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First Trout

By Marshall Estes

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The Magic of My First Trout

I grew up in Iowa fishing for catfish, bass, crappie and bullheads using some of the worst smelling baits you could imagine. But my father loved to hunt and fish so I went along. On one summer vacation to Oklahoma, Dad stopped at the fish hatchery in Bennett Springs, MO.

I can still remember standing on the bridge watching a fly fisherman gracefully cast a dry fly upstream to the base of the little dam feeding a pool by the hatchery. On the third cast, he hooked up with a nice fat 12 to 14 inch rainbow that leapt out the water 3 or 4 times trying to throw the hook.

The fisherman prevailed and slipped the rainbow into his classic wicker creel with the slot in the lid. (Back in those days we ate a fish once in a while) Turning to my father, I asked what the fisherman was using for bait. Dad said, "He is using an artificial fly and not bait." "Does it stink?", I asked.

Dad laughed and said "No." Right then I knew one day I would become a fly fisherman. I was about 14 at the time. I never touched stinky bait after that.

I would not take up fly fishing until 1969 some 15 years after first seeing it in the Ozarks of Missouri. I had moved to Colorado to learn to ski and fly fish. Never did learn to ski but I did learn to fly fish.

When I was starting out, there weren't a lot of classes, guides or instructors to teach fly fishing. I purchased a cheap rod, reel, line and some flies from a local sporting goods store. Then I read a lot of books and practiced casting until I could do a reasonable overhand cast.

First Trout

My first fish was a 2 lb. brookie caught on a brassie out of the famed South Platte river. That was my only fish on a fly rod for that whole season. For the next two seasons, I caught exactly one fish a season on a fly rod. I had upgraded my equipment so the casting was a lot more enjoyable.

In 1972, I was back to drifting salmon eggs on the bottom with light spinning gear and was catching fish. But releasing them was killing a lot of them I knew. As destiny would have it. A friend and I ended up on Bear Creek at O'Fallon Park one Saturday. Jerry parked the car and said, "Hey, there's Frank Aubon. Frank is one of the best fly fishermen I know. He can teach you how to catch fish on a fly rod." (Frank was from Maine and had been fly fishing some 40 years when I first met him.)

Jerry introduced me to Frank and explained the problem I was having with a fly rod. Frank said, "Come here and show me what you know about casting." So I dropped a couple of reasonable overhand casts out onto the Creek. Frank looked at me, "You know enough about basic casting, what do you do with the fly when it is in the water?" "Frank, if I knew what the H---- to do with the fly in the water, I would be catching fish!", I said.

"Come on and watch what I do." said Frank. Frank shook out a little line and let it drift downstream. Then he flipped a "Tension" cast back upstream. On the 3rd drift, Frank hooked a nice bow right along the bank. He looked at me and said, "Now you do it!" I tried to imitate Frank but no fish.

Finally Frank asked me what I had been fishing. "Eggs on the bottom." I replied. "Fishing eggs on the bottom is the same as fishing nymphs on the bottom", said Frank. "You make a little J in the line just at the water line and watch it as you bounce the nymph on the bottom. If the J twitches left or right or hesitates, raise the rod tip to set the hook. And don't rip the rod tip up. Remember that hook is only a quarter inch or less long to the bend. A gentle tipup is all that is needed." Then Frank proceeded to demonstrate with two more fish.

I watched Frank and tried to imitate him with some success. As I remember I caught and released about 6 trout that Saturday. For me that was the best I had ever done with a fly rod. Frank and I fished together for some 5 years before losing touch with each other.

But I will never forget the gift of a lifetime fly fishing enjoyment you gave me Frank. You were a good teacher and fine friend to wade the waters with.

Whatever big river you are fishing in Heaven, I hope the fish are huge and you are having a ball.

Tight Lines and Good Fishing,

Marshall, Editor

has been a fly fishing and fly tying

enthusiast for over 30 years.

Marshall Estes , editor Colorado Fly Fishing Tipshas been a fly fishing and fly tying enthusiast for over 30 years. Check out our other issues at www.fly-fishing-colorado.com

Trout Species - Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout

By Brett Fogle

Rainbow Trout: Few freshwater fish can match the fighting spirit and beauty of a Rainbow Trout.

The Rainbow Trout is a well-traveled species of fish. Originally, the Rainbow Trout was found in the coastal rivers in the United States on the west coast but today, Rainbow Trout are found throughout the United States, as well as in the cold-water streams of South America, Europe, New Zealand and even Australia.

The reason for the wide range of Rainbow Trout in the U.S. is that Rainbow Trout are relatively easy to transplant. Virtually all areas that Rainbow Trout now inhabit are due to environmental transplants - both intentionally or unintentionally.

Regardless, Rainbow Trout are the most popular types of trout found in the world today, and are also the most sought after trout by fly fishermen.

The Rainbow Trout is equally famous for its acrobatic aerial displays and very long runs to avoid being caught.

Rainbow Trout are also well-known for being highly selective in what they eat. While at other times, they seemingly gorge themselves on just about everything in sight.

Rainbow Trout are easily distinguished by the red stripe that travels the length of the fish, from the gill plates to the tail. Rainbow Trout also have hundreds of black spots that cover the dorsal of the body (the dorsal part of the body of a trout refers to the "back side" of the fish).

Brown Trout : Brown Trout are the "smartest" of the trout family, frequently frustrating beginners and professionals alike.

To read the full article, click [here](#):

Brett Fogle is the publisher of Fly Fishing Secrets, an insiders guide to flyfishing tips and techniques of the pros. To sign up for free flyfishing tips and other articles, please visit

- Trout Species - Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout
- General overview about Trout Senses
- Trout Species - Brook Trout
- 5 Powerful Trout Fishing Techniques
- Trout Species - Cutthroat Trout and Golden Trout



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