Hosmer Lake



Hosmer Lake channel to the North Pool

Eager to escape the August heat, I headed to Hosmer Lake, a fly-fishing-only lake located southwest of Bend, Oregon. Hosmer Lake is situated in the scenic volcanic landscape along the Cascade Highway. The lake spans 200 acres with a south and north pool connected by a meandering channel.

The lake supports an abundance of wildlife and insects and offers breath-taking views of Mount Bachelor, South Sister, and Broken Top. Brook and cutthroat trout can be observed swimming along the bulrush-lined edges of the channel connecting the two lakes.

A parade of happy stand up paddleboarders eagerly reported all the big trout they saw in the clear water channel. They, along with the boating traffic and angling pressure made for exceedingly spooked trout. Although fun to fish, the channel was too crowded with paddle boaters. If this occurs, the best option is to fish either the north or south pool.

Due to the warmer waters of late summer, the best time to fish Hosmer Lake is early and late in the day. Early in the morning before the sun hit the water, I fished my Grizzly Bug pattern on the Cortland 7-foot intermediate sink tip. After the sun hit the water, I observed trout feeding on or close to the surface. I switched to the Cortland Hover Line and fished close to the reeds that lined the channel using a two of my small pupa patterns: my All-Purpose Nymph and UV Midge Pupa. Trout preferred a slow retrieve with a long, 5-second pause between each pull.

I find in shallow lakes like Hosmer, where the average depth is less than 8 feet, trout tend to feed either in the top few feet or closer to the bottom. This was true in the channel and north pool of Hosmer Lake where the average depth was four feet. I either fished a few inches below the surface film using the Cortland Hover Line, or the top few feet using my 7-foot intermediate sink tip line. The key was to fish the depth where trout are feeding.

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At dusk, just before the sun set, the bite picked up. Anglers reported that they were successful at this time catching fish close to the boat ramp of the south pool.



Brook Trout caught on my Olive Grizzly Bug



Fishing with Marilyn Forestell and her dog, Piper

I was joined by Marilyn Forestall fishing Hosmer Lake. After I got home, I received this message from her.

"I'm trying to stay focused on taking two weeks off, but all I want to do is throw my 7-foot intermediate sink-tip line out at Hosmer, strip 4-6" and let it drop 5 seconds and wait for another soft take!"

Residents of Bend who fish this lake regularly speak reverently about Hosmer. The beauty of this fishery and its clear waters captured my heart as well.

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