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Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : PA Prodigal son returning for fly fishing trip

Re: PA Prodigal son returning for fly fishing trip

Author: : pcray1231

Date: : 2013/7/31 10:52:34

URL:

Well,

First, thanks for your service. And regardless of everything below, 95% of the time you want a floating line for trout in PA, and you can get away with it for the other 5%, so go with a floating line.

There are medium sized limestoners close. Example is Big Fishing Creek and Spring Creek. These are generally wild brown trout, though Fishing Creek has brookies as well. The brookies there act an awful lot like browns, how they act has more to do with location than with species. These streams have more and bigger fish. The fish are pickier, though, and are more "streaky". Meaning fishing might suck at one time of day, and then suddenly they all turn on like someone threw a switch. And the numbers you actually catch in the end usually aren't as high, but they are bigger, with the average being more like the trophies on the little streams, and these streams have some REAL trophies. For these, a 9 ft 5 wt is the standard, there's room to cast. Match the hatch if fish are rising. If not, you nymph likely looking water (pheasant tails, scuds, etc.). If water is up, throwing streamers can be effective. These are, of course, the famous waters and are more crowded, you are likely to see other fishermen. Even with the right basic flies and technique, the fish are picky. A little bit of drag on the fly, or if it floats a little too high or low, and they refuse it. Getting on fish is easy. Fooling them is a challenge. These streams also hold more consistent temperatures and conditions. So if we're in a drought, they'll have enough water to fish, whereas the freestoners can get real low, and if it's also hot out, they get warm too.

Then there are small freestoners, with mostly brookies, but usually some browns as well. The fishing is totally the opposite of the limestoners. Some of these are choked with rhododendron, which makes it real hard for a beginner. Others are a little more open (still thick by other standards). You typically want shorter rods on these streams. 7 to 7 1/2 ft. There is some disagreement on equipment. Some like the ultralight gear so that a small fish can feel like a fight, so the 2 and 3 wts and stuff. Others prefer broomsticks with heavy lines to punch casts into tight places. I'm of the latter group. Neither group is "wrong". But my recommendation would be a 7 1/2 ft 4 wt rod, and put 6 wt line on it. Seriously. When casting shorter distances than the line and rod were ratted for, "overlining" a rod based on rating isn't really overlining it based on reality.

These fish, brookies or browns, are generally very aggressive as the food supply in these streams is thin. Opportunistic is the term. They don't have to be rising, toss a standard attractor dry like a humpy, wulff, etc. in there and they'll travel halfway across a pool to nail it. Lots of fun in beautiful places. Finding and getting to good streams is part of the fun/challenge. These streams are everywhere, we have literally thousands, and Clinton County alone probably has several hundred of them. But finding information on which are better than others is difficult, and nobody talks about how good stream X is. Heck, it may only get fished a few times per year. Plus, the better ones usually require a hike or some real bushwacking to get to. And because of the tight surroundings, you often have to get close to get a cast in there. Too close. And they are spooky. That's the

challenge. Getting there, and then keeping as much distance as possible while getting decent casts in tight places. It's not easy. You spend plenty of time retrieving flies from trees. Beginners often don't do well because they end up spooking all of the fish before getting in a good cast. But once you get a cast to an unspooked fish, actually fooling the fish is extremely easy. And on a good stream, a good small stream fisherman can rack up some real numbers. As in, 20 might be a BAD day, and on a few occasions it's possible to top 100. Many are dinks, and on some streams basically all of them are. But in some places, you can get an awful lot in that 8 or 9 inch range, which is nearing comparable to the average fish on the bigger, more famous limestoners.