
Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : A State College trifecta

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The past Monday and Tuesday, I had a security conference to attend at Penn State. I arranged, with the homefront, to leave Sunday afternoon, and planned to meet up with sarce to try out some local streams. After a dead car battery delayed me a bit, I was on the road and arrived in the State College area shortly after 3PM. Water was low and clear, but the sunny morning had turned to an overcast afternoon, so at least we did not have a lot of extra sun to contend with. We spotted a few trout and tons of midges, but fished buggers and scuds, but only a few trout showed interest. I lost a small brown on a scud and then we decided to try out another stream. After a short drive, we arrived at the second stream, which also (suprisingly not) was also low and clear. I was fishing a bugger at this point, and I again managed to hook and roll a fish but lost it almost immediately. Finally, as we worked our way downstream, I hooked into a small fish in a small bend of the stream and brought a nice little rainbow to hand. This was maybe the third wild rainbow I've ever caught, so they are still special to me, at this point.

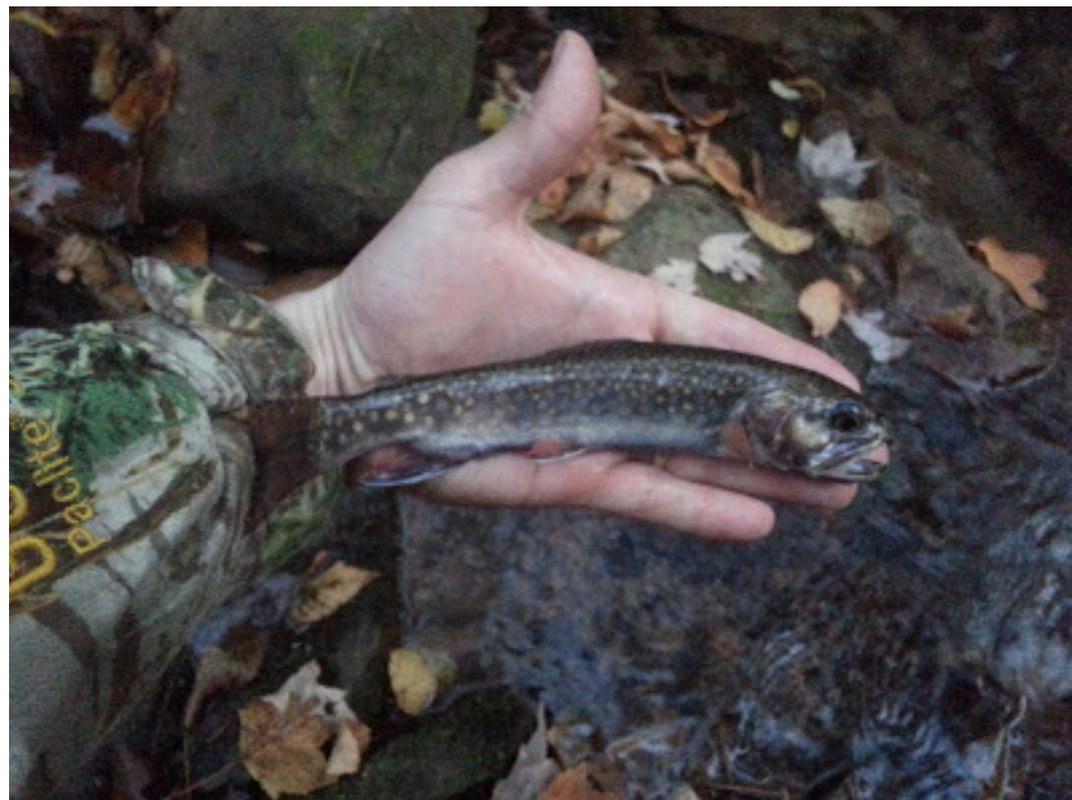


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I had also been in contact with TLoomis about possibly doing some night fishing, but our paths didn't cross. Instead, at his suggestion, I headed out to a spot to try on my own. I wasn't sure what to expect; I generally fish an area during the day, so I know the lay of the stream, the depth, etc. But it was dark when I got there, so I

fished somewhat tentatively from the bank. And as soon as I got out of the car, I heard splashes on the water, so I knew something was feeding. I did manage one savage strike as the evening went along, followed by a large wake as a brute of a trout shot downstream like an arrow. I took the night skunk on Sunday evening.

