

**FLIES
CLOTHING
CHECKLIST
EQUIPMENT
AND LOTS MORE**

The Fly Shop®



ALASKA

2010 TRAVEL AND OUTFITTING GUIDE





YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY TO ALASKA!

Alaska is a fly fisherman's paradise. That may sound like a cliché...unless you've been there. For those who are returning to Alaska for your second (or twenty-second) time, you know what we're talking about. If this will be your first trip to the 49th state, know that you're in for the ultimate in freshwater fishing, and a stunning wilderness experience.

Over the last 30 years, we here at The Fly Shop have spent collective lifetimes fishing the Last Frontier. We go back every summer because nowhere else in the world produces as big or as many wild trout and salmon.

Just turn the page to begin learning about:

- Hotels and Restaurants in Anchorage, page 2
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- Gear and Clothing, pages 5-7
- Tackle and flies, by species, pages 8-14
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As your trip approaches you can relax in the knowledge that The Fly Shop and the staff at your destination are going to pull out all the stops to show you the best fishing and service Alaska has to offer. If you have any questions on travel, gear, or anything else in the fly-fishing world, please don't hesitate to give us a ring. It is always our pleasure to help.

Have a GREAT trip!

The Fly Shop Travel

Mike Michalak
Pat Pendergast
Mike Mercer
Ryan Peterson
Bill Marts
Eileen Born
Michelle Quinlivan



ANCHORAGE GUIDE TO HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

One of the main pistons that drive the Alaskan economy is tourism. Few places in North America do a better job of taking care of their guests than this little city on the Last Frontier. Anchorage hotels fill up quickly in the short summer as hunters, fishermen, and tourists flock in by the tens of thousands. Smart travelers will make their reservations early or run the risk of arriving to a city full of "no vacancy" signs.

There are numerous hotels within Anchorage that offer superb accommodations for traveling anglers looking for a single overnight, or for longer stays to tour Southcentral Alaska. Those listed below are all recommended by The Fly Shop. When we travel through Anchorage we look for good service with easy access to the airport and a nice restaurant. The Quality Inn, Hilton Garden Inn, Puffin Inn, Courtyard Marriott Anchorage and West Coast International offer nice accommodations and airport shuttles. The older hotels like the Millennium, Captain Cook, Anchorage Hotel, and Sheraton offer a bit of historic flavor to the stay. The Millennium, Quality Inn, and West Coast International are all located very close to the airport, while the Captain Cook, Anchorage Hotel, Puffin Inn, Sheraton, and Hilton Garden are in mid or downtown.

Anchorage Hotels

	Summer Rates	Reservations
The Millennium Hotel	\$200-\$310	800-544-0553
The Captain Cook	\$250-\$1,500	800-843-0553
Quality Inn	\$150-\$300	907-243-3131
The Anchorage Hotel	\$189-\$235	800-544-0988
Puffin Inn	\$119-\$209	800-478-3346
Sheraton Anchorage Hotel	\$220-\$240	800-478-8700
Hilton Garden Inn	\$209-\$339	800-445-8667
West Coast International Inn	\$185-\$219	800-716-6199
Courtyard Marriott Anchorage	\$175-\$205	800-314-0782

Restaurants

	Location	Features
The Flying Machine	Millennium	Great view and food
Glacier Brewhouse	Downtown	Seafood and steaks
The Crow's Nest	Captain Cook	Great view, wine list
* Simon and Seafort's	Downtown	Great view, seafood, hoppin' bar
Moose's Tooth Pub	Mid-town	Pizza and brewery
Club Paris	Downtown	Anchorage's famous steakhouse
Bear's Tooth Pub	Mid-town	Hearty Mexican and American
Sacks Café	Downtown	Gourmet menu, breakfast & dinner
The Marx Brothers	Downtown	Elegant fine dining, make reservation
Snow City Café	Downtown	Great breakfast! (near Captain Cook)

* "Simon's" is a very popular restaurant and advance reservations are a must. Tel: (907) 274-3502, or you can make reservations at: <http://www.simonandseaforts.com/resv.php>



ALASKA PHONE NUMBERS

One of the reasons we're all so captivated by the pursuit of trout and salmon with a fly is that these fish live in beautiful places. To catch them, we find ourselves flying, boating and standing over, through, and within situations that take our breath away. You'll find that fishing in Alaska typifies the wilderness experience. Bears, moose and caribou are your river companions, while snow-capped peaks, thick forests and tundra provide the background.

But fishing is just one of many different wilderness adventures Alaska has to offer. If you want to add a few days or a week onto your fishing trip to see some other Alaska sights, you can easily do so. From Anchorage you can rent a car and drive south to the famous Kenai Peninsula to wrestle a Volkswagen sized halibut in Seward or Homer, or head north to Denali National Park or Prince William Sound. Or you can fly to more far-flung regions, like the far north Arctic or lush, rain forested Southeast Alaska.

