



Tri Cities Seasonal Fishing Calendar



Your Year-Round Guide to Fishing the Columbia, Snake & Yakima Rivers

Fish All Year in Eastern Washington!

Save this guide to know exactly what's biting, when to go, and where to fish every month of the year!



JANUARY - Winter Steelhead Season

WHAT'S BITING

★ **HOT:** Steelhead, Whitefish

✓ **GOOD:** Sturgeon, Burbot

z-z **SLOW:** Bass (dormant), Trout (deep & slow)

WHERE TO GO

🎯 **Steelhead:** Yakima River Delta, Snake River (Ice Harbor Dam)

🎯 **Whitefish:** Columbia River below Priest Rapids

🎯 **Sturgeon:** Deep holes in Columbia River

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Steelhead:** Drift fishing with cured roe, jigs under float
- **Whitefish:** Small flies or maggots near bottom
- **Weather Tip:** Fish warmest part of day (11am-3pm)



CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 38-42°F | **Weather:** Cold, possible snow

Best Days: After 2-3 days of stable weather



SPECIAL NOTES

- ⚠️ Check steelhead regulations - selective gear rules apply
 - 💡 Dress in layers - mornings are freezing!
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FEBRUARY - Late Winter Transition

WHAT'S BITING

- ★ **HOT:** Steelhead (peak season!)
- ✓ **GOOD:** Whitefish, Sturgeon
- 🔄 **IMPROVING:** Walleye (pre-spawn staging)

WHERE TO GO

- 🎯 **Steelhead:** Ringold Springs, Snake River confluences
- 🎯 **Walleye:** Columbia River deeper channels
- 🎯 **Family Friendly:** Try ice fishing at local ponds (if frozen)

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Steelhead:** Pink worms, bobber and jig
- **Walleye:** Slow jigging with minnows
- **Sturgeon:** Smelt or squid on bottom

CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 38-44°F | **Weather:** Cold but improving
Best Days: Overcast with light rain

SPECIAL NOTES

- 🏆 Local steelhead derbies often scheduled
 - 🎓 WDFW offers free workshops this month
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MARCH - Spring Awakening

WHAT'S BITING

- ★ **HOT:** Steelhead, Rainbow Trout (stocked)
- ✓ **GOOD:** Walleye, Bass (waking up)
- ↺ **IMPROVING:** Channel Catfish

WHERE TO GO

- 🎯 **Trout:** Columbia Park Pond (freshly stocked!)
- 🎯 **Steelhead:** Snake & Yakima confluences
- 🎯 **Bass:** Shallow coves with sun exposure


BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Trout:** PowerBait or worms under bobber
- **Bass:** Slow-moving jigs in 5-10 feet
- **Walleye:** Nightcrawler harness, slow troll

CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 42-48°F | **Weather:** Variable, windy
Best Days: Warm afternoons after cold fronts

SPECIAL NOTES

- 🌈 Rainbow trout stocking begins at local ponds
 -  Get licenses before April 1st renewal!
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APRIL - Prime Spring Fishing

WHAT'S BITING

- ★ **HOT:** Bass (pre-spawn), Trout, Walleye
- ✓ **GOOD:** Crappie, Bluegill, Catfish
- 🚀 **STARTING:** Spring Chinook

WHERE TO GO

- 🎯 **Bass:** Bateman Island, Yakima Delta backwaters
- 🎯 **Trout:** Howard Amon Park, stocked ponds
- 🎯 **Walleye:** Hanford Reach, McNary Pool

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Bass:** Spinnerbaits, plastic worms near cover
- **Trout:** Rooster tail spinners, flies
- **Walleye:** Bottom bouncers with worms



CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 48-55°F | **Weather:** Warming, occasional rain
Best Days: Stable weather patterns



SPECIAL NOTES



NEW LICENSE YEAR STARTS APRIL 1st!
 Youth fishing events at Columbia Park



MAY - Peak Spring Action



WHAT'S BITING



HOT: Bass (spawning), Crappie, Walleye



GOOD: Channel Catfish, Spring Chinook



EXCELLENT: Bluegill & Panfish



WHERE TO GO



Bass: Any shallow bay with cover



Crappie: Marina docks, submerged trees



Chinook: Columbia River main channel



BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Bass:** Topwater early, soft plastics midday
- **Crappie:** Small jigs under docks
- **Catfish:** Nightcrawlers or stink bait at night



CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 55-65°F | **Weather:** Beautiful spring days
Best Days: Early morning and evening



SPECIAL NOTES

☀️ Some of the year's best fishing!

