

# Dave Graybill

## The Fishin' Magician

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I was away most of last week attending Fish Camp near Biggs on the Columbia River. For three years now I have gone to this camp where I and other outdoor writers, broadcasters and those with fishing web sites get to fish the river in this area and meet guides and makers of outdoor products. This gave me the chance to get in on the terrific fishing for fall kings in the area and see some new products that I will be introducing you to through my web site Product Review Page and the new "How To and What's New" TV Show.

The past two years there were many options available to all of us. We could choose to go steelhead fishing, bass fishing, walleye fishing, sturgeon fishing or salmon fishing. This year everyone wanted to go salmon fishing. Big surprise, huh. Over 600,000 fall kings had already passed over Bonneville Dam and they were still coming at a rate of over 20,000 a day.

The first day, Eric Granstrom who joined me for Fish Camp, and I were on Bruce Warren's boat. He owns Fishing for Fun Guide Service. Also aboard were Kelly Riordan from the Shelton Mason County Journal and Bobby Loomis from Macks Lure Company here in Wenatchee. Warren is a guide from the Puyallup area and fishes many of the rivers in Southwest Washington. We launched at Celilo Park on the Oregon side of the river and ran up to where the Deschutes River enters the Columbia. There was a big fleet of other anglers there and we joined the pack. There was a stiff breeze blowing but Warren managed to keep his 25-foot Alumaweld under control to keep our baits fishing effectively.

What we were doing was dropping a small gob of eggs to the bottom and coming up a couple of cranks to put them in the zone where the fish were moving. We had just a two ounce cannon ball on the end of our line, with a three foot leader on slider to a 2/0 single hook. I watched everyone else catch fish on this first day. I was fishing too close to the bottom and hooked and landed four sturgeon that were from three to four and half feet in length. They put up a terrific fight, but I took a lot of ribbing from everyone on the boat. They were having no problem catching fish. When we headed back to the ramp we had seven kings from 12 to 15 pounds and a jack in the fish box. When we got back to fish camp, Warren filleted our fish and there was a rep there from the Professional Marketing Group that vacuum sealed our catch.

The next morning, we all got together at the Cook Shack, had breakfast and made up our lunches for the day, and headed back out. Granstrom and I fished with Willie Ross, of Walleye Willie's Guide Service. His specialty, obviously, is fishing for walleye in this stretch of the Columbia River, but he showed us that he knows how to catch salmon, too. We launched at the State Park, near the Peach Beach RV Park where Fish Camp is held, and headed downstream. We nearly ran over a net in the heavy chop that we had that morning, but made it to the fishing grounds without incident. We once again joined the pack and set up our drift. Granstrom and I each picked a corner and found the padded edges were ideal for bracing ourselves in the rolling waves, and Ross did an excellent job navigating with his bow mount electric motor. In spite

of the conditions fishing was good. I had vowed to avoid sturgeon, bringing my baits up three or four cranks. I had the hot rod on this day, hooking four of the five fish we boated before we had had enough of being bounced around in the heavy wind. We returned to the State Park to fillet our catch, as there was a great fish cleaning station here. We vacuum sealed our catch when we got back to camp.

On day three we fished with Bruce Warren again, and Eric and I were joined by fishing writer "Uncle Wes" Malmberg and Loren Dunbar of the Hevi-Beads Company. The wind was the worst that we had seen so far. It was blowing a steady 20 mph with gusts to 30. Warren had his hands full keeping the boat straight and put us into fish. Dunbar got two nice fish right away, with a Hevi-Bead attached to his leader. I got one and lost one and Granstrom landed two nice kings and a jack. We quit early, though. Fishing in these conditions just wasn't any fun.

The last day we were invited to go along with Herb Good, legendary guide on the Columbia, and he put on a clinic. He had a full boat, with Tim (sorry no last name) manager of Bi-Mart store in The Dalles, Jack Smith President of Oregon CCA, Hank O'Dougherty, of the Darex Company, that makes the Work Sharp Knife and Tool sharpener, his friend John, Granstrom and I. Conditions were the best of the week, with little or no wind. Herb Good runs a very tight ship and kept everyone on task and lines in the water, even when other fish were being fought. Granstrom put on a show, too, hooking six kings. We had 14 fish in the box and were headed for the



launch in about an hour and a half. We got our fish filleted and sealed and loaded up the Ford F-150 and headed home. I want to thank Ed Iman, organizer of Fish Camp for another great experience. Not only for the great fishing, but for the introduction to some great guides and also the makers of some great products. I look forward to trying them and sharing what I learn with my readers and viewers.

There is good news for anglers in the Hanford Reach on the Columbia. The daily limit has been raised to three adults. Fishing has been great in this stretch of the river already, and with the huge return having one more fish to take home is a real bonus. I will be fishing here twice in the next week and will let you know how I do.

Reach Dave at:  
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