



Fishing Scenario IDs # 363 and 364

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Vedder River White Chinook or Chum

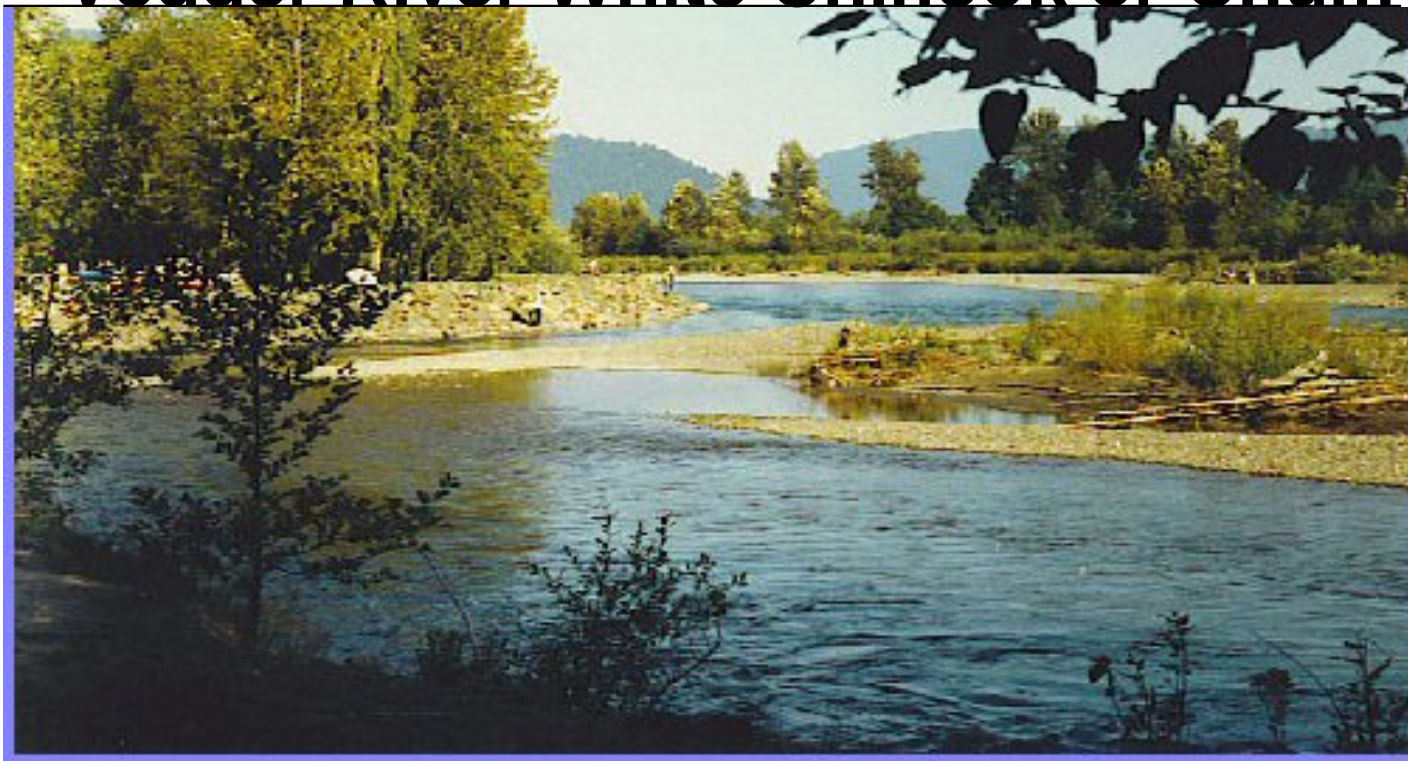


Photo by Elmer G. Wiens hmodena.intergate.ca

"I can safely say that the Vedder offers urban anglers the best drive-to fishing in North America...If you can *fish*, you can *catch* here. The caveat is, because it's urban, the Vedder will be crowded at all times."

Dave Vedder, Fishing Coaches Consultant

There are a half million reasons the Vedder River, AKA the Vedder Chilliwack, ranks as the most popular river in British Columbia: 500,000 is roughly how many White and Red Chinook, Coho, Chum, Pink and Sockeye salmon return to here each year (every odd year for pinks), mixing with steelhead, and cutthroat trout, Rocky Mountain whitefish, and Dolly Varden char. In fact, there are days that anglers have scored a salmon Grand Slam-- one of every species--all from a river too small for a drift boat, too big too wade across, accessible for almost 25 miles, and just an hour from the US border. Timing runs is critical, but when it all comes together, it's possible to hook-up 20 to 40 white-fleshed kings per day, from 20 to 50 pounds, perhaps even more chums up to 20 pounds, along with small bright cohos....