Monday, I wrapped up at the conference around 4:30PM and again met sarce to try out another local stream. After weaving through the local countryside, we arrived at a small freestoner and immediately saw a fair number of small brookies. With the low clear water, and our downstream approach, we didn't have much success, although sarce managed to pull a handful of dark fish out from underneath rocks. We ended up moving upstream and were stopped on the way up through by a woman who wanted to know if we were headed up the trail (we were) and if so, that she had just spotted a big snake alongside the trail. We didn't spot the big snake but as I worked my casts up through a larger pool, a nice size brookie chased my micro bugger and I missed it. He chased again on the second cast and I missed him again and he pulled up under a root stump at the bottom of the hole. A few holes up, I did manage a brightly colored male (no photos) and a little further up, I managed one spawned out female.



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It was dark when sarce and I parted ways but I really wanted to chase the smell of the night skunk, so I headed back to my location from the previous night. This time I managed two half-hearted strikes, and ventured a bit further upstream and downstream, but could not seal the deal with any fish.

Tuesday afternoon and evening, I was planning to drive to Erie, to fish for steelhead the next few days. However, with the beautiful weather, I couldn't pass up the opportunity to fish some more, so back to my night-fishing locale I went. I discovered the water I was fishing was extremely shallow (at compared to some streams I fish) and I ended up fishing the afternoon wearing just hipsters. I told myself I was only going to fish just down around the bend, but the stream kept bending and I kept going. In one short stretch, I encountered three dead trout - one 8-9" brown, a 7" brookie, and a 15"+ brown. This is the second stream I fished this year where I encountered 3 or more dead wild trout on an outing.



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Anyway, as noted, just around the bend downstream, and two hours after I started, darkness set in. Since I was not planning to be out after dark, I had no light with me, save my cellphone, so I used that to tie on a mouse fly. And I was encouraged to hear some soft splashes along the far bank. I was not super comfortable wading in the dark, since I hadn't had the chance to survey that stream section in the light, but the fallen leaves that had come to rest on the stream bottom contrasted nicely with the dark stream bottom, providing a sort of depth gauge, and I was able to shuffle my way slowly downstream. And I finally broke the night skunk just before 7PM, when the first fish came to hand. I picked up three fish in that first ten minutes of fishing with the mouse, each fish increasing in size. I reached the spot of the run where I told myself that I would absolutely, positively not go below, and somewhat grudgingly, held to that notion, and turned around and started moving upstream, fishing the run. It was close to 45 minutes after the third fish that I managed the fourth fish, and he continued the trend that had started on my previous successful outing, which involved each fish getting larger as the night went on. I missed at least twice as many fish as I caught and landed two trophy trees as well, losing a mouse and a good chunk of my leader in the process. Realizing I still had over a three hour drive ahead, I began the trudge back to the car. I couldn't resist tossing the mouse into the tail of the run near the car, and was rewarded with a hookup on that first cast. Given the trend, this should have been a trophy, since the last fish was a 15"+ trout. But this fellow broke the trend, breaking the tape at 9" and is my smallest night-time trout.