National Airlines

- Alaska/Horizon Airlines, (800) 426-0333
- United Airlines, (800) 241-6522
- Delta Airlines, (800) 221-1212
- Northwest Airlines, (800) 225-2525
- Continental Airlines, (800) 525-0280
- America West, (800) 235-9292

In-state Airlines

- Era Aviation, (907) 243-6633
- Peninsula Air, (907) 243-2323
- Alaska/Horizon Airlines, (800) 426-0333
- Iliamna Air Taxi (907) 334-9845

Ferries and Trains

- Alaska Marine Highway System, (800) 642-0066
- Alaska Railroad, (800) 544-0552
- White Pass and Yukon Route RR, Skagway, (800) 343-7373

National Parks and Forests

- Denali Nat. Park, (907) 683-2294, www.nps.gov/dena/
- Denali Bus Tour Reservations, www.reservedenali.com/tours.php
- Kenai Fjords National Park, Seward (907) 224-2132, www.nps.gov/kefj/
- Kenai Fjords Cruises, www.alaskaheritagetours.com/476.cfm
- U.S. Forest Service Information Center, (907) 586-8751
- Alaska Public Lands Information Center, (907) 271-2737
- Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve, (907) 697-2230

Fishing and Hunting

- Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game, (907) 465-4112
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (907) 786-34

The Great Alaska Travel Agent: The best Alaska travel agency we have worked with in recent years is Travel Meetings and Incentives (TM&I) located in Mill Creek, WA. They know all the tricks, secure great rates and understand the intricacies of traveling to and from Alaska, as well as in and around the state. Your contact at TM&I is Sandy Dubois. You can contact her at:

Sandy Dubois

Travel Meetings and Incentives

Direct telephone line - 425-275-4202

sandyd@travelmeet.com

Main telephone line – 800-596-2297

Fax – 425-742-2638

FISHING LICENSES

You'll need to purchase an Alaska fishing license to cover the number of days you'll be fishing. Most lodges are licensed vendors and can sell you one on the spot. They are also readily available in Anchorage at any sporting-goods or grocery store. **The most convenient way to buy your license is online at:** <https://www.admin.adfg.state.ak.us/buyonline>. If you are fishing for king salmon, you will also need to purchase a king stamp. The face of the stamp must be signed, in ink, and stuck onto the back of your current year's sport fishing license.

Non Resident Sport Fishing License

1 Day Sport Fishing License	\$20
3 Day Sport Fishing License	\$35
7 Day Sport Fishing License	\$55
14 Day Sport Fishing License	\$80
Annual Sport Fishing License	\$145

Non-resident King Salmon Stamp

1 Day Stamp	\$10
3 Day Stamp	\$20
7 Day Stamp	\$30
14 Day Stamp	\$50
Annual Stamp	\$100

ALASKA READING LIST

- *Coming into the Country*, (recommended!) by John McPhee
- *Alaska*, by James Michener
- *Travels in Alaska*, by John Muir
- *Where the Sea Breaks its Back*, by Cory Ford
- *Arctic Dreams*, by Barry Lopez
- *Into the Wild*, by John Krakauer
- *Rods & Wings*, by Bo Bennett
- *One Man's Wilderness*, by Richard Proenneke
- *Atlas of Pacific Salmon*, by The Wild Salmon Center



ALASKA CAMP GEAR & FLY FISHING TACKLE GUIDE

Below are The Fly Shop's recommendations for camp equipment, clothing, rods, reels and lines that we have found to work best for fishing conditions for Alaska. Please remember that these recommendations are merely that - you are by no means required to purchase all of this equipment. Do, however, make sure the gear you come equipped with is in quality, reliable working condition that will stand up to the rigors of the Alaskan wilderness and fish.

The Fly Shop is a full service purveyor of flyfishing equipment. We carry only top quality equipment that our staff uses and vouches for in the field. We would love to have your business in outfitting you for your trip!

FISHING VEST OR TACKLE PACK

For vests we like a high quality product, in a shorty model. Choose one that has room for a rain jacket or camera in the back. The brands we like are Simms and Patagonia. If you prefer a tackle pack, take a look at the Fishpond Water Dance Pack.

WATERPROOF DAY PACK OR BOAT BAGS...

...hold extra gear, clothes, flies, camera, snacks, etc., and keep them safe and dry during floats and boat rides. The Fly Shop recommends Simms and Sagebrush Dry Goods products as they all produce 100% waterproof packs and bags.

HEAD NETS AND INSECT REPELLENT

Alaskan mosquitoes do abide by the rules of DEET. You don't need to apply much, but it does need to cover all exposed skin. Repellents with 50% - 100% of the active ingredient, DEET, are the best. Head nets are rarely needed, but if you have a low tolerance for bugs they can be a real asset. Bugs are worst in July and taper off as the summer progresses.

