

"The Illusive Eleven Point Pickerel"

October 5th

Sam Potter - www.TightLine.Biz

I was disappointed that a silly little grass pickerel did not get into our canoe this weekend. I tried several different flies, we had some follows but no takes. But I am getting ahead of myself.

My wife Sandy and I had a wonderful weekend on the Eleven Point River. We fished the Blue Ribbon waters on Friday and dropped downstream a few miles on Saturday to fish for smallmouth and I tried to catch a Pickerel on a fly.

We made arrangements with Brian Sloss and Ryan Griffin at [The Eleven Point Canoe Rental](#) in Alton for a shuttle from Greer to Turner on Friday and a shuttle from Whitten to Riverton on Saturday. We always make arrangements with them, because they are knowledgeable fly fishermen and because they are really nice guys. They give us some good advice on patterns, locations and hatch times. We are confident that they will pick up our vehicle and boat trailer soon after we put in and have it ready for us about an hour before we take out.

FRIDAY was a cloudy, drizzly day with a few showers in the afternoon. I was throwing a nine foot 6 wt with a sinking leader. I tied on a crawfish pattern that was given to me by my good friend Patrick Jordan of Warren PA. Patrick makes excellent custom files for the Northwest part of PA and the southwest part of NY. He is often asked to participate in seminars demonstrating his unique method of spinning hair. Anyway, Sandy started with a parachute adams and a #14 prince dropper about 3 feet below. It doesn't happen very often for us, but these two combinations were the only ones we needed all day. And you know the ole saying "if it aint broke don't fix it". I really don't know how many trout we caught, but

it was a lot. Unfortunately none of them were wild trout. I have always told people that when you catch a wild trout you will know it. I rigged up a parachute and prince dropper on my 4 wt and switched to it when we got to the tail end of the holes where the water was a more shallow. I prefer to use the 4 wt, but chucking heavy flies is hard on the 4 wt and makes it hard on my shoulder. When I ran out of crawfish flies, I switched to a wooly bugger. (Make a note, take plenty of flies if you fish the heavy guys) The Eleven Point has lots of big rocks covering the bottom.



Rainbow on the Wooly.

About a month ago I bought two Temple Fork rods for float trips. I really don't like to take my Winston or my Sage on float trips, because I am always in and out of the canoe, and there is too much of a chance of breaking a rod. I really believe floaters miss a lot of fish in the fast water because they don't stop to fish it or they don't walk it down. I have always walked our Scanoes down the fast water and Sandy has picked up some really nice fish that most people float by. I was amazed the first time I threw the Temple Forks. I could not believe a rod at this price could cast this well, but they do. Don't be fooled by the price, Lefty has come up with some quality rods. Don't get me wrong, I wouldn't trade them for my Winston, but they are ideal rods for float trips.



©

Rainbow on the Prince

SATURDAY was sunny but it was down in the 40s when we put in at Whitten. I have caught a lot of different fish with a fly, but I have never caught a pickerel on a fly. I know the habitat they like and I have caught them on spinning gear, but I wanted one on a fly. I told Sandy that my goal for the day was to catch a pickerel, but it was not to be. We were actually rushed to finish the nine-mile float in the time we allotted, so I didn't get a lot of casts to the ideal pickerel spots. If we don't stop or drop the anchor during the float I usually don't get to make a lot of casts. But that's OK, because trips with Sandy are mostly for her to fish, unless we have a slow day and she gets tired, then I get to move to the casting seat.



©

We did catch several smallmouth and some goggle-eye, oh and shiners and chubs if you want to count them, But no PICKEREL. There were four gentlemen floating and playing leaf frog with us for most of the day (if you float you know what I am talking about. We stop they pass us up, they stop we pass them up), you get the idea. Anyway, they were throwing spinning gear, I'm not sure what they used, except I did see a 4" gitzit hanging off one of the rods. I told them that I was trying to catch a pickerel and they would tell us where they had caught some during previous trips and during this trip. Maybe I can get one on our next trip to the Eleven Point River.

There are just a few places to stay in Alton. We always stay at Piney Creek Lodge. 417-778-6164 They are good people and they have excellent prices.

It was a beautiful weekend in the Ozarks with the leaves starting to turn. I expect them to be at their peak in about another week or two. Get out and enjoy our beautiful state, and remember "a bad day fishing is still a great day".



©



©