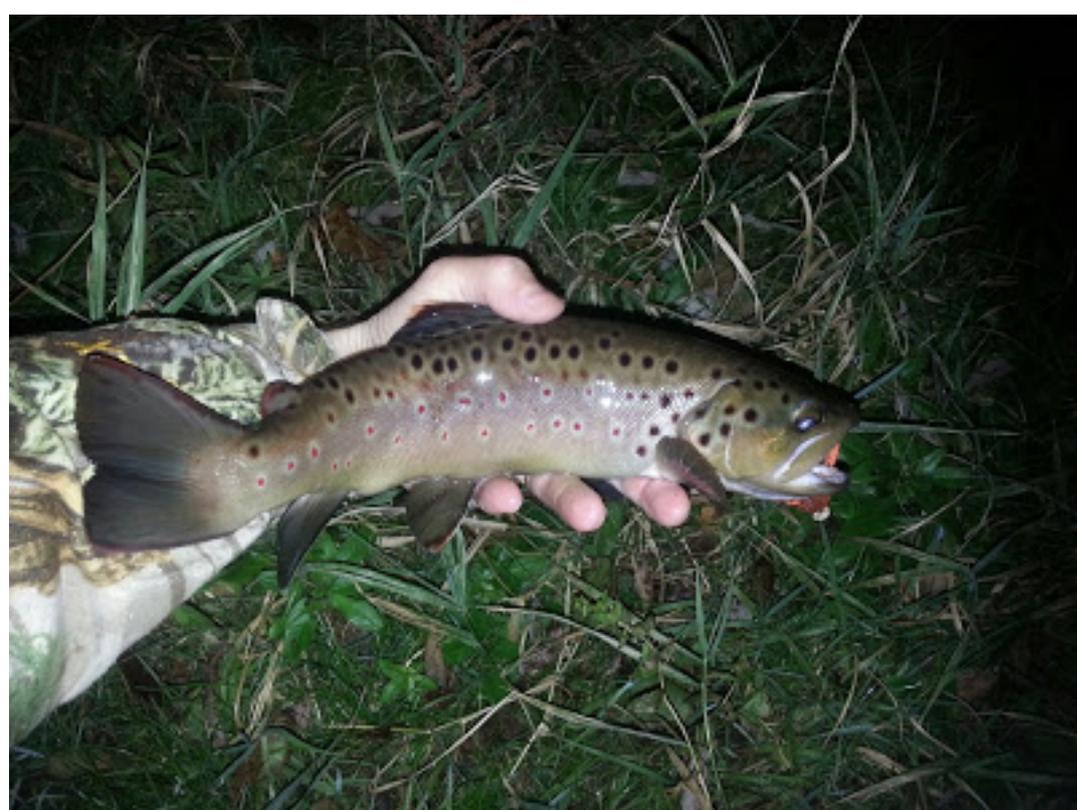
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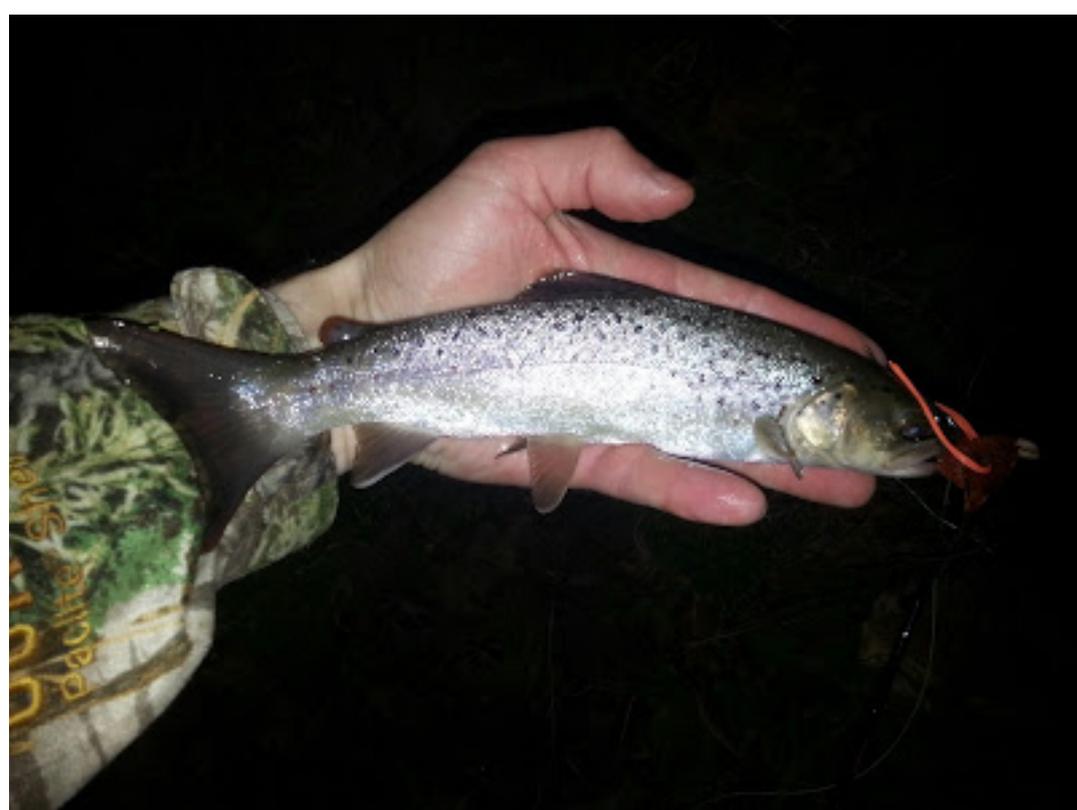
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Tally for the three days: 1 rainbow, 2 brookies, and 5 brownies. All were caught using different techniques (bugger on the swing, micro bugger with dapping, and mouse fly at night). As I've stated before, I attended PSU for four years, and didn't buy a fishing license at all during those years. So this trip was a bit of a start at redemption for that crime and offense. It was my first time fishing any of streams and thanks to sarce for playing the role of the guide for a few days and TLoomis for providing some location tips. I half-joked with another board member that one of the fringe-benefits of changing jobs was ending up in State College on a

fairly frequent basis (every month or two), but that's not a joke anymore, and it is a fringe benefit I truly value.
Looking forward to tying into a trophy trout at some point..