GPFF - Burney Trip 14-17 June, 2018 – Eric Larson, Fishmaster; ericlarson87@gmail.com, (cell) 925-895-8058. (Updated 5/30/2018). Much of this is recycled from previous Burney trips, thanks Rich!

RENDEZVOUS AND CAMPING

Campsites are booked for June 14-17, Thursday, Friday, Saturday nights, McArthur-Burney Falls Campground (530-335-2777). 4.5 hrs. from Berkeley. Take HWY 80 east to 505 North, to 5 North, to 299 East. The park is northeast of Redding, six miles north of Highway 299 on Highway 89 near Burney, CA. Campsites 29 and 31. 3 cars max per site/must register and pay, 8 Anglers max per site. **Burney Campground is strictly enforced, so registrants have priority at campground.** Elev. 3100'.

Potluck Saturday well after dark. Bring something to share!

MAPS, BOOKS, ETC

http://www.burneychamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/burney.jpg shows a Burney Area fishing guide map in slightly too low resolution. The classic maps of Dewayne Hight are available at **http://www.fishsniffer.com/maps/**, in particular, (Upper) Hat Creek, Baum Lake, and Britton Lake. **http://www.burney-falls.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Burney-falls-campground-map.gif.** Pit River slightly anotated topo **http://www.ecoangler.com/habitat/Pit_River/images/Pit_River_PowerDam3.JPG**. **"Flyfisher's Guide to Northern California"**, Seth Norman, Wilderness Adventures Press. **http://caltrout.org/tag/pit-river-flows/** gives an extensive and excellent discussion of the Pit water management plan.

REPORTS AND ONLINE GUIDES

http://perfectflystore.com/whatcreek.html gives a really fine discription of the Hat Creek fishery and current conditions. See also **http://www.flyfishingconnection.com/cahatcreek.html** and **http://www.theflyshop.com/adventures/hatcreek.html**.

WATERS AND FLOWS (See **http://www.dreamflows.com/flows.php?page=real&zone=canv&form=norm&mark=All#California_Sacramento_Valley**, Below Pit 3 Dam, **http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/getAll?sens_num=20**, Pit R (PR4), (Upper) Hat Cr (HCB), for current flows.)

Burney Creek

below Falls -- Wild Trout regs. Falls View path. Huge pool below Falls, riffles and flats downstream to Lake Britton. Much more water than above Falls!

above Falls -- District regs. Upper campground footbridge. Pocket water and riffles. Entirely spring fed; absolutely clear, peters out remarkably soon upstream.

Hat Creek

below Hwy 299 -- Wild Trout regs. Dirt road to north 200 m west of Hwy 299 Bridge. Riffles and flats down to fish barrier pool above Lake Britton. This and next one are the stretches that made Hat Creek famous.

below #2 Powerhouse -- Wild Trout regs. Powerhouse road south off Hwy 299 0.5 mi. west of Hat Creek Bridge. Powerhouse pool and riffles, then (hard, to fish) spring creek flats to the bridge. Lots of fishers line up along the prime slot below the last riffle.

below #1 Powerhouse and Baum Lake -- Cassel Road south off Hwy 299 east of Hwy 89 junction. Follow signs to Fish Hatchery. Pool and riffles below powerhouse down to the lake. Fish the lake from shore or float tube.

Cassel --Road to Cassel. Public access in town and a little upstream, with paved path on west bank. Lots of bait fishers, but often good dry fly fishing in the evening.

Upper Creek -- Off Hwy 89. Private land in the flats above Cassel, but public access on Federal Land further upstream. Numerous Forest Service campgrounds. The creek is rather small here.

Pit River -- Wild Trout regs. Clark Creek Road west off Hwy 89 south of the Falls Campground, to Lake Britton Dam. Cross the dam (Powerhouse #3) and take Forest Route 37N06. This section of the Pit River is a tailwater flowing out of Lake Britton , known for being one of the best fisheries in the state, but is **very tough to wade**. It was hard to wade in the past when flows were steady around **150cfs**. New negotiation from PG&E have increased the flows to **280- 350cfs**! This is not water for novices. The river has a dense population of well-fed native rainbows. Flow information at http://cdec.water.ca.gov/dynamicapp/staMeta?station_id=P35

Lost Creek -- So. on Hwy 89 10 mi past Hwy 299, left onto Wilcox Rd. A tiny, pretty flat, stream ending in a pond above a small dam. Mostly tiny fish, but nice.

