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## Gardiner Basin



### Gardiner Basin

**Suggested Flies for Gardiner Basin Area:**  
**Eastern Sierra Hatch Selection**

**Dry Flies:**


Parachute Adams #16-18  
 Olive Elk Hair Caddis #16-18  
 Royal Wulff #16-18  
 BWO Sparkle Dun #18-20  
 BWO Parachute Dun #18-20

**Nymph Flies:**

Hare's Ear #16-18  
 Prince Nymph #16-18  
 Pheasant Tail Nymph #16-18

**Directions:**

From Fresno, take Hwy 180 east into Grant Grove and follow the South Fork of the Kings River east. Roads End is 85 miles from Fresno and is at the end of Hwy 180 where it ends as a loop just past Cedar Grove Village within Kings Canyon National Park. Take the Bubbs Creek Trail following the Bubbs Creek eastward to lower Vidette Meadow where it meets the Pacific Crest Trail. Follow the PCT northward for 1.5 miles where it intersects with the Charlotte Lake Trail. Take the Charlotte Lake trail westerly along the northeastern shore of Charlotte Lake and follow the outlet creek, as you gain elevation, eventually crossing Gardiner Pass. There is an avalanche chute that must be crossed and the trail can be difficult to find. Just keep the avalanche chute to the east as you proceed up to the pass.

 Gardiner Basin Directions
**Notes:**

Kings Canyon National Park encompasses the Gardiner Basin region. 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.

Many of the lakes within the Gardiner Basin region above 10,000' elevation became fishless but some lakes continue to have good fishing. The trail is poorly marked but the area is open and accessible. Must go off-trail to reach these regions.

**South Fork Kings River:** The SF Kings above Roads End tends to be riffle water up to the Bailey Bridge. This section has Rainbows, 9-12". Above the bridge is a short section of plunge pools and then the river tends to be calm up to the confluence of Glacier Creek. This stretch will have small rainbows 6-9 inches. The SF Kings gets steeper in gradient upstream from Glacier Creek confluence and has a natural fish barrier at Mist Falls about 1 mile upstream. This gradient continues for another mile until the beginning of Paradise Valley about a half mile below Woods Creek Campsite 1. Through the valley, the river is a typical pool structure with small rainbows in the 6-9 inch class. This stretch is about 2.3 miles long before the steep gradient begins about half mile above Woods Creek.


**Gardiner Creek:** The creek is a steep torrent coming into the SF Kings. The creek has a good population of rainbows all in the upper sections which have outlet from the lakes within the Gardiner Basin. Most of these fish are 6-9 inches.

**Gardiner Basin Lakes:** There are three forks of lakes feeding Gardiner creek. The western fork has a number of lakes that are easily reached by the trail below Pass. Rainbows can be spotty but there are reports of Rainbows 9-12" in Lake 9534. The middle fork also has had reports of rainbows in Lake 3223 but on the sr 9 inches. The east fork is referred to as the Gardiner Basin with two lakes, 3214 and 3477 known as Lower and Upper Gardiner Lakes. These lakes are your best rainbows with reports of trout 9-12" but reports have also been quite spotty over the last few years.

**Bubbs Creek:** Starting at the confluence of SF Kings river, the Bubbs Creek trail follows the creek to the intersection of the Pacific Crest Trail near lower Vidette. From the Bailey Bridge to the bridge that spans Sphinx Creek, Bubbs is a rushing torrent. Above the Sphinx Creek bridge the creek becomes a fast moving stream pools and rapids up to Charlotte creek confluence. Above the Charlotte Creek confluence will be small rainbows, 6-7".

**Charlotte Creek:** Access to Charlotte Creek is from the outlet of Charlotte Lake. About a mile of this creek is fishable. Rainbows are small, 6-7 inches.

**Lakes north of Mt Clarence King:** Access is from Woods Creek. No known reports of fish.

 Gardiner Basin Lakes

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

**All Lakes and Reservoirs in Kings Canyon NP:**

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 the last day 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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