## Campbell Lake (Fremont National Forest)



*Campbell Lake, in the Fremont National Forest, Lake County, Oregon*

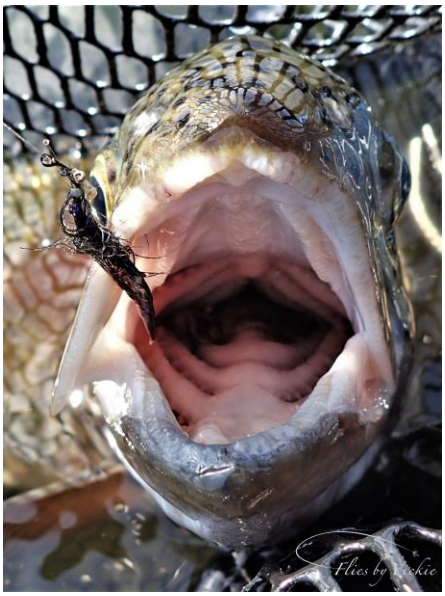
August's record high water temperatures have severely impacted the fishing in lakes near Portland, so I headed to Campbell Lake in southern Oregon.

Campbell Lake is a pleasant, 21-acre mountain lake in the Fremont National Forest in Lake County, approximately 33 miles from the small community of Paisley, Oregon. At an elevation of 7,135 feet, Campbell Lake is rarely accessible until late June. From Paisley, it is a scenic drive over paved roads to the lake with only the last few miles on gravel. Once you are there, the lake offers 16 camp sites available on a first come, first served basis. The lake is stocked with trout averaging 12 inches in length.

Campbell Lake offered a nice break from the heat of August and fish were more active in cooler 62 degree F water temperatures. In the evening, I was lulled by the faint but distinct smell of fall. As night fell, I watched the spectacular Perseid meteor shower went to sleep dreaming about the promise of exceptional fall fishing.

I was productive using a slow troll. Staying in 7-8 feet of water, I fished close to the shallow shorelines with my Cortland intermediate clear camo line (which has a sink rate of 1.5 – 2 inches per second). Maintaining the fly in the top 3 feet of the water column was effective. Fish were active from six to eight in the morning and again in the late afternoon. The best fishing was early morning before the sun hit the water starting at 6 am. The bite came to a dead stop at 8:30am. The bite returned in the late afternoon but wasn't as active. I caught all my fish using my burgundy and olive Grizzly Bug patterns.


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*Trout caught on Vickie's Grizzly Bug*

**Vickie's Tip:**

If you are not getting hit and you know there are fish where you are fishing, adjust the depth of your presentation by changing which line you use. You need to know your line's sink rate to accurately adjust the depth of your presentation.

*Sinking Lines:* Understanding the sink rate of your line is critical to success. The sink rate determines how fast the line will drop in the water column and is defined in inches per second (IPS). For example, if the line's sink rate is 3 IPS, then you know that the line will drop 3 inches a second, or 30 inches in 10 seconds. If trout are feeding in the top 24 inches of the water column, your fly will pass through that feeding zone in only 8 seconds. Once the line drops below that feeding zone, your number of hook ups will significantly diminish because trout look up, not down for food. You could try to increase the speed of the retrieve to retard the fly's sink rate, but the movement of the fly will not appear natural to trout and your fly will be rejected.

If, however, you were using a line with a sink rate of 1.5 – 2 IPS, then the line would hold the fly in the feeding zone twice as long, increasing your odds of hooking up.

Note: there is no market standard all manufactures follow in the classification of lines. An intermediate sinking line from one manufacture may be 1.5 IPS, but the intermediate line from a different manufacture may be 2.5 IPS. Knowing your sink rate enables you to know the depth your fly is being presented.

At Campbell Lake, I observed a hatch triggering fish feeding on or close to the surface. Therefore, I started with my intermediate 7-foot sink tip to maintain the fly in the top two feet.

Then the wind came up and killed the hatch. There were no visible signs of fish feeding on the surface. I switched to my clear camo intermediate sinking line (1.5 – 2 IPS). This maintained the fly in the top 4 feet, and I hooked and landed trout on every cast.

On the other hand, I saw other anglers at Campbell Lake who were using fast sinking lines. They struggled and were frustrated because they weren't getting hookups since their lines were dropping their flies below where trout were feeding.

In my opinion, the most critical tackle choice for success in stillwater angling is the line. Having the knowledge and flexibility to accurately adjust the presentation of your fly to the depth where fish are feeding increases your odds of a hook up. Once the fly sinks below the feeding zone, trout will never see it and your productivity will drop off.


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