

GPF - Lower Yuba, August 26-7 (Sat-Sun), 2023 - Rich Miller - Fishmaster, (h) 510-525-8006, (home email) rich@ski.org (Updated 3/20/2023)

SPECIAL NOTES

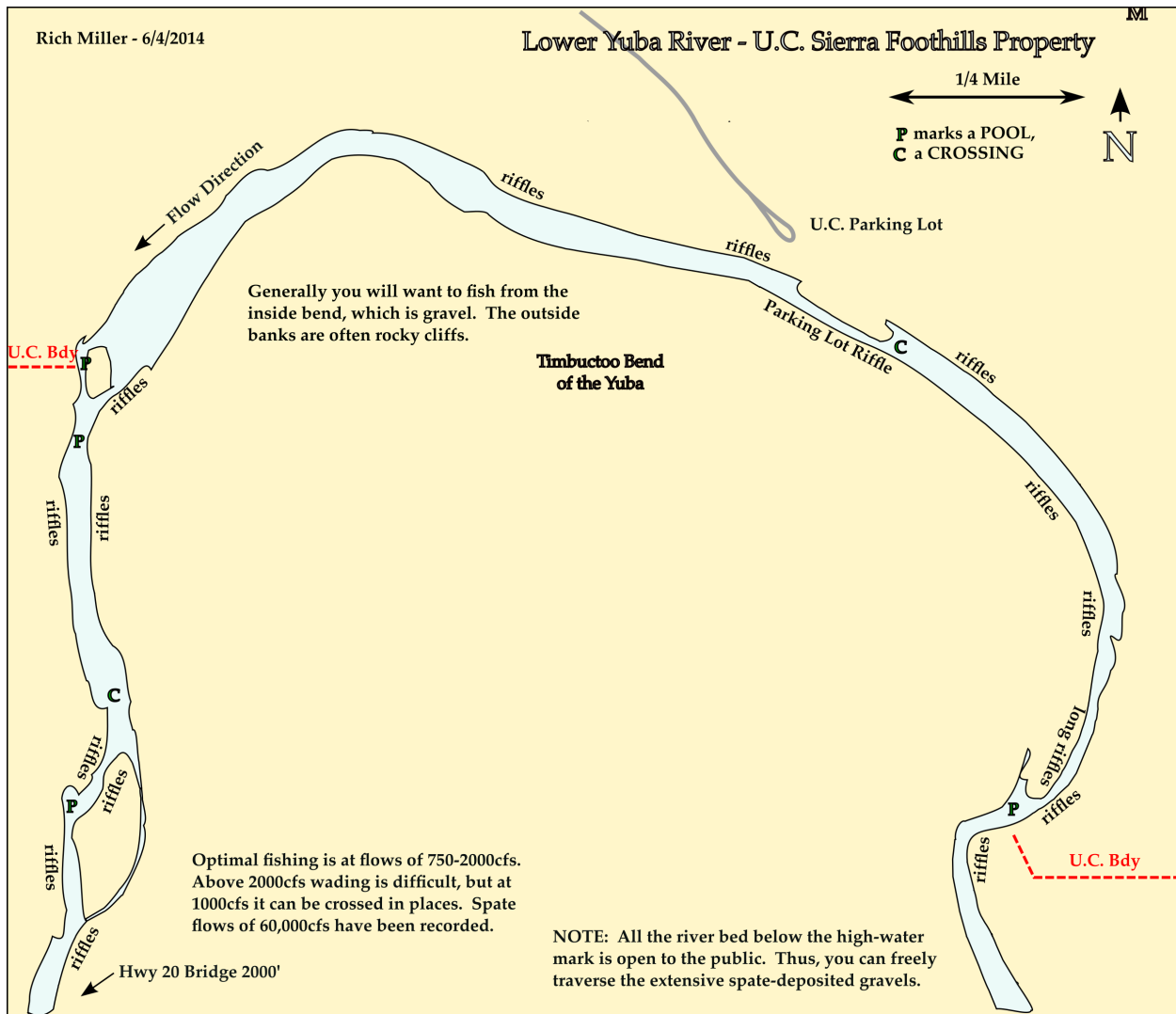
The outing is limited to 20 people. Camping will be available on the property beginning at 4 PM Friday and extending to Sunday evening. Fishing hours are dawn to dusk. Individual day passes will be handed out when we meet at the U.C. gate. The gate code will be emailed to us the week before the trip.

The Lower Yuba is accessible from the sea - you must have a 2023 California Steelhead Reporting Card in addition to your fishing license. Unlike the license, the report card must be delivered in hard copy, either by snail mail or by hand from a fishing store. Plan ahead!

RENDEZVOUS

Friday and Saturday evening 4 PM and Saturday and Sunday morning 8:30 AM, at the University of California Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center (530-639-8800), 8279 Scott Forbes Road, Browns Valley, CA 95918. Meet at the gate to the river road (N39.24672°, W121.32222°), which is on your right about 1/3 mile before you reach the research center. Note that, misleadingly, there is a sign at the gate that says "No Fishing Access". Be on time! The gate will be opened and then locked behind us. 2.5 hrs from Berkeley. Take I-80 east to Sacramento, turn onto I-5 north, then onto Hwy 70 to Marysville. Pass through downtown Marysville on 70, and as you round the lake, turn right onto Hwy 20 east. Continue 15 miles, pass the Sycamore Ranch Campground. At the sign to the UC Station, turn left onto Peoria Rd, and then at another sign, bear right onto Scott Forbes Rd (also called Long Bar Rd). The gate is just past Sicard Flat Ditch. GPF strongly encourages carpooling. Email Rich to coordinate rides.

