Information For The Serious Angler

by John Martinis

July 2012

#### How To Videos

by John Martinis

**Rigging Flasher** for Chinook Fishing **Click Here Sockeye Rigs** Click Here for Freshwater Halibut **Spreader Bar Rigging Click Here Using Scotty Downrigger Emergency Crank Handle** Click Here Shrimp/Prawn **Trap Rigging Click Here Crab Trap Rigging Click Here Purchasing Fishing Licenses Click Here** Making Spot Shrimp Bait **Click Here Fishing Reel Care Click Here Rigging Salmon Plugs** Click Here Tying John's Spectra Knot **Click Here** Tying a Double Hook Rig Click Here **Installing Braided Line** on a Downrigger **Click Here** Make a Downrigger Release **Click Here** Improving a **Downrigger Release** 

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#### Get Ready to Fish!

July 1, Area 7 opens for Chinook July 1, Area 9 opens for Salmon, release Chinook

July 1, Baker Lake opens for Sockeye July 1, Puget Sound opens for Crab July 15, Area 7 opens for Crab July 16, Area 9 opens for Chinook Sept. 16, Everett Lion Club Blind Derby Sept. 21, Coho Seminar by John Martinis

Sept. 22-23, Everett Coho Derby

# July is Chinook Time in Puget Sound San Juan's Fishing is a Collection of Knowledge

I want to start by talking about the San Juan's Chinook fishing that opens on July 1. If the ocean fishing is any indicator of what to expect, I have my hopes up for some decent salmon fishing in the Islands.

I want to start with some historical perspective on what makes the San Juan's tick. There is a good chance that many of you were not salmon fishing when the Islands were open for Chinook fishing in May and June. It was truly spectacular fishing for Spring Chinook. By July 4, we would stop fishing Chinook in the Islands and we would head for Puget Sound to fish because the salmon fishing would cool down.

I believe because of the closures, Chinook have been rebuilding and the time that they run through the Islands has been expanding. Thus, better fishing after the 4th of July.

There is a big however that goes with this story. You have to start fishing the San Juan's for Chinook from the moment that it opens on July 1!! If the tides are big...Big Deal. Go fishing. If you don't start fishing right from the start, you have a good chance of missing some good salmon fishing. The 55lb Chinook that I have hanging on my wall at the store was caught on a 3.5 minus low tide. Everyone quit fishing at Hope Island that day and I caught three Chinook that ranged from 36 to 55lbs. I was in my late 20's then and it taught me a valuable fishing lesson that I have would follow for the rest of my fishing career. The lesson that I learned was this, "Adjust to the conditions". fish will bite; you just have to fish smarter.

Alow tide of -2.4 on opening day. Not a big deal. The fish don't care if the tide is -2.4. They still have to eat. This is where fishing smarter comes in handy. The tide is approximately at 8:00 AM opening day. The first thought that comes to mind for fishing that day is; Hein Bank, Thatcher Pass Slime Rock. Great tide for Hein Bank, but the tide is too early to get there on time. That leaves me with Thatcher and Slime Rock. A good runner up will be Lopez Flats or Point Lawrence.

To fish Thatcher (Pointer Island) on this tide, I have to change my fishing pattern altogether. Instead of fishing out in the flats between Point Island and Black Rock, I like to sneak in on the south side of Point Island. There is a deep trough on the south side of Pointer in close to



#### **New Puget Sound** Salmon Seasons

#### Area 5:

July1-August 15: Daily Limit, two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release wild chinook, wild Coho and Chum.

See closure Area

August 16-Sept 18: Daily Limit, two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release Chinook, wild Coho and Chum

See closure Area

Sept 19-Sept 30: Daily limit two salmon, release chinook and chum

Nov. 1-Nov. 30: Daily limit two salmon, only one may be a chinook.

Feb. 16-April10: Daily limit one salmon.

