

SHAD HOT SPOTS EAST AND WEST *continued from page 67*

downstream from the dam, though shore fishing can be dicey depending on water levels. Some of the better shore access is upriver from the dam on the Washington side of the river.

Downstream from Bonneville, the **Willamette River** south of Portland and the Columbia River provide some shore access. The **Umpqua River** east of Reedsport along Route 38 and 138 to Roseburg and beyond is a popular area. The **Rogue, Coos, Siuslaw, Smith, Sandy, and Coquille** rivers also have runs worth investigating.

Washington. Like Oregon, Washington's best shad fishing is on the Columbia River in the Bonneville Dam area. From Highway 14, two miles east of North Bonneville, transmission towers mark the entrance to the access road that provides access to some good spots. The **Chehalis** and **Skookunchuk** rivers in the vicinity of Centralia have good water. Route 6 west from this area follows the upper Chehalis and leads to another good shad river, the **Willapa**.

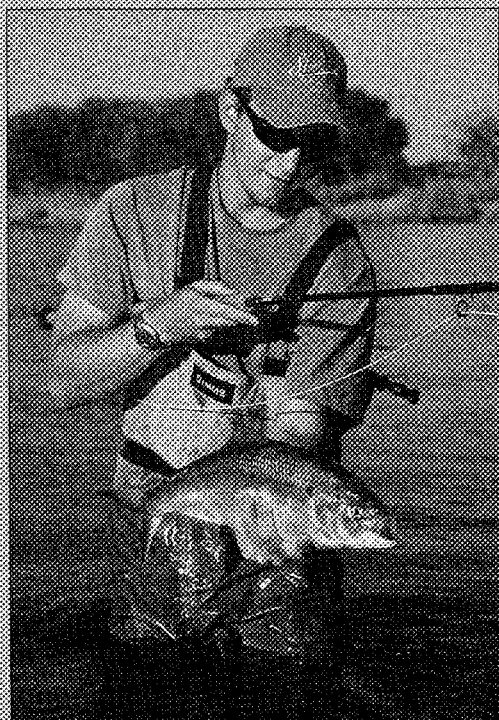
East Coast Shad

WADEABLE PORTIONS OF NORTHEAST RIVERS are most productive mid May through June, in the mid-Atlantic, from April through May, and in the Southeast, from as early as January through March. While there is shad fishing from Maine up into Canada, the fisheries tend to be marginal.

New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. With a shad run exceeding 500 miles, the Delaware River has many places to catch shad. The best wading fly water is between Port Jervis and Hancock, New York. Route 97 follows the river, providing numerous pull-offs and rapids for over 70 miles. Up and downstream from the Barryville Bridge, downstream from the Lackawaxen Bridge (park on the Pennsylvania side), Cedar Rapids, Ten Mile River Access, and down from Kellams Bridge just north of Hankins are a few good spots. Visit www.flyfisherman.com/Delaware/ for a detailed map of the Delaware River and its access points.

Connecticut. Unlike the Delaware, shad on the **Connecticut River** have to pass a number of dams, each one thinning the numbers that push upstream. The river is large and difficult to fish in Connecticut without lead line and a boat, so wading fly fishers have to look for confluences like that of the **Farmington River** near Windsor. The **Hammonasset River** around Clinton also has some good fly water.

Massachusetts and Vermont. Holyoke Dam on the Connecticut River—Massachusetts' most famous shad spot—is too crowded to be any fun. Try spots below the Willimanset Bridge or the confluence of the **Chicopee River**. You'll have



In California, the best places to look for American shad are the Sacramento River and its tributaries (the Yuba (above), Feather, and American rivers).

a more pastoral experience fishing up and down from the Rock Dam (not a dam at all, just rocks) access at Turners Falls. Shad go all the way up into Vermont as far as Bellows Falls, though Vernon Dam significantly decreases the run.

Maryland and Washington D.C. This is where you start running into significant numbers of hickory shad, which are smaller cousins to American shad. Below Conowingo Dam on the **Susquehanna River** is a popular spot for both American and hickory shad, and in Washington D.C., try Fletchers Boathouse and below Chain Bridge on the **Potomac River**. These are not particularly wadeable or fly-friendly spots and they can be busy, but they consistently offer good fishing. Maryland's **Deer Creek** is a good spot for wading fly fishers, but only for hickories.

Virginia. Tributaries of the James River offer a variety of opportunities, as do **York River** tributaries like the **Mattaponi**

south of Aylett and the **Pamunkey**. Other hot spots include the **Chickahominy** at Walkers Dam below Lexana and the **Nottoway**. Some of the best wade-fishing in Virginia is on the **Rappahannock River** through Old Mill Park in Fredericksburg and down from the Route 1 bridge where there are a couple parking places and good fishing if you wade from the north side. Shad used to stack up below Embrey Dam, which was breached in February 2004. The removal of this formerly impassable barrier opens 100 miles of historical shad spawning habitat and creates new opportunities for fly anglers in Virginia.

North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Try **Cape Fear River** at Lock & Dam No. 1 and the **Tar River** upstream of Rocky Mount railway bridge. In low water, the **Roanoke River** between U.S. 158 and the Weldon Boat Ramp offers some access to shad. If you have a boat, there is a huge run of hickories here in March and by April there are also striped bass in the river. The **Cashie River** near the U.S. 17 bridge is good wading water, though this is primarily hickory shad territory. Also try the **Pee Dee River** below Blewett Fall Dam. Georgia shad rivers include the **Ogeechee, Woodbine, Satilla, and Altamaha** rivers, and the **Savannah River** at Bluff Lock dams near Augusta.

Florida. The **St. Johns River** meanders through swamps and savannas, a completely different shad river from the Delaware's stony rapids and draws. And as if that weren't enough, the season is from November through February. Some excellent fly water is accessible from Route 46 between Sanford and Titusville—all within easy reach of Orlando. —