That's enough to make any angler's arms ache.



Vedder River White Chinook or Chum

Timing Details

- 1. **DATE: Oct 7 to 21 for White Chinook**

Oct 14 to 30 for Chums

- 2. Note: while White Chinooks are excellent eating when fresh, they 'turn' quickly. Traditionally, Vedder "springs" are *brightest* when caught before Oct. 16, most *abundant* Oct. 10 through 14 – a mix of bright and dark -- and still running strong through the 21st.
- 3. Stay flexible in your trip timing and planning. As always, the more quickly you can prepare to go – or cancel – the better you can adapt to Timing Details. Weather can vary the timing of runs, so check in advance with Fred's Custom Tackle Store, which supplies daily reports at 1-800-663-7793, or on the Internet at [Fred's](#). The store's direct line is 604-858-7344, it's address 5580 Vedder Rd, Vedder Crossing, B.C.
- 4. *We recommend you **don't go to the Vedder when:***
 - a. The runs are not yet strong.
 - b. Water visibility is less than 18 inches.
(Check [Fred's](#) for a. and b.)
- 5. Remember the "Fourth Trip" Rule – that it may take four visits to a specific scenario location to learn to catch the full potential. For your first three trips, focus on following the Game Plan, also on learning and experimenting! Ideally don't give up, even if you get skunked, until after four trips.



Dave Vedder photo

Special Regulations:

- 1. US anglers will need both a BC Freshwater License, and a Salmon Stamp. These are available at any Canadian tackle store, including Fred's. When you purchase, make sure to pick up *and read* a copy of the BC regulations booklet.
- 2 At this time, **all hooks must be barbless**. Anglers who cramp down barbs (see page 7) should do so *carefully and completely*. The test often used on the Vedder is to pierce cloth with the hook: if the barb snags when the hook's pulled out...expect a citation and fine. You must also make sure "to record, on your license, in ink, any Chinook salmon retained."
- 3. Canadian and US customs regulate what you may bring into Canada, so check these carefully at [Canadian Customs](#). For return to the US, we strongly recommend you carry a US Passport, and that before going you check this link, [US Customs](#).



Vedder River White Chinook or Chum

Tackle and Equipment

- 1. Waders and felt-soled boots. Breathables are often the best idea, since while mornings may be frosty, air temperatures can reach 70 by afternoon.
- 2. A wading staff is recommended.
- 3. Rods between 10 and 13 feet will help an angler manage drifts. (And Lamiglass carries a 10.5 foot Dave Vedder model!) For reels, bring a **"center pin"** or **baitcasting** reel spooled with at least 200 yards of 20-pound test Maxima Ultragreen™ line.
- 4. 20-pound test line for leaders.
- 5. For both White Chinook and Chums, 2/0 Gamakatsu™ "Octopus" hooks, or pre-tied Gamakatsu™ Salmon/Steelhead leaders.
- 6. **Needle-nose pliers to de-barb your hooks. (See pg. 7.)**
- 7. #5 quality snap swivels.
- 8. Pre-made ¼ inch **Magnum** "Slinky" weights, filled with ten ¼ inch shot, pierced at both ends (see "Rigging")
- 9. "Dink" floats or other elongated foam or balsa floats buoyant enough to hold the slinky sinker off the bottom – approximately five inches long and half an inch in diameter.
- 10. Lure fishing: for Chinooks, red and orange yarn; for Chum, chartreuse yarn.
- 11. For Bait fishing: cured salmon roe, either chum or Chinook.



Above, clockwise: orange and red yarn, for Chinooks; a "dink" float; chartreuse yarn for chums; #5 snap swivels ("barrel swivels with safety snaps"); pre-rigged salmon/Steelhead leader with egg loop ties; sample Yarn Tie, Magnum slinky with snap swivel at each end.



