

Fryingpan River Report

January 19, 2015

UPPER FRYINGPAN

FLOW: 126cfs

WATER CLARITY: Clear and low. Ideal and back to normalcy now that Ruedi is done turning over.

OVERALL RATING: 7 out of 10

THE SHORT AND SWEET: Hatches are consisting of primarily midges and psuedos. Best dry fly activity has been midday, anywhere from 10:30am - 3pm. The streamer bite has been fairly decent, despite the low flows and obviously the nymph fishing is solid all day long.

FOOD SOURCES PRESENT: Midges, Psuedos and Mysis Shrimp

IN DEPTH REVIEW: The Fryingpan is a true pleasure to fish in the winter, and December offers up fine midge hatches, light crowds, and big fish. Nymphing is the name of the game until later in the afternoon, but you should always be prepared for anything!

The other bugs on the scene are psuedos (small, two-winged BWOs) and midges. Midge activity seems to be starting and closing out the day, so keep those little dries handy. With the low flows, it is time to think about stealth in your presentations. Light leaders and 6x and 7x fluorocarbon tippets are the name of the game. If you are getting refusals on your dry fly offerings, be sure you're using fluoro, and most importantly, throw your dries in a downstream presentation. Keep brightly colored fly line well away from the fish you are casting to. Be aware of spawning browns throughout the river!

Mysis shrimp spill out of the reservoir on a daily basis into the tailwater, which is the reason you will see so many large fish in the upper few miles of river. These protein-packed freshwater shrimp are a favorite snack when there aren't any insects actively hatching, so be sure to carry a few patterns in your fly box. Mysis are clear when they spill into the river, and begin to turn white or opaque as they begin to die. Mysis can't survive in the river, as they are more acclimated to the deeps of the reservoir. These patterns are a factor only in the upper half mile or so of river.

It's still a bit early to see very many fish in the Flats, but a few browns are beginning to get on beds. As the browns ramp up for their December spawn, a few larger rainbows will sneak in below their beds picking off eggs. Weekend fishing pressure has been high along the upper half mile below the dam. If you want solitude, stay below mile marker 12.

Streamer fishing can be quite productive on the Fryingpan in November barring the temps. On truly cold days, you'll still be better off to nymph fish, as your fly line will freeze up your rod guides stripping streamers or dries. Carry a palate of colors in black, white and rust. Cover a lot of water while throwing these big bites, and vary your retrieve until you find that magic combination!

APPROPRIATE PATTERNS:

DRIES: Sparkle Dun Baetis 20-22, Roy's Fryingpan Emerger 20-22, Hackle Dun Baetis 20-22, Bill's Midge Adult 22-24, Skittering Zelon Midge 20-24, Morgans Para Midge 20-22, Hatching Midge 20-22, Stillborn Midge 22, Sprout Midge 22-24, CDC Transitional Midge 22, Befus CDC Midge Adult 22

NYMPHS: Sparkle Wing RS2 20-22, RS2 20-22, Chocolate Thunder 20-22, Glass Bead Baetis 20-22, CDC Loopwing Baetis Emerger 20-22, Biot Baetis Emerger 20-22, Medallion Midge 20-22, Cap'n Hook 20-22, Desert Storm 20-22, Black Beauty Emerger 20-22, Flashtail Egg 14-18, Will's Mysis 16-18, Sea Monkey Mysis 16-18, Motown Mysis 16-18

STREAMERS: TC Autumn Splendors, TC Stingin' Sculpins, Slumpies

HINTS: Sight fishing is much more productive up here over blind fishing.

MIDDLE RIVER FRYINGPAN

WATER CONDITIONS: Clear and perfect.

FOOD SOURCES PRESENT: Midges, Psuedos

OVERALL RATING: 5 out of 10

THE SHORT AND SWEET: It's colder down here and doesn't receive as much sunshine as the upper river. Because of that, fishing pressure is also lighter. Hardcore types will do well if you're layered-up.

IN DEPTH REVIEW: Some people (most people) skip the entire river except for the top mile, on their quest for a lunger trout. Fine by us, as most locals forego the pigs and opt for solitude.

Fall midge hatches are a delight to fish right now, as the weather stays relatively warm and cloud cover is fairly consistent. Pay attention to riseforms to determine which bug, and more importantly, which stage of the life cycle (emergers, adults) the fish are most keyed in to. When you are seeing the backs of the fish, think emergers underneath the surface film. When there are noses poking through the surface, think adults.

APPROPRIATE PATTERNS:

DRIES: Roy's Special Fryingpan Emerger 20-22, CDC Comparadun 18-22, Sparkledun BWO 20-22, Morgans Para Midge 20-22, Bill's Midge Emerger 20-22, Sprout Midge 22-24

NYMPHS: Biot Baetis Emerger 18-22, Tungsten Hoover Baetis 18-22, Sparkle Wing RS2 18-22, Flashtail Egg 14-18, Slinky Midge 20-22, Flashbang Midge 20-22, Flashdance Midge 20-22

STREAMERS: Same as upper river

HINTS: If solitude is what you're after, fish away from the dam.

LOWER FRYINGPAN:

WATER CONDITIONS: Clear but cold. Better conditions are to be found upstream.

FOOD SOURCES PRESENT: Midges

OVERALL RATING: 3 out of 10.

THE SHORT AND SWEET: As fall winds down and winter settles in, the lower Fryingpan begins to taper off.

IN DEPTH REVIEW: Head on up higher where the fishing is much, much better.

APPROPRIATE PATTERNS:

DRIES: Same as above

NYMPHS: Same as above

HINTS: The better fishing is certainly up higher.

[Link to the USGS Real Time Flow Chart for the Frying Pan River](#)