CAMERA & CAMERA PROTECTION

Waterproof or splash-proof 35mm pocket cameras are handy. Canon or Nikon digital SLR cameras with a good zoom lens (28 - 80) are the best.

The best hard plastic cases to protect expensive camera equipment are made by Pelican Products, www.pelican.com The Sure-Dry Hip Pack by Sagebrush Dry Goods is a totally submersible soft option.

POLARIZED SUN GLASSES

Good quality polarized sunglasses are a must both for seeing fish and for safety. Brown, amber and copper are the best lens colors. Oakley, Costa Del Mar and Action Optics make excellent fly fishing sunglasses, and even offer prescription options. Bring a spare pair!



SUN PROTECTION

When the sun shines in Alaska the ultra-violet rays are intense. Waterproof sun block in SPF 25 or higher is recommended.

WADING STAFFS

If you use a staff at home, bring it along. They can be handy, particularly the collapsible models. While Alaskan rivers are considered easy wading, there will always be a fish that likes to hang out in swifter deeper water, tempting you into position.

NIPPERS, HEMOSTATS, HOOK FILE, FLOATANT, AND MEASURING TAPE: These are essential.

CLOTHING FOR ALASKA

The weather in Alaska is constantly changing - one day it may be 80 degrees and sunny, and the next day rainy, windy and in the low 50's. It is also not uncommon to have frosty mornings and every type of weather all in one day. By planning your clothing strategies around a layering system, you can easily adjust and adapt to changing temperatures and conditions. These insulating layers can be used in any combination, and not necessarily in the order listed. For instance, you may want to put your rain jacket directly over your base layer on a warm, breezy day. Concentrate on synthetic fabrics in all your garments when packing for Alaska. Synthetic materials retain little moisture, "wicking" it away from your skin and "breathing" it out away from the body. This is important when you are walking in waders or when outside temperatures heat up. Remember, cotton garments are nice in the tropics but have no place in the mountains or wet country. When wet, cotton has negative insulating qualities and takes a very long time to dry.

BASE LAYER

Start off with synthetic thermal underwear tops and bottoms. They usually come in three weights: light, mid and expedition. According to your individual metabolism, pick what weight is best for you. The Fly Shop's Signature "Base Layer," Simms "WaderWick" (lightweight) and "RiverTek" (midweight) and Patagonia Capiline are good choices.

MIDDLE LAYER

Your second layer of insulation, both top and bottom should match the weather and conditions of the day. Synthetic fleece is the way to go here. Simms' "Windstopper Softshell" and "Guide" Pants and shirt, or Patagonia's "Regulator" line of fleece provide great insulation. Also consider The Fly Shop's "Alpine Tech" and "Wind Barrier" jackets; they are terrific garments and are a great value.

HATS

Bring a hat with a good brim for sun protection, and a warmer stocking hat for cold days (which can occur anytime during the season.)



SOCKS

For a week's fishing trip, three pairs of heavy socks will be adequate. Wool, polypro or a combination of both are the best choices in sock material. Try on your socks with your waders and wading boots before you go to insure you have plenty of room to move your toes. Being unable to move your toes and cramping your feet in your wading boots are the biggest reasons for numb toes and cold feet. Fox River, Simms and Patagonia synthetic and “smart wool” are the way to go.

GLOVES

Fingerless insulating gloves are great for boat rides and cold days. If the bugs are bad, gloves further help keep them off the backs of your hands. We have had the best success with synthetic or wool gloves, rather than neoprene which retain water.

WATERPROOF SHELL

The final layer on your upper body should be a rain jacket. High quality Gore-Tex type products are the best. Your rain jacket should be 100% waterproof and breathable, multi-layered, with sealed seams. Buy the best rain jacket you can afford, as it is one of the most important pieces of equipment you can own. The Simms line, and Patagonia's Guidewater are high quality jackets designed specifically for flyfishermen. Various models by North Face, Arcteryx, Columbia, and Marmot are all good crossover choices.

WADERS

Stocking foot, breathable waders are the only way to go. You will experience little or no moisture build-up inside the waders, even after a long hike; they wear like iron, pack down very well, and are comfortable to be in all day. For safety we strongly recommend wearing a wading belt at all times. Simms waders are the time-tested gold-standard and Patagonia's Guidewater are also high-quality waders.

WADING BOOTS

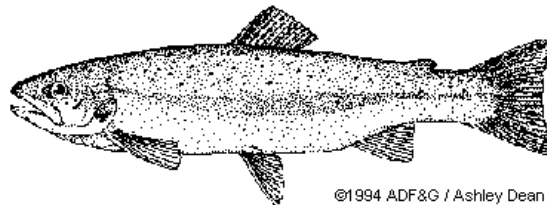
Felt or “sticky” vibram rubber-soled wading boots are the best choice. Patagonia, Simms and Chota - there are lots of good brands. With a few exceptions, studs are generally not allowed or needed in Alaska.