#### Area 6:

**Selective Fishery Area** July 1-August 15: Daily Limit, two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release wild chinook, wild coho and chum.

Chinook Release Area

July 1-Aug 15: Daily limit two salmon plus two additional Pinks. Release Chinook, wild Coho and Chum

#### **Entire Area**

See closures

August 16-Sept 18: Daily Limit, two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release Chinook, wild Coho and Chum. See Closures

Oct 1-Oct 31: Daily limit two salmon, only one chinook... See closures

Feb. 16-April 30: Daily limit

trough and south of the island. Don't get right spot when you see this rock. too far south or will get into to some shallow water around Lawson Rock. I I don't want to make this whole column the flats between Pointer and Black Rock season wears on. (See Map, Click Here). This is just part of fishing effectively on a big tide.

On a different day when the tide is south end of Pointer at all. I would stay out in the flats between Pointer and Black times over the years do you get an knowledge."

Being at the right place at the right tide is only half the battle. When the water is the bottom. It isn't going to do you any reason? good at all to let 90 feet of cable off your downrigger if it is 90 feet deep. At the Here is the skinny on fish Hein Bank for cable.

you will see a green/slimy rock on the buoy.

the island. I like to fish through that shore of Blakely Island. You are in the

like to use this particular technique when about fishing opening weekend because the tide is running fairly hard. When the there is a good forty-five days of good water starts to slow down near the last Chinook in the San Juan's. Once again, hour of the outgoing tide, I get back out in you have to adjust where you go as the

Once July 15 rolls around, I would not even think about fishing the inside of the Islands. The best Chinook fishing shifts smaller, I wouldn't fish the trough at the to the outside of San Juan Island and to Hein Bank.

Rock. Only by fishing here so many Going to Hein Bank the last week of July or the first week of August has been a understanding of how Chinook weave ritual of mine for many years. Last year I their way through the Islands. As you can fished Hein Bank the first week in August see "fishing is a collection of and it was spectacular for Chinook. In fact it was some of the fastest Chinook fishing that I have seen in a long time. This is not uncommon. I have written about this many times over the years, but running fast, it forces everything close to it seems to never catch on for some

correct trolling speed, you have to Summer Chinook. Like all the other measure the distance to the bottom with fishing places, there is a set of criteria for your downrigger ball. On a -2.5 tide, it fishing here that only applies to this exact will not be uncommon at Thatcher to let spot. I like the tide to be low between 9out 120+ feet of cable when fishing in 11 AM. And, I like a lot of water ninety feet of water. Let it out until it hits movement. No small tides! I fish the bottom and then bring in 2-3 feet of parallel to the big rip that runs off of the Hein bank Buoy (the buoy that is in the center of the bank, buoy "BR DH"). (See Another good idea when the tide is Map, Click Here). This big rip will be running at its peak, fish at Slime Rock. perpendicular to Hein Bank. Fishing this This area is just north of Point Island. way defies conventional wisdom for You can see the area from Pointer Island. Chinook fishing. I like to start out in 150-Slime rock is at the most Southern end of 175 feet of water and troll straight toward Blakely Island. It is roughly the area the Hein Bank buoy. To do this properly; between Point and Black Rock (See Map, one person has to steer the boat and one Click Here). This area is very rocky so person has to run the downriggers and don't try to drag the bottom. In fact, look tackle. Keep trolling toward the buoy for suspended bait in this area and adjust until you get into 45-50 feet of water. As your gear to fish through the bait. To you can surmise; the riggers have to be indentify that you are in the correct area; raised constantly as you move toward the



one salmon. See closures

#### Salmon Area 7:

July 1-July 31: Daily limit two salmon plus two additional Pinks, only one chinook. See boundaries and closures.

Aug. 1-Sept 30: Daily limit two salmon plus two additional Pinks, only one chinook. Release wild Coho. See boundaries and closures.

Oct. 1-Oct 31: Daily limit two salmon, only one chinook, release wild coho. See boundaries and closures.

