

Valley Angler

More Good Fall Fishing

By Bill Thompson

At the risk of sounding a bit like a broken record; WOW! Has the fishing been good lately! If you were one of the fortunate who was fishing the Saco a week ago this last Friday, you were treated to one of nature's spectacular events. One of the largest displays of swarming ants that I have ever witnessed occurred just about 5:00 o'clock in the evening. We were just leaving the shop when we spotted the first ants on the windshield of the truck. When we got down to Hussey's Field, to run the dog, the air was full of them. Unfortunately Janet and I were unprepared to fish. When we crossed First Bridge to go back into town every fish in the river was rising.

The next morning Nate Hill was in the shop regaling us with tales of the previous night's fishing. Apparently there was more than one type of ant on the water. Nate said at first it was cinnamon ant followed by a smaller black ant. Later in the morning Bill Franke was in the shop with more stories of how spectacular the evening had been. By now I was pretty much reduced to tears by having missed what may have been the best night's fishing of the season.

If this was not enough to drive you crazy on Thursday, of the same week, a twenty-seven inch Brown Trout was caught in the Saco. It didn't take long for the news to spread through the local fishing community. First thing right off Thursday morning I got a call from a friend who told me he had witnessed firsthand the event. He asked me if I knew the fellow who had caught the fish. After a brief description of the fellow I knew exactly who he was talking about.

A few minutes after the first call the fellow in question called. He did indeed confirm that he had caught the fish. He exclaimed that: "The fish was as long as my arm". Congratulations to Ron Mellady for making the catch of a life time.

The story does not end there; unfortunately there was a down side. In an attempt to get a photo of the behemoth with his cell phone the phone was dropped in the river. When I spoke to Ron Thursday morning he was heading down to the phone company to see if they could retrieve the photo. Fortunately Ron did have two witnesses, for as you know most fish stories are subject to doubt. Oh, and for the record Ron did release the fish. I know that a lot of anglers would have had a hard time doing that especially with the loss of the camera. I am not going to divulge the location, but suffice to say the big boy still swims somewhere in the Saco.

As for myself I did get to go fishing Saturday evening. Janet and I were joined by Nate and another old friend David Loren, from Rhode Island. Summer was also present and had a great evening running through the woods and watching us fish. We all had a

good evening's fishing, but nothing as spectacular as the preceding two days. We hiked up to the "Cornfield Pool" in an attempt to get away from the crowd. We did have the pool to ourselves, but only managed a couple of trout. There was little bug activity and the trout seemed to have lockjaw. I suspect that they were too full of ants to make any attempt to rise for any dry fly. Nate got a couple of fish in the flat water above the pool and I got one nice fat rainbow from out of the logs.

Latter in the evening we fished the "Outlook Pool". Dave put on a good show and took several rainbows from the eddy at the head of the pool. All and all a good evening and all the more enjoyable because of the good company.

All this past week the fishing on the Saco and the Ellis has remained excellent. I know I said it in last week's column but I have never seen such great late season fishing in all my years of fishing the "Valley". The days are getting shorter and the season will be over shortly. Take my advice and go fishing.

See you on the river.