CAMP SHOES

A good weight saving trick for overall packing is to wear comfortable tennis or hiking shoes during air travel that can double as camp shoes. Avoid sandals – they're not mosquito-proof!



RAINBOW TROUT, CHAR & DOLLY VARDEN



Because of their sheer size and abundance, and their voracious strikes and tendency to go airborne when hooked, Alaskan rainbows deserve their reputation as the premier freshwater game fish in North America. Naturally occurring up to 18 pounds or better in the Iliamna and Bristol Bay drainages, they are caught June through October. Techniques vary according to the season, in relation to the salmon runs. Alaskan rainbows are 100% wild and native – no hatcheries or transplants! Many anglers consider them to be the hottest strain of rainbows within the species' world wide range.

Arctic Char and Dolly Varden are, genetically speaking, nearly identical. Both species average between 1 and 5 pounds with a maximum of 20 pounds. They have fascinating life histories that include both sea-run and stream-resident forms. A very hard fighter for its size, the beautiful pink and orange-colored markings have always been admired by anglers. Char are exceedingly plentiful in most river systems of Alaska.

Fly Rods for Trout and Char: It's a wise idea to bring two rods of different weights, both to be able to maximize your technique, and of course so that a spare is available should you break a rod. A 9 foot 5 or 6 weight rod will allow you to use a variety of fishing techniques from casting dry flies and nymphs to throwing a sinking line with a weighted streamer. A 9 or 9 1/2 foot 7 or 8 weight rod is more suited for high wind situations, throwing large weighted streamers, and/or in the event you also want to fish for Sockeye, Chum or Silver Salmon. Four-piece rods are the way to go.

Sage Z-Axis and TCX
Winston Boron IIX or BIIImX

Scott G2 or S4
The Fly Shop's GL H20.

Fly Reels for Trout and Char: There are many good reels on the market today. You'll want a reel with a drag capable of stopping large fish in heavy current. Our favorite reel for the price is The Fly Shop's own L2A. The reel is everything you need at a modest price (\$129.) Whatever reel you choose it should have a smooth drag and hold a minimum of 100 yards of backing. Reels with rim-control are ideal. Avoid antiques and clicker drag reels. Alaska can be hard on gear!

Ross Vexsis, size 2 or 3
Nautilus NV 6/7

Galvin Torque or Spoke Series, size 5 or 6
The Fly Shop's L2A 5/6



Leaders and Tippet for Trout and Char: Leaders for trout and char should be short and stiff. Length should be limited to 7 1/2 feet and tapered to 2X or 3X tippet diameter on both floating and sinking-tip lines. Large trout are best pursued with leaders tapered to 0X or 1X tippet. For a week's fishing you will need no less than four tapered leaders. For tippet you should bring fresh spools of 4X - 0X. Umpqua and Rio both make quality tapered leaders and tippet material. The new fluorocarbon leader and tippet material is virtually invisible in the water, has great abrasion resistance, does not degrade in UV light and sinks faster in the water. Although it costs more than standard tippet and leader material, we are convinced that using it will help you to catch more fish: Rio Fluoroflex, Frog Hair, and Seaguar Grand Max and The Fly Shop's mono leaders and tippet are some of the best available.

Fly Lines for Trout and Char: Fly line selection is simple for Alaska. The most important line for you to have for each rod is a floating weight forward. Lines to consider are Rio's Gold or Steelhead/Atlantic Salmon Taper. However, as we all know, sometimes fish will be impossible to catch without a sinking tip line. We recommend you have a 15-foot fast sinking tip line for each rod, such as Scientific Angler "Wet Tip" or Rio's Density Compensated Type III. The best value line on the market is the Rio "Versi-Tip" interchangeable tip line. It comes with every 15' tip you're likely to use in a week in Alaska, from full floating to fast sinking.

Split Shot, Indicator & Floatant for Trout and Char: Bring an ample supply of split shot in sizes B and BB. Indicators are a must for the bulk of the roe imitation angling. We like to use the plastic "Thingamabobber." Yarn indicators and mouse flies should be dressed with quality floatant.

Dry Flies for Trout and Char: Traditional dry fly fishing in Alaska occurs prior to the arrival of the salmon in June and early July, during which time in some isolated locations it can be spectacular.

Parachute Adams, #12-14

Humpy, #12-14

Stimulator, #12-14

Elk Hair Caddis, olive & tan #12-14

Black Gnat #14-16

Royal Wulff, #12-14

Surface Creatures for Trout and Char: All of the famous watersheds in Alaska have large populations of voles, lemmings and mice. Trout feed on them heavily in the spring, and to a lesser extent throughout the summer and fall. Fly fishermen should always have a couple of mouse patterns on hand. They are fished with a dry line and short stout leader (6 foot, tapered to 1X). Remember to let the fly swing downstream, across the current, under constant tension (not dead-drifted) in order to avoid the fly being taken too deeply by the fish. Hold on to your rod!