👨‍👩‍👧 Perfect weather for family trips

JUNE - Early Summer Variety

WHAT'S BITING

★ **HOT:** Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Catfish

✓ **GOOD:** Chinook Salmon, Sturgeon

🔥 **EXCELLENT:** All panfish species

WHERE TO GO

🎯 **Smallmouth:** Snake River rocky points

🎯 **Walleye:** Columbia River current breaks

🎯 **Family:** Wade Park, Two Rivers Park

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Smallmouth:** Tube jigs, crawfish patterns
- **Walleye:** Worm harness, deep diving cranks
- **Catfish:** Fish at night with cut bait

CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 62-70°F | **Weather:** Warming, longer days

Best Days: Overcast or early/late

SPECIAL NOTES

🎉 **FREE FISHING WEEKEND** (First weekend)

🍖 School's out - great camping/fishing combos

🌊 River flows increasing from snowmelt

JULY - Hot Summer Patterns

WHAT'S BITING

★ **HOT:** Walleye (night), Catfish, Summer Chinook
✓ **GOOD:** Bass (deep), Sturgeon
zz **SLOW:** Trout (too warm in shallows)

WHERE TO GO

🎯 **Walleye:** McNary Dam area (night fishing)
🎯 **Chinook:** Vernita Bridge to Priest Rapids
🎯 **Catfish:** Any river channel or pond

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Fish early (5-8am) or late (7-10pm)**
- **Go deeper:** Fish move to cooler water
- **Night fishing:** Excellent for walleye & catfish

CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 70-78°F | **Weather:** Hot & dry
Best Days: Cloudy days or nights

SPECIAL NOTES

☀️ Start EARLY to beat heat
💧 Bring extra water & sun protection
🌙 Some of year's best night fishing

AUGUST - Late Summer/Pre-Fall

WHAT'S BITING

★ **HOT:** Fall Chinook (starting!), Catfish
✓ **GOOD:** Walleye, Bass (deep water)
↻ **IMPROVING:** Steelhead (early ones arriving)

WHERE TO GO

🎯 **Chinook:** Hanford Reach, Columbia Point
🎯 **Bass:** Deep structure, main lake points
🎯 **Catfish:** Yakima Delta, warm water discharge areas

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Chinook:** Kwikfish, spinners, cured roe
- **Bass:** Deep diving crankbaits, drop shot
- **Walleye:** Nightcrawlers in 20-30 feet



CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 72-80°F | **Weather:** Hot days, warm nights

Best Days: Early morning essential



SPECIAL NOTES



Fall Chinook run building



Salmon derbies starting



SEPTEMBER - Fall Transition



WHAT'S BITING



HOT: Fall Chinook (peak!), Coho Salmon



GOOD: Bass (feeding up), Walleye



EXCELLENT: Steelhead arriving



WHERE TO GO



Salmon: Yakima River mouth, Ringold



Bass: Shallow flats in mornings



Steelhead: Snake River, Yakima confluence



BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Salmon:** Twitching jigs, cured roe
- **Bass:** Topwater at dawn, reaction baits
- **Walleye:** Blade baits, jigging spoons





CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 65-72°F | **Weather:** Cooling, stable

Best Days: Consistent weather patterns



SPECIAL NOTES

-  Fantastic fishing as fish feed heavily
 -  Salmon fishing reaches peak
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OCTOBER - Prime Fall Fishing

WHAT'S BITING

- ★ **HOT:** Steelhead, Fall Chinook, Coho
- ✓ **GOOD:** Bass, Walleye, Trout (active again)
- 🔥 **EXCELLENT:** Everything feeding before winter!

