



Winter Fishing at Lake Narambulla ...July 2010

July is normally not a good month to go fly fishing for trout – cold water, scarce food, and preoccupation with spawning rituals make for lethargic, hard to catch fish. Not to mention the elements' inclination to conspire against the angler! However in this latter regard we struck it lucky – we had frosty mornings, yes, but clear sunny skies all day long.

Quite pleasant to be out and about Lake Narambulla – if anything, there could have been a bit more wind. So, what about the fishing?

The lake is full to overflowing (almost), and the water has a bit of a brown tinge which appears to be clearing very slowly.

We explored the full perimeter of the lake, and still found the best (meaning, most productive) fishing at the bottom end of the lake, on and around the dam wall.

Little rainbows (6-8 inch) were rising and swirling all around the lake edges all day long. They were fun to chase in particular in the shallow, marshy top section of the lake near the highway.



There are some surprises up there as well – I cast a size 12 green/black Clumsy to one of the many small rise-forms in one of the deeper gutters, which resulted in a stronger than expected pull.

The puller turned out to be a fat 4 pound hook-jawed male rainbow! The fight played out in front of a parade of passing cars on the Hume Highway, less than 100 metres away, with a few car horns tooting encouragement.

That fish was caught about 5 pm on Friday afternoon, our first day down there.

As it turned out, at about the same time John Ploski found a “purple patch” of rainbows near the western end of the dam wall. He hooked eight fish in a row, all between 3 and 4 pounds, but “only” managed to land four of them. A spectacular hours' fishing for him between 5 and 6 pm! Needless to say, all four of us hogged that spot on Saturday evening, waiting for a repeat of the Rainbow Parade. However, it didn't happen - only John (again) managed to catch a solitary 3 pound rainbow there after dark.

Apart from many undersized rainbows caught more or less accidentally, our total tally of decent fish caught over the weekend was nine: one brown of 2 ½ pounds, and eight rainbows between 3 and 5 pounds. All very strong, deep-bodied fish. Afternoons and evenings proved to be the most productive fishing times. Two fly fishermen from the Southern Highlands Fly fishing Club, who turned up at the dam wall on Sunday afternoon, said that the 3-pounders in Lake Narambulla were probably stocked as fingerlings 2 years ago and the 4 and 5 pounders one year before. Phenomenal growth rates indeed!



Another record for me: I used only 3 flies all weekend, all Clumsies, and did not lose a single one: size 12 green/black, size 8 grey/brown (the infamous baby carp imitation), and size 6 green/orange. And, best of all, they all caught fish!

Gerhard