

Tackle



South Lake Backcountry



Suggested Flies for the South Lake Backcountry Area:
[Eastern Sierra Hatch Selection](#)

Other Local Favorites:

Dry Flies:


[Parachute Adams #16-18](#)
[Olive Elk Hair Caddis #16-18](#)
[Royal Wulff #16-18](#)
[Griffith's Gnat #16-18](#)
[Henry's Fork Hopper](#)
[Chernobyl Ant](#)

Directions:

Nymph Flies:

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

From US Highway 395 in downtown Bishop, turn west on Line Street /Highway 168. Follow Line Street / Highway 168 for 15 miles and turn left on to South Lake Road. Follow South Lake Road for 7.1 miles to the trailhead, located at the end of the road. Overflow parking is located along the road near Parchers Camp, less than a mile from South Lake. The trailhead is at the south end of the trailhead parking lot, to the left of the bathrooms.

 French Canyon Directions

Notes:

South Lake (180 acres) is within a huge crater at 9,768 feet elevation. The lake was created by an earthen dam in 1962 across the south fork of Bishop Creek. The lake consists of **Rainbows**, **Brookies**, and **Goldens**. Rainbows are regularly planted in the 10-12 inch class as well as some brooders and Alpers. Brookies are 8-10 inches while the Goldens, caught near the inlets are 6-8 inches. The best float tubing is around the inlet areas and along the shoreline. The season is from the last Saturday of April to October 31st. However, the lake is often iced over until mid-June.

Most of the lakes in the South Lake Backcountry contain Brookies and Rainbows. Many of these lakes were planted by the W.C. and Marie Louise Parcher in the 1920's. They would bring the trout in milk cans using mule trains and the trout became quickly established. Browns can be found at Long Lake and Margaret's Treasure Lakes (there are seven of them) hold Goldens and a Golden/Rainbow hybrid, mostly in the 6-10 inch class. Starting in 2003, Treasure Lakes #4, 5 have their fish eliminated by DFG in response to the Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog program. Goldens can also be found in the nearby South Fork of Bishop Creek.

From the Green Lake trailhead (9,400 feet), take the trail eastward.

Bluff Lake : About 1 mile from the Green Lake trailhead at 10,523 feet elevation. Consists of Rainbows.

Brown Lake : About 1.5 miles from the Green Lake trailhead at 10,700 feet elevation. Consists of Rainbows.

Green Lake : About 2.2 miles from the Green Lake trailhead at 11,054 feet elevation. Consists of Rainbows. The trail continues onto the headwaters of Bishop Creek.

From the South Lake trailhead, take the right fork trail which runs along the eastern shoreline to the Treasure Lakes. Named "Treasure" for the Golden Trout that have been planted there since the early 1900's. All of the lakes, except for #1 and #2, are no longer being maintained as a Golden Trout fishery in order to protect the Mountain Yellow-legged Frog.

Treasure Lakes #1 and #2: About 2.5 miles from the South Lake trailhead at 10,690 feet elevation. Consists of Goldens and Golden/Rainbow Hybrids, 7-10 inches. Try the inlets and outlets of each lake. These two lakes remain outside the MYLF program.

Treasure Lake #3 and #4: Go .25 miles to the southeast of Treasure Lake #1 crosscountry. The two lakes are at 10,950 feet elevation. Has consisted of Goldens and Golden/Rainbow Hybrids. However, DFG is managing these lakes as "fishless" for the Mountain Yellow-legged Frog enhancement program and will not restock them.

Treasure Lake #5 : Take the trail past #1 and #2, it will discontinue just past the lakes and you follow the creek up to Treasure Lake #5 which is about .5 miles from #1 at 11,180 feet elevation. Has consisted of Goldens. However, DFG is managing these lakes as "fishless" for the Mountain Yellow-legged Frog enhancement program and will not restock them.

Treasure Lake #6 : Going past the western shore of #5, Treasure Lake #6 is .25 miles further at 11,190 feet. Has consisted of Goldens. However, DFG is managing these lakes as "fishless" for the Mountain Yellow-legged Frog enhancement program and will not restock them.

Treasure Lake #7: Just behind #6 is Treasure Lake #7 at 11,190 feet. Has consisted of Goldens. However, DFG is managing these lakes as "fishless" for the Mountain Yellow-legged Frog enhancement program and will not restock them.

From South Lake trailhead, take the left fork trail going east of South Lake. Trail continues on to Bishop Pass.

Hurd Lake: About 1 mile from the South Lake trailhead. Must come off the trail and follow creek up to the lake at 10,300 feet. Consists of Rainbows.

Marie Louise Lakes: Two lakes at 10,650 feet elevation about 1.6 miles from the trailhead. You must get off the trail and follow creek up to the lakes. There are two lakes separated by 5 feet of elevation. The lakes were named for Mary Louise Parcher, who founded Parcher's Camp along with her husband, W.C. Parcher, in 1920. The lakes have a good food base and most of the Brookies are 7-12 inches in size. The lower lake is 1.5 acres and fairly shallow with reeds lining most of the shoreline. The upper lake is 2 acres and quite a bit deeper. It tends to have larger Brookies than the lower lake.

Bull Lake: Ten acre lake about 1.75 miles from trailhead at 10,780 feet elevation. Consists of Rainbows.

Chocolate Lakes: Three lakes of 1, 4, and 8 acres respectively as you hike up the valley. Sitting at just above 11,000 feet, each lake contains Brookies. About 2.25 miles from trailhead going past Bull Lake.

Ruwau Lake: About 3 miles from trailhead taking either the right fork through Long Lake or the left fork past Chocolate Lakes. At 11,050 feet, the lake consists of Rainbows up to 16 inches and good size Brookies.

Long Lake: About 2 miles from the trailhead, taking the right fork west of Bull Lake. At 10,750 feet elevation, the lake is 29 acres and has a maximum depth of 10 feet. The lake has some steep drop-offs along the western shore. The outlet is fairly shallow and most of the spawning takes place in the southern inlet of South Lake. Long Lake has mostly small brookies, 8-10 inches, some rainbows up to 12", but some very large browns (a 9 lb. Brown was caught there in 1998).

Spearhead Lake: At 10,900 feet about 3 miles from the trailhead going along the eastern shoreline of Long Lake. Consists of Brookies and Browns.

Margaret Lake: At 10,970 feet, go .3 miles west of Spearhead Lake crosscountry. Consists of Brookies.

Timberline Tarns: Two lakes at 11,100 feet, each consisting of Rainbows and Brookies. About 3.6 miles from the trailhead.

Saddlerock Lake: About 4 miles from the trailhead at 11,170 feet. Consists of Brookies.

Bishop Lake: About 4.2 miles from trailhead at 11,200 feet. Consists of Brookies.

Fishing Regulations (Effective March 1st, 2021)

South Lake:

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. No restrictions. 5 trout per day.

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

Open all year. 5 trout. 10 in possession. No gear restrictions.

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 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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