

Guide's Corner: Nymph-Rig Delivery Methods



By: Chase Pritchett

More often than not, many fishermen find themselves unable to reach fish because flies are not presented to fish deep enough in the water. There are two common rules of thumb in regards to nymphing fishing. First, the rig should be at least one to two feet longer than the depth of your target. Secondly, cast upstream of the target zone in order to allow your rig adequate time to sink. Without these techniques, the rig will fall or sink too late. Thus, the fish is not allowed an opportunity to eat. Often times, these errors in presentation will cause the angler to misjudge the effectiveness of their rig and either change flies or move on to another area.

Adding weight is an option; however, I find that additional weight in the form of heavier flies or split shot makes it difficult to manipulate the rig throughout the day. For example, casting may become troublesome and the weight of the rig could reduce the effectiveness of strike detection.

Additionally, anglers know all too well the frustrations of re-rigging more often than necessary.

As for moving on to another area in search of fish, my creed is never leave fish to find fish. That is, if fish are actually present. I believe there are ways to catch unlikely participants by making a few minor adjustments to presentation. Here are a few tips on how to get those rigs adjusted in a timely and effective manner:

Better to fish deeper than you think.

Look at it this way. If fish are present, chances are they are feeding. It would suffice to say a specific depth of presentation will be necessary. Deciphering at what depth a rig should be presented can be tricky. Typically, depth can be determined by simply guessing. If your indicator drags under the surface of the water slightly, the rig is too deep. If it freely drifts, then chances are the rig is too

shallow. If the indicator bounces while on the surface of the water