

Bethinking of Old Orleans

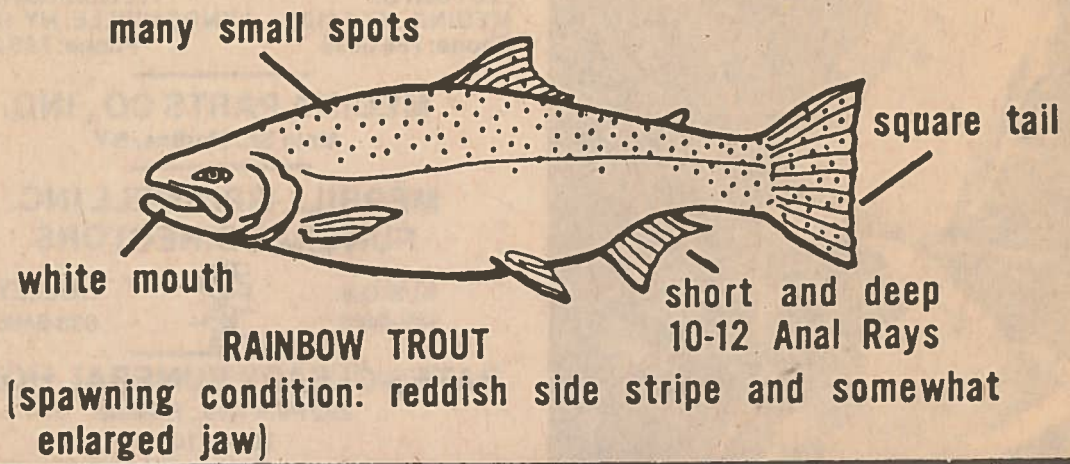
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NORTH COUNTRY FISHING LORE



*"When the wind is in the north,
The skillful fisher goes not forth,
When the wind is in the south
It blows the bait in the fishes mouth,
When the wind is in the east
'Tis neither good for man or beast,
When the wind is in the west
The fishing's at its very best."*

Spring has come. It's time to go fishing'.

The successful country fisherman has become familiar with the ways of fish. He has studied and observed various habits, traits, and haunts of the species of fish he wants to catch. He has tried to become an expert on their sense of sight, smell, and hearing. He has learned their means of existence, their likes and dislikes.

A good fisherman must be able to take advantage of their weakness, avoid their keen perception, and outsmart their cunning. Knowing as many things as possible about certain species of fish helps to locate them. Once located the country fisherman can then proceed to deceive or tempt them to his bait.

Here are a few highlights of how to catch fish, collected from anglers who have spent decades studying nature, and fish in particular:

Fish have a keen sense of sight. Stay out of their range of vision.

Fish have a keen sense of hearing by detecting vibrations. Be as quiet in your movements as possible.

Use an active lure. With live bait, attach the hook so the bait will have natural movements.

Present the lure to the water in a manner that will be interesting to the fish both in location and in motion. Fish the shady sides of logs and rocks, the down-current sides of boulders and large stumps, and the windless side of ledges and cliffs.

Fish are usually on three levels of most lakes, ponds and streams. Some are near the surface, some mid-water, and some at the bottom. Work the various levels to find the area of biting fish.

Go with the weather. Sudden barometer changes, fronts, and rising waters often cause fish to start hitting any bait that comes close to them.

Position yourself to fish with your back to the wind, and don't allow your shadow to be on the water. In moving water, cast upstream and allow your bait to drift down with the flow.

Don't be in a hurry. Give the fish a chance to bite before moving to another spot.

Fish are greedy by nature and will swallow the largest bait they can handle. They have a sense as to the size object they can swallow and will go for larger baits up to their maximum swallowing capacity.

Fish don't always bite because they are hungry. Sometimes the bait is attractive to them or they bite out of curiosity, greed, or viciousness.

Fish feed on a fairly regular time schedule. If they feed in the early morning they will usually feed again in the late afternoon. This will be their regular feeding procedure day after day.

Brown trout and rainbow trout seem to eat a greater portion of other fish, such as shiners, as they grow larger while smaller trout lean more toward an insect diet.

The larger the size of a fish the faster it can swim. A general rule is that fish can swim about eight miles per hour for each foot of body length. A fish striking a bait or making any other sudden move can accelerate to about 50 per cent more than its usual cruising speed.

A highly developed sense of "touch" helps fish to reject objects that they cannot eat.

Shallow water game fish seem to have the best color sense.

The appearance of a bait can be more important than the smell or sound of it.

Most fish adjust their eyesight to the rhythms of the natural night and day cycle. Any sudden light thrown on them will cause them to leave the area rapidly.

The best period for fishing falls in the period from three days before to three days after a full moon; the day after the full moon is outstanding.

After heavy rains fish often won't bite because plenty of food has washed into the lake.

Fish are hard to catch when fresh snow water is in a stream.

July is generally the worst month for fishing, and June is usually the best.

The eyes of fish are placed in such a way that makes it impossible for them to see objects on their level or directly under them. They can, however, see plainly all that is happening above and around them for distances of fifty or more feet.

Build a big campfire that reflects upon the water and it will bring fish in at night.

Perseverance pays. Don't quit, keep fishing.

Lysbeth A. Hoffman
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