Alaska Wiggle Lemming
Morrish Mouse

Mighty Mouse
Mr.Hanky

Mercer's Lemming

Smolt Imitations for Trout and Char: In every major river & lake drainage in Alaska, sockeye salmon smolt begin their migration to the sea in the spring and early summer. At lodges like Royal Wolf or the Royal Coachman, trout congregate by the thousands in June to gorge on smolt. At this time these patterns are deadly.

Mercer's Sac Fry, #12
Hatchery Smolt, #4

Zonker (natural), #4
TFS Alevin, #8

Clouser (silver and olive) #6
Milt's Belly-up Smolt



Egg Patterns or Roe Imitations for Trout and Char: Once salmon begin the active spawning cycle, trout, char and grayling also move in behind the huge washboard-shaped redds to gorge voraciously on the salmon spawn. Eggs that don't take to the gravel nests roll along the bottom, and for weeks are the fishes' primary food source. Therefore from mid-July on, egg patterns are often the most important flies. They're best fished with a dry line, indicator, and small split shot.

Soft Milky Eggs, #6 - 12
Clown Eggs, #10

Iliamna Pinky
Glo-Bugs, #6

Fox's Fertilizer, #8, 12

Leeches, Sculpins and Streamers for Trout and Char: Throughout the season in Alaska, leeches, sculpins and streamers are top producers. The strike is vicious, and trout often actually prefer these forager imitations to their routine diet of roe. There are a handful of deadly patterns that should occupy the bulk of your fly box.

Poxyegg Leech, #4

Wooly Bugger (black), #4

Egg Sucking Leech, #4

Wool Head Sculpin (olive, black), #4

Rag Sculpin #6

Sleech (pink & purple)

Silvey's Sculpin (olive, tan, black), #4

Kiwi Muddler (olive, brown, yellow), #4

Flesh Patterns for Trout and Char: In the late fall, as the salmon start to die, their carcasses become another important food source for trout and char. Flies that imitate bits of flesh need to be a part of your arsenal.

Polar Shrimp, #6

Sleech (flesh colors)

Alaskan Omelet, #6

Cotton Candy, #6

Carcass Fly (ginger), #4-6

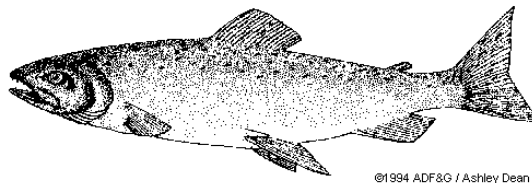
Battle Creek, #4

Kennedy Flesh Wound

Candy Cane

Morrish Medusa

KING (CHINOOK) SALMON



The largest of the Pacific Salmon, kings (or chinook salmon) are the first species to make the migration to their natal streams each season, from Mid-June to late July. Adults weigh from 15 to 80 pounds, but those in the 25 to 50 pounds class are the most plentiful. The mighty king salmon will give you the most sensational challenge in fresh water on rod and reel.

Fly Rods: Nine and ten weight rods with stiff butts are required. Length of rod should be 9 feet. Companies that offer quality rods suitable for chinooks include Sage Xi2 or Z-Axis 9' 10 wt, Scott S4s or X2s models, or Winston BIIImX.

Two-handed "Spey" rods are also effective when fishing for kings. Their advantage is that you can cover a lot of water very efficiently, while maintaining amazing line control, given the 13 to 15 foot rod length. On rivers like the Hoodoo, Sandy or Kanektok, they are a great way to go. We like Sage's Z-Axis, 9143, and TCX 14' 9 wt. Scott's T2h 15' 9 wt. is also a good choice.

Fly Reels: Fly reels should be of high quality and capable of holding at least 200 yards of 30-pound micron backing. Saltwater models are the best choice, as they are built to stand up to screaming runs with smooth, reliable drag systems. Outside palming rims are nice when a fish is in close. Quality reels include the Tibor Riptide, Nautilus CCF, and models from Galvin and Ross. For Spey fishing, the Galvin T-10 or T-12. The Nautilus 12-T or 12-S offer large, wide-arbor designs that easily accommodate the bulkiest of spey lines.

Fly Lines: The majority of the time you will find kings in fast, deep water. This type of water calls for fast sinking lines that get down in a HURRY! A good assortment of 30 foot shooting heads, such as Rio's Dredger System, are useful and should include sink rates I - VIII and some leadcore or tungsten T-14. For running/shooting lines either Amnesia or level floating lines work the best behind shooting heads and should be no lighter than 25 pounds in strength. Rio's Density Compensated lines with 24 foot sinking tips (300 or 400 grain) or Teeny 24 foot sink-tips (325 or 425 grain) work very well and can be easier to cast and manage compared to standard shooting heads with running lines. It is also a good idea to carry a standard weight forward floating line, like Scientific Anglers GPX or Rio Steelhead/Atlantic Salmon.

