




Rae Lakes





Rae Lakes

Suggested Flies for Rae Lakes area:
Eastern Sierra Hatch Selection
Other Local Favorites:

Dry Flies:

Parachute Adams #12
 Elk Hair Caddis #14-16
 Stimulator #12
 Madam X #10-12
 Royal Wulff #12

Nymph Flies:

Pheasant Tail Nymph #14-18
 Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear #14-18
 Prince Nymph #14-18
 Bird's Nest #14-18
 Bird's Stonefly Nymph #8-10
 Copper John, Black #18-22


Streamer Flies:

Muddler Minnow #8-10
 Woolly Bugger, Black or Olive #8-10

Directions:

From the East Side, there are two trailheads that you can take into this region. The Baxter Pass trailhead starts near Oak Creek Campground behind the old Mt Whitney Fish Hatchery. It starts at 6,000' elevation and the pass is 5.6 miles from the trailhead at 12,000'. The trail drops down into Baxter Lakes within 7 miles of the trailhead but it is another 3 miles until this trail intersects with the PCT. Rae Lakes is about 11.5 miles from the trailhead and you only have to climb the one pass (Baxter Pass). The more popular route is from Onion Valley where you start at 9100' elevation and it is only 3.6 miles to Kearsarge Pass at 11,700'. The trail intersects with the PCT within 5.6 miles from the trailhead. You have to cross Glen Pass at 12,000' but you can reach Rae Lakes in 9.5 miles from the trailhead after climbing the two passes.

From the West Side, many of the visitors to Rae Lakes come from the loop trail that originates at Road's End in Kings Canyon National Park. The loop goes through Paradise Valley along the Woods Creek Trail and intersects the PCT which you can take southward to Rae Lakes. The return loop follows Bubbs Creek back to Roads End for a 42 mile loop.

 Rae Lakes Directions
Notes:

The Rae Lakes region is considered by many as one of the most beautiful spots within the Sierra. The lakes are overlooked by a number of majestic peaks, Fin Dome, Dragon Peak, Painted Lady, and Diamond Peak. The lakes lie within a large cirque basin providing a wide view of the region. Expect a few people as this area is a camping spot for PCT/JMT through-hikers, Loop Trail hikers, and destination hikers from Onion Valley. Camping is limited to just two nights at Rae Lakes. Kings Canyon National Park encompasses the Rae Lakes area. Prior to 1973, many of the streams and lakes were planted with trout. This practice had some drawbacks to the native biota such as amphibians. After 1988, all fish planting within the park was discontinued. Park streams and lakes were managed for a sustainable fishery. Those streams and lakes that could not support a fishery were allowed to go fishless. However, by 1990, it was evident that certain amphibians such as the Mountain Yellow Legged Frog (MYLF) had not recovered enough and a management plan was implemented to eradicate certain lakes and streams of non-native fish. By 2013, 15 lakes and ponds were eradicated of fish. Over the next 25 years, the Park intends to eradicate another 70 lakes, streams, and marshes to reach a 15% level of fishless habitat. Most of these fish removals are within the higher elevations of the park and many are fishless due to the unsustainability of fish within these waters due to lack of food source, lack of spawning grounds, and shallow depths lacking winter survival during freezing periods.

 Rae Lakes

The headwaters of the **SF Kings River** originate within this region. Many feel that the upper reaches of the Kings River is one of the best wild trout fisheries on the slope of the Sierras. What the river may lack in sizable fish, it makes up for in quantities. Survey results from the State of California show that most of the fish in the South Fork Kings are Browns and Rainbows in the 6-8 inch class with a few larger ones up to 14 inches.

The **Sixty Lakes Basin** had been planted with Rainbows and Goldens. This was a very popular fishing destination up until ten years ago. Over the last ten years, Park Service has removed fish from seven of the lakes. Most of the upper basin lakes of this region are already fishless. The large number of lakelets following is scheduled for a piscicide treatment over the next few years.

Baxter Lakes: Elevation at 11,500 feet, about 16 miles from the trailhead. Consists of Brookies up to 12 inches.

Dollar Lake: Elevation at 10,200 feet. Consists of both Brookies and Golden Rainbow Hybrids in the 10-12 inch range.

Arrowhead Lake: Elevation at 10,300. Consists of Brookies, 6-8 inches and Rainbows up to 12 inches.

Rae Lakes: Elevation at 10,000 feet. There are four lakes within this system. They were first planted with Brookies in the early 1900's and these fish became established. The DFG collected Brookie eggs from the lakes after 1925 but discontinued the practice by 1932 since the transportation was difficult. Rae Lakes received Rainbows, Browns, and Goldens up until 1970. **Rae Lake #1** (aka Upper Rae Lake, elevation 10,545') contains Brookies while the Rainbows reside on the connecting stream to Rae Lake #2. **Rae Lake #2** (aka Middle Rae Lake, elevation 10,541') contains brookies 7-9 inches. **Rae Lake #3** (aka Lower Rae Lake, elevation 10,540') contains Rainbows up to 10 inches and Brookies up to 9 inches. **Rae Lake #4** is often just an unnamed pond, contains Brookies, 6-7 inches.

Dragon Lake: Very scenic lake at an elevation of 11,080'. Consists of small Brookies 4-6 inches.

Fishing Regulations (Effective March 1st, 2021)

Rae Lakes:

Open all year. No restrictions. 5 trout per day. 10 trout in possession.

All other lakes within Kings Canyon National Park:

Open all year. No restrictions. 5 trout per day. 10 trout in possession.

All creeks and tributaries:

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