

My FAVORITE FISHING Hole

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #60 —

Dad taught me to fish, back when I was just a kid; it was catfish, bass and bluegill - in the farm ponds and small creeks and rivers of northeast Missouri. Later on, older brother Marion introduced me to rainbow trout fishing in the state trout areas and I in turn introduced dad. He wasn't impressed with rainbow trout, as he could see them in the clear water but they wouldn't bite.

Growing up, we always had favorite ponds and favorite fishing holes in the creeks and rivers, all based on expectations – the number and size of the fish; but I never found a fishing hole that delivered lots of big fish – until now. And, we're not talking about three pound bass, we're talking about 30 pound king salmon.

It was on Kodiak Island in Alaska that I first heard a guide holler "Fish On". You see, when you hook into a big salmon, it's important to let everyone know, because they need to pull in their line and be prepared to move out



A pretty nice batch of silver salmon, taken during the 2009 fall bear season – with my wife, Brenda. Silvers run a little smaller than kings.

of the way quickly – these big salmon own the river, especially when they're fresh from the ocean.

My favorite fishing hole is on the Alaska Peninsula, a couple hours by air west of Kodiak Island -- in a no-name creek that flows north into the Bristol Bay area of the Bering Sea. The creeks start in the mountains and gather volume as they meander across the flat ground, on their way to the ocean.

In season the king salmon make their 'once-in-a-lifetime' spawning trip into the fresh water they were hatched in a



Two pretty nice king salmon, 35" and 39" in length – 30 pounds or so each. Two per-person per-day is the limit.

few years earlier. For a few weeks, about the first of July, the fishing in certain places can be fantastic.

Now, there are a lot of ways to fish for salmon; typically I prefer a simple spinner, possibly with some dried salmon eggs on it, if the fish aren't biting much. It's just a matter of

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throwing the lure/bait across the creek, letting the current take it down stream and 'hold on for dear life'. Kings generally hit pretty lightly; but when they're on, they're on – and it takes a fair amount of time and energy to get the big ones to the bank where you can net or release them. On my very best day, I hooked 50 of these monsters – releasing all but two, so now you know why it's my favorite fishing hole.



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4 July 2006



Fish or cut bait! Dried salmon eggs are a favorite addition to a spinner for King Salmon – in some rivers.