

Valley Angler Fall Fishing by Bill Thompson

At 5:51 A.M. last Sunday morning summer ended and fall officially began. Previous to last Sunday we were waking up to temperatures close to freezing and this week we are experiencing near record heat. Needless to say this is raising havoc with the fishing.

These are the days when anglers expect the fishing to turn on again after the doldrums of late summer. This is also the time of year when we begin to count down the final days of trout season. That's right, October 15th is not that far away. Only a scarce 16 days remain. The telephone has been ringing off the wall the last few days with inquires that begin: "How's the fishing up there"? Well, despite the unusual weather the answerer is: "Not all that bad".

Things slow down a little at the shop in September and that is when I begin to panic. Not so much from the obvious slow down in business, but from the realization that up until now I just haven't been out fishing that much. True I spend a lot of time on the water guiding, but that, at least for me, doesn't count. So for the past week or two I have been sneaking out of the shop at every opportunity. Thank goodness that Janet is tolerant of my obsession. In fairness I have been taking her at every chance.

All season long I have pretty much stayed away from the Ellis. There are a couple of reasons for this and number one is that it is hard to take my other girl along do to the closeness of Route 16 to the river. My other girl, being Summer, who sometime strays a little farther away than I would like. The other reason is that for some reason the Ellis has just not fished that well this past year. It has been on the low side this year and the temperature has been a little higher than normal. With the cooler weather that we had experienced the Ellis started to fish fairly well last week.

In response to a very good report from a fellow angler I made kind of a hit and run attack on the river the other afternoon. The plan was to hit as many pools as I could in a three hour period. In three out of four of my favorite pools I caught fish. No real big ones, but good fish just the same. I even explored a couple of new spots, new to me anyway, and found fish in these places as well.

Just when I was beginning to think that the Ellis was going to be the hot spot for the fall the damn dam keeper drained Timmy's Pool. They have been doing this for the past few years and why they can't wait until the season ends is beyond me. I would think that it would be in their favor to have a little respect for the angling community. Perhaps they believe the erroneous sign that is posted at the gate on the access road that leads below the falls. The sign reads, "Open water fishing season April 1st to September 30th".

Despite the fact that Timmy's Pool is out of the question I would think that the fishing above

and below the dam should be quite good.

Perhaps the best fishing in the area is the Androscoggin River. I fished this last Saturday and had a solid days fishing. I think that the Andro will just get better each day right up to the closing of the season. A favorite spot is right below the Pontook dam.

By now the trout ponds should be the hot ticket, unfortunately as of yet that has not happened. I spent a very enjoyable morning fishing Mountain Pond last week. It was one of the colder mornings and my fishing partner and I had great expectations. For the two hours or so that we fished we only had one fish between us. However, any time that you get to fish Mountain Pond is always a rewarding experience.

Other local trout ponds have been slow to get started as well. Janet and I have spent several evenings fishing our favorite pond and as of yet have not had a banner evening. We have caught a few nice brook trout, but for the most part we have had to be content with a bunch of bass.

With the end close at hand it is hard to be patient, but I am confident that better days are just ahead of us.

See you on the river.