



"GOT HIM!" NOT A VERY BIG TROUT, TO BE SURE, BUT 'TWILL SERVE.

THE SPECKLED BEAUTIES

Where to Fish for Them and How to Catch Them.

With the springtime comes the fever to go a-fishing, and the city dweller catches it (the fever, not the fish) just as readily as does his country cousin. Then it comes to deciding what variety of finny prey to go after. Brook trout continue to hold their own in popularity, both with angler and epicure. The city epicure, however, who purchases his home supply or gets it at a restaurant, has little conception of the flavor, the aroma, of the trout placed on the fire immediately after being drawn from the water.

Up in New York State the farmers have occasional brook trout days in which the whole family gets busy. Mamma stays at home and gets her spiders and cornmeal ready. Dad and the rest of the family go after the fish. The small boy trots to the house with 'em as fast as caught. Mamma "dresses" 'em, rolls 'em in cornmeal and puts 'em in the spider. Until the family returns she keeps on turning 'em over with a fork and stacking 'em on trays on the back of the stove as fast as cooked. When the family returns all roll up their sleeves and get on the job devouring the catch. If the city epicure got in on one of those farmers' trout soirees he could ever after pose as a real, instead of a professed, connoisseur.

In France they boil trout only and serve them with various sauces, but Americans boil only the big fellows. Billed brook trout are pretty good eating when covered with Hollandaise sauce and followed with fresh tomato and lettuce salad. One can go a long way and fare worse.

Game as a brook trout may be, no person was ever hauled into the water by one. Lots of people have been ducked by larger game fish, however, and survived to admire themselves ever after. A seven-pound black bass hauled me off a rock into thirty feet of water in Black Lake, St. Lawrence County, when I was a youngster, but that's another story. However, I shall boast of it as long as I draw breath.

Speaking of Northern New York, that's a gem of all brook trout habitats. The rivers and small streams swarm with them. There's Mad River, the upper Salmon River, etc., where, in good seasons, you stand in the rapids and get a trout on almost every cast. They are the gamiest of their race, too, in those swift waters. The upper Delaware River waters are the only

ones close to the metropolis which compare with them.

From now until September you can legally catch trout in this state, but in New Jersey they shut down and lock you out July 15. New Jersey, however, is stocking up its streams, even including those of Ocean County, where no trout was ever seen. Last year the state and private parties placed several hundred thousand young trout in the main streams and branches of Forked River, Tom's River and Cedar and Oyster creeks. To the amazement of almost every one, the fishermen of Barnegat Bay have hauled up hundreds of them in their nets, the young trout showing no bad effects from their outing in salt water. Perhaps,

as a result, we are to have a new species—a salt water brook trout. This would indicate the presence of a characteristic of this family of fishes, one well known member of which, the salmon, passes back and forth from salt to fresh water, while a bass is instantly killed on entering salt water. Pickerel, however, are often caught in Barnegat Bay, but thousands of years of immersion in salt water by reason of abnormally high tides swamping their haunts in Ocean County streams have made them accustomed to the change.

Angling for trout and its methods depend upon the point of view of the angler. We have the "regular," who never deigns to angle except with correct clothes, rods, reels and flies. He

would feel disgraced to use a humble angle worm and looks upon bait fishermen as vulgar and uncouth. If "classy," he takes his "man" along to hand-net his fish, so as not to slim up his hands. The superiority of the fly user over his rival, the bait user, is fully conceded by himself. He has only scorn and contempt for others.

It must be confessed that the mass of anglers go out to catch fish over Sunday not merely for an outing but to get something to eat for the family. Owing to the high prices of edibles, this is going to be the most popular angling season ever known. Everybody that can will try to "beat the Meat Trust" by catching fish and substituting them for meat. Already the regular fishermen are being augmented by thousands.

To those who go after trout as a food supply a few words may be helpful. In the first place the biggest trout and the greatest number may be taken in rainstorms. The rain rolls the water and also washes down worms, grubs and insects from the banks along the streams. This is the time to drop your hook baited, if one has no scruples against it, with an angle-worm. The trout, unable to see the angler or hook or line in the roiled water, will not only bite as fast as you can throw in, but the biggest trout will fight for and get the worm.

Trout fishing in sunlight is a gamble. You then walk up and down stream casting, as a rule. It is almost useless to cast with your face to the sun. Cast with your back to the orb of day, so the trout faces it. He cannot then see you, as the sun dazzles him.

Trout have wonderful powers of sight. In the deep Adirondack lakes it is almost impossible to catch one in daylight. The water is perfectly clear, and these fish, lying on the bottom, often several hundred feet deep, can see persons and boats on the surface, see their rods, lines and bait, and are not to be taken.

Your angler, therefore, fishes at night and sleeps during the day. At night long lines with sinkers are dropped to the bottom and the trout, so smart when he can see himself angled for, feels no fear when his sense of sight ceases its warnings.

W. H. B.



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