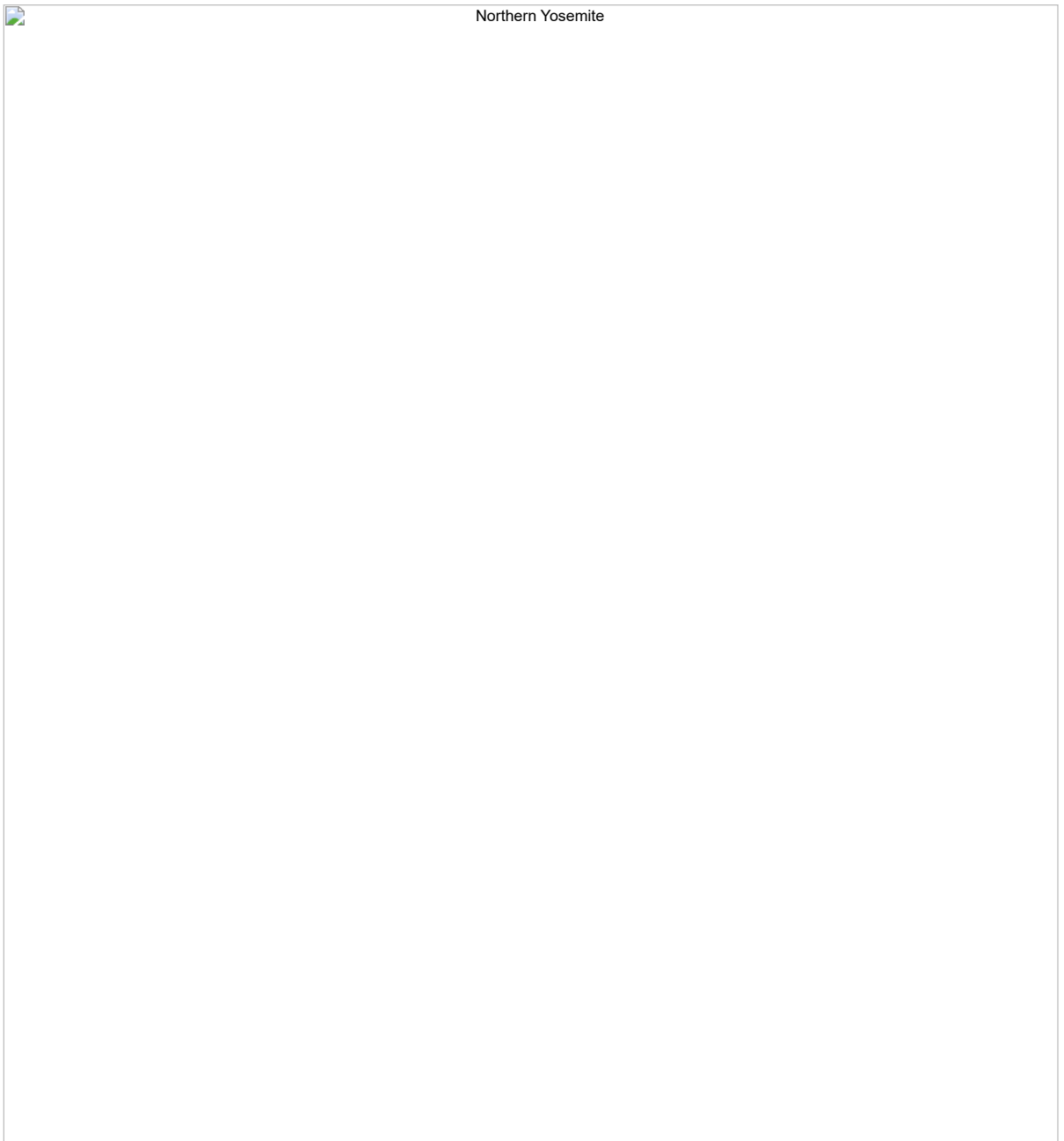


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## Northern Yosemite



**Suggested Flies for the Northern Sierra area:**  
**[Eastern Sierra Hatch Selection](#)**

**Other Local Favorites:**

**Stillwater Flies:**

**[Woolly Bugger #8-10](#)**  
**[Krystal Buggers #8-10](#)**  
**[Hornberg #8-10](#)**  
**[Matuka #8-10](#)**

**Nymphs:**

**[Copper John](#)**  
**[Pheasant Tail](#)**

**Drys:**

**[Cutter's Perfect Ant, #16-18](#)**  
**[Olive Caddis, #16-18](#)**  
**[Black Gnat, #16-18](#)**  
**[Yellow Humpy, #16-18](#)**  
**[Parachute Adams, #16-18](#)**

