

Mid-Missouri Trout Unlimited



Cross Currents

August 2006

Life According to Curt:

“When I’m at home I fish all the time so when I go on vacation I like to get a lot of fishing in.” Thomas McGuane, Outside Chance

Well, we’re in the thick of summer; deliriously hot weather, humidity, yard work, maybe a good book read by the pool and, hopefully, vacation. As a family, we travel to Colorado each year and stay in the mountains enjoying bright sunny days and cool nights. Somewhere in between the family things I’ll drop a dry fly on a small creek not known for anything but the fact it flows through a bunch of ski condos and has a local saloon named after it. There are trout in it but they’re pretty small.

A couple of years ago, I spent the better part of an entire week hunting one particular brook trout in the largest pool within five minutes walking of where we stay. As best I could tell, the pool held a single fish. He intermittently changed holding positions, moving from the deeper section up against the opposite bank to the skinny water at the tail, which made the approach to the pool as critical as the presentation of the fly. The remains of a mostly dead willow stood in the middle of my back cast and random appearances by a mettlesome little boy yelling “Look out Dad!” then tossing rocks in from behind me gave a tense feel to the whole experience.

Another dead tree lay across the head of the pool creating a casting obstacle course and the consequential multitudinous currents made mending a study in physics although knowing a good deal about astronomy may have been as helpful. The fly had to be small and the drift had to be dead on for any kind of hope and this resulted in a lot of casual but disinterested looks from the fish. When he did strike I was so wired by the rest of the ordeal that I would set the hook like I was trying to stick a hard-mouthed tarpon and it usually resulted in a snarl high in the willow limbs behind me.

When I put the fish down, and he was “the fish” for that entire trip, I searched out different spots up and down the creek. Occasionally I found a promising hole and caught trout but none held the drama of the fish’s sanctuary. Some were deeper runs with bigger fish but the approach, the cast and the drift were pretty straight forward and the results seemed common to me.

One evening I came back from the pool and my wife asked if I saw “the bear.” Late that afternoon one of the locals had been sniffing around the bear-proof garbage facility on the other side of the parking lot and, after being satisfied that no one had left the doors unlocked, headed off to the creek in my direction where I was deep into the part of the story where the hero gets beaten to a pulp and watches the villain make off with the girl. I figured an unexpected bear would have been only one more annoying facet to a tale that was already going badly for me but, no, I didn’t see him.

The vacation wasn't a fishing trip, so these little excursions fit in like the paperback my wife read in quiet moments. I switched rods a lot, visited the pool at inconsistent times of the day, never saw a hatch, never tied on a nymph and never put on wading boots. More than once I didn't even have a fly box with me. I don't remember the ending but I know the main character got smacked around several times and just when it looked like he was going to get the girl someone or something interrupted. All I know is I can't wait for the next installment in the series.

- Curt Morgret

August Meeting



Tuesday, August 1, 7:00 p.m. we will be back to our usual location at the Missouri Department of Conservation Resource

Science Center. Our speaker will be **Norm Crisp**. Norm is owner and head guide for STREAM SIDE ADVENTURES (www.StreamSideAdventures.com). Norm's topic will be **Traveling and Fly Fishing**. Norm is an excellent fly fisherman, a great guide, and an entertaining and informative speaker. Don't miss this one.

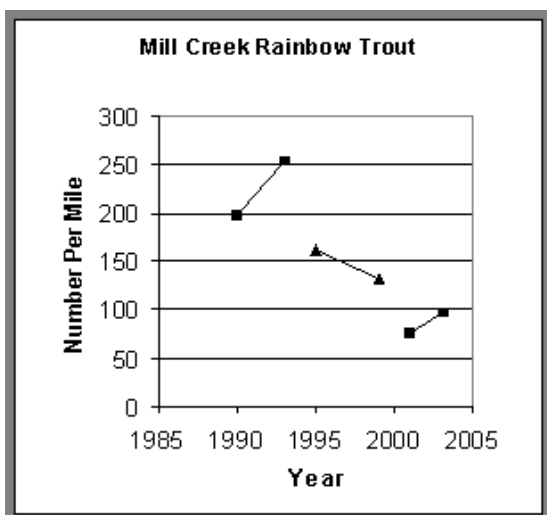
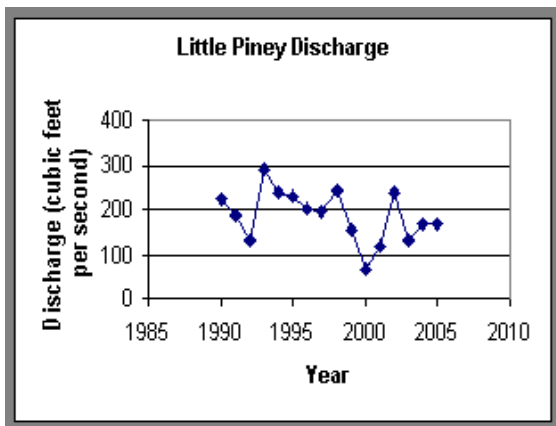
Little Piney Project

The insect survey project on the Little Piney is tentatively set for September 9 with September 16 as a backup. Reserve

those dates on your calendar and plan to get wet, have fun and learn some things about the LP. More details in next month's newsletter.

TROUT NEED WATER

At least that is the simple message of the relationship between recent flows measured on the Little Piney and trout populations sampled on nearby Mill Creek. Population bars marked with squares represent the upper section of Mill Creek below Wilkins Spring, that marked with triangle the middle section known as the Gabel Tract.



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