Rock Creek -- Access as the Pit River. This very small stream enters the Pit from the north 2 mi below Lake Britton. Follow FR37N06 to where it crosses the creek. Fish the bridge pool or up or downstream from there, or drive up the dirt road to the east of the stream. Pockets, pools and riffles.

Fall River -- Hwy 299 east. A whole trip of its own.

HATCHES & SPECIALS See, eg, **http://www.flyshack.com/HatchChart.aspx?RiverID=2003**, "Fly Fisher's Guide to Northern California, S. Norman, pp 47-8. See also **"R's SHORT GUIDE to Feeding Trout"**. **There should be lots of activity! Plan on fishing until you can't see what you're doing.**

05/13/18 The big Salmonfly hatch is going good. Remember, they crawl out of the water usually at night or low light conditions to hatch. Fish the Salmonfly nymphs near the banks. There are lots of other insects including Green sedges, Spotted sedges, both caddisflies. There are good Pale Morning dun hatches.

OCTOBER CADDIS LARVAE! (*Dicosmoecus*). Uncased larvae are unusually prone to behavioral drift during the daytime in June and July, peaking around 4 PM (big **cream Buckskin Caddis**).

SPOTTED SEDGE (*Hydropsyche*, net-spinning caddis, **10-15mm,** also LITTLE SISTER SEDGE, *Cheumatopsyche*, **a bit smaller**, but otherwise similar). Shallow, moderate to fast riffles and runs in most trout streams, large populations in plankton-rich waters (like Hat Creek!). Pherates emerge late PM *en masse* (**yellow, tan, brown Sparkle Caddis, EC Caddis**). Before emerging, *Hydropsychidae* pherates drift along the bottom or just under the surface, sometimes for hours. They then take unusually long to struggle out through the film. Adults oviposit late PM on the bottom in riffles or runs by diving , or possibly on the surface by dipping (**olive Deer Hair Caddis**, **Lead Wing Coachman**, **Missing Link**).

LITTLE WESTERN WEEDY-WATER SEDGE (*Amiocentrus*, long, slender, round-section tapered plant-material cased caddis, **8-10mm**). Large populations in weedy, plankton-rich slow to moderate runs. Available as pherates emerge PM to late PM often *en masse* after long drift and slow pushing through the surface film (**green Emmergent Sparkle Caddis, EC Caddis**), and as adults oviposit late PM on the surface or by diving or crawling below (**dark green Deer Hair Caddis**, **Lead Wing Coachman**, **Missing Link**).

PALE MORNING DUN (*Ephemerella*, smooth crawler, **7-9mm**). Nymphs live among rocks and debris in riffles, runs and flats that have moderate water flows. Nymphs are available if they come free any time of the day, during concentrated behavoiral drift in the evenings, and during heightened activity, including swimming, before a hatch (**tiny light olive brown Bird's Nest**). The nymphs, like many other *Ephemerellidae*, sometimes engage in up and down "practice runs" exposing the them to trout during extended pre-hatch periods. During emergence, fish the nymph as a dropper below a cripple (**pale yellow to olive tan Shucked Cripple)**, whose husk makes it a bit more supporting, and useful in its own right. The duns are classic surface emergers with long sedate floats in optimal weather (**pale yellow to olive tan parachute dun**). Duns have been reported to emerge subsurface in faster flows. Despite name, hatches any time the weather is temperate. Spinners return to the water within 2 days of emergence. Females often, but not always, drop their eggs from the air above the stream, preferably into riffles. Some females end up on the water with egg sacs still attached. These females are often active and far from spent. True spent spinners usually cause the most feeding activity (**brownish red spinner, eg Trusty Rusty**). Though often seen in the late PM, mid-AM spinner falls have achieved legendary status at many locations.

