

Fishing Forecast – White Mountains

Fishing Rating: Hot  Good  Fair  Poor 

Carnero Lake – Rating:

Fishing from the shoreline or using spinners or lures is difficult at this lake because of the weeds. The best way to fish is from a small boat, canoe or float tube. Fly fish for rainbow trout and tiger trout with wooly buggers, prince nymphs or light-colored nymphs in open areas. The water is deepest near the islands on the north end of the lake. Water levels are still low this year. However there are fewer weeds than normal and more open water. Water quality will only improve throughout the fall as cooler daytime temperatures and afternoon monsoons cool things down. Access is still difficult and requires a slog out into the mud to get a float tube or kayak in. Carnero won't fill back up until winter storms, so put your chest waders on and fish!

Concho Lake -- Rating:

As water temperatures warm throughout the summer and water is used for irrigation, this lake becomes inhospitable to trout and tolerable for warmwater species. By fall, only kayaking and shore fishing may be possible due to low water. Use corn to catch common carp. Try chicken liver or worms on bottom in the evening and night for channel catfish.

Crescent Lake -- Rating:

Bait and shore fishermen can try nightcrawlers and PowerBait. Rocky points on the west side are good for shore anglers when the lake is weedy. Boat anglers consistently do better at Crescent than shore fishermen. Boaters can try trolling with flies, such as wooly buggers, prince nymphs or peacock ladies, or use spinners like Panther Martins, small Mepps or Rooster Tails. Spring 2019 population surveys found very few fish, but in extremely good condition. Supplemental trout were stocked to improve fishing after poor water quality during 2018. This lake is full of fish, but murky water can make sight fishing and dry fly fishing difficult – use flashy lures or streamers, or bait. Summer algae blooms and low water likely decreased fishing success. As weather cools and water quality improves, try Crescent instead of other nearby lakes that may be overfished.

Fool Hollow Lake -- Rating:

With a variety of fish species, Fool Hollow Lake offers something for everyone, from first-time anglers to seasoned veterans. For kids and novice anglers, nightcrawlers on the bottom or under a bobber in rocky areas are a good way to go for bluegill or green sunfish. More experienced anglers can try spinner baits, jigs and nightcrawler rigs around underwater rocky structure, where large smallmouth bass, largemouth bass and walleye lurk. This is a great lake to catch trophy-sized walleye. Catch catfish in early fall with nightcrawlers or chicken livers on

the bottom. Try small bass and sunfish mimic lures for walleye in the rocky shallows during the evening. Water quality is good and rainbow trout were stocked until the end of August.

Lee Valley Lake -- Rating: 

Lee Valley Lake can only be fished with artificial lures and flies. Float tubes are popular and easy to use at this lake. However, fishing success from shore is comparable to fishing from a float tube or a boat. Lee Valley holds the state record for Arctic grayling (14.65 inches). Either end of the dam is a good place to fish from shore. Fly fishing is usually the most productive technique at this lake. Wet flies to try are hare's ear nymphs, small peacock ladies and prince nymphs in sizes 14 to 16. Just before dark, surface action can be good with dry flies, such as small Adams, mosquito or midge larvae, and light Cahills in sizes 16 to 20. Successful spinning lures can be small Panther Martin, small Z-ray or a very small Kastmaster fished from the dam. Fall fishing should be good and water quality has remained good all summer, so look for Apache trout or grayling that have put some size on since stocking in spring.

Luna Lake -- Rating: 

Luna Lake is the last chance to fish in eastern Arizona before the New Mexico state line. Large, scenic, with lots of visitor amenities and close to the town of Alpine, Luna Lake offers good spring, early summer and fall fishing for locals and visitors alike. This lake holds the current state record for cutthroat trout at 6 pounds, 5 ounces. Summer algae blooms and water quality issues should be clearing up in the fall and really improve fishing. Trolling with flies works well in spring and early summer at Luna Lake. Try wooly buggers, a prince nymph, simi seal leech and other large wet flies. Nightcrawlers and PowerBait fished off the bottom also work well. Shore and boat anglers both have success at Luna. Summer water quality conditions were stressful and resulted in a minor fish kill, but are improving as temperatures cool and will only get better as fall progresses.

