Spin Fishing for Trout Equipment and Tactics
Spinner Fishing for Trout

Jeff Deitrich

Stackpole Books

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Why spin?

Get into the woods and have fun!
Catch trout consistently
  throughout the open season
Gear can be relatively inexpensive
  spend more if you want
Easy to learn
Have the stream to yourself
Fish in tight and brushy places
  under bridges and culverts
  easy to pack into the backcountry
Backcountry and brushy streams

5 – 20 ft wide
Overgrowth
Deadfalls
Recommended gear for small stream trout

Small Ultralight Gear

4-1/2 foot ultralight rod

4 pound quality monofilament

Ultralight reel holding at least 100 yd

1/8 ounce spinners (#8 or #10 hooks)
Catch little fish with small gear
Catch big fish with small gear
Catch a variety of fish with small gear
Spinning rods

Ultralight
4’ 6” one piece
2 – 6 # test
1/32 – 3/16 oz lure weight

Expect to spend at least $25 – 50
Cabela’s
Ugly Stik
Diawa Spinmatic C

Pack rods

More $$ not always better
(Shakespeare Travel Mate Telescopic Spinning Rod - $14.99)
Spinning reels

Ultralight
2 – 6 # test
100 yd capacity
Instant anti-reverse
Drag smooth even when wet

Expect to spend $25 – 50
Lots of brands

More $$ definitely not always better
Monofilament

4# test a good compromise

- lighter line more sensitive
- lighter line casts further
- line twist subtracts from strength

Many brands
Spinners

1/8 oz, #8 or #10 hook
Undressed (no hair)
Should spin
1X hooks preferred

Experiment a little to find a design that works for you

Pick a color and brand and stick with it

*Mepps #1, Blue Fox #1, Panther-Martin #4,*

*Rooster Tail 1/8*
Now use nothing but homemade in silver and (rarely) in black

Used nothing but this in 2011!
Recommended gear for small stream trout

4-1/2 foot ultralight rod

(St. Croix Avid Series 4-1/2 ft UL Fast)

4 pound quality monofilament

(Stren clear/blue)

Ultralight reel holding at least 100 yd

(Pfleuger President 6925X)

1/8 ounce spinners (#8 or #10 hooks)

(Panther Martin #4 Silver Deluxe)
Make your own spinners

Save money ($1.50 vs. $3.50) - allows bolder casts
Customize (barbless, single hook, etc.)
Attaching the spinner

PALOMAR KNOT – This knot, over 95 percent in strength, takes more line to tie because it is doubled first. It is good for lines up to and over 20 pound test. Because it is run doubled through the lure or hook eye, knotted and then looped over the hook or lure, it may tangle easier. It is a favorite knot of many anglers.
Trout fishing tactics

Keys to success:

Get up early

*streamside at sunrise*

Get in the water

*invest in good waders and boots*

Keep moving upstream

*typically 1/3 to 1 mile in a morning mostly in the water, wading*
Trout fishing tactics

Cast upstream
get the lure spinning on retrieve (with the current)
steady retrieve right to your feet

Short firm tug to set the hook

Keep the hooks sharp!
Trout fishing tactics

Relieve line twist

*Once or twice per trip:*
- cut lure off the line
- play line out downstream
- let it untwist in current
- reel it back in
Trout fishing tactics

Snug the lure against top guide for travel through brush
How to find the trout

**Look** You can see the trout in small streams

**Tap on angler wisdom** Fish are in the same place as for fly fishing: books, web, videos, other anglers

**Think like a fish**
Flow – food vs. energy, temp, O₂
Cover – safety, null currents
Shade – no eyelids!
Where to find the trout

Likely spots
1. Plunge pool
2. Seam – rapid current/undercut pool
3. Undercut below brush
4. Boulders, sunken wood & roots
5. Confluence with tributary

Unlikely spots
A. Shallow riffles
B. Rapid current
C. Shallow/no cover/bright sun
Catch and release mortality

Best studies show no difference:

*Flies and spinners*

*Single and treble hooks*

*Barbed and barbless*

Effect of Hook Type on Mortality, Trauma, and Capture Efficiency of Wild Stream Trout Caught by Angling with Spinners

North American Journal of Fisheries Management, 24:2, 609-616
Beyond Trout: Spinners for “prospecting”

Mepps #2 Aglia “French Blade”, one of the most versatile lures ever made

Home made version
Caught on Mepps #2
Caught on Mepps #2
Other recommended reading

Spring Creek Treasure: Wisconsin’s 100 Best Trout Streams
Jay Ford Thurston
Nightengale Press ©2010

Spin Casting Brilliantly
Michael Rutter and J. Alan Baumgarten
Mountain Press ©2000
Spinning for Trout

2012 Trout Year in Review

2012 was another great year for trout fishing. The warm spring and early snow melt meant more trips during the catch and release season.

This year, I switched completely to home made lures patterned after silver Panther Martins, and they really seemed to do the trick, especially at attracting some larger fish.

I enjoyed several backpacking trips that included some fishing in the backcountry. These hiking trips included sites in Georgia, North Carolina and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

I only got skunked once this year, on my final trip in early October. That was on the Wolf River in Langlade County, on a very cold morning with the river level way below normal.

As usual, I tracked my statistics for trout, salmon, and grayling fishing, and here are the results compared to past years:

2006: 1 trip, 0 skunks, 1 fish
2007: 23 trips, 1 skunk, 80 fish
2008: 33 trips, 5 skunks, 135 fish
2009: 36 trips, 3 skunks, 167 fish
2010: 36 trips, 8 skunks, 168 fish
2011: 27 trips, 0 skunks, 216 fish
2012: 36 trips, 1 skunk, 253 fish

ABOUT

Catch and release stream fishing for trout with ultralight spinning gear.

“Spinning for Trout” blog and photos by Dan Geddes in Appleton, Wisconsin.

FAVORITE GEAR

Stren clear/blue 4# test
Panther Martin Deluxe 4# silver spinners
Delorme PN Series GPS
St. Croix Avet Series 4# UL spinning rod
Pinnacle Tiny DeadBolt spinning reel

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Spinner Fishing For Trout: A Proven System of Tackle, Techniques, and Strategies for Catching Trout by Jeff DelTorch
Spine Casting Brilliantly by Michael Rutter, J. Alan Baumgartner, Ed R. Jenne, and Greg Stipe
Map Guide to Improved Trout Waters of Wisconsin by Todd Hanson
Spring Creek Treasure: Wisconsin’s 150 Best Trout Streams by Jay Ford Thurston
Backcountry Fishing: A Guide for Hikers, Paddlers, and Backpackers by Johnny Molloy

LINKS

Nature Conservancy
Trout Unlimited
Fox Valley Trout Unlimited
Laughing Whitefish Folk Music Group

NOTABLE QUOTES