WHERE TO GO

- 🎯 **Steelhead:** Ice Harbor Dam, Yakima mouth
- 🎯 **Trout:** Stocked ponds get fall plants
- 🎯 **Bass:** Following shad schools



BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Steelhead:** Float fishing, side drifting
- **Trout:** PowerBait, kastmasters
- **Bass:** Liplless cranks, spinnerbaits

CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 55-65°F | **Weather:** Crisp, beautiful fall days
Best Days: Stable pressure systems

SPECIAL NOTES

- 🏆 Many tournaments and derbies
 -  Possibly the best month overall!
 -  Great fishing around Halloween
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NOVEMBER - Late Fall Opportunities

WHAT'S BITING

- ★ **HOT:** Steelhead (increasing daily!)
- ✓ **GOOD:** Whitefish, Late Chinook
- ↺ **SLOWING:** Bass, Walleye (getting sluggish)

WHERE TO GO

- 🎯 **Steelhead:** Snake River system
- 🎯 **Whitefish:** Columbia below dams
- 🎯 **Trout:** Deep holes in lakes

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Steelhead:** Bobber and jig, bead fishing
- **Whitefish:** Small jigs tipped with maggots
- **Trout:** Slow presentations, live bait

CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 45-55°F | **Weather:** Cool, possible frost
Best Days: Warmer afternoons

17 **SPECIAL NOTES**

- 🦃 Thanksgiving week can be excellent
- 🧥 Layer up - weather changes quickly

DECEMBER - Winter Steelhead Begin

WHAT'S BITING

- ★ **HOT:** Steelhead (winter run starting)
- ✓ **GOOD:** Whitefish, Sturgeon
- zz **SLOW:** Most warmwater species dormant

WHERE TO GO

- 🎯 **Steelhead:** Yakima confluence, Snake River
- 🎯 **Whitefish:** Below any dam
- 🎯 **Sturgeon:** Deep Columbia holes

BEST TECHNIQUES

- **Steelhead:** Drift fishing, float and jig
- **Slow everything down** in cold water
- **Fish midday** when slightly warmer



CONDITIONS

Water Temp: 38-45°F | **Weather:** Cold, short days

Best Days: After warming trends



SPECIAL NOTES



Fishing gear makes great holiday gifts!



Christmas break = steelhead time



Check ice conditions on ponds



YEAR-ROUND HOTSPOTS QUICK REFERENCE



BY SPECIES



BASS: Bateman Island, Yakima Delta, Marina areas



TROUT: Columbia Park Pond, Howard Amon Park



WALLEYE: Hanford Reach, McNary Pool, Dam areas



SALMON/STEELHEAD: Yakima mouth, Ringold, Ice Harbor



PANFISH: Two Rivers Park, Wade Park, Marina docks



CATFISH: Yakima Delta, warm water outlets, river channels



ESSENTIAL RESOURCES



WEBSITES & APPS

- **WDFW:** wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/reports
- **River Flows:** waterdata.usgs.gov
- **Fish Counts:** fpc.org (dam counts)
- **Weather:** weather.gov/pdt



LOCAL INTEL

- **Bob's Sporting Goods** (Pasco): (509) 547-6764
- **Sportsman's Warehouse** (Kennewick): (509) 783-5445

- **Angler's Guide Service:** Local guide reports
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SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ANNUAL EVENTS

JANUARY: Steelhead Derby (Snake River)

MARCH: Youth Fishing Day (Columbia Park)

APRIL: Trout Derby (Various ponds)

JUNE: FREE FISHING WEEKEND (1st weekend)

SEPTEMBER: Fall Chinook Derby

OCTOBER: Walleye Tournament (Columbia River)

PRO TIPS BY SEASON

SPRING (Mar-May)

- ✓ Fish are shallow and aggressive
- ✓ Target warming areas in afternoon
- ✓ Match the hatch with local insects

SUMMER (Jun-Aug)

- ✓ Fish early and late or at night
- ✓ Go deep during midday heat
- ✓ Night fishing can be magical

FALL (Sep-Nov)

- ✓ Best overall fishing of the year
- ✓ Fish feed heavily before winter
- ✓ Follow the baitfish schools

WINTER (Dec-Feb)

- ✓ Steelhead make it worthwhile
- ✓ Fish the warmest part of day
- ✓ Slow presentations are key

