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Saddlebag Lake and Twenty Lakes Basin



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Saddlebag Lake



Suggested Flies for the Saddlebag Lake area:
[Eastern Sierra Hatch Selection](#)

Other Local Favorites:

Dry Flies:
[Parachute Adams #18-20](#)
[Adams #18-20](#)
[Griffith's Gnat #18](#)

Nymph Flies:
[Hare's Ear #16-18](#)
[Prince Nymph #16-18](#)
[Pheasant Tail Nymph #16-18](#)

Wet Flies:
[Grey Hackle Peacock #18](#)
[Grey Hackle Yellow #18](#)

Streamer Flies:
[Matuku #10](#)
[Woolly Bugger #10](#)

Directions:

From Lee Vining, go 10 miles on Hwy 120 to Yosemite. Take the Saddlebag Road 2 miles to the lake.

Notes:

The 325 acre **Saddlebag Lake** sits at 10,000 feet elevation and can be directly reached by car. The lake was created by the construction of a rock-filled dam in 1921. A resort with a water taxi service can take you to the far side of the lake with access to the Twenty Lakes Basin trail for \$9.00 round trip. The taxi operates from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm. DFG plants about 29,000 **rainbow** stockers annually in the 10-12 inch class. There are no spawning areas within the inlet streams, so there is a lack of any wild trout or holdovers reaching sizes over 12". **Brook Trout** are also present in sizes 6-9 inches. The best areas to fish are the inlet at the West end of the lake or at the dam. These areas are best fished by float tube. Since fishing at Saddleback Lake is mostly hatchery rainbows, taking the Basin Lake loop is where the flyfishing can be fun. The season is the last Saturday of April to November 15th. However, the road usually is closed due to snow from late October to the end of May.

The entire loop is about 8 miles starting at:

Hummingbird Lake(4 acres) with Brookies and proceeding to Odell and Helen Lake. Most of the fish are Brookies and **Goldens**, averaging about 9 inches.

Odell Lake holds the largest Goldens up to 16 inches. Your best bet is to bring a Float Tube when going to Odell Lake and hike the 3/4 miles from the water taxi to the lake. The larger Goldens will go for #10 Woolly Buggers and Matukus.

Helen Lake (12 acres) is at 10,100. It's about a 1 hour hike from the loop trailhead. Now, fishless due to cessation of air drops.

Shamrock Lake(17 acres) is at 10,255' and contains Brookies, Rainbows, and Goldens.

Going off-trail from Shamrock you can reach:

Twin Lakes following the creek outlet on the western shore of Shamrock. Twin contains Brookies at an elevation of 10,400 feet.

Steelhead Lake(25 acres) is a 1.5 hour walk from Saddlebag Lake at 10,400' with Rainbows and Brookies in the 8-10 inch class.

Cascade Lake(11 acres) is at 10,400' and contains Golden Trout and Brookies.

Wasco Lake contains brookies and is at 10,100 feet.

Going off-trail west of Wasco, you can reach:

Z Lake, which also contains brookies at an elevation of 10,480 feet.

The three **Conness Lakes**(10 acres each) are at 10,750' and all have Goldens.

Greenstone Lake(25 acres) is at 10,120' with Goldens.

The prime time to visit this area is from August to late September.

Saddlebag Lake

Fishing Regulations (Effective March 1st, 2021)

Saddlebag Lake:

Open all year, five trout daily bag limit, 10 trout in possession.

All Lakes and Reservoirs in Inyo and Mono Counties (except Bridgeport Reservoir and tributaries; Convict Lake; Crowley Lake; George Lake; Grant Lake; Gull Horseshoe Lake; June Lake; Lundy Lake; Mamie Lake; Mary Lake; Rock Creek Lake; Sabrina Lake; Silver Lake; South Lake; Twin Lakes (Mammoth); Twin Lake and Upper (Bridgeport); Virginia Lake, Lower and Upper):

Open all year, five trout daily bag limit, 10 trout in possession.

All other creeks and tributaries:

From the last Saturday in April through November 15, 5 trout daily bag limit, 10 trout in possession; and, from November 16 through the Friday preceding the last Saturday 0 trout bag limit, artificial lures with barbless hooks only and trout must be released unharmed and not removed from the water.