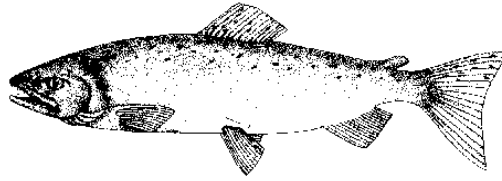
For a spey line choice, we recommend the interchangeable-tip Rio Skagit Lines with their short heavy belly for punching out large flies and heavy tips with double spey and snap-T casts. They should be matched with tips built from tungsten-core "T-14" in lengths from 7.5 feet to 20 feet, in increments of 2.5 feet.

Leader and Tippet: With kings hanging so close to the bottom, you want to keep your leaders short, 3 - 5 feet in length. Straight mono leaders are fine, though special "king salmon" leaders are available. You'll need heavy tippet material - 12-20 pound test Maxima monofilament is the standard king rigging. Tie your knots carefully and check all leader and tippet connections constantly.

Flies: Flies used are standard attractor patterns tied on stout hooks, sizes 4 to 2/0. Your flies should vary from heavily weighted to non-weighted. Color should range from black, orange, fuchsia, purple, flame, red, chartreuse, or any combination thereof. A simple, large weighted black bunny strip streamer can be deadly.

- Bjorn's Super Prawns ("popsicle", chartreuse, pink, purple, orange crush), #1/0
- Paul Miller's Spey Prawn (hot orange, chartreuse, pink), #1/0
- Paul Miller's Super Spey Predator (blue/purple, black/red), #1/0
- Hareball Leeches (fuchsia, orange, pink/purple), #1/0
- King Caviar, #1/0
- Marabou Coneheads (popsicle, blue moon, volcano), #1/0
- Egg Sucking Leech, #4 - 2
- SW Clouser, #2 - 1/0
- Babine Special, #2 - 6
- Comets (orange, chartreuse)
- Hot Shot Comet (black, orange, pink, purple, chartreuse), #2
- Motion Prawn (purple, pink, black), #2
- String Leeches (black, purple), #2

SOCKEYE, PINK, CHUM & SILVER SALMON



©1994 ADF&G / Ashley Dean

Fly Rods: Fly rods for these salmon should be moderately stiff, with plenty of backbone, and durable enough to withstand the rigors of dozens of big, strong fish each day. Optimum length is 9 feet, and the best line weight selection is 8. A stiff, strong 7-weight will be adequate, but an 8 weight is optimum. Too light of a fly rod will exhaust the fish. We like Sage Z-Axis 9 foot 4-piece 8 weight, and Winston Boron IImX 9 foot 4-piece 8 weight rods.

Fly Reels: Reels should have a minimum of 125 yards of #20 - #30 backing. Solid reels for silver salmon include Ross Vexsis 4, Nautilus CCF8 or NV8/9, Galvan T-8 or T-10, Tibor Everglades QC and The Fly Shop's S4la 7/8.

Leader and Tippet: Leaders should be very short and strong. Tapered leaders should be 6 to 7 1/2 foot, 1X - 01X. Alternatively, you can splice together a totally adequate leader system from a 2 foot butt section of 30# test mono, followed by 2 feet of 20# mono, and a 2 foot tippet of 10-15#.

Fly lines: The key to successful fishing for salmon of any species is to get the fly to the proper depth. In this sense, fly lines are critical. Silver salmon, especially, will often come to the surface for "wog" style popper flies and for this scenario a weight-forward floating line like Rio's Steelhead and Atlantic Salmon taper is a must. Usually, however, fishing for all salmon is done sub surface with weighted streamers, so an interchangeable tip system like Rio's Versi-Tip insured you will have the right tip for the right depth and conditions.

SILVER (COHO) SALMON

Fishing for silvers is at its best from mid-August through September, and in some cases into October. Most silvers weigh between 8 and 14 pounds, but on some coastal streams it is not uncommon to catch fish of 20 pounds or more! That's a lot to handle when you consider that pound-for-pound, silvers are the most exciting salmon on the end of a fly line, famous for their aerobatics and screaming runs.

Fishing Techniques: Most silvers will be fished in slack or swirling water, outside the main current of the river. Therefore a cast and strip technique works well. If there is a huge school of fish milling, don't cast into the middle of them but to the sides to avoid spooking the group. A floating or monocoar intermediate line works the best under these conditions. When fishing cohos in moving water, a classic downstream wet fly swing produces well. Pay close attention to the end of your swing, as the grab often takes place here. When conditions are right silvers can also be caught on a wog-style dry fly waked over the top of them. This is a heart-stopping way to fish for the salmon - very visual and with explosive strikes.

