

## "Watch Out For The Traps"

December 22nd on the Current River



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Has it been a month since my last story? I guess coaching basketball has taken up more of my time than I thought. I have been fishing a few times since late November, but just didn't find the time to write about it. We played our last game of 2004 two nights ago. I gave the team a week off for a holiday break, then it's back to practice after Christmas to get ready for the rest of the high school season.

Today was cloudy and very cold. 17 degrees when I left the house late this morning and 16 degrees when I got home at 4:30. The weather man missed the forecast. It was suppose to snow a couple of inches and get up to 29. I can stand it at 29 but 17 degrees with the wind blowing 15 MPH is down right crazy. My fingers needed to be warmed, with my breath several times during the day, just to feel them. The rest of me was fine, especially when I was waist deep. Fishing was about as cold as the weather. I picked up a couple of

bows with Mike's Olive Leech and a couple of small browns with a #20 olive dry fly. I am a sucker for fish rising, even if they are only 8-10 inches long. I couldn't see what they were feeding on, but the olive worked so I was happy. I had a devil of a time trying to tie on a #20 with frozen fingers. I really must be crazy to be out in 17 degree weather fishing dry flies. I'm not sure that the fish weren't hitting the snow flakes anyway. I had to dip my rod all day, to clear the ice, so the line could get through the guides. Oh well a day to remember, and an opportunity to share an observation.

What in the world does trapping have to do with fishing? Nothing I guess as long as you don't step in trap. But how many fishermen realize, or even think about traps set along the river during the winter months. I know I don't think about it until I see those makers along the bank. I took a couple of pictures of a trap line today just so fishermen will realize what the bright red markers are for. I wouldn't bother walking over to investigate if I was you. You never know where the trap is set. Sometimes they are on the bank and sometimes they are out away from the bank in the water. I suggest that you keep a wide berth, the trapper doesn't need your scent around his trap and beside "your hide won't fetch much on the market", as they say in the Ozarks.





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Look carefully, you can see the red markers of the trap line along the bank and another in the upper middle of this picture.



I took my chest pack off and laid my rod down to take the pictures of the trap line. When I came back up the stream I found my dip net frozen stiff. I couldn't resist taking the photo. Get out and enjoy the great Ozarks, but wait until it warms up a bit.