WESTERN GREEN DRAKE (*Drunella*, horny squat crawler, *D. grandis*, **11-15mm**, *D. Flavilinea*, "FLAV", **7-9mm**). Nymphs inhabit medium to fast water, but spring creeks (eg. Hat Creek) as well. Behavior generally like PMD. Imitate nymph (**medium to dark brown, olive Hare's Ear, Mercer's Poxyback Green Drake**). Emergence occurs when the air is temperate, in slow water adjacent faster nymphal habitat.The duns often emerge subsurface (within 12") as well surface. This is given testimony by the frequent success of wet emerger imitations (**bright green Soft-Hackles**). *Ephemerellidae* are classic surface emergers with long sedate floats in optimal weather (**bright Green Drake Natural Dun**), but the large *Drunella* take an exceptionally long time to get airborne once they break through the surface, and they may make several clumsy attempts. Good hatches can last several hours. The spinner fall may be at night, but if you see it, imitate (**Trusty Rusty)**.

LITTLE WESTERN IRON BLUE QUILL **(***Acentrella turbida*, tiny swimmer mayfly, **4-5mm).** In almost all trout streams, but especially in cold, unpolluted, alkaline waters. They inhabit almost every microhabitat in the stream except for silt beds, gravel and vegetation are especially suitable. Near constant availability, both as fast-swimming nymphs (**Pheasant Tail Nymph**) and as surface emergers (**PTN** as dropper, **Quigley Cripple**, **parachute dun, in olive, with blue-gray wings**). During emergence, nymphs may drift just under the surface for a while before breaking through. They have trouble escaping their shucks in the film, taking a long time and often becoming stuck in the process. Those which do escape may ride the water for quite a distance before taking flight. Dismal weather invites the best hatches of Baetis mayflies; look for them on overcast, rainy days, as long as the water temperature is above 40°F. Timing the return of these mayflies as spinners after they hatch is difficult; some may come back within a few hours, while others take a few days. *Baetis* females are among the only mayflies to lay their eggs underwater. The females land near the water after mating and crawl down to lay rows of eggs on the downstream side of rocks, sticks,

and other objects. They may slip loose during the process or let go after they finish, and wet fly imitations (**dun winged, olive Soft-hackle**) are effective during this time.

Starting - TINY WESTERN OLIVE (*Apobaetis futilis*). For us, same as LITTLE WESTERN IRON BLUE QUILL above.

Starting - TRICO (*Tricorythodes*, crawler, **3-6mm**). Cool clean streams with slow to medium flow, best in alkaline spring creeks, over silty bottoms. Nymphs become available during emergence. They are terrible swimmers and are extremely vulnerable as they swim up to the surface (**tiny dark WD-40, w/wo bead**). Males emerge at night, females (**tiny Cripples, Klinkhammers, olive abdomen, dark brown thorax**) in the early, AM, but as late as noon in cool weather (water temperature 52-56 F). Mating spinners gather in very tight swarms rather than roaming the full width of the river. The gravid females return to lay their eggs within minutes or hours of emerging. Spinner falls (**Ellis Triple Wing, Polywing Trico Spinner**) may provide the best Trico fishing. In general, it is very important to get the hook size right. With such tiny insects, being off by a single size makes the imitation look like a freak! When fishing dries, microdrag is a serious problem. Avoid it by using short casts and keeping most of the line off the water.

Starting - LITTLE YELLOW SALLY (*Isoperla*, **7-16mm).** Like Golden Stone (see below). Imitate nymph (**Mercer's Little Yellow Stonefly Nymph**) and adult (**Clark's Little Yellow Stonefly**).

Ending - GOLDEN STONE (*Calineuria*, **25-40mm**). Rocky riffles and runs of small to large streams with moderate to fast currents. Naturals are yellow with dark brown vermiculations. When the water warms in the spring, mature nymphs migrate toward shore, where they crawl out at night and emerge as adults. During migration, fish the banks with slow, shoreward swings (**black AP Nymphs**, **Kaufmann's Black Stone**, **big Rubberlegs Nymph**). Adults mate in stream-side vegetation. They become available again when they wriggle on the surface during oviposition, and when spent (**yellow, poss. peacock Stimulator, Madame X**).