Coho Salmon Flies: Of all the salmon in Alaska, silvers move the best to a fly. Streamers are by far the most successful patterns. Surface poppers are also a thrilling and often productive way to fish.

Karluk Flash Fly, (red, pearl, purple), #2	Hareball Leech (fuchsia, pink, black)
Bunny Leeches, all colors	Egg Sucking Crystal Bugger
Foam Top Pink Pollywog	Hot Shot Comets
CH Popsicle	Bjorn's Super Prawns
Psycho Leech	Kami Killer
Davis Spanker	Coho Shrimp
Wiggle Tail	Coho Seizure
Davis Spanker (purple/pink, chartreuse/orange)	

SOCKEYE (RED) SALMON

Sockeye Salmon Fishing Techniques: Sockeye follow the banks of the rivers as they migrate. Sometimes an unbroken black ribbon of fish can be seen from the air, just a few feet off of each edge of the stream. By far the best way to fish sockeye is to dead drift a fly into this glut of traveling fish from a point directly perpendicular to it. If you can set yourself up in this situation, you should be in them. Occasionally you'll find sockeye in still water where a slow cast and strip method will suffice. Be aware of slight hesitations in line speeds or stoppage of fly as sockeye usually take very softly. When fishing over large concentrations of sockeye, it can be easy to snag fish. Try to distinguish between the fly dragging over a fish's back and a take. It can be quite challenging at times.

Sockeye Salmon Flies: We have found that the best sockeye flies are sparsely tied. Flies used in the Pacific Northwest for shad are great. Green, yellow, chartreuse, pink and orange colors on hook sizes 4-8 with bead chain eyes and a ribbed body work well. A simple and fast fly to tie requires a #4 medium shank hook wrapped with lead wire. Slide a piece of gold or silver Mylar tubing over this (use your imagination on color) and secure at both ends with colored thread. At the front of the fly wrap a colored inexpensive hackle three or four times.

Chumbugger, #4-8	Sockeye Special, (orange or green), #8
Green Comet, #8	Wiggle Tail, #4

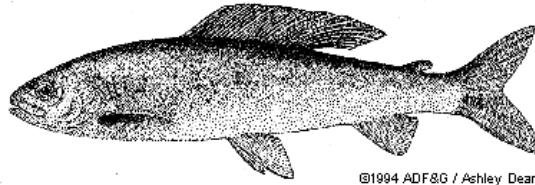
CHUM (DOG) SALMON & PINK SALMON (HUMPIES)

Chums average 8 to 12 pounds. They are perhaps the most underrated game fish in Alaska. When targeted in tidewater and the lower pools of rivers in Bristol Bay, they are extremely aggressive! They readily take streamer flies and lures.

Pink Salmon: Smallest of the Pacific Salmon, averaging between 3 and 5 pounds, they arrive in mid-July and August. What Pinks lack in size, they make up for in aggressiveness and non-stop action. They are excellent sport on smaller rods.

Fishing Techniques: The most effective method of fishing these salmon is the classic downstream wet-fly swing. Both chum and pink salmon take a fly aggressively. Occasionally you'll find chums held up in slack water where a cast and strip technique is deadly.

Flies for Pink & Chum Salmon: Pink and chum salmon are not fussy about what they eat or hit. You can use just about any standard salmon or steelhead streamer to entice them. Flies tied on #6s to #2s, weighted and non-weighted, are standard; black, pink, orange, chartreuse and silver are good bets. A straight short leader of 5-7 feet works the best.



ARCTIC GRAYLING

Grayling are God's gift to entry level fly rodders and light tackle fanatics. They're thick in many streams and will attack a fly all season long and in the worst of weather. Their reputation as a sport fish is in their susceptibility to dry flies and the gracefulness with which they take them. Most grayling average 10 to 14 inches with trophies measuring 21 inches and weighing 4 pounds. Their distinctive sail dorsal fin, and color variations, from coal-black to iridescent turquoise, makes the grayling a memorable and worthy sport fish.

Fishing Techniques: Upstream or downstream dry fly presentations take a lot of grayling. The largest grayling are usually taken on wet patterns, most notably egg flies. Trophy grayling leave their normal feeding stations and lay behind, on the side of, or in the center of spawning salmon to gorge on spent eggs. Other good locations to try are under cut banks or behind rocks. Dries fished over riffles will also take grayling on a consistent basis. Grayling will rise for dry flies with little provocation throughout the summer. They provide a welcome and productive diversion from the challenges and rigors of salmon and trout fishing.

Fly Rods: A 3-5 weight rod, 8 1/2 or 9 feet in length, balanced for a floating line is ideal for grayling. Odds are the rod you like to use for trout at home will be on the money.

