

Strawberries and Trout



When wild strawberries are blossoming and thunder showers have given us good water conditions in our streams it's time to start angling for sea trout. Above we see Chris Sinclair of Stillwater NS with a fine sea-trout, silver from the sea.

Don MacLean, in his book *Discover Nova Scotia Sportfishing*, 2003, Nimbus Publishing Ltd, Halifax, writes, "Sea Trout! Two words that stir the heart of any angler."

"In Nova Scotia, the term "sea trout" refers to brook, brown, and rainbow trout which spend part of their life cycle in the sea before returning to fresh water. Biologists use the term "diadromous" describe fish that spend part of their life cycle in the sea, returning to fresh water to spawn. Sea-run brook or speckled trout are especially prized among Nova Scotia anglers. These sea-run brook trout usually head into fresh water in distinct runs, often triggered by a rise in water levels. Historically, this run of sea trout has coincided with the appearance of wild strawberries – hence the anxiously awaited "strawberry run". "

"While sea-trout runs are found in many coastal rivers of the province, not all trout go to sea. Many live their lives strictly in fresh water. The factors which trigger to decide to move to the sea are often related to habitat and food. Trout may leave the hot, low water found in many of our rivers to take advantage of the cooler waters of the bay. There is also an abundance of food available to fish in salt

water. While in the sea, it is believed that most brook trout stay close to their home rivers.”

“Much early scientific work on sea-run brook trout was carried on in the 1930’s. Researchers working on Moser River, on the Eastern Shore, investigated when trout ran in the river, what they ate, and so on. They found that the majority of sea-run brook trout returned to the river in July, with the run following a rise in water levels. Analysis of stomach contents provided interesting insight into the trout’s diet, with young eels, sand worms, and shrimp the most common prey.”

“Once in the ocean, trout can grow rapidly, returning as large, strong, sea trout. We are indeed fortunate that eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton continue to have healthy sea trout runs in many rivers, but habitat loss, acid rain and overfishing have reduced numbers in other areas. So, when the rains come and you hit your favorite river for the strawberry run, remember how fortunate we are to experience this, and limit your catch – leave some for the future.”

Here’s a local shrimp pattern that works well on all sea trout that feed on shrimp in tidal waters.

Bill Carpan, Stillwater NS



Slim’s Shrimp

Hook – Partridge Saltwater Shrimp, size 4 - 8

Thread – Black

Tail - Pearl Krystal Flash

Rib - Black thread

Body – Light grey soft fur dubbing, pearl Krystal Flash on top

Eyes - Black Groovy Eyes

Shrimp Tail - Short pearl Krystal Flash

Head - Black thread finished with ProLac Glossy Wet Head Cement