Probably done - SALMON FLY (*Pteronarcys*, **30-60mm!**).

MIDGE (*Chironomid*, **3-8mm** in temperate lattitudes). Available all year in nearly all waters, but most important in fertile spring creeks where the current is so slow that it's efficient for trout to surface feed on very tiny insects. Larvae that inhabit oxygen-poor water contain hemoglobin, which makes them red; these are "bloodworms". The other midges are usually habitat colored. Pherates (**black, olive, gray, tan, poss. red, Zebra Midge, WD-40**) frequently emerge *en masse.* Pherates rise to the surface and slowly struggle to pass the back of the thorax through the surface film while the rest of the body dangles vertically below (**Klinkhammer**). The thorax skin breaks open and the adult emerges onto the surface (**Griffith's Gnat**). Sometimes on streams midges emerge so densely that they clump up (**Cluster Midge**). Midge pherates account for much of the mystifying midsummer spring creek action on evenings when no bugs seem to be in the air or on the water, yet trout are rising everywhere and ignoring one's flies. Despite the tiny size of midges, trout can be very selective to size and color. Remember that a difference of a single hook size in the tiny sizes is a very large percentage difference and very noticeable by the trout.

RESIDENT BUGS **If no hatch-related fishing is working, you can try imitating residents, or just exciting the trout**.

B**ig stoneflies** have multiyear life cycles, so *pteronarcys* and *calineuria* nymphs in all sizes up to, and possibly including, terminal will be resident in the riffles.

The larvae of the hatching caddis families will be pupating or gone --don't bother with them

Swimmer mayflies are always available, and **crawlers** drift, sometimes inadvertently, and sometimes behaviorally in great numbers, especially in low light. **Clingers** essentially never lose their grip, so if no behavioral drift, forget them.

Tiny fish in tiny streams eat anything and will always come to the surface, so dead-drift the standard dries (**Elk-Hair Caddis, Parachute or Catskill Adams**).

Finally, keep the classical subsurface searching patterns in mind (**Prince, Zug Bug, Bird's Nest, and Pheasant Tail nymphs, olive**, dead-drifted under an indicator, **black Wooley Buggers**, swung).

REGULATIONS

Sierra District Rules

April 26 - November 15, 5 per day, 10 in possession.

Special Regulations

(28.5) **Burney Creek** (Shasta Co.). From Burney Creek Falls downstream to Lake Britton.

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. Maximum size limit: 14 inches total length. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. 2 trout.

(74) **Hat Creek** (Shasta Co.) from Lake Britton upstream to Baum Lake, exclusive of the concrete Hat No. 2 intake canal between Baum Lake and the Hat No. 2 Powerhouse.

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. Minimum size limit: 18 inches total length. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. Aquatic invertebrates of the orders Plecoptera (stoneflies), Ephemeroptera (mayflies) and Trichoptera (caddisflies) may not be taken or possessed. 2 trout.

(75) **Hat Creek No. 1 and Cassel Forebays** (Shasta Co.). Those portions of Hat Creek known as No. 1 Forebay and Cassel Forebay.

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. 5 per day 10 in possession

(141) **Pit River** (Shasta Co.).

(A) From Pit No. 3 (Britton Dam) downstream to the outlet of the Pit No. 3 Powerhouse.

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. Minimum size limit: 18 inches total length. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. 2 fish.

Nov. 16 through the Friday preceding the last Saturday in Apr. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. 0 trout.

(B) Pit River, from Pit No. 3 Powerhouse downstream to Pit No. 7 dam.

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. 5 trout.

Nov. 16 through the Friday preceding the last Saturday in Apr. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. 0 trout.

(C) From Pit No. 7 dam downstream to Shasta Lake.

All year. 5 trout.

(67) **Fall River** (Shasta Co.).

(A) Fall River from its origin at Thousand Springs downstream to the mouth of the Tule River and including Spring Creek and excluding all other tributaries.

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. Maximum size limit: 14 inches total length. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. 2 trout.