

2017 Steelhead Trip

I had to push my annual steelhead trip back a little this year because of all the high water. We actually didn't know how the river was going to fish with a CFS a tad over 1400. The normal flow is about 600 for this time of the year. The river was a cool 42 degrees with a dark tea stain, so visibility was going to be limited. The stream crested two days earlier at 2400 and was dropping. The weather forecast for the week would be a pleasant low 30s to mid 40s with rain, sleet, snow and wind. It was going to be perfect weather for Steelhead fishing. We floated the first day and the fourth day and walked in to some places the rest of the week. With all the high water the previous week the stream had a ton of migrators in the system. All we had to do was find out where they were holding and figure out what color they preferred. We usually go with brighter colors and heavier tippet in dark water and lighter colors and lighter tippet in clear water. With the forecast for cloudy conditions and off colored water there was a very good chance they would be holding in shallower water in feeding lanes and they were. We fished that pattern for the first 4 days with great success. On the fifth day the river was clearing up pretty good and a high front came in with bright sunny skies, which makes for crappy days Steelhead fishing, and it did. We only had nine hookups between us on the last day compared to 73 hookups for the previous 4 days. Sometimes the stars all line up and you have the opportunity for a lifetime trip. We landed 41 Steelhead in 5 days and just a tad under 50% landing ratio, which for this stream is a great ratio with all the timber and snags in the river. It has been several years since we have had a trip like this one. There were lots of fish and several double digit fish on this trip. I'm sure there will be some 20+ pounders caught this winter.



This Big female Chrome is my largest steelhead to date. The treasure of the trip was caught by Barry . See the photo below that deserved a full page shot.



The Treasure of the Trip