Lyman Lake -- Rating: 

The largest lake in the region with great amenities and no boat motor restrictions, Lyman Lake State Park attracts anglers, as well as campers and water skiers year-round. Spring 2018 population surveys found large numbers of walleye and channel catfish throughout the lake. Try fishing for largemouth bass, walleye and sunfish along rocky or weedy areas of the lake. Predatory fish like walleye and bass should be concentrated in the deeper, northern areas near the dam. Fish for catfish with nightcrawlers or chicken livers on bottom at night. Catch carp with corn or dough baits. Lyman Lake has filled significantly since the low water of 2018 changing fish behavior and habitat. Try new techniques in new areas if your usual methods aren't working.

Nelson Reservoir -- Rating: 

Water levels are still good as the lake filled this spring and continued spilling into early summer. The southern end is the most shallow and may be totally inaccessible due to weeds. Fish from a boat or along the rocks at the dam. This lake has been known to produce trophy sized black crappie. Try spinners such as Panther Martins or Z-rays, artificial flies and bait, especially

nightcrawlers. Green sunfish are plentiful and can be easily caught along the rocky shoreline with nightcrawlers. Target rainbow trout during overcast days or even as it's raining when fish may be more active and less concerned with shadows overhead.

Patterson Ponds* -- Rating: 

Located in St. Johns, this Community Fishing Water is stocked with rainbow trout in fall. Try using small Panther Martins or gold Kastmasters. Bluegill are stocked in early summer and channel catfish are stocked in the later summer months. Patterson Ponds got an extra load of bluegill from the Eagar Days fishing tank thanks to the City of Eagar and Eagar P.D.! Look for rainbow trout stockings in October and November. Fish with chicken livers or nightcrawlers on bottom during the evening and night when catfish are most active. A General or Community Fishing license is required to fish here. The pond daily bag limits in community fishing waters (2 trout; 2 catfish; 5 sunfish) apply.

Rainbow Lake -- Rating: 

Because so much shoreline is privately owned, Rainbow Lake is best fished from a boat. Water levels are still good this year and the minimal weeds making boating a dream! Anglers may have some luck casting near structure with spinner baits for largemouth bass and Northern pike. Help remove illegally introduced Northern pike by harvesting any caught. Fish on the bottom with nightcrawlers or stink baits to catch catfish. Grass carp (white amur) are stocked into this lake to control weed populations; statewide daily harvest limit is 1 per day, minimum 30 inches. Bow fishing is not a legal method of take for grass carp. However, grass carp are a fun summer treat when other fish aren't biting. Try small hoppers, green or white flies, or small lures – anything that might look like plants – and let a grass carp tow you around for the afternoon.

Scott Reservoir -- Rating: 

Scott Reservoir is almost full after good winter storms. Rainbow trout were stocked in spring and catchable channel catfish were added to boost the population. While trout may be fished out, catfish are fun in the evenings on corn, chicken livers, or your own special stinkbait. Other warmwater species like largemouth bass or bluegill may be restocked when further necessary dam maintenance is complete.

Show Low Lake -- Rating: 

With campground, bathrooms, fish cleaning station and boat rentals, Show Low Lake is a great place to get away from it all while having amenities close by. Rainbow trout are stocked in spring and summer, while naturally reproducing walleye, sunfish, bass and channel catfish provide fishing opportunities the rest of the year. Fingerling channel catfish were stocked this year to increase populations in the future. Use nightcrawlers or chicken livers on bottom to target catfish. In fall, water stratification breaks up thanks to cooler days. Trout remaining after the last stocking are more active and disperse throughout the lake. Fishing for trout is best in the morning and in the evening as the sun sets; use worms, PowerBait, or small lures. The AZ State Record Walleye was caught here weighing in at 16 pounds! Use fish mimics throughout the water column, especially in the evenings and near rocky structure. 2018 spring population

surveys showed nice smallmouth bass; the largest fish was over 3 pounds and found right by the dock. It's time for Show Low Lake to produce another state record and fall after summer crowds have left is a great time to do it!

Woodland Lake -- Rating: 

Rainbow trout were last stocked in May, so few remaining trout are likely persisting. The fishing pier is currently closed for safety concerns and will likely not be repaired for some time. Fingerling channel catfish were stocked during the spring to grow big for the coming years. Adult channel catfish can be caught using bait on bottom, especially at night. Small bass and sunfish may be hiding under the floating dock and can be fun with a small hook, worm and bobber.

