

Valley Angler Unsettled Weather by Bill Thompson

The last week or two has produced some rather unusual weather. Those of us who live or work in North Conway were treated to a spectacular hail storm the other afternoon. At the time of the storm we had a customer in the shop with a brand new Lexus parked out side. When the hail hit he nearly had a stroke. At one point we thought he might run out of the shop and jump on top of the car. Janet pointed out that there wasn't much he could do about it. He agreed and said something about: "that's why we have insurance". Can't say that I blame him, but at the same time as I looked out the window at the falling hail, I had to smile a little as my 12 year old Ford sat parked next to the Lexus.

All and all the rain was a good thing for the trout and those of us who like to fish for them. The water temperature on the Saco had reached 70 degrees only a few days before the rain. On Tuesday of this week the temperature was back down to 64 degrees. The river did come up a little and clouded up some too, but that is a small price to pay for what might translate into an extra week or two of good fishing.

The "North Country" has not fared as well and even as I write this the Androscoggin is still blown out. Last week should have been the best week of the season on the Andro. All winter long anglers try to guess the exact date that the Alder Fly hatch will come off. Generally speaking you can plan on it around the 20th of the month. As you might expect we always book the most drift trips around this time. Due to the high water we had to cancel four drift boat trips. For the record the Alders stuck to their schedule, despite the water level, and were in abundance this past weekend.

Our drift boat guide, Rick Gerber and his wife Pat, (who also guides for us), made the best of it and spent the weekend in Maine. Their original plan was to camp at Mollidgewock Camp Ground for the week. The water was so high that several of the campsites had to be closed. They reported that water was still high on the Maine side, but more conducive to fishing. They camped at the Kennebago River where they found the fishing to be excellent, but the black flies were horrific. They stopped to fish at one point on the river where some very large fish were rising. The flies were so thick that they passed them up. When they stopped by the shop on Tuesday Pat still had the scares to prove it. For the Gerber's to pass on rising fish is unheard of.

Rick and Pat did fish the Androscoggin in a couple of spots on their way home from Maine. They managed to catch a few at the Errol dam and at Pontook. High water and Black Flies aside they still managed to have a good trip.

All and all the best fishing in New Hampshire, this week, was probably right here in our own "Happy Valley".

Congratulations to Alicia Morrison, of Conway, who won this years' Saco Valley Anglers' Scholarship. I along with all the members join in wishing her and all of this years graduates great success in all their future endeavors.

See you on the river.