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Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : FYI - wild trout ID

Re: FYI - wild trout ID

Author: : troutbert

Date: : 2006/11/5 9:27:55

URL:

I thought the article's description of wild vs hatchery browns was interesting. It gave this description of the hatchery browns:

Domestic stock: A large-headed, somewhat slender trout, usually dark brown on dorsal surfaces and silvery to pale brown with heavy black spotting on sides and dorsal fin, often with slightly paler spots on the upper half (and sometimes the lower half) of the tail. The spots are often of an irregular shape (and may even be connected toward the tail). As these fish "color-up" in streams, the sides become a bit more yellow and spots below the lateral line develop an orange or orange-brown color. As fall approaches, the fish darken (especially males) and the entire lower half of the body may be washed in deep orange-brown. These fish rarely develop any true red or crimson anywhere on the body and their fins are usually dark.

The stocked browns usually do have these irregular dark spots, as opposed to round spots, and on a light background, and they don't have much brilliant red color. So its a pretty good description of the strain stocked by the PFBC. But browns with this appearance are also found as wild, reproducing populations in some streams, particularly some of the larger limestone streams in central PA. In some of these streams you will find browns with the irregular spots all over the body, not the round spots, and on a light background, not that deep buttery yellow, and without red spots. But if you catch fish like that, you can't assume those fish came from the hatchery. Some streams have quite good wild populations of these browns.