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Author: : RandyJones

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Steelhead Drift Boat Guide Fly Fishing Reports for the Salmon River in Pulaski NY:

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Dec. 18 - Fresh and older Steelhead are top to bottom of the Salmon River in Pulaski NY. All spots producing. Winter holding and Transitional holding. You will find some spots 'HOT" one day and cold the very next day. Some spots will be neither, but instead, normally consistent. Over my last 3 trips we have found this to be true. Water level has dropped to 335 cfs. More rain and snow in the forecast, so we may see the water come back up?

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As of today Dec. 20, at 9am. the water is forecast to be 900 cfs plus run-off. We did get some rain and am forecast to get possibly 1/2 inch tonight into Friday. Turning to all snow later on Friday. Windy and temp's in the mid. 30's. Sounds like a cold soaking rain with wind chills in the 20's. More snow, some lake effect in the forecast. Fishing should be reeel good! We might even see a higher water flow with the forecast? Sounds like reeel Steelhead weather!

Best of Holiday Luck to you all!

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On my last several Drift Boat Trips:

This was Stans first time fishing for Steelhead on the Salmon River NY. Stan was 4 (landed) for 9 (Steelhead on) off the drift boat. We fished 2 different spots and found Steelhead in both. As a drift boat-wade guide, I love it when I'm 100% on my spots! Congrats Stan!

Skip was with me the next 2 days. He played with 9 Steelhead the first day. We found Steelhead in 3 out of 5 spots fished. Both Transitional and Winter holding locations. The hot spot today was a lil hole in the middle of the river that most drift boats and anglers walk past. We found a pod of Steelhead! We played with 7 total in this one lil place over a short period of time! Ye-haa!

The second day while slower, we still were consistent on finding a Steelhead, two or even 3 in each spot fished. We were once again 100% on finding Steelhead in each location fished off the drift boat. I think we played with 6. Had to work for'm. We fished the same hole as the day previous where we had hit 7 Steelhead. Today we could only manage 1. Guess the fish heard about Skip's superior angler ability level and headed for the hills!

Skip was one of those anglers who could land it on a dime. I'd suggest casting side arm, land it a couple feet off the far bank at around 11:30, so we could land our offering under the over hanging tree branch's. Each time it was perfectly placed and fished. We were rewarded with 3 Steelhead from this one fishing location without moving the boat.

Each day of the above 3 was a combined team effort. All striving for the same fun, enjoyment and rewards of hitting all 3 of the most important key parts of fishing consistently. I'd have to say we succeeded! Outstanding!! Congrats again gentleman!

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All of the above fish were released for your, your friends and your children's future fishing fun!

(To see all photo's please visit [www.yankeeangler.com](http://www.yankeeangler.com) - Fishing Report's)

Guess who was fishing for Steelhead in old farts pool this weekend on the river? Yup, even Santa takes time off to wet a line and tangle with some Silver Bullets on the Salmon River. Ol' Saint Nick was 1 for 3 using a combination of glow bugs and Stones. Santa was last seen chasing a rocketing, somersaulting, speeding bullet, tail walking Steelhead down the river steady on his feet, bellowing Ho-ho-ho.

Where the land ends LIFE begins

(Photo)

This article first appeared in the February 2002 issue of the NY Conservationist magazine and is being reprinted with their permission. Article and most photo's by Mike Cavanaugh. Mike works in DEC's Division of Public Affairs and Education.

You may enjoy reading Mikes article on a day on the Salmon River with his son. For me, certain days stand out among other's. Sometimes its the big fish, numbers of fish or the camaraderie we share. Today was different, it was not about numbers or size, but mostly about dad sharing his love for the great outdoors with his son and spending quality time together.

May devoted anglers read these words and relive the simple pleasures of finding - and landing - the big one.  
( The fisherman's book of wisdom )

(Photo)

A Fish for X-Mas:

Thomas looked a little puzzled as he picked the brightly wrapped package from under the tree; it wasn't heavy, it didn't rattle or anything. In fact, it felt like an empty box. A cruel trick to play on a 12-year old boy, but the sudden appearance of cameras as he unwrapped it meant that this would be something special. He was even more perplexed, however, when the box contained only a single fishing fly and a note that said January 5th.

Fly Fishing in January?

The drive up to the Salmon River was filled with questions. What kind of fish will we be after? What's a steelhead? How will we get to the river in all the snow? What's a drift boat? What if I get cold? Why are we going with a guide, Dad?

The answer to the last question really shed light on all the others. My experience with winter steelhead fishing was limited, to say the least. A guide would help us be safe, comfortable and most of all, he'd share his knowledge on the river. After a quick dinner in Pulaski, we settled in.