Vedder River White Chinook or Chum Rigging

- 1. Leaders are identical for Lure and Bait fishing techniques, constructed from 20-pound monofilament. The total length will depend on the depth at which you're fishing: lures or bait should be suspended within a foot of the river bottom.
- 2. Begin by tying a barbless hook to one end of the leader using the egg loop knot. (See Figure 1). For larger, step-by-step directions of a variation, see photos at steelheaduniversity.com
- 3. Eighteen-inches up from the hook, tie a #5 snap/swivel. Insert the snap through the one end of the slinky sinker's parachute cord tube.
- 4. Insert the reel's main line through the float (or wrap line around the float, depending on float style). Do not fix in place.
- 5. Tie another #5 snap/swivel to the reel's main line. Insert the snap through the hole at the opposite end of the Slinky cord (Pre-made Slinky come with a hole at one end, or none, so pierce the cord at the opposite end with the snap wire, the farther up from the tip, the better.) (Figure 2)
- 6. Determine the depth of water you will be fishing (or observe nearby anglers' rigs!) -- typically between 3 and 7 feet. Fix the float in place so that lure or bait suspends within a foot the bottom of the river. (Float attachment systems vary, so ask directions from shop staff.)
- 6. Lure fishing: For Chinooks, construct a "Yarn Tie" (or "Fly") by inserting an inch of red *and* orange strands through the loop of the egg loop knot. Pull tight to secure yarn, then "tease out" and trim sides to form a sphere the size of a dime. (Some anglers use a small comb or brush). Follow the same process for chums, using chartreuse-colored yarn.
- 7. Bait fishing: cut or pinch off a roe cluster about the size of a dime, slip into loop, *gently* pull tight.

How to tie a yarn fly

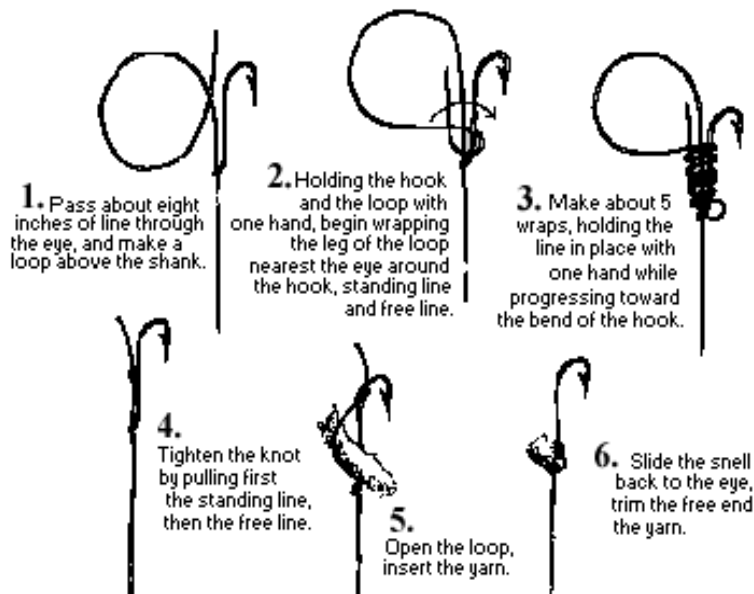


Figure 1

(Burger Brothers Sporting Goods)

Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine



Figure 2



Vedder River White Chinook or Chum Techniques



Dave Vedder photo

While the basic principles of float fishing appear simple – the float holds the bait off the bottom, creates a natural drift when properly managed, and visually indicates a take – the skills involved are substantial. General rules follow; brief introductions and overviews can be found at www.coastangler.com, www.fishonlineca.com, and www.fishonbc.com. FC members might also consider Dave Vedder's more comprehensive book, *Float Fishing for Steelhead*, which contains many techniques relevant to salmon, and is available at most Northwest fishing stores as well as amazon.com.

1. Those new to the Vedder should take time to first watch other anglers on the river. Beginning float fishers will learn from observation; also, in crowded conditions, each angler *must* time his or her casts to avoid tangling with neighbors' gear.

2. For both White Chinooks and Chums, look for relatively deep slots with fast moving current.

3. Try to match the drift of your float to the speed of the current. Keep in mind, however, that rivers move faster at the surface, slower near the bottom where most salmon will lie.
4. As much as possible, keep your line off the water by maintaining a *slight* tension between rod tip and float. Do not, however, create "drag" enough to cause the float to move unnaturally, or to swing in an arc until the end of the cast!
5. When the float is pulled below the surface, moves upstream, or suddenly pops up as a fish lifts Yarn Tie or bait... **strike hard**.
6. EXPERIMENT! If you're not getting into fish in the numbers described, change the depth of lure or bait by moving your float up or down on your line. If you don't hook fish w/in 30 minutes, or see others hooking fish, MOVE to a new part of the pool or a new pool!
9. Remember the Three Hour Rule: even on great days, the "bite" is sometimes off for up to two hours. If you only fished during that period, you might mistakenly think the fishing is no good! So, fish for three hours at least, so you're more likely to sample the day's great potential.
10. Each day at your destination, talk to (and learn from) four or more fishers, if possible.

A Special Note on Landing...

