
Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by FlyGuy - 2009/06/13 10:26

In the 1995 book Many Rivers to Cross by M.R. Montgomery, he tells of his trips across the West to catch rare trout species in their native waters. In the last chapter of his book, he attempts to catch a thought-to-be-extinct specie called the Alvord cutthroat. I recently read a blog by Gary, The Gig Harbor Fly Fisher, and how he caught one of these "extinct" trout late last summer. This inspired me to try for this trout, which also fit in well to my plans for another fly fishing trip to Eastern Oregon. I was in the region last summer on a quest for redband trout, and failed to catch one redband and one cutthroat specie, so I wanted to go back for another attempt. The Alvord cutt fit in well, since it is found in the same general area.

The Catlow Basin with Steens Mountain in the background. WIDE open spaces...

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/CatlowBasin.jpg>

The fishing was in very small streams, still on the high side from the run off, but still easily fishable. The Catlow Basin Redband Trout.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/CatlowRedband.jpg>

The campground I stayed at for a few nights had a nice hot spring which I made good use of. Notice how nice this facility is. In California this spring would be fenced off and covered with signs warning people away. In Oregon: benches, a ladder and other improvements.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/HotSpring1.jpg>

One of the locals in Eastern Oregon. This ain't no gopher snake!

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Rattler.jpg>

The stream with the Alvords, pictured here, was also on the high side, but easily accessed. Gary's blog described how he walked here, an 18 mile hike, baking in the summer sun. I was able to drive right to the creek and the temps were cool, but the malady I had to contend with were mosquitoes. I have NEVER seen such an infestation in my life, even in Alaska. DEET seemed to have no effect, so the only way I was able to be outside my rig was by being almost totally covered in thick clothes and have a head net. Still, massive swarms of these bloodsuckers surrounded me the whole time and tried to feast on me. Very disconcerting.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/SmallCreek.jpg>

I flogged the water for over an hour, with a dry and dropper combo, until I was finally able to scare up this small cutt.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Cutthroat.jpg>

I was beginning to get discouraged, when I remembered another native trout fly fishing blogger, DaveB, and his luck with cutthroats with a fly he called the Big Ugly. I got the tying directions from him a few months back, so I tied one on my tippet, made a cast, and BAM! Fish on. The Big Ugly was THE fly for these cutts. Every likely looking holding water had a trout in it, so I'd get at least a strike or a trout using that fly. Thanks, Dave! Pictured here is a good specimen of an Alvord cutt. This looks a LOT like the one pictured in Behnke's book on trout and salmon.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/AlvordCutt.jpg>

Another one of the locals I saw on the way back to camp.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Pronghorn.jpg>

While M.R. Montgomery was often looking for arrowheads on his trips he talked about in his book, I was able to find another kind of sign that we were not the first ones here.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Petroglyph.jpg>

I did encounter a some rush hour traffic: Eastern Oregon style.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Cattle.jpg>

I headed further east, into the Whitehorse basin, watching the clouds build up as I drove along some amazingly lonely

highway. There were a few more friendly locals to greet me, however.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Burros.jpg>

The stream was small, VERY remote, tick infested, but casting a Big Ugly in likely looking spots resulted in nice sized Whitehorse Basin cutts. I wonder why cutts seem to like this fly so much?

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/WhitehorseCutt.jpg>

The clouds, which threatened all day, finally let loose in the afternoon. This photo may not look like much, but it got a whole lot worse. Howling wind, driving rain, pelting hail and this is the SECOND time I've been close to being struck by lightning, and let me tell you, it's not a fun experience.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Storm.jpg>

I got the heck out of there as fast as I could, and later found this HUGE hot spring, more like a creek, in Northern Nevada, and took a relaxing soak.

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/HotSpring2.jpg>

I drove back to Nor Cal and fished some of the better known rivers in that region, but after easy fishing and NO crowds, I was not exactly thrilled by the tough fishing and hordes of anglers I had to deal with in my home state. Hmph!

<http://i203.photobucket.com/albums/aa104/dderuysscher/Shasta-1.jpg>

That's it, enjoy! I hope I do this right so I don't get the white screen o'death. Reply in the same fashion to avoid this as well.

Cheers!

--FlyGuy (Dave)

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by Andrew Weiner - 2009/06/13 10:46

Great stuff.

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by Phil - 2009/06/13 12:18

Fly Guy,

Awesome report. I hope to be there soon!

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by Bjorn - 2009/06/13 14:10

right on... very cool report.

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by hightrekker - 2009/06/14 09:12

Great report, thanks.

I am redband centric myself, and need to a bit more exploring.
Catlow Basin- yep

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by Buzz - 2009/06/15 21:23

Great report! Dang, I wonder why you didn't get the WSOD (white screen of death)?

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by FlyGuy - 2009/06/16 07:41

I type up my report on Word first, size the pictures to a smaller size and resolution, cut and paste the report onto the board, and then place the image links from photobucket. I've tried using the preview button, but it doesn't work for me. But if I follow the steps above, once I get done and I submit, it seems to work fine. However, I've had some other threads broken by others that "do whatever it is they do" to cause the WSOD. How far away are the board admin from finding a fix or a patch or some kind? Just curious.

--FlyGuy (Dave) :peace:

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by Buzz - 2009/06/16 11:13

We are actively working on the upgrade. There is a lack of features in the upgrade that are giving us pause, however I posted a massive tome with a LOT of pictures on it last night with NO problems, so it is looking good.

Hopefully, we will have this taken care of shortly.

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Re:Many Rivers to Cross Redux : A report :pic:

Posted by Charlie S - 2009/06/16 13:10

Great report Dave. That is some of my favorite country...desolate but surprisingly full of wonderful things to see and do. Thanks for the time and effort.

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