I had met Randy Jones at an outdoor show the previous spring while helping with the fly casting demonstrations near Randy's booth. After a few friendly exchanges about my technique, or lack thereof, we started talking about the Salmon River. This guy seemed to have a compatible personality, the right approach to fishing and a good attitude about protection of the resource and ethical behavior on the river-all important considerations that I wanted to share with my son. More importantly, he really seemed to enjoy what he did, a quality I've found to be contagious. I had wanted to get Thomas out during the winter run of steelhead, but had never ventured into the cold and ice to try. A chat with Randy made up my mind.

That night, I dreamt of dancing steelhead and the excited smiles of a boy who is growing up too quickly. We

hopped out of bed in the pre-dawn darkness to find 4 inches of fresh snow and a temperature of about 20 degrees. Promptly at 6 AM, Randy, with his drift boat in tow, pulled up. We got Thomas outfitted with some 5 mm Neoprene waders, korkers (safety spikes for the slippery bottom) and grabbed a bite to eat on our way to the drift boat launch in Altmar, just downstream from the DEC's Salmon River Hatchery.

Before launching the boat, Randy and I talked about my objectives for the day. I told Randy that this was Thomas's trip and, with that in mind, to devote most of his attention to making sure my son learned a bit of technique, and how to be a courteous and ethical angler. While catching a fish was important, a good day on the water was the goal.

(Photo)

We fished for a while in the fly-only area upstream of the Altmar bridge, using a fly rod. My third cast-WHAM! A silver rocket took the fly and gave me the fight of my life-for all of about 30 seconds, that is, 'til I got too aggressive and it broke the tippet. Oh well! Under our guide's tutelage, Thomas was doing much better; getting the hang of casting to the right spot, feeling the drift and cooperating with the handful of other anglers in the pool. After 45 minutes, Randy decided it was time to move downstream a bit.

(Photo)

Riding in the big drift boat was quite an experience for both of us. Randy steered and poled us around some rocks; we bumped over others. The fresh snow, combined with the steam rising off the river and the bright gray of January overcast made it a surreal picture. Other anglers shivered in their waders as we drifted past and warmed our hands in the red glow of the propane heater on the boat. While drifting Randy spoke to Thomas about his experiences fishing the Salmon River and his love of fishing.

(Photo)

We drifted for a few minutes and landed at a hole just upstream from the popular trestle pool. We got out of the boat and waded into the icy water (thank goodness for our insulated Neoprene waders). There were a few other anglers and some real promising water. The promise was kept within a few minutes as Thomas hooked into a large and very energetic steelhead. I put down my rod, picked up the camera and enjoyed watching my son get dragged around 100 yards of Salmon River real estate, with Randy running close behind! The big fish was netted and Thomas got a close look at a 16-pound silver beauty. High-fives all around, a picture or two from the proud dad, and the fish was released unharmed to hopefully brighten the day of another angler.

As we drifted and fished for the rest of the day, we learned about the river, we visited with other anglers, we talked about the steelhead we were seeing, we had a lot of laughs and , oh, by the way, Thomas caught another fish or two. Randy felt bad that the "old man" hadn't caught any fish, but I assured him it didn't matter. After all, that wasn't the objective of the trip. Just look at that smile!

(See Photo)

I'm often asked, "What was your best day on the water?" After 20 plus years of guiding in Vermont, on Cape Cod and the Salmon River in New York, many best days flash across my mind. As I searched deep for my best fish story, it suddenly hit me. It wasn't my fish, my day or even my story that gave me the most rewarding experience!

Any guide will tell you, we are teachers and our true satisfaction comes in a way that any teacher feels when their students do well on a test. When I guide I feel my guest's are fishing through me. As a partnership striving for the same goal.

Today, more than ever I felt a part of Mike and Thomas's hopes, desires and dreams. We shared laughter and the excitement in each other's voices. The look of total satisfaction and awe as we revived, released and watched a keeper swim away, savoring its beauty and gracefulness. Released to produce more offspring for your children's pleasure.

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(Photo)  
12 year old ("Hot Rod" for the day) Tom's Holiday present from his Dad, Mike.

Tom was all smiles after fighting this big (approx. 16lb Steelhead). This was his first time ever fishing for them. The second one even though smaller, still gave him a great fight and both will last in his memory for a life time. Congrats Tom! I have a feeling it will be a long ride home for his father Mike! ( Both fish released )

Hello to all the armed forces that read my reports from around the world. We will try to save a few fish for you all upon your safe return. Thanks for your service!

That's it for this week's Steelhead Salmon River Pulaski NY Drift Boat Guide Fishing Report, Etc... I think I covered all the important stuff.

I'll be updating things next week and will be adding my normal educational articles, Tips, Pics, Humor, Mail Bag stuff. So stop back.

Stay tuned for more entertainingly informative and mildly educational reports and articles on this never-ending virtual fishing trip with your host Randy "The Yankee Angler" and friends.

I sincerely hope that what little I've been able to share with you will help you along the path to more enjoyable, safe, knowledgeable fishing.

Thanks for stopping in and spending your valuable internet fishing time here :)

Hope you all enjoying this great fishing!

Best Holiday Fish's,  
Randy Jones