WATERS AND FLOWS



Current and historical flows are available from Dreamflows at the following links: the [Yuba](#) below Englebright Dam, [Deer Creek](#) near Smartville, and the [Yuba](#) below Deer Creek). Optimal flows for fishing the Yuba are in the range of 750-2000 cfs. At flows above 2000, wading becomes difficult and crossing impossible. In the spring, Deer Creek tends to be muddy, and if there is much flow, the water in the Yuba itself becomes cloudy.

BEWARE loose gravel where it makes steep banks. The stones often give way and roll you right into the fast, deep water.

Deer Creek is a small stream that enters just above the Narrows above the UC Property. It runs off quickly after a rain, usually contributing only a small amount to the Yuba's flow, but quite a bit to its color.

Lower Yuba River -- Wild Trout and Steehead Special Regs. The UC property abuts the north bank between signs up and down river. This is a wide, shallow, open-shored reach. Easy access almost everywhere as long as you are on the inner, gravel, side of the turns.

Nymphing in riffles during the day when no fish are rising is the usual advice, but there are people who maintain that the Lower Yuba is really a dry-fly fishery, even then. In the slowly moving flats and especially in the tailouts, across or down and across dead-drifting presentation of dries or soft hackles to rising fish is often effective. Of course, you should always try the back eddies.

MAPS, BOOKS, ETC

"**Flyfisher's Guide to Northern California**", Seth Norman, Wilderness Adventures Press, 2010, has a chapter on the Lower Yuba that includes a map and a hatch chart. "**Fly Fishing the Sierra Nevada**", Bill Sunderland, Mosca Loca Books, 2008, has a chapter on the Yuba with a section about the lower river.

HATCHES & SPECIALS (Fly Fishing Traditions and Wildtrout have hatch charts specific to the Lower Yuba. Expected are March Brown, Mother's Day Caddis (American Grannom), PMD's, and maybe the tail end of Skwala.

Likely - AMERICAN GRANNOM (*Brachycentrus americanus*, square-section plant-material tapered-case caddis, **6-12mm**). Larvae live in medium to fast riffles and runs where they attach their cases to the upper sides of rocks exposed to the current. Pherates emerge PM *en masse* midstream, during warm, but not hot, PM to late PM. They drift like mayflies a short way (**bright green bodied, dark wing case Emergent Sparkle Caddis**). Ovipositing adults land on and ride the water calmly, PM to late PM (**medium green bodied, medium brown, grey wing CDC Caddis**). This species changes color dramatically after it emerges, and imitations of egg-laying adults should be a different color from imitations of emergers. Emergers have pale blonde, almost off-white wings and bright green bodies, while the egg-laying adults have light brownish gray wings and medium green bodies.

Likely - MARCH BROWN (*Rhithrogena*, clinger mayfly, **8-12mm**). Nymphs live among the rocks in riffles and runs and are rarely caught in the drift. Emergence takes place underwater, on bottom for most species. Thus, there is little point imitating the nymph. However, you do want to imitate the emerging dun (**March Brown Soft-Hackle**) and the drifting dun (**March Brown Parachute**). It is sometimes worthwhile to go after the spinner (**Trusty Rusty**). Early season on the Yuba, the bugs will be *R. morrisoni*, the "Western March Brown". These prefer cobble runs of medium depth, but are more tolerant of slow water than most in *Rhithrogena*. The spinner fall may be important.

Likely - 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 behavioural 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.

Probably done - SKWALA (*Skwala*, females **18-22mm**, males noticeably smaller). Nymphs are lovers of cobble bottomed riffles and runs of larger mid to low elevation rivers. Naturals are relatively slender and have patterned turkey-tail brown backs and pale olive or amber bellies (**Gold-Ribbed Hare's Ear**, small **Kaufmann's Golden Stone**). When Spring water temperatures rise above 45 deg F, skwalas crawl out onto the bank to emerge, usually staying in

the cobble crevices near the water. Their presence is not always apparent. However, once mating flights begin when the day warms, PM to evening, you will know they are there. Adults have smoky brown to brown wings, brown legs, and either primrose (often tinged with olive) abdomens ribbed with brown or the reverse in darker strains. Gravid females have obvious black egg clusters at the end of the abdomen (**yellow Stimulator**, or a similar pattern with a **black egg cluster** imitation). Ovipositing females lie still in the water, and often drift a long way. Because they are still and dark colored, they can be hard to see. Skwala hatches can be better in drought years.

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

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

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.

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

According to Kiene, there is a good population of **sculpin** in the river so many swing olive Zonkers on a sinktip line.

REGULATIONS

(212) **Yuba River**, from mouth to Englebright Dam (Yuba and Nevada cos.)

(A) From mouth to Highway 20 bridge.

All year. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. 2 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead**. 4 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead** in possession.

(B) From Highway 20 bridge to Englebright Dam.

Dec. 1 through Aug. 31. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. 2 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead**. 4 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead** in possession.

**Hatchery trout or steelhead in anadromous waters are those showing a healed adipose fin clip (adipose fin is absent). Unless otherwise provided, all other trout and steelhead must be immediately released. Wild trout or steelhead are those not showing a healed adipose fin clip (adipose fin is present).