**Dec. 1-April 30:** Daily limit two salmon, release wild chinook. See boundaries and closures.

#### Area 8-1:

Aug 1-Sept. 30: Daily limit two salmon plus two additional Pinks, release all chinook.

Oct. 1-Oct 31: Daily limit two salmon, release chinook.

Nov. 1-April 30: Daily limit

Nov. 1-April 30: Daily limit two salmon, release wild chinook.

#### **Area 8-2:**

Aug 1-Sept. 30: Daily limit two salmon plus two additional Pinks, release all chinook. See clousures

Oct. 1-Oct. 31: Daily limit two salmon, release all chinook. See closures

Nov. 1-April 30: Daily limit two salmon, release wild chinook.

**Tulalip Terminal Fishery:** 

**Tulalip Bubble: June 3-June 18**, Open Friday through Monday Noon. Closed on June
19. Two salmon limit, plus

As you can see, two different places, two entirely different techniques for fishing for Chinook. If you used the same technique for either place, you might come up empty handed. Now, let's move to Eagle Point on the West Side of San Juan Island.

Don't confuse Eagle Point on the West Side of San Juan Island with Eagle Bluff on the North End of Cypress Island. Fishing Chinook at Eagle Point could not be any more different than fishing at Hein or Thatcher. Chinook at Eagle are suspended. How can that be? How can fishing be so much different in three places that are somewhat in close proximity of each other? It's all about the The bait schools up so much differently in the three places we have talked about. The "Why" is the question that I do not have the answer to. But, that doesn't matter because we have the knowledge of how to fish each individual place with skill.

Fishing at Eagle can be in deep water or it can be in standard Chinook depths of 90-120 feet of water. The fishing here is more in lanes/rips than it is fishing at a desired depth. Look for bait on your fish finder and place your gear at those depths. More often than not, Chinook will be suspended between 30-60 feet. However, the actual depth can be any depth. Fish at Eagle on either tide.

Just north of Eagle Point is Pile Point. Pile Point is only fished on the outgoing tide. This area really turns on the first week in August. The bait and Chinook will be suspended here. I like to fish 30-60 feet deep. It is quite deep here even close to the shore. You can fish the rip lines at Pile or you can fish close to shore. Both fishing methods can be quite effective.

San Juan Island Rigs

If you want to fish with herring you will most likely have a problem with ultra small dog fish. That's a problem! Dog fish greatly diminish productive fishing time. Remember, that the bite might only last twenty minutes on a good day. So don't work up a sweat dealing with doggies if you don't have to. Don't get me wrong, I have seen days when the guys with herring crushed the Chinook. I have also seen it the other way around too many times.

Here is what I recommend: The two flashers to use are pretty standard. Use the Red Racer pattern or the Purple Haze pattern. Both these flasher patterns are made by Hot Spot, Gibbs and QCove. Hot Spot Flashers (Click Here), Gibbs Flashers (Click Here), QCove Flashers (Click Here).

I would mix up the Spoons and squid. Spoons to use are Kingfisher 3.5 Red Racer (Click Here), Kingfisher Cookies n Cream (Click Here), Coho Killer Army Truck (Click Here), Coho Killer White Lightening (Click Here). I would also highly recommend using needlefish squid Goldstar NG142R (Click Here). Before the really cool colors of spoons became available, I only used needlefish squid in the San Juan's. Nothing has changed except the tackle. Fish the spoons or the squid 42" from the flasher. Tie everything together with 30lb Ultra Green Maxima Leader (Click Here) or 40lb Pline Fluorocarbon leader (Click Here).

#### Puget Sound Area 9 Chinook Opens July 16

The same tide dilemma confronts anglers on July 16. There is a minus low tide of -. 0.7 on that day. I don't think there is any need to obsess about the tide because it is



two additional Pinks.

June 20-September 5, two salmon limit, plus two additional Pinks. Open Friday through Monday Noon.

