

# Valley Angler

## The Fishermen's Coconut Telegraph

by Bill Thompson

It always absolutely amazes me how fast the word gets out when a new hot fishing spot turns up. Fishermen have a communication network that rivals Sprint and ATT combined and at twice the speed as the fastest digital cable.

Last Saturday two anglers showed up at the shop with an urgent need for trout flies. They had come upon a large pod of brook trout in one of the local rivers and the fishing was so good that they had depleted their entire stock of flies. They were spin fishermen, but they had discovered that by attaching a split or two they could cast a fly. The fact that the added weight sank the flies apparently had no effect on the trout and they took the bait with reckless abandon. I explained that a clear bobber might work better than the split shot and they quickly added a couple to their purchase.

Needless to say I inquired as to where these fish might be found and they foolishly gave up the location. Now information like that is a rare thing and there are a couple of things you can do with it. One, probably the best course of action, is to keep it under your hat and file it away until you can get to the spot. Two, not the best thing to do, is to pass the information on to just about everybody you encounter for the rest of the day. Well, of course I chose to keep it to myself that is until my favorite father and son team from Rhode Island came in the shop. Seems that they were camping not too far from the spot and they only had one last evening before they had to leave. So nice guy that I am I gave up the place. But, for the rest of the day I kept it to myself, I swear. Later that afternoon two other anglers showed up at the shop. You guessed it they had been fishing the same place and they couldn't wait to tell me all about it. If that were not enough a little while later another fisherman came in and told the same story.

The next morning Janet graciously gave me the day off. Now my plan was to fish another river, but because this hot spot was on my way I decided to check it out. When I arrived there was not another soul around. I figured if this spot was so great that by this time in the morning there ought to be someone else around. I stopped the truck and got out and walked up onto the bridge. At first I didn't see anything and then all of a sudden I saw them. One side of a slight bend in the river there were dozens of big trout.

I bolted back to the truck, got in and turned it around to find a better place to park. I hurried into my waders and rigged up my rod. Just about the time I had the rod together another truck rolled by and damned if he didn't stop on the bridge and get out. I quickly stepped into the river and headed to the bend. Just as I waded into position I ran head long into the other guy. Turns out the guy had been there the day before and was just as surprised to see me as I was to see him. He was a very nice guy and we had a nice talk. He was from Michigan and was in New Hampshire on business. The day before he had stumbled on the spot by accident and he commented on how quickly he had company. I

told him how I had come to know about the place and he assured me that what the other fishermen had said was true. The trout had apparently been dropped off by the stocking truck just the day before. These poor fish were babes in the woods. They rose to just about anything that looked like food. The two of us begin to cast. The other fellow was a spin fisherman and was using small spinners and I, of course was using my fly rod. There was not a lot of room to maneuver and it soon became clear that we were at odds with each other. He needed to cast his lure out and swing it down through the pool and on the other hand need to float my fly as drag free as possible through the pool. It soon became evident that these trout had been pounded the day before and they had developed a hard case of lock jaw. Who could blame them? Based on what I had heard every trout in the pool had been hooked at least twice the previous day. Neither the spinning lure nor my flies could entice the fish to strike.

I was just about to reel in and seek greener pastures when I turned around and was greeted by two more anglers; turned out I knew them. These two fellows were from Sandwich and had heard the same story of the "Trout Fishermen's El Dorado". One of them was already fishing up stream of the spin man and me. The guy with the spinning rod gave up first and headed off down stream. The other fellow waded in where the spin man had just vacated. I hung in for a few more casts, but it was clear to all but the most optimistic angler that these fish were on strike. I reeled in and headed down the road to another river that maybe was a little less hot.

See you on the river.