

Subject: : Tips and Tricks

Topic: : Fishing small wild trout runs

Re: Fishing small wild trout runs

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URL:

It sounds to me as if you're on the right track. Focus on the places that give you the best chance of catching fish.

On small streams, that's bound to mean skipping a lot of water, including some places that probably hold nice fish. Log jams are often a problem, for instance- even if I think I can manage to get a take instead of a tangle, unless I think I can land the fish, I don't bother.

I usually bypass shallow, fast runs on small streams. Unlike mid-sized and larger streams, the food supply is seldom rich enough for fish to want to feed there, and the flow tends to be faster due to steeper gradient.

Pocket water is different- if there are boulders that provide deeper holes, refuge from the current, and cover, there can be fish there. But they're spookier than they would be in a larger, deeper stream, and it's tough to fish right up on them.

The best places are the pools. Try to fish the tail first. Carefully. The first cast is the most important one. Be crafty, like you're making a bank shot in a game of pool. Plot it out. (Easier said than done. I need to work on that part.)

Practice bow & arrow casting technique. Find a target- something like a putting green, if you can.

Figure out how to crouch out of sight, and cast without waving your rod over the water in view of the trout. Upstream, down, across, who cares? Most of the time I'm just flipping the leader over, with about 4' of line out. Whatever gets the fly over the fish. The most important thing is to not spook them.

Casts over 20 ft. (including leader) are typically a ticket to disaster on a little brook. Dry-dropper rigs are often not worth the trouble, either. They tend to tangle on the flip. If you want to use them, keep the distance between the dry and the dropper fairly short.

Since it's often not possible to situate yourself to get a fly to your targets in a pool without scaring the fish first, give the pool a rest after you move into position. A long rest, like enough time to fix yourself a snack and eat it. Bring along some wrist grip exercisers or something. Meditate. Watch the wildlife. Whatever gives you the strength of patience.

Sometimes you'll get to a nice pool where there's just no way to get your fly to the fish without scaring them off. These days, I just shrug and pass it by. I've learned my lesson on that.

Take for granted that once you hook and fight a fish in a small pool, it's over. Move on. In a big plunge pool, you

might get one from the tail and one near the head. That's about it.

I just picked up a copy of *Fly Fishing Small Streams* by John Gierach. He gets it right. So does Tom Rosenbauer, in *The Orvis Guide to Fishing Small Streams*.