September 10-25, open Saturday and Sunday, limit two salmon, plus two additional Pinks.

**Closed June 19** 

#### Area 9:

July 16-Aug. 31: Daily limit two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release wild Chinook and Chum. See closures

**Sept. 1-Sept 30:** Daily limit two salmon, plus two additional Pinks.. Release Chinook and Chum.

Oct. 1-Oct 31: Daily limit two salmon, release chinook

Nov. 1-Nov 30: Daily limit two salmon, release wild chinook.

**Jan. 16-April 15:** Daily limit two salmon, release wild chinook.

#### Area 10:

**June 1-June 30:** Catch and release only. See closures

July 1-July 15: Daily limit two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release Chinook. See closures

**July 16-Aug. 31:** Daily limit two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release wild chinook. See closures

**Sept. 1-Sept. 30:** Daily limit two salmon, plus two additional Pinks. Release Chinook. See closures

Oct. 1-Jan. 31: Daily limit two salmon, release wild chinook. See closures

**Elliot Bay Fishery:** 

**Aug. 19-Aug 28:** Open Friday through Sunday only. Daily

the hand that is dealt to us. Once again, we have to fish smart. Instead of dwelling on the low tide at 9:15 Am, I would rather look at the high tide at 5:53 PM. The tide is a 10.7 High tide. The perfect tide for fishing Pilot Point (Click Here for Map) or fishing the West side of Possession Bar (Click Here for Map). There is no reason to arrive at Pilot Point before 1PM in the afternoon. That's an easy day of fishing. Not getting up early appeals to me.

The more I think about that morning low tide, it has Mid Channel Bank at Port Townsend written all over it. Good water flow, morning low tide and the fact that I like big tides for fishing at Mid Channel (Click Here for Map). The tide is at 9:04AM at Port Townsend on the 16th.

As the season progresses, you have to change your fishing habits. Please do not make the classic mistake of fishing where you are the most comfortable fishing. That's bad bingo! After July 30, cross Mid Channel off of your fishing By then most of the hatchery Chinook have moved into Puget Sound. That last few days of July and the first week of August belong to Point no Point/Skunk Bay (Click Here for Map) and Pilot Point. Chinook that are headed to Elliot Bay/Lake Washington and to some other hatcheries in the South Sound are rounding the corner at Point no Point during that 10 day time period. Don't wait for someone to tell you that it is good salmon fishing, just head there knowing that it is the right thing to do. Last year, the Skunk Bay area was one of the better areas to fish for Chinook. The Skunk Bay area is strictly a place to fish when the tide is going out.

The first week in August, a late run of Snohomish River Chinook show up at the Scatchet Head Buoy (West Side of Possession Bar). These fish can be indentified by their very distinct bronze coloration. These fish show up every year just like clock work.

You can see the picture that I am painting of Chinook fishing in Puget Sound. The fish that are headed to all destinations in the Sound can be found at Mid Channel Bank. The fish that are headed to South Puget Sound can be found can be caught at Point no Point/Skunk Bay. Chinook that are headed to the Snohomish and Stillaguamish Rivers can be caught at Possession Bar. In light of run timing or run abundance, one of these areas will be better fishing than the other at different times. Don't get fixated on fishing a single place. Have at least two options available to fish for salmon at all times on both sides of Admiralty Inlet. I believe that this approach will consistently put more salmon in the boat for you.

### Skagit River Sockeye Update

I have to hand it to all of you for getting a quick handle on how to catch Sockeye in the Skagit River. It turns out that "Plunking" is the best method for catching these salmon. I have heard of a variety of Spin n Glow colors that are working well for the Sockeye. The most sought after colors are; Rocket Red or Rocket Red with Mylar wings. Some anglers have also been using variations of green/chartreuse Spin n Glows. Both sizes #6 and #4 Spin n Glows have been working well. One common theme that all anglers agree on: a single hook rig with size #2 red Gamakatsu hook is working best. Sand Shrimp are also a must and they have been hard to get any quantity. Click Here to see Plunking Rig diagram.

