

Sam Potter / [TightLine Fly Fishing](#)

Authorized Guide with the National Park Service for the Upper Current River and the National Forest Service for Mill Creek, Spring Creek, Little Piney and the Eleven Point River.

Does color matter?

I am not talking about the color of your truck, your girl friend's hair or the color of the fly you are using. I am talking about the color of your clothes and to some degree your fly line. Some fishermen will disagree with the fly line mention, we all have our opinions. Just keep in mind that I am referring to my experiences with **Big**, wild McCloud strains, spooky as hell trout as a reference.

If you don't think color matters, try fishing the wild trout creeks in this area with a white hat or a white T-shirt and yes those bright red fly lines. You will swear that there isn't a fish in the stream. Unlike most of the fish in Taneycomo, especially up by the hatchery, or in any of the trout parks, the trout in the wild trout creeks, are very aware of their environment and the dangers they face every day, most notably fishermen. Yes, we have lots of otters, and we see eagles and osprey all the time, but a huge threat to the fish are fishermen. If your favorite hat is white, or better yet one of those florescent orange jobs, you might get lucky enough to catch some smaller fish in fast tumbling water, but you will have a difficult time catching anything of size especially when it comes to stream born rainbows. They will get lockjaw and look for a place to hide at the first site of anything resembling a fisherman. Bright colors against a dull background stand out like a deer hunter in a tree stand. If you start waving one of those bright red fly lines over the trout down here, don't expect to catch much of any size or those 18+ especially over shallow flat water.

The next time you are out on the water take a look up or down the stream sometime, and notice what you see first, the bright colors some of the fishermen wear especially white, pink, light blue or bright red. Those are the first colors the fish see when you are wading, and especially walking along the banks. My advice for clients is to wear colors that match the background colors where they are fishing.

If you fish in open water, like lakes or saltwater then the background color, from the fishes' view, is the sky. Shades of blue or blue with white, or even grey.

Because the streams and the creeks in the area are narrow, and surrounded by trees most of the colors are green and turn to brown and grey in the fall and winter. In Michigan, where I fish for steelhead, the background colors are mostly green and black.

Color may not make a difference to you and where you fish, but if you are planning a trip to the wild trout creeks in this area, match the background colors for more success. Should you wear camouflage prints, is that taking the color theory a little too far? Have you noticed some of the newest fishing shirts on the market lately? More and more designs in camo type patterns.

Does movement matter? Another story another time