passel of Link Lake beauties ready for the brine and smoking.



Very picturesque setting for the two waterfront cabins which were to be our home for 5 days.