

NORTH FORK PAYETTE – CASCADE, ID

I went fishing on the North Fork of the Payette River on the weekend of Oct. 15, 2004 while staying at the cabin. On Friday evening I took my two oldest girls down to the river near Smiths Ferry. We spent a couple hours throwing Spinners. The spinner we used was a gold, black and red Panther Martin.

We caught a dozen Rainbows in the 9"-12" range with the exception of one 15" Rainbow that gave a great fight, especially in the current. Kalyn, my oldest daughter who is seven, knows how to cast by herself. While I was getting Cami's pole ready, Kalyn walked over to the river and caught a 10" Rainbow on her first cast. I decided not to help and just watch her. She had it up on the bank and all I said was good job and gave her a thumbs up. It didn't take long for me to hook a fish and let Cami reel it in. They both caught five or six fish in a short time period, which made for a very good experience.



Kalyn



Cami

The next day we went to Cascade to enjoy the Scarecrow Festival festivities with Aaron and Shigae, who are some friends from Melba. After a while, Aaron and I decided to go throw some spinners in the river near Cascade, while my wife, kids and Shigae stayed to watch the entertainment. Within a couple of hours we had caught around 40 Whitefish and a few large Rainbows. The girls soon showed up and started enjoying the action. We ended up catching a lot of fish.

The girls needed to get back to the cabin so Aaron and I went fishing down at the spot my girls and I fished the night before. This time I took my fly rod, while Aaron continued casting spinners. I threw on a hopper and landed three 10" Rainbows on my first three casts. I had never seen the river so low. It was perfect for fly-fishing. We fished for about three hours and I ended up catching 15 Rainbows in the 10"-12" range. I lost a couple of fish in the 15" range. I have fished the North Fork of the Payette several times, but this was the best fly-fishing success that I have had. I attribute the success to the lower water levels.

I saw a few Bald Eagles and was able to witness a Hawk bring down a Duck in midair right over my head and land in the river close by. It was cool to witness this in the wild.

I like fishing this river because of the small crowds and serenity that it offers. I'm still trying to beat my Father in Laws record from a few summers ago before I even began fly-fishing. He caught a fat 17" Rainbow, which is the largest I've seen so far from this river. The closest I've come is a 16 1/2" Rainbow. It's a river that many overlook and don't consider due to all the other good fishing locations in the region.