**Directions:**

There are four trailheads that provide access into the Northern Yosemite region: Kennedy Meadows, Leavitt Meadows, Twin Lakes, and Tuolumne Meadows. From the western side of the Sierra, Kennedy Meadows trailhead is off Hwy 108 (Sonora Pass Road). The trail passes the eastern side of Relief Reservoir and follows Summit Creek to Brown Bear Pass where it descends into Emigrant Valley and continues eastward to the border of the Emigrant Wilderness at Bond Pass, a distance of 15 miles with a 2300' gain. From the north, you can access from Leavitt Meadows trailhead which is about the same distance to Bond Pass as Kennedy Meadows. The trail connects with the PCT about 10 miles from the trailhead and you can take the southeastern fork following Kirkwood Creek to Twin Lakes. Coming from the eastern side of the Sierra at Twin Lakes trailhead, you can reach Buckeye Pass in less than 7 miles also with a 2400' gain. From the south, take the Tuolumne Pass trailhead. From Tuolumne Pass, you can reach Miller Lake in 15.5 miles with a 900' loss in elevation.





#### Notes:

Most of the fish within the Northern Yosemite were planted in the early 1900's. These waters were primarily fishless prior to the introductions. Yosemite discontinued fish planting in 1972 as recommended by the Leopold Report. Some waters had fish physically removed, particularly to restore amphibian populations, while other waters were allowed to naturally become fishless again due to poor spawning habitat, lack of food, and severe winter conditions. The waters with fish today in Yosemite are wild trout that have resided within these waters for generations. Due to snow conditions, most of this area is not accessible until July.

From the Tuolumne trailhead you can reach the following lakes:

**Miller Lake:** Elevation 9,446 feet, about 15.5 miles from the trailhead. This lake was planted with rainbows numerous times from 1911 to 1972 but each planting was not sustainable. Today, the lake is fishless.

**Matterhorn Creek:** The PCT drops down over 1200' elevation within 2.5 miles from Miller Lake to Matterhorn Creek. The trail follows the creek as it meanders through a meadow area to the confluence of Wilson Creek about 18 miles from the trailhead. This section was planted with Brookies in 1905 and continues to have a thriving population in the 5-9 inch class.

**Wilson Creek:** There is a steep incline of the creek above the confluence with Matterhorn Creek with Brookies but the Brookies are only with the lower section of the creek below 9,000 feet.

**Smedberg Lake:** After crossing the 10,160' elevation of Benson Pass, the trail drops down to Smedberg Lake, about 23 miles from the trailhead. Smedberg is an excellent fishery for rainbows that were planted from 1934 to 1972. Most of the rainbows will be in the 12-14 inch class with a number of fish over 16 inches. Smedberg has a good chironomid hatch that keeps the fish well fed. A size 18-20 midge pattern works well and you will find that the trout are evenly distributed throughout the lake.

**Sister Lake:** Sister Lake and Surprise Lake are close to Smedberg and can be reached off-trail from their outlet streams entering Smedberg. Both lakes were planted with Rainbows from 1948 to 1972. However, those stockings were not self sustainable and the lakes are now fishless.

**Tallulah Lake:** Best access to Tallulah and Doe Lake is off trail from Sister Lake. Head northeast from the northern shoreline of Sister about 2 miles. The lake is at 9,850 feet elevation. The lake was planted numerous times since 1940 with the last rainbow trout planting in 1970. It continues to have a small population, mostly in the size 12 range but some up to 14 inches.

**Doe Lake:** About a mile downstream of Tallulah Lake is a marshy area that has a confluence with the outflow from Doe Lake. Taking a route up this outflow to the northwest for 3/4 miles, you can reach Doe Lake. Doe was planted at the same times as Tallulah but the trout were not able to sustain quite as well as Tallulah and there remains a small population in the 10-12 inch range.

**Rodgers Lake:** At 9,500 feet elevation, 25 miles from the trailhead. Rodgers Lake was planted with Rainbows in 1907 and had a few more plantings up to 1970. The lake has maintained a good population of Rainbows in the 12 inch class with some up to 14 inches. The lake is not as prolific as Smedberg but have a similar size of fish nonetheless. The shoreline has a shallow sandy flat along its edges that requires approach.

**Benson Lake:** This is probably the most popular lake within the region for fishing. It is about 27 miles from the trailhead at 7,580 feet elevation. Benson has a good population of Rainbows mostly around the western shoreline that is steep and rocky. A nice sandy beach area is on the northern shore where Paiute creek enters but the fish in this area are small in the 8-12 inch range. Brookies, that were planted in 1895, are also found within this area of the lake. If you can reach some of the deeper parts of the lake along the western shoreline, there are rainbows up to 20 inches with many in the 14-16 inch size range.

