

COOLING WATER, RAINS START BIG STEELHEAD RUN

Joe Wharton in Grants Pass Courier
The autumn season is upon us. In the Rogue Valley this is the most beautiful season of the year and the season that appeals most to the real out-door man. Cool night and wonderful days and a colorful landscape that gladdens the eye. These days are the days of good hunting and fishing and with the opening of the deer season on the tenth of this month there will be the annual exodus to the wild and lonely places to stalk the frisky buck in his native habitat. Men revert to the primitive days when hunting was necessary to provide the larder with fresh meat but today we hunt more for sport than we do for meat. There will be hundreds of hunters in the mountains after the tenth of this month where there was one twenty-five years ago and each hunter should remember this and exercise the greatest care to know what he is shooting at before he fires his high powered rifle into the brush. The law says "Male deer with horns" so be careful to see the horns before you fire. A hasty careless shot in a moment of intense excitement may bring grief and sorrow to many lives.

The little rain we have had and the cool nights have lowered the temperature of the water in the river and started the most wonderful run of steelheads that has been known for many years. Andy Huggins, who has lived on the Rogue River almost half way between here and the coast for nearly twenty years, made a trip from Alameda to Gold Beach. He reported that on every riffle there were hundreds of steelheads fighting their way upstream. He says it is

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the biggest run he has seen in the twenty years he has been on the Rogue. They are fresh run from the sea and eager to take the fly. When hooked they put up a magnificent fight, quite different from the slow and lazy fish of the warm water.

With the great improvement in fishing conditions, angles from all parts of the country are beginning to arrive. In a week or two the road along the river from Hell Gate to Alameda will look like the street of a village, the camps will be so thick. There will be good fishing all along the river but the Galice and Alameda water is noted for its big ones.

Anglers should keep in mind the Fishing Contest of the Field and Stream magazine. The rules and regulations of the contest will be found in the June number of the magazine. There are prizes worth trying for as well as the honor and glory of taking a record fish. Steelheads and Rainbows now come under the same classification. In the past most of the prizes have been awarded to Rogue River steelheads but last season the prize fish was taken in the McKenzie. The season before, H. Van Hoevenberg, of the Siskiyou Orchards in Sams Valley took the prize with a twelve and a half pound steelhead, taken from the water near the Chair Riffle—the "Rocky Riffle of Rogue River," of Zane Grey's store. This fish was taken late in October, with a No. 6 Silver Doctor, with Jungle Cock wing. In 1922 Harry Van Leuven captured the first prize with a beautiful specimen of steelhead that weighed fifteen pounds and five ounces. This came from the Innis Riffle just above Galice.

The total length, from the point of the lower jaw to the end of the tail, the girth around the largest part, and the exact weight of the fish should be recorded. It is necessary to measure and weigh the fish in the presence of two witnesses and an affidavit made that the fish was caught on a fly or fly rod lure, with regular fly fishing tackle. Fish caught with any kind of spoon or spinner are barred from entry. There are four prizes offered in this contest, the first prize a lot of guns and tackle valued at \$193.30. The value of the fourth prize is \$13.00. So if you catch a large steelhead, be sure to enter it in the Field & Stream contest.

When you go after steelheads from now on, be sure that your tackle is in the best of condition. A prize fish may be lost on inferior tackle, the best tackle that money can buy is none too good. You should have a good rod, with plenty of backbone for casting a long line, a large single action reel that will hold at least a hundred and fifty feet of line and the best quality of leaders and flies. It is useless to tackle these hard fighting, fresh run steelheads with an inferior outfit. You might get away with it, but the chances would be strong against you. Last week end one fisherman hooked seven steelheads and landed two. Another, (and I was with him and saw it done) hooked seven and landed three. And many others reported similar luck. Most of these fishermen had good tackle and experience in handling big fish. With the best of tackle, you have only a fifty-fifty break with the steelhead.

Most of the old standard steelhead flies have been taking fish during the last week or ten days. The Royal Coachman, Professor, March Brown and Grey Hackle are old tried and true patterns. Perhaps the best catches and the most strikes have been had with the McGinty and Professor with Jungle Cock wing. The Oak Fly has also proven a killer. As we advised some weeks ago, use the fly in which you have the most confidence because with confidence in your selection you will fish harder and more persistently and in this lies the true secret of success, especially fishing for steelheads.

With the cooling of the water, the trout have begun rising more freely to the artificial fly and good catches are being made. For trout, number ten flies in any of the standard patterns will do the work and number six or four for the steelheads. If you cannot take them on the fly small spinners will attract both trout and steelheads. For the next week-

end, there will be good fishing, on almost any of the good riffles, up or down the river. If you do not find them on your favorite riffle, move on to the next one. If you persevere, you will soon locate the run. The fall fish do not stay long in one place, but keep moving up the river.

Oregon mineral production dropped from \$3,678,072 in 1924 to \$2,430,753 in 1925, according to figures compiled at Washington by the bureau of mines. Josephine county is credited with the production of \$60,038 in gold. Jackson county was one of the leading producers of lead, that county and Baker county having produced 5,612 pounds, as compared with 513 pounds in 1924. Baker county lead in gold production with \$210,615.

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