Subject: : Warm Water & Salt Water Fly-Fishing
Topic: : Where do the brandywine smallies go?
Re: Where do the brandywine smallies go?
Author: : Fishidiot
Date: : 2011/11/15 18:38:16
URL:

Numb,
I don't fish the Brandywine so can't offer a specific answer. As for winter smallies, I do see some winter over in creeks to be sure. Going off my own experience, these are usually yearling or two year old bass. Big bass (10"+) almost entirely migrate. Back in the winter of 2009 I spent some time watching some deep pools in a local creek that were loaded with smallies all summer. I could even look through the ice. There were a couple small bass that stayed in the pool all winter - during summer there were dozens of fish with several large ones. The big fish were all gone by the third week in Oct.
This migration is an odd phenomena - there doesn't seem to be a transition when fish can be "followed" like migrating salmonids. Instead, one day the fish are just gone. They re-appear just as suddenly in springtime.
With regards to dams blocking migration - this does, of course, happen. If I had to hazard a guess, I'd imagine that bass in the B-wine are mostly schooled up in the deepest water directly above the dam. They will stay in this winter hiberncula until the point in the spring when water temps hit about 40 degrees at which point they will start to move (this is usually around the first half of March), sometimes for distances of many miles. Studies done on river SMBs in WI have documented this mass migration to dam pools.
SMBs can be caught in winter, although it's mighty tough with a fly rod. I'd find those deep spots and fish 'em.