STREAMS

Show Low Creek Tailwater -- Rating: 

The large pool below Show Low Lake dam is once in early September to finish out the summer fishing season. Fishing will start to drop off a couple weeks after the final stocking. Try flies or small lures to draw fish from bottom or under cover.

***Show Low Creek Meadows -- Rating:** 

This new Community Fishing Program water located at the Show Low Bluff trailhead in Show Low provides multiple opportunities for anglers and families alike. Hiking trails and a disc golf course provide extra fun! Show Low Creek Meadows be stocked with catchable sized rainbow trout each month throughout the fall. Fishing will continue to improve as water temperatures cool. There should also be holdover bluegill and large channel catfish from summer stockings. Angling is permitted from the trailhead and bridge, upstream to the Hampton Inn on Hwy 260 / White Mountain Blvd in Show Low. Bait can be used, but daily bag limits are 2 trout, 2 catfish, 1 bass (minimum size 13") and 5 sunfish.

***Silver Creek -- Rating:** 

Silver Creek is stocked weekly through September with Apache trout and/or rainbow trout. Silver Creek is open to harvest from Apr. 1 until Sep. 30. including bait fishing, 6 trout daily bag limit. **No harvest is permitted after Sept. 30.** On Oct. 1, the catch and release season begins. Only artificial lure or fly with single point barbless hook may be used. Super catchable rainbow trout will be stocked on Oct. 1. Fishing at Silver Creek will be very good except during the hottest and brightest parts of the day. Sight fish with dry flies or small nymphs in the morning and evening. Nymphs and midges drifted through the largest pools can be effective during the day. Small single hook lures will also be effective. Silver Creek is a Game and Fish Commission-owned property; entry is only allowed from 30 minutes after sunrise to 30 minutes before sunset, about 7 a.m.–5 p.m. During catch-and-release season in the fall and winter, both the upper and lower section may be fished. No unauthorized entry is ever allowed in the hatchery grounds.

Black River–West Fork -- Rating: 

The stream is stocked weekly with Apache trout from the Forest Road 68 crossing upstream to the first crossing in the West Fork Campground. The stream also contains wild brown trout. Fishing is great in early summer, then may drop off a bit during monsoon rains in July and August when the water becomes turbid after rain showers. Baits become more effective when the flows are up and turbid. Flows usually drop back down within hours.

Black River-East Fork -- Rating: 

Fishing is good for stocked Apache trout and wild brown trout. The stream is stocked weekly with Apache trout from May to mid-September. Flow levels are higher and slightly off color during monsoon run off, but will drop and clear as monsoon storms subside. Try dry flies, nymphs, wooly buggers, streamers, small lures or PowerBait for trout. Hoppers or hoppers with droppers will work well in early fall when insects are most active. As fall progresses, watch out for spawning Brown Trout. Try not to target fish on redds or step on redds in the stream. This creek has a great population of wild browns. Protecting spawning fish will allow these populations to thrive.

Little Colorado River in Greer -- Rating: 

The stream was stocked this spring with Apache trout for the first time since 2015 and will be stocked weekly throughout Sept. Stocked trout will likely persist for 1-2 months after final stocking. Fishing for wild brown trout should improve as water temperatures cool. Try dry flies, small nymphs, small lures or PowerBait for trout. Flow levels are higher and slightly off color during monsoon run off, but will drop and clear as monsoon storms subside. As fall progresses, watch out for spawning Brown Trout. Try not to target fish on redds or step on redds in the stream. This creek has a great population of wild browns. Protecting spawning fish will allow these populations to thrive.

Little Colorado River – Sheep’s Crossing/West Fork – Rating: 

The river will be stocked through mid-Sept. and cooling water temperatures will help improve fishing. Fishing for wild Apache trout will be even better if you’re willing to hike upstream. Flow levels are higher and slightly off color during monsoon run off, but will drop and clear as monsoon storms subside. Try dry flies like a Parachute Adams or small nymphs such as a Hare’s Ear. Small lures or PowerBait can be effective as well.

*Community Fishing Program water