

# Trout Fisher



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# Trout Fisher

Issue 168 of NZ's only trout fishing magazine, covering Autumn 2019 ...

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## *Cover & Here*

Peter de Boer with a nice Wellington brown fooled on cicada  
(Andrew Harding)

Hasta la vista, thermocline (PWS)

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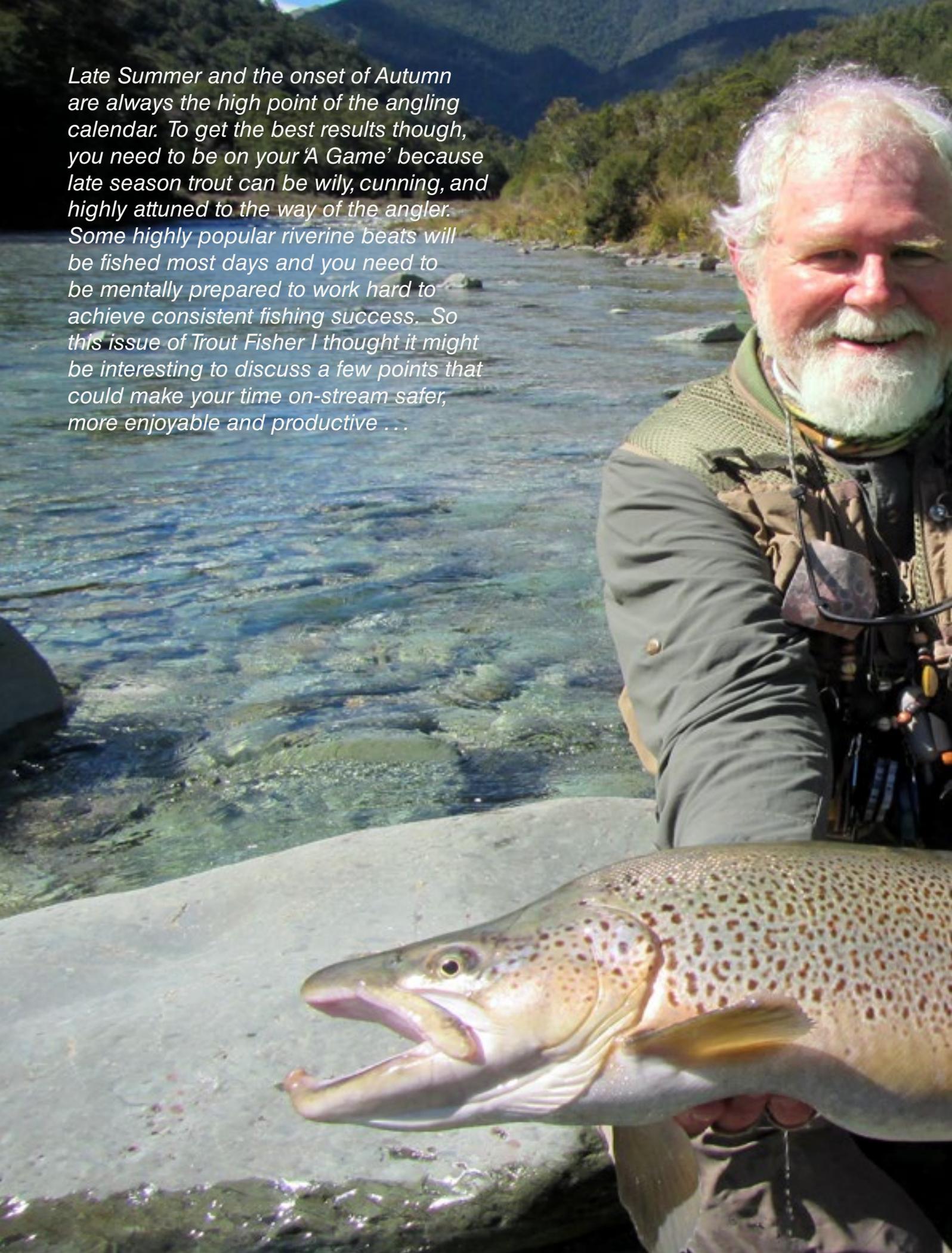
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*Late Summer and the onset of Autumn are always the high point of the angling calendar. To get the best results though, you need to be on your 'A Game' because late season trout can be wily, cunning, and highly attuned to the way of the angler. Some highly popular riverine beats will be fished most days and you need to be mentally prepared to work hard to achieve consistent fishing success. So this issue of Trout Fisher I thought it might be interesting to discuss a few points that could make your time on-stream safer, more enjoyable and productive ...*



# PUT A BEND IN YOUR ROD

*By Zane Mirfin*

*Big dry flies catch big trout  
(Shame Phil is about 6'4")*





*The* first choice of fly when nothing obvious is happening is a damselfly nymph, with the size being varied according to the depth at which it is to be fished. There were rises on opening day but too few to worry about imitating whatever it was fish rose to. I also fish a water boatman, size 14, on a dropper about 60cmms above the damselfly nymph.

Although still-waters look featureless this is far from the truth. Having seen most of the dams at low summer level when the contours of the bed are obvious this gives a clue as to where fish may be expected. The most obvious feature in Mathias' is the deep channel formed by the race that runs in and extends out into the middle. There is also another deep channel running down a small side arm of the dam. Weed beds are another important feature even when they are relatively small in the spring. If there is a wind blowing, I like to fish through the area down wind of the weed beds where trout are attracted by food items being washed out by the wave action.

When the water is cold it pays to fish the flies with a slow retrieve. As Mathias' is quite small it can warm up several degrees as the day warms and then a quicker retrieve can be used. Both ways catch fish but more water can be covered when using a faster retrieve. Opening day did warm up and we caught several fish, surprisingly all were brown trout and the average weight was just over 1kg. Because of the amount of food in the dams the fish are always in great condition. We fished Mathias' twice more in October and it was not until our third visit that I caught a rainbow.

On the first of November two dams close to Mathias' open, Rutherford's and Blakely's. These are a different kettle of fish; all rainbows and a much higher average weight. The method of fishing is the same as for Mathias' but there is much more weed and as the fish are bigger it is harder to land them, with many being lost in the weed or broken off trying to keep them out of it. I fish at least 3.5kg tippet to improve the success rate. Fishing any water regularly helps increase the catch rate as you pick up on the habits and locations of the fish. Rutherford's has a lot of bullies in it whereas Blakely's has none. The bullies are concentrated along the dam wall where rocks and rubble that protect the dam wall from wave action provide shelter for these little fish. Bullies that stray from cover are nailed by patrolling rainbows. Here, I still fish a damselfly nymph as longshank size 12 is very like a small bully. The method is to sit down on the dam to keep off the skyline as the water is clear and the fish can see you if you are standing up. The fly is cast along the dam two or three metres from the wall and retrieved parallel to it. This is not a never-fail method but it works often enough to make it worth trying if there are no fish showing anywhere else on the water. Away from the dam the shallow water close to shore is weedy, but in some places it is easy to cast over the weed as long as you can wade to the outer edge of the weed to net a fish.



*Netting a rainbow on Blakely's*

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