

# Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

## The Fishin' Magician



the streams are out of shape or they are covered with ice, Rocky Ford is a place I can still go to find placid, flowing water.

I had the opportunity to make a trip to the Ford last week. One of my fishing buddies, Tom Bartlett, was able to go along and we headed for Ephrata with a stop at the Desert Fly Angler. We wanted to check in with Darc Knobel to get the latest information on what to use on the creek. Knobel said that there wasn't any new secret formula to catching the big rainbow, and using scuds or egg patterns under an indicator or stripping mini leeches was still working. There were even fish taking dry flies. When I mentioned that I hoped there were some hungry, dumb fish waiting for me, he replied that in fact the lower end of the creek had been recently planted and might just find what I was looking for in that area of the stream.

We began our day in the upper third of the stream, just up from the middle parking area. I have had great success in this stretch. I was using a mini leech and Ultra Scud combo on an intermediate sinking line. Bartlett started with an indicator and scud to see which method would be best. I got a clue as to how my day was going to go on my sixth cast. My rod shuddered as a huge fish grabbed my fly and tore off down stream. It came up to the surface made a big slashing swirl and then broke me off. I was using a seven-pounder leader! While I was putting everything back together Bartlett hooked two fish, landing one. When I was able to get back to fishing I found some more fish that liked the leech and lost a couple more and landed a couple smaller fish.

We had worked our way down to the bend, where there are some big boulders in the stream, and at that point we decided to take a break, grab a bite and "re-tool". I switched from my 10-foot, five weight rod to a nine-foot, five-weight with a floating line. Bartlett decided to try a sinking line for the balance of the day. I had been hooking a lot of fish, but not landing many. Maybe he would have better luck.

We marched straight down to the "island" below the bridge and began casting. I had tied on an orange leech, just for the heck of it, and was drifting it without an indicator at the head of the hole. The trout loved it! I hooked

and landed three before I goofed and snapped it off while releasing a fish. We determined that a bright color was the way to go and since that was my last orange scud, I was casting a bright egg. Bartlett tied on a bright leech that he had tied himself, caught a fish right away. He had a couple in his box and gave me one to try. It worked! We began catching fish like crazy. It was obvious that we had found a pack of those hungry, dumb fish that Knobel had told us about. For the next hour or so we caught fish constantly. When I broke off the leech that Bartlett had given me I switched to a white bunny leech and it worked great. When it got too dark to tie on a fly we quit. It was an amazing day at the Ford. We estimated that we had hooked at least 35 fish between us. Most of them were 14 to 16 inches.

You can see why I like fishing at Rocky Ford when steelhead fishing is not an option. I am also looking forward to getting up to Rufus Woods Reservoir. I am getting some good reports of triploids being caught, and that the walleye fishing had picked up, too.

Have a great Thanksgiving everyone, and I hope to see you on the water!

Reach Dave at:  
www.FishingMagician.com  
or Fishboy@nwi.net

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