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Amphitheatre Lake and Lake Basin



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Suggested Flies for Lake 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:

15 miles south of Bishop is the town of Big Pine on Hwy 395. Take Glacier Road for 11 miles to the trailhead. Glacier Lodge burned down, but Kathy (the Owl) still has about 15 cabins and will rebuild the Lodge soon. The store has been relocated into one of the cabins. The trailhead is at 8,300 feet and it is a 3.5 mile hike going up 1,700 feet to reach the first lake at close to 10,000 feet. From Glacier Lodge, hike past the Big Pine Lakes and proceed to Jigsaw Pass from Big Lake #5. Over Jigsaw, hike another mile to Bishop Pass and proceed on the trail to Dusy Basin. The trail heads west until it connects with the PCT about 5 miles from Bishop Pass. Head south following the MF Kings River to the confluence of Palisade Creek in about 3 miles. Palisade Creek trail will take you to the Cat

Creek trail providing access to Amphitheatre Lake basin and the Dumbell Lakes. Continuing south on the PCT past Palisade Creek for 4.5 miles, you reach the confluence of Cartridge Creek and the Cartridge Creek trail provides access to Lake Basin with an exit to the SF Kings River near Bench Lake.

 Lake Basin Directions

Notes:

Kings Canyon stopped all fishing planting in the 1980s. Up until that time about 80% of the lakes contained trout, mostly Golden and Rainbows. With the cessation of fish planting only those trout populations that had a decent spawning stream and adequate food supply were able to survive. The lakes and streams are all above 10,000 feet elevation and many are shallow enough to fully ice through during the winter.


Amphitheatre Lake continues to have rainbows some up to 16 inches but the goal is to eliminate these fish for frog restoration. The remaining lakes within the Amphitheatre basin are fishless. Cataract Creek below Amphitheatre Lake has Golden Hybrids.

Dumbell Lakes: Four lakes each containing Rainbows, 6-8 inches.

Lake Basin is accessed through Cartridge Pass from the SF Kings. The trail going through the pass and down Cartridge Creek to the MF Kings was once part of the John Muir Trail prior to 1938, once the Mather Pass route was completed. The JMT brought many visitors to the Lake Basin in the early 1900's. The original trail below Marion Lake is sketchy and the route is considered a difficult bushwack to the MF Kings, particularly below Triple Falls.

Marion Lake is named after Helen Marion LeConte who accompanied her husband, Joseph LeConte, to this area in 1902. A plaque remains along the shore commerate her explorations. Marion Lake is considered by many as one of the most beautiful lakes within the Sierra. The lake has a deep hue of blue due to depth and light colored granite that forms it's basin. Marion Lake contains Rainbow trout, 10-12 inches. Not much known about the remaining lakes. Cutter indicates that the lake at 10,640 has Rainbows. There is a report that Rainbows are within the lake below Cartridge Pass.

Cartridge Creek: Cutter lists Rainbows within Cartridge Creek but the creek is mostly unfishable due to the steep gradient decline. The south fork of Cartridge meets the main creek in a structure known as Triple Falls, forming a barrier to any fish migrating upstream. Rainbows are most likely within the outlet stream: Marion and Basin Lake 10,640.

 Lake Basin

Fishing Regulations (Effective March 1st, 2021)

Lake Basin:

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 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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