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Subject: : Beginner Forum

Topic: : Fly Rod Selection for Beginners

Re: Fly Rod Selection for Beginners

Author: : pcray1231

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URL:

I totally agree with the picking the rod based on where you plan to fish. Everyone seems to have a different idea about what rod is perfect for PA streams. Part of that is just personal preference, but a big part of it is that we all have different ideas of what "typical PA streams" are because we fish different areas of the state and different streams.

I tend to fish a lot of small, infertile freestone, headwater streams for native brookies. These streams are often thick, and the fish are rarely drag shy or line shy, but they are people shy. The name of the game is to get as much distance as possible (which still isn't that far with the thick surroundings). Thus, I tend to like short, stout rods, where you can throw tight loops through that tight window below the hemlock branch and above log in the water. My favorite compromise tool for these situations is a 7'6" 5 wt, loaded with 6 wt line. More open water and I'd like a little longer rod, lower line weight. Tighter water and I'd like shorter and even heavier line weight.

If you're "matching the hatch" with small flies like midges, tricos, BWO's, etc. where the fish are drag shy and the fishing could be described as "delicate", to me that's when the soft action, 3 and 4 wt rods come into their own. Streams where you'll be doing this tend to be a bit larger and more fertile.

But I agree, that on medium and large trout streams, with a mix of nymphing and larger dries fished at distance, a 9' 5 wt with a fairly fast action is the best all round tool for the job. For beginners, I'd recommend backing off to a medium action, they are more forgiving of casting mistakes and easier to learn on, both with the slower stroke and the ability to "feel" the line load the rod and thus time your forward stroke.