Winston LT

Sage TXL

The Fly Shop's H20 "Hat Creek" or "Fall River"

Fly Reels: A lightweight, single action, palm or disk drag reel is a perfect choice.

Ross Vexsis 1.5 to 2

Galvan T-3 or T-4

Nautilus Featherweight Plus 3 or 5

The Fly Shop's L2a 4/5

Fly Lines: Your best all around fly line will be a weight forward floater, such as a Scientific Angler GPX or Rio Gold.

Leaders & Tippet: Leaders for grayling should be about 9 feet, tapered to 3X tippet.

CATCH & RELEASE TECHNIQUES

Alaskan trout grow big. But they grow slow. Catch and Release may be the most beneficial trend in the movement to conserve fisheries worldwide. But just because you let it go, doesn't mean it will live to fight again. To reduce fish mortality, anglers must handle fish carefully and quickly with approved techniques. Not surprisingly, we've found that educating our anglers in proper fish fighting, handling, and release methods is an effective tool to reduce percentages of injured or killed fish.

Always use barbless hooks. You're going to catch a lot of trout in Alaska, and losing one fish more or less, isn't going to make a difference. Applying constant pressure during the battle is more effective and less harmful to the fish than using barbed hooks. Fishing with barbless hooks will make you a better angler, make it easier to release the fish, and add a safety factor for both you and the guide. At the same time, avoid using stinger or bass hooks, or flies larger than size 2.

Remove hooks with as little handling of the trout as possible. It is often necessary to hold a fish while removing the hook. Hemostats, or even better, the effective "Ketchum Release" hook tool, will help.

Don't squeeze. Don't squeeze. Please don't squeeze. When holding a fish, cradle it gently and horizontally in two hands. Do not squeeze the fish in the throat or stomach regions; vital organs can be easily injured. Hold the fish upside down (for a calming effect) with just enough pressure to get the hook out.

Don't touch the gills, or lift by the lips or line. Gills have large blood vessels that transfer oxygen from the water to the fish. When these are damaged, death after release is likely. It is best to keep hands and fingers away from the gills and the eyes. Lifting the fish by the lip may further tear the gills or damage the controlling muscle.

Fight the trout quickly. Fish that are fought to exhaustion are often difficult or impossible to revive. You don't have to hydroplane the fish in, but trout should be fought aggressively, handled little, and released quickly. That's even more important when water temperatures are higher. Water oxygen levels are lower in warm water, and fish stress more quickly.

Don't throw your trout back! Grasp the trout gently and return it carefully into quiet waters.

If your photo shows water dripping off the trout, you probably got it right. When you are going to photograph a fish, have someone ready with the camera and do it quickly. Keep the fish in the water until you're ready for the shot. Then return the trout quickly to the stream.

Be patient, and revive the fish if it's necessary. Point the trout's head into the current until it recovers enough to swim out of your hands. This may take more than a few minutes. If a fish needs to be revived and the gill plates are not moving, gently hold the fish under water, by the tail with one hand and supporting the underbelly with the other. Face the fish into the current and gently move it back and forth. A few minutes of facing the fish into the current should be enough help to allow it to swim off on its own.

“A FISH IS TOO VALUABLE TO BE CAUGHT ONLY ONCE” - LEE WULFF

ALASKA TRAVEL CHECK LIST

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Airline tickets and itinerary | <input type="checkbox"/> Fly boxes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wallet, cash, credit cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Dry flies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet articles | <input type="checkbox"/> Streamers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription medications | <input type="checkbox"/> Egg Patterns |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aspirin & Ibuprofen | <input type="checkbox"/> Floatant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camera, lens paper, battery | <input type="checkbox"/> Split shot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses & phone numbers | <input type="checkbox"/> Strike indicators |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency telephone numbers | <input type="checkbox"/> Polarized sunglasses (2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight underwear | <input type="checkbox"/> Waders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Light fleece pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Headlamp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fleece jacket | <input type="checkbox"/> Wading belt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long-sleeved shirts | <input type="checkbox"/> Wading boots (no studs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slacks and pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravel guards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bandanna | <input type="checkbox"/> Clippers, pliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Undershirts | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing vest/tackle pack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notebook, pen | <input type="checkbox"/> Day pack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Hook file |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Briefs | <input type="checkbox"/> Knot tool |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Belt | <input type="checkbox"/> Hemostats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maps | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket knife | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Light socks | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy socks | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading book | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flask | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel alarm | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading glasses | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bug repellent | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bug net | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ear plugs | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walky-Talkies | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camp Shoes | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing hat | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stocking cap | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rain jacket | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing gloves | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen SPF 25+ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lip balm & hand lotion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dry bags for float trips, camera | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tape measure | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fly rods | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fly reels | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spare spools, spare lines | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tippet | |

NOTES: