

Module 6 – Summer Doldrums Fishing

What is Summer Doldrums Fishing?

1. Fishing late June, July, August and Early September when high water temperatures have chased trout into deeper water.
2. As most of the hatches have finished for the season, the fish have scattered and are more difficult to locate
3. Trout are not as eager to bite during the heat of the day.

Why Summer Fish?

1. Its summer, everyone wants to get outdoors.
2. Camping is at its best.
3. There are opportunities to fish in the late evenings and after dark.
4. Dry fly fishing can be great.
5. Good time to take a float tube or pontoon boat to high elevation lakes and kick around.

Where do you Summer Fish?

1. The best fishing is usually at high elevation lakes, if it is hot, the higher the lake the better the fishing.
2. If the lake is high enough and water temperature are still cool, you might still find fish in the shallow areas.
3. If water temperatures are high, you will have to fish deep.
4. Drop offs, next to shallow areas
5. Stream inflows
6. Look for surface action, sedge and mayfly surface action can concentrate fish.
7. The shallows can be good in the evening and after dark.

When do you Summer Fish?

1. Any day that the weather is suitable.
2. Sometimes rainy weather after a long hot spell triggers a hatch.
3. If water and air temperature are high, the best fishing can be late in the evening or after dark.

Fishing equipment needed

1. Fishing Equipment needed:

- I. Fly rod set up with a floating line and indicator,
- II. Fly rod set up with a floating line and dry fly
- III. Fly rod set up with a slow sink line (type I or II)
- IV. Fly rod set up with a med- fast line (type 3, 4 or 5) with a searching pattern
- V. Float or strike indicator
- VI. Lots of leader
- VII. Tippet material (6-8lb)
- VIII. Small swivels
- IX. Weights to keep your line straight
- X. Fly patterns:
 - a) Sedge Pupae
 - b) Dry Flies
 - c) Micro leeches
 - d) Leeches
 - e) Dragonflies
 - f) Attractor patterns, some good ones are:
 - i) Doc Spratly
 - ii) Half Back
 - iii) Idaho Nymph
 - iv) 52 Buick
 - v) Pumpkin Head
 - vi) Booby
- XI. A method of measuring water depth - sounder, forceps and line etc.
- XII. Throat pump
- XIII. Sample jars
- XIV. Magnifying glass

Summer Strategies

1. Look for surface action, you can never tell when a hatch will happen.
2. If no hatches are evident, put on an attractor pattern with a wet line and troll around the lake searching for concentrations of fish.
3. Watch your depth sounder for fish stratified at certain depths. Sometimes they will school up just above a Thermocline.
 - a. A Thermocline is a shear zone in the water where the temperature and oxygen levels are drastically different. Most deep lakes have them.

- b. During high water temperatures the fish will sometimes seek out the Thermocline and stage at that level.
 - c. On your sounder, it looks like a line of fish on the screen.
 - d. If you find this situation, work this depth
4. Fish the evenings or after dark. On many lakes the trout turn nocturnal in the summer, especially the large trout

Summer Fish Food

The most abundant food species available at this time are:

1. Caddis
2. Freshwater shrimp
3. Damselfly nymphs
4. Leeches
5. Dragonfly nymphs
6. Mayflies

You should be using patterns that imitate these.

Summer Fishing Methods

Your first decision is to decide which food species you want to imitate and how to fish it.

The most popular fly choices and methods on our local lakes are:

1. **Dry fly fishing** with a floating line.
 2. **Trolling** with a deep line (medium to fast sinking, types II to IV) and attractor pattern
 3. **Indicator (float) fishing** if the fish are not too deep, < 25 feet.
 - a. **Show indicator set up**
 - b. To fish this way you need to:
 - i. Anchor your boat
 - ii. Cast the fly.
 - iii. Let the fly sink to the feeding zone
 - iv. Keep your line straight
 - v. Watch your float for a strike.
 1. Sometimes it is better to let the float sit still or wind drift it.
 2. Sometimes you have to slowly move or twitch your float and fly to get a strike.
 3. When you see the float move, set the hook and the fight is on.
2. **Casting and retrieving with a wet line and wet fly**
- a. Cast the fly out and use the count-down method
 - b. When the fly is just above the bottom, start your retrieve, slow or fast
 - c. Trying to keep the fly in the feeding zone as long as you can

- d. When you feel resistance set the hook.
 - e. Some of the more common flies used with a wet line are:
 - i. Caddis
 - ii. Damselflies
 - iii. Leeches
 - iv. Dragonfly nymphs
 - v. Mayfly nymphs
 - f. **Show wet line set up, show different retrieves.**
3. When you start catching fish it is a good idea to pump the occasional one to see what type of food they are eating.

Demonstration Equipment needed:

1. Photos of different life stages
2. Vials of sample insects
3. Fly samples
4. Rod set up with a floating line, indicator and the rest
5. Rod set up for wet line fishing
6. Tippet material
7. Leader material
8. Swivels
9. Strike indicators
10. Small weights
11. Depth sounder
12. Forceps
13. Throat pump
14. Sample jar
15. Magnifying glass