

Get out, go fishing any time you can



Fishing
Henry Miller
Guest columnist

As a longtime outdoor writer, I'm frequently asked ... OK, make that occasionally asked ... OK, in all seriousness, my favorite checker at Costco asked about a month ago, "what's the best time to go fishing?"

Given that at the time it was raining and on the raw edge of snow/sleet/frozen fog, my first inclination was to say "not now."

But his question led to some deep pondering.

There are those who I refer to, but not within their earshot, as the "solunatics," or those who rely on predictive charts that purport to show the prime time for the hot bite.

Which given the vagaries of the multiplicity of factors in the Pacific Northwest such as weather, temperatures (both air and water), stream and/or river flows and water clarity, etc., generally have all of the validity of a phrenology or tarot reading.

As an example, when I plugged in my zip code on one website and asked what the best time to fish for trout and salmon on March 24, it said that morning bite would be best starting ... more than an hour before it is legal to fish.

Hmmmm.

So who are you going to believe, the Internet or the Oregon State Police Fish and Game Division enforcement officer?

Actually, references such as tide tables are crucial when clamming or salmon fishing on rivers or bays.

Ditto for current information about river levels in Oregon, which can yo-yo like a 400-pound bungee jumper during the rainy season.

Those are available via automated river gauges and are online at the U.S. Geological Survey web page at <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/or/nwis/current/?type=flow>

The next obvious question if you are clueless or Henry Miller, but I repeat myself, is so what?

As an example, the Nestucca River gauge at Beaver was at 5.44 feet at 12:30 p.m. on March 19 with a flow of 824 cubic feet a second.

Is that good for fishing for steelhead or salmon? Too high? Too low?

There is an answer for the informationally challenged such as myself, and it's at "The Perfect River Levels" web page at http://rivertrailoutfitters.com/The_Perfect_River_Levels.php

The page is sponsored by River Trail Outfitters headquartered in Eugene, which offers guided drift boat fishing trips and most definitely deserves a plug and a tip of the fishing fedora for sharing.

According to the site, the information gleaned from the guides about best levels is copyrighted and not for reprint, but you can check it out for yourself.

The table is divided into three parts, best for "Drifting & Floating," "Perfect River Level" and "Plunking."

Although by the time you get there, the next storm will have blown out the river that you're going to.

Turning the page, when it comes to fishing for bass, crappie and other warm-water species that are ubiquitous in Oregon waters, I generally follow the Henry's Brandywine Rule.

When it's warm enough to plant tomatoes in general, and heirlooms such as red Brandywines in particular, which means overnight temperatures around 50 degrees consistently, then it's time to get out the bass gear.

And we're not talking first-warm-day, plants-at-the-garden-center euphoria and winter fatigue giddiness which means you will have to buy them all again



When you hit it just right, the payoff can be sweet. And even a blind pig finds an occasional acorn, as this old-time photo of a much more gray angler illustrates. STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

the next weekend after the last-gasp cold snap.

Although the garden centers refer to the crush of overeager tomato-plant buyers as repeat customers in waiting.

We're talking honest tomato-planting time.

I digress.

And in response to John at Costco's original question, the best time to go fishing is ... any time that you can.

Henry Miller is a retired Statesman Journal columnist and outdoor writer. He can be reached via email at HenryMillerSJ@gmail.com

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Girls

Continued from Page 1B

This is the All-Mid-Valley team for girls swimming:



Lidiia Buiko

School: McKay
Year: Sophomore

District results: Third in GVC in 100 back (1:02.23), fourth in 100 free (56.22), seventh in 200 free relay (1:53.73), ninth

in 200 medley relay (2:09.73)

State results: 10th in the 6A state meet in the 100 backstroke (59.65).



Anna Despain

School: South Salem
Year: Senior

District results: GVC champion in 100 back (57.93), 200 free (1:55.41) and 200 free relay (1:40.67), second in 400 free relay (3:39.96)

State results: Sixth in the Class 6A state meet in the 200 free (1:56.66) and 100 back (58.65), fifth in the 200 free relay (1:42.15) and ninth in the 400 free relay (3:46.17)

(59.82), third in 400 free relay (3:47.77) and fifth in 200 medley relay (2:01.02)

State results: 12th in the Class 6A state meet in the 100 butterfly (1:00.64), 13th in the 500 free (5:24.34) and 200 free relay (1:44.79).



Alexis Smith

School: Sprague
Year: Sophomore

District results: GVC champion in 100 free (54.84), second in 50 free (24.77), fourth in 200 free relay (1:45.76), sixth in 200 medley relay (2:02.11)

State results: Fifth in Class 6A state meet in the 50 free (24.96) and 100 free (55.31)



Charis Duffus

School: West Salem
Year: Junior

District results: Third in GVC in 200 free (2:01.06), seventh in 50 free (26.19), third in 200 free relay (1:43.48) and 400 free relay (3:47.77)

State results: 13th in the 6A state meet in the 200 free relay (1:44.79) and 17th in the 400 free relay (3:56.08)

Coach

Lucky Rodgers

School: Silverton
Year: Third

Team accomplishments: The Foxes equaled their program bests by placing second in the Mid-Willamette Conference district meet in both the boys and girls. Silverton's girls scored at the Class 5A state meet for the first time and placed seventh for the first time. Boys placed a program-best eighth at the state meet.



Alaina Otterstrom

School: West Salem
Year: Senior

District results: Second in GVC in 500 free (5:24.71), third in 100 fly

Boys

Continued from Page 1B



Ian Shultz

School: Sprague
Year: Junior

District results: Greater Valley Conference champion in the 100 fly (53.00), 100 breast (57.78), 200 medley relay (1:40.40) and 400 free relay (3:15.42)

State results: Third in the Class 6A state meet in the 100 breaststroke (58.37), 10th in 100 fly (53.73),

third in 200 medley relay (1:39.20), eighth in 400 free relay (3:16.91)



Caleb Warde

School: Salem Academy
Year: Junior

District results: Special District 3 champion in 200 free (1:50.72), 100 fly (56.60), 200 free relay (1:32.48) and 400 free relay (3:27.98)

State results: Class 4A/3A/2A/1A state champion in the 200 free relay (1:31.49), second in the 20 free (1:47.65), third in 100 butterfly (54.57) and 400 free relay (3:24.17)

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