The best Sockeye fishing on the Skagit has been in the Burlington area at an area

they call the Soccer Fields. Click Here for Google Map directions to the Burlington Soccer Fields

#### Baker Lake Sockeye

This article is a re-run from the June Newsletter because it is very timely with Baker Lake opening on July 1. I expect Baker Lake to be at its best around or after July 10th.

Baker Lake Sockeye July 1-Sept. 4. Three fish a day.

John's Sockeye Rig Video Click Here

Fishing for Sockeye in a lake is much easier than fishing for them in a river. In a lake, Sockeye strike from aggression or from a latent feeding habit. There is one thing for certain if you want to get in on "the bite", you better plan on getting up early because Sockeye only bite the first hour of the day. That's real early in July!

I got my first experience fishing Sockeye in a lake on Lake Washington. I remember that it was quite a few years before anglers got real adept at catching these critters in the lake. when I first fished Lake Washington, I was using a size #0 Les Davis Dodger/Chrome Prism with a chrome U20 Flatfish that I painted with red spots. This rig was actually quite good. When the limit was 4 Sockeye one year, we had no trouble catching a limit of 12 Sockeye for three of us.

Not long after that, it was discovered that a plain red hook trolled behind a #0 Chrome prism dodger worked about as good as anything. Later, I

discovered putting a red Power Bait Egg made that rig even more effective. I discovered that while fishing Sockeye in Lake Wenatchee. Through the years, I have had lots of experience catching these salmon in a lake.

Let's do the rundown and all the particulars of successful Sockeye Fishing freshwater.

There are only a couple variations of one simple rig for freshwater Sockeye Salmon fishing. All the rigs use either size #00 or a size #0 Les Davis chrome dodger with silver scale prism (Click Here to see). The preferred size of dodger is size #0. Rig the dodger with one 2/0 Red Gamakatsu Hook (Click Here to see). I like to put a red Power Bait egg on the hook. Just thread the egg up to the eye of the hook. The leader should be 20lb and the length of the leader is 14"-16". I would use 20lb Pline fluorocarbon leader (Click Here to see).

One variation of that rig would be a pink or red micro squid on the hook. These micro squid will all work: NG193, NGH193, NGH212, O224. (Click Here to see).

I just received some Sockeye Rigs that are pre-tied that are made by Mack's Tackle. These rigs are called Mack's Cha Cha Squider and Mack's Double Whammy Sockeye Pro. These rigs are used extensively in the Columbia River at the mouth of the Okanogan River for Sockeye with great success. Click Here to see a complete selection of Sockeye Rigs and tackle.

If you are using a downrigger, you can snap this rig to the end of the line with a X3CB Sampo ball bearing swivel. If you do not have a downrigger, tie a

6-8 ounce mooching sinker 24" from the dodger.

One of the most critical aspects of trolling for Sockeye is speed. You have to have the ability to troll between .5 and 1.5 mph. It is impossible to troll that slowly without a 10 horse kicker motor or an electric trolling motor. I just can't emphasize enough how critical this is!

At daylight the fish will be at 30 feet deep. They will quickly go to 40-60 feet deep as the sun gets on the water.

Resources
WDFW Baker Lake Sockeye
Click Here
Baker Lake Map, Click Here

Directions to Baker Lake and boat launches

#### Baker Lake (Kulshan) Launch

The boat ramp has a moderate grade. Concrete blocks have been placed along the side of the ramp for protection from erosion. No designated disabled parking. The parking lot slopes slightly. Nearby, Kulshan Campground offers campsites, a R.V. dump station, and restrooms. No overnight parking or camping within the boat ramp parking area.

#### **Directions:**

From Sedro-Woolley, E on SR 20 12.5 mi; L on Baker Lake Rd, go 14 mi; R on FR 1106; go 1.2 mi; L at Kulshan Campground, go .5 mi; ramp at S end of dam.