Falls Creek

From the Twin Lakes trailhead you can reach the following:

**Robinson Creek:** The trail follows Robinson Creek up to its headwaters at Peeler Lake. The trail enters the Hoover Wilderness about a 1/2 miles from the trailhead. Robinson Creek contains both Rainbows and Brookies.

**Barney Lake:** Barney lies at 8,300' elevation and is about 14.3 acres in size. It is 3.6 miles from the trailhead. The lake was named for Barney Peeler, a long resident of Bridgeport, in 1925. Barney Lake has Brookies but there are also Rainbows and Rainbow-Golden hybrids. Best access for fishing is along its western shore.

**Peeler Lake:** (60 acres) The trail continues for 3 miles onto Peeler Lake (Barney's last name) and ascends to 9,489' elevation, 6.5 miles from the trailhead. Peeler Lake contains Brookies and Rainbows.

**Crown Lake:** About 3/4 mile prior to reaching Peeler Lake the trail forks to the southeast onto the Crown Lakes trail. 7 miles from the trailhead. Very scenic view of the lake. Contains Brookies.

**Arndt Lake:** Fishless

From the Leavitt Meadow trailhead, you can reach:

**Tower Lake:** 14.0 miles from the trailhead at 9523' elevation. This lake is fishless.

**Kirkwood Lake:** 14.5 miles from the trailhead at 10,257' elevation, the last mile is off-trail following the outlet stream. Kirkwood Lake lies within a glacial cirque on the north facing slope of Hawksbeak Peak at the border of Hoover Wilderness and Yosemite National Park. This lake contains Brookies.

From the Kennedy Meadow trailhead, you can reach:

**Snow Lake:** At the 15 mile mark before you reach Bond Pass, a trail forks to the south within Summit Meadow and proceeds to Snow Lake (1/2 mile). Snow Lake is 9,355 feet and had a reputation of holding some large Brookies up to 18 inches.

**Bigelow Lake:** Similar to Snow Lake, Bigelow Lake is 2 miles further on the trail past Snow at 9,591 feet elevation. It has also been known to hold large Brookies.

**Dorothy Lake:** At 9,600 feet elev., 17 miles from the trailhead. Drop down from Bond Pass and connect with the PCT, go north on the trail for 1/2 mile to the Tilden Lake. Contains a self-sustaining population of Rainbows that were planted in 1911 and 1913 in the 10-14 inch class but there are some larger trout up to 18 inches in the 12-14 inch class. A submerged granite shelf extends about 20-30 feet from northern shoreline and the larger trout lie just beyond that shelf. The lake outlet is Falls Creek. The southern shoreline is much shallower but have a large number of smaller rainbows in the 10-12 inch class. The lake outlet is Falls Creek.

**Falls Creek:** This is a classic freestone stream that travels about 6 miles from the outlet at Dorothy Lake to the confluence of Tilden Creek. The PCT follows Falls Creek within the Jack Main Canyon. Most of the rainbows are 6-8 inches except the section of the creek just above the inlet to Wiilma Lake where the fish get considerably bigger in the 12-14 inch class. Grace Meadow is a great section for dry flies.

**Lake Ruth:** Fishless

**Lake Helen:** Fishless

**Cora Lake:** (13 acres) at 9356 feet. The lake developed from a moraine dam created by past glaciation. Granitic bottom. About 15.0 miles from the trailhead at 9,150 foot gain. Consists of Brookies and Rainbows.

**Tilden Lake:** At 8,870 feet elevation. About a mile off the PCT, cross Tilden Creek and connect with the Tilden Lake Trail. You are about 23 miles from the trailhead. The lake is about 2 miles long and initially stocked with Rainbows in 1911 and 1913. There were subsequent plantings of rainbows during the aerial means. Contains Rainbows in the 12-14 inch class although there are numerous reports of rainbows over 17 inches as well.

**Tilden Creek:** Above Tilden Lake, the creek has a good population of small Rainbows within the meadow section and Goldens appear in the sections just below Tilden Lake, rarely over 7 inches.

**Mary Lake:** About 3 miles upstream from Tilden Lake is Mary Lake at 9,620 feet elevation. Early plantings of Rainbows did not survive in Mary Lake but stocked Goldens occurred there in 1935, 1954, and 1964. Good populations of Goldens were established below the lake on Tilden Creek. The lake does not have high populations of Goldens but the few that reside there are 12-16 inches with some over 18 inches.

## Fishing Regulations (Effective March 1st, 2021)

### Lakes and Reservoirs in Yosemite NP:

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 Saturday in April, 0 trout bag limit, artificial lures with barbless hooks only and trout must be released unharmed and not removed from the water.

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