Subject: : Beginner Forum
Topic: : Questions about trout and warm weather
Re: Questions about trout and warm weather
Author: : pcray1231
Date: : 2010/6/30 15:20:11
URL:

The other answers were all good. I'll add my own.

1) What water temps are too warm to fish for trout without killing or hurting the fish? Are there guidelines for this?

Generally, 70 degrees is a good measure. It can be a bit more complicated than that. Browns seem to handle warm temps better than brookies or bows. Amount of flow matters a bit, they'll handle temps better if the water is fast and aerated. Streams go up and down by the day, some considerably and others not as much. So if its 70 for a brief time at the peak of the day, but dropping to 62 at night, you might be alright, but if its staying at 70 thats a different story.

2) Do limestone streams typically reach temps that put them "off limits" or is it pretty safe to fish these streams during the summer?

Unlike what you'll hear elsewhere, both limestoners and freestoners generally have a base flow that comes from springs. But most freestoners have many small springs from a wide drainage area. A fair number of limestone springs are much larger, and can represent the majority of the flow in some areas. All springwater comes out at a constant temperature, and once in the stream begins to take on the temperature of the surroundings. So, with a limestoner, it is possible to have a fairly large waterway which is relatively fresh from the ground and thus cold. Thats hard to do with a freestoner, they grow more gradually with a higher number of smaller springs spread out over a bigger area. Small streams will often be plenty cool, but by the time its a large waterway, it's probably warm. That said, even limestoners eventually flow far enough from the spring to warm up. Take the temperature yourself.

3) Are there other ways, besides water temp, to determine if the fish are too stressed from the heat or water levels to safely catch and release?

Well, water temp is the easiest predictor. But a stressed fish will generally feed less and put up a poor fight when hooked. The fight time it takes to overstress a fish is also shorter, so if after release, the fish doesn't dart away very quickly thats a bad sign, and if it turns belly up or needs "reviving", thats a very bad sign.