Most Vedder anglers beach salmon instead of using nets. This technique can be hard on fish unless done carefully. When net or hand-landing salmon you don't intend to keep, try to do so in deeper water, where fish are less likely to be fatally damaged by slamming against rocks. Remember to spend time reviving exhausted specimens. (For more information, see page 7, including techniques courtesy of the Columbia Federation of Drift Fishers www.bcdf.com.)



Vedder River White Chinook or Chum

Location Details

- 1. Located close to Vedders Crossing, not far from Chilliwack, BC, the upper Vedder River can be reached from I-5 by taking Canada Highway One eastbound to the Chilliwack exit. Follow Vedder Road through Vedder's Crossing to the Vedder River Bridge. A paved road parallels the river from there upstream to the upper fishing boundary.
- 2. For a shorter, more complicated route from the Meridian exit off I-5 in Bellingham, Washington, click map and directions at maps.google.com, select the I icon (for Fred's Custom Tackle) then begin at step 3.
- 2. Dave Vedder's generic rule for finding the best fishing spots on this river: find a pull-out with a large collection of cars, gear up and fit in with the anglers already in place.
- 3. Click here for a detailed fishing map of the [Vedder](#) .

Services and Facilities:

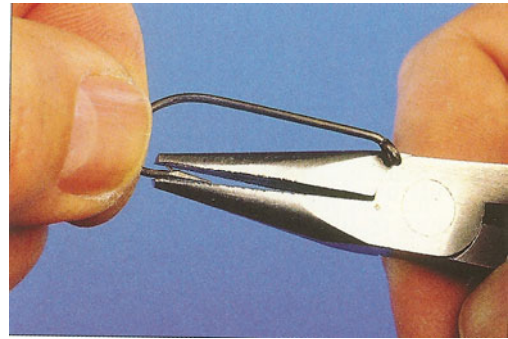
- 1. Camping...**Expect rain.** Click here for [Chilliwack Options](#)
- 2. For Lodging, Food and Travel recommendations, try [Chilliwack listings](#). Note also that we hear good things about the Bar at the Rainbow Country Inn, Whw 1 and Lickman Rd., and that the coffee shop attached opens at 5:00 a.m.



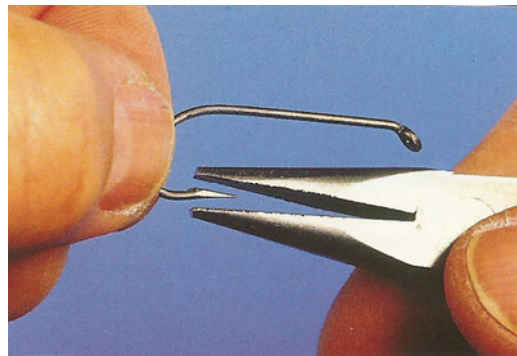
Responsible Catching

While opinions vary as to whether you'll land more fish with crimped barbs, or less, no one argues that improved *catching* makes it critical for anglers to practice the most responsible *releasing* techniques for fish they do not keep. This begins by pinching down the barb of hooks you use in nearly all Fishing Coaches Scenarios, and finishes with the proper landing and reviving of tired fish.

Step 1. Hold the hook by the bend and position the jaws of a pair of flat needle-nosed pliers over the barb. Only the flat hook spear should make contact with the jaw face. (Do not insert pliers far enough to press or scrape against the bend.)



Step 2. Squeeze the pliers to bend the barb down. Use the lightest pressure that will still do the job. Most barbs will not bend completely flat, and some may require touch-up with a file.



Text and illustrations courtesy of Ted Leeson and Jim Shollmeyer, *Fly Tier's Benchside Reference*, amatobooks.com

Catch and Release Tips

From the British Columbia Federation of Drift Fishers www.bcdf.com

Play the fish as quickly as possible.

Prior to landing, look for a suitable site free of sand, where you can ease the fish into.

Remove woolen gloves, as they remove the fish's protective slime, which promotes disease.

Leave the fish in the water, don't slide it up the bank.

Never remove the fish from the water in freezing conditions.

Don't force the hook out. If it can't be easily removed, cut the leader near the hook- It will fall out in a few days.

Never try removing a hook lodged in the fish's tongue or gill- cut the leader near the hook.

Never poke a finger in the fish's gills, or lift it by the gills.

After removing a hook, face the fish upright into the current. When the fish is able to swim away on its own, release it to swim out of your hands.

If a photo is desired, quickly lift fish up (not longer than 5 seconds out of the water) holding it under the pectoral fins, and the other hand supporting the wrist of the tail.

Fish kept out of the water for more than 30 seconds will almost certainly suffer brain damage, and may not survive.