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Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : big brown in a small freestone

Re: big brown in a small freestone

Author: : salmonoid

Date: : 2013/9/24 18:06:21

URL:

Quote:

pcray1231 wrote:

I've seen a number of these kind of fish over the years. I mean, I'll fish to them when I'm there. But I don't get all hell bent over them and make a point to specifically go after them.

But I have friends who do target these fish. Once located, you go in by night, with a flashlight. Don't even bother taking a rod the first night. As you approach, turn the light off and sneak up. Then turn on the light and look for him. Chances are, he has a feeding lie somewhere nearby where he sits at night. Tailout, extreme head. Usually shallow, moving water. Find him!

Now you know where he sits. Wait a few nights, and return again, this time with the rod. Make the first cast count. Cast beyond him and swim a streamer by him in the dark before he's aware of your presence. Use really stiff tippet. It's streamers, and nighttime, after all. like 1x. When he hits don't be afraid to muscle him to keep him out of the cover!

There's no reason to not take a rod the first night. Up until this year I might have endorsed this approach, but one night fishing escapade this year has me convinced otherwise (or at least convinced that its not a complete waste to try again after the light is shown). Fish one was caught around 10:55. Once I hook a fish at night, I usually flip the headlight on, to see what I have and to help with guiding the fish away from the in-stream obstacles, plus its a heck of a lot easier jumping down off of rocks to get streamside when a light is used 😊

Anyway, I landed the first fish and figuring I had caught my one fish of the night, I cast my light around the pool. I located two more fish - the headlamp makes their eyes glow white. One fish was at the head of the pool and he went spastic when the light went on him, darting all around. He ended up holding right out in front of me, so I quickly snapped the light off and figuring I had nothing to lose, I dropped the mouse in the water. On the third cast, I hooked him and landed him. No more than five minutes had passed between one big commotion in the stream, with a light, and the catching of the fish. And it was definitely the same fish; he had a unique shape, which I also spotted last year, and his nickname is Lion because of the way he was just sitting in his feeding lie at the head of the pool, waiting to pounce on anything that floated down through. Bottom-line - if you're going to walk in to spotlight, take the rod with you. Wait a few minutes, and then start fishing.

Unlike pcray, I am a person who will target specific fish once I find them. The particular nightfishing episode from above resulted in a third fish, although that didn't come until almost an hour and a half later than the first two.

The fish wildtrout2 refers to dogged me for two years and five separate trips, although I only fished for him once at night. I hooked him two times and lost him two times and didn't see him the third trip. I saw him the fourth trip, but didn't hook him, and finally landed him the fifth trip. And if you intend to target a specific fish, don't let too much time go by. I believe the fish was about 18" when I first saw him and over the course of a year-and-a-half, he added another three inches. I'll be super-surprised if I find him in the same spot next year. The good news is after he wrapped me around a root system and I sprang into action to net him, he kicked out ANOTHER large trout, between 16-18". His succession plan is already in place..

As far as night tactics, forget about light tippet. I used 8lb mono my last outing, and have skipped tippet altogether if I happen to have on a stout leader that I've cut back a few times (say a 3X 9' leader, after removing the bottom 2 feet from retying tippet on, you've got a nice stout leader that you can tie a fly directly onto - one less knot to fail). I've caught night fish on hoppers and mice patterns and I don't know that the fish were necessarily keyed on the patterns as they were to something that made decent movement on the surface. The hopper is actually what I caught my first night brown on and it has opened up a whole new world of fishing for me. I like mice patterns because they are food that a large brown may reasonably encounter, they can generate enough noise to attract attention, both on the cast (a water-sogged fly makes a nice THWAP! when it hits the water) and they will displace water on a retrieve. I vary the retrieve, sometimes just a twitch here and there, other times a more measured five strips, pause, five strips, pause. It's during those pauses that my imagination likes to think that there is a large brown (like Lion) that has been following the mouse, and given the pause, is now ready to pounce. Sometimes, imagination comes to life and a fish does strike at that exact moment.

Other suggestions are good too, if you don't want to fish at night. Fish in high water, although don't necessarily expect the fish to be in the same spot as you saw it - it may be in the head or tail of the pool, or along the bank. Generally, the larger fly you use, the better. Big fish will eat mites of flies, but they don't get big nibbling on tricos as the mainstay of their diet, plus if its a freestone stream, there may not be good hatches to begin with. They like meat, so articulated streamers are a good choice.

Make it a quest, learn something, and enjoy the pursuit.