#### **Horseshoe Cove Campground**

The boat ramp has a gentle grade. Launching and load occur on both sides of the gravel and sand bar. The surface is uneven from wave erosion and vehicle use. No designated

disabled parking. Horseshoe Cove Campground also offers campsites, drinking water, picnic area, group camp area, and vault toilets. Overnight parking is available.

#### **Directions:**

From Sedro-Woolley, E on SR 20 12.5 mi; L on Baker Lake Rd, go 15 mi; R on FR 1118, go 1.7 mi to campground.

#### **Panorama Point Campground**

The boat ramp has a gentle to moderate grade. The asphalt ramp approach stops ten feet away from the shoreline. A drop off has been created from wave erosion. The gravel is becoming rutted from the run off of the parking lot.

#### **Directions:**

From Sedro-Woolley, E on SR 20 12.5 mi; L on Baker Lake Rd, go 19 mi; R at Panorama Point Campground.

#### **Shannon Creek Campground**

The boat ramp has a gentle to moderate grade. Ruts are developing around the ramp due to the run off from the parking lot drainage. Waves have been creating some erosion at the shoreline. No designated disabled parking. Shannon Creek Campground also offers campsites, drinking water, and picnic sites.

#### **Directions:**

From Sedro-Woolley, E on SR 20 12.5 mi; L on Baker Lake Rd, go 24 mi; R at Shannon Creek Campground, go downhill to ramp.

#### Most of Puget Sound opens for sport crab fishing July 1

WDFW, OLYMPIA – The recreational crab season gets under way July 1 in most of Puget Sound, where fishery managers with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) expect another good summer fishery.

All but one marine area in Puget Sound opens July 1. The exception is Marine Area 7, where the crab fishery opens July 15 in the area's southern p o r t i o n (S a n J u a n Islands/Bellingham) and Aug. 16 in the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia).

The crab fishery in all marine areas of Puget Sound will be open Thursday through Monday of each week. Crabbers should note, however, that the season gets under way with a two-day opening (July 1-2), and will be closed July 3-4 before re-opening on its regular weekly schedule Thursday, July 5.

Additional information on the crab fishery is available on WDFW's website at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/crab/.

Rich Childers, shellfish policy lead for WDFW, said recent state and tribal test fisheries indicate the crab population in Puget Sound remains abundant.

"The test boats have done very well," Childers said. "I expect this summer's fishery to be similar to last year's,



when crabbing was good throughout the entire season in most areas of Puget Sound."

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across.

Most marine areas will close the evening of Sept. 3 for a catch assessment. However, Marine Area 7 will remain open through Sept. 30.

Sport crabbers in Puget Sound are required to record their Dungeness crab catch on a catch record card. Separate catch record cards are issued for the summer and winter seasons. The 2012 summer cards are valid only through Sept. 3. The winter cards will be available on Aug. 15 and are valid until Dec. 31.

Catch record cards are not required to fish for Dungeness crab in the Columbia River or on the Washington coast (marine areas 1-4).

Childers reminds Puget Sound crabbers that they are required to record their Dungeness crab catch on their catch record cards immediately after retaining crab. "Having crab in your possession that are not properly recorded on a catch card is a violation and could result in a fine," he said.



## Special Purchase

Tackle For The Serious Angler

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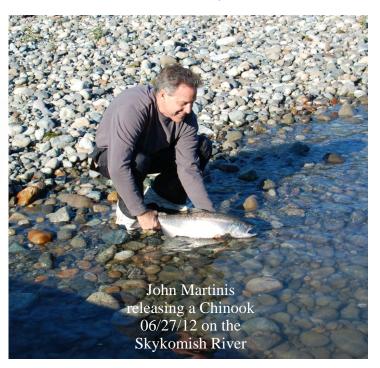
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