

King Salmon on KODIAK ISLAND

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #228 —

This was the Family's very first trip to Alaska, and we had come to fish; it was son Russell who researched the fishing and chose our destination. We were after King Salmon, and knew only that they came out of the ocean and into the rivers to spawn in the early summer.

We flew to Anchorage and spent a day there, where the sun sets about midnight that time of year. Then we took a small, commercial flight to Kodiak airport on Kodiak Island. Floatplanes picked us up at the airport and flew us the short distance around the island to the lodge – which was home base for their fly-out fishing trips.

The next afternoon our King Salmon experience began, as the floatplanes landed on the Karluk River near the northwest corner of the island. Here we loaded

into rafts and floated down the river to a big hole of water that the salmon held up in, as they came out of the ocean and waited to spawn. While we started fishing, the



It was a picture like this, for which I stepped into the water to capture a different perspective. Brenda and her guide are quite focused on the fish.

guides pitched our tents and set up camp. This was the first time we heard the words “fish on”, which means that someone has hooked a fish and everyone needs to quickly get their lines out of the water, while the hooked fish is being landed.

The limit of King Salmon was five for the season, no more than two per day. We fished the afternoon of the first day, all day the second day and the morning of the third day – catching our limit each day. Then we packed up and



A pretty nice King Salmon, still hooked to the spinner. Fresh ones like this fight like crazy.

floated down the river, to be picked up by the floatplanes and taken back to the lodge. There were two exciting events while fishing. First, we had a young bear come a bit too close for comfort and the guides “yelled” him away. Second, I stepped into the water to take a picture, but it was much deeper than it appeared and in I went. The wader belt held

“...when the fog rolls in, you don't fly.”

On the trip home the next day we

had our first experience with Alaska weather; when the fog rolls in, you don't fly. Often, the only answer is “wait till the fog clears”, which was our situation. But late morning the fog lifted and we made it over to Kodiak, then to Anchorage and finally back home. What a great first fishing trip to Alaska!

Larry Potterfield

Port Lions Lodge
The Karluk River
Kodiak Island, Alaska
19-21 June 2000

USA
Midway



This was our tented camp on the Karluk River. There were many bears in the area, but they gave us no problems.