



<b>Date</b>	Mid July 2006	<b>Time</b>	Evening
<b>Location</b>	S.F. Snake River – Heise, ID	<b>Weather</b>	calm, overcast, warm
<b>Fish Species</b>	Brown Trout	<b>Size Range</b>	9"-12"
<b>Fish Caught</b>	A few Brown Trout		
<b>Flies Used</b>	Standard Nymphs, Deer hair pattern with legs		
<b>Techniques</b>	Wet Fly Swing with just enough split shot to tick the bottom		
<b>Comments</b>	The only thing that I landed of significance was a rash!		

I parked at the Heise Bridge and made my way up river on some well worn paths deciding where to stop and fish. I had caught a few small browns as I worked my way down a few small side channels and wondered why I wasn't hooking into any Yellowstone Cutthroat. This wasn't my first time on this river and all that I had ever caught were Brown Trout and Whitefish.

I found a good run and was anticipating a hole where two side streams converged. It was a nice thought until two fishermen stepped out of the tall grass in front of me. So much for that idea! I could tell this area was well used but you can come to expect that from any area with such easy access. To get to the best areas you really need a boat.



South Fork of the Snake River

I hiked up and around the bend and found a likely spot. The rainbow added to the scenery of this cotton tree lined Blue Ribbon fishery. I stood out on a little peninsula casting upstream into some very fast moving water. I let my fly sink as it came down past and below me swinging into the slower water that eddied below and to the opposite side of my cast. The seam between the fast and slow water looked very promising. I cast over and over again casting a little further after every two or three casts. I snagged several times requiring me to tie on additional flies. The last fly I tied was a big deer hair pattern with legs. It was the only kind that I had. I remembered finding it while fishing.

I continued to cast as I was doing but decided to start stripping the fly back toward me near the seam between the fast and slow moving water. That was the trick! That fish hit with a vengeance. My rod bounced hard and I was doing everything I could not to let my fly line tangle. The jolt from the fish loosened the fly line in the reel causing it to hang up as the fish was peeling all my line. About the time I got everything under control the fish was way down stream and still flying like a bat out of hell. I could do nothing to stop it.

It had to be the biggest fish that I hooked on my fly rod judging by its power. I will never truly know as it continued down stream as my line loosened and my rod lost its bend. It's one of those moments that I will always remember even though I didn't get to see the fish. That's not the first time that I have lost a big fish on this river. After all, it does hold the state record Brown Trout.

Now for the rest of the story.....

I made my way back to the vehicle in the dark. As I was walking I decided to take a shortcut through the tall grass that was well over my head. I safely made it back to the car without any problems or so I thought!

The next evening in my hotel room as I took off my socks I noticed an ugly rash on my ankles where I had been itching that afternoon. I was concerned but waited to see what it would be like in the morning. That morning I could see that it made its way up my leg and was now appearing on my wrists. It only got worse when I itched so I refrained.

I called my nurse as I had just received a Tetanus/Diphtheria shot as part of my physical for work the previous week. I figured it was an allergic reaction but wondered why I didn't cover my whole body if it was from an allergic reaction. She said that it was possible but not the usual reaction. She told me to keep an eye on it and to see a doctor if I had problems breathing.

Well, it didn't take long before it covered my entire body. It itched like crazy and luckily for me I was working in an air conditioned room. That wasn't the end of the battle. After a couple of days my joints began to ache until eventually I felt like they were going to explode. This went on for a few more days but I got over it and passed it off as an allergic reaction.

I traveled back to Utah where my family was visiting as I worked a couple of weeks in Idaho Falls. I borrowed my sisters' car for the trip. I told of my experiences to the family and eventually headed back to Boise.

After a few days in Boise my sister called and said that she had the same symptoms. This threw me for a loop. I called my doctor and told him the situation. He told me that it sounds like a lighter strain of the Rocky Mountain spotted fever carried by Ticks. I called my sister and told her that a tick had most likely hitched a ride and she was the next victim. Hey, what else could I say other than "You're Welcome"!

