

Upland Idaho

Date	May 28, 2005 - Opening Day	Time	8:30–10:30 am; 7:30–9:30 pm
Location	Billingsley Creek – Hagerman, ID	Weather	Sunny; Overcast in the evening
Fish Species	Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Yellow Rainbow Trout, Utah Chub	Size Range	9-12" majority; 14-15" a few 18"-20" the one that got away
Fish Caught	Many Rainbows & Yellow Rainbows; several Browns and a few Utah Chub		
Flies Used	Stayner Ducktails (10), Bead Head Nymphs (14), Wooly Buggers (6), my girls used Panther Martins (I thought spinners were less effective)		
Techniques	Wet Fly Swing		
Comments	I would average one fish for every 3 or 4 casts.		

I decided to take the family to “Fossil Days” in Hagerman, ID, on Saturday, which happens to be opening day and Billingsley Creek is just down the road, which I had never fished.

We left Friday and stayed in a hotel in Jerome so that the girls could go swimming and so that we could get some fishing in Saturday morning before the festivities began. We got to the fishing hole at about 8:30 a.m. and only one truck was parked at the parking lot. I couldn't believe it. I didn't know what to expect but I was definitely expecting more people. We went to the fish hatchery on Tupper Grade Road just east outside of Hagerman which is part of Billingsley Creek State Park. There are a few places to fish from the bank where the water leaves the fish hatchery; otherwise, you need a float tube due to the high vegetation and moss along the banks.

There is more bank fishing across the street at Billingsley Creek Ranch if you have permission and it is fly fishing only waters. You can also fish at Billingsley Creek State Park on the northeast side of town. You see the sign just after you cross Billingsley Creek as you come into Hagerman from the freeway but there are several access points. I really want to come back with my float tube and float the lower stretch of the State Park.

You can see the hundreds of fish in the clear water. The Yellow Rainbow trout really stand out and of course those are the ones that I targeted. They were so thick in spots that you never knew what you were going to catch. I would hook the fish and then let my daughters reel them in. My oldest daughter was casting spinners and caught her fair share. We caught Brown trout, Rainbow Trout and Yellow Rainbow Trout. It was artificial lures and



spinners only and you couldn't keep anything under 20". I would cast to the opposite bank and let the current swing the fly down and across the stream. The wet fly swing seemed to work better than stripping straight back across the current although this method still worked as well. I never did try throwing a dry fly which is unusual for me. I honestly think anything would work until they see a few flies. A few more people arrived as it was time for us to go to the parade. Everyone was catching fish.



I took the girls to the parade where they gathered a huge bag of candy as my wife and I relaxed in the shade and enjoyed the parade. We then went down to a shady picnic area just outside of town to Lower Salmon Falls Reservoir. I had previously seen people hook large Sturgeon from below the damn. There were several people fishing for Sturgeon but we didn't stop to look. We headed back to the carnival in the park to await the fish scramble. A local fish hatchery donated fish that they put into a shallow pool and allowed different age groups to get in and catch a fish by hand and take it home. This ranks right up there with greased pigs. Jacie, my four year old, got in before they released the water and fish and after touching a few fish, became overwhelmed by all the flopping fish and wanted out. Kalyn (7) and Cami (5) enjoyed the challenge and caught several fish that I told them to release. Many kids thought they had a fish until it would squirm out of their hands before they could get it in their plastic bag. It was a hoot. There were a few fish that pushed 18-20" that were of course the targets of some of the older boys. Watching the boys fight each other for the biggest fish that did manage to make a few escapes was hilarious.

After Pizza and a walk to one of the waterfalls at Thousand Springs near the Nature Conservancy, we were back on the river. We continued to catch many more fish and then decided to walk over to Fischer Lake. Fischer Lake is a beautiful crystal clear aqua blue lake that you can see the bottom of for quite a distance out into the lake. The water cascades down into the lake from the adjacent hill side and makes for a very refreshing atmosphere. We caught several small Rainbows on Nymphs and Stayner Ducktails. I'd like to go back in the fall and see if the fish are still as willing after they've seen a few flies all summer. I think it would be fun to float tube over next to the adjacent bank where the water flows in. I did see a few large fish.



Well, it was time to go but I couldn't resist wetting my line a few more times in Billingsley Creek on the walk back to the van. I caught a few fish including a large Brown that broke off. I then gave it one last cast and I saw a big gold silhouette streak through the water and downstream about the same time my reel began to scream. "This is one of those keepers", I yelled to my wife, as the fish continued down stream. I had to hop down on a rock and put my pole next to the water to avoid getting my line tangled in trees down stream. "I'm into my backing", I exclaimed, as I told my wife to go down stream to see if she could see the fish. She couldn't see the fish due to the trees. Every time I gave the fish a tug it would take more line. I couldn't even budge the fish. It could easily have dove into the moss. I applied pressure for a few minutes and knew that I wasn't going to land this fish so I broke off. It was one of the larger Yellow Rainbow Trout and another fish that took me into my backing. It was a fun way to end the day!

