

(Note: This is wildlife news from DWR, 6-4-08.)

See Colorful Cutthroat Trout

DWR hosts viewing event on June 14

Strawberry Reservoir -- Colorful cutthroat trout are swimming up the Strawberry River right now.

You can see these cutthroats—and watch biologists take eggs from them—at a free wildlife viewing event.

The event will be held June 14 at the Strawberry Reservoir Visitor Center. It runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

DWR biologists will be available to answer your questions and show you the many cutthroat trout that have worked their way up the Strawberry River to spawn.

To reach the event, park at the visitor center, and then walk along the boardwalk behind the visitor center to the Division of Wildlife Resources' fish trap and egg-taking facility.

Strawberry Reservoir is about 25 miles southeast of Heber City, off US-40.

See and learn

“The reservoir’s Bear Lake cutthroat trout spawn in late May and early June,” says Scott Root, regional conservation outreach manager for the DWR. “These determined fish are well known for their energy and their ability to jump over obstacles as they make their way upstream to spawn.”

Many of the cutthroat trout in the Strawberry River end up in the DWR’s fish trap and egg-taking facility.

After the fish arrive at the facility, biologists extract eggs from the “ripe” female cutthroats by rubbing the bellies of the females and gathering the eggs that squirt out. They typically gather more than 1,000 eggs from each female.

After the eggs are gathered, the biologists fertilize them by adding the milt of male cutthroat trout.

After the eggs are fertilized, they’re taken to DWR hatcheries. Hatching the cutthroats in hatcheries allows them to be raised in a protective environment. More than 90 percent of the cutthroats hatched in the hatcheries will survive. In the wild, less than 10 percent of cutthroats that hatch typically survive.

“The tributaries to Strawberry Reservoir are closed to fishing until July 12, and some of them are closed even longer. But this event is a great way to get a close-up view of these spawning fish,” Root says. “Unlike the kokanee salmon in the reservoir, the cutthroat trout do not die after they spawn.”

The water in the tributaries is high and murky right now. That can make it difficult to view fish in the Strawberry River. But if you attend the event, you’ll still be able to see the fish. “Our biologists will occasionally hold up a large cutthroat so everyone can get a good look,” Root says.

For more information, call Root at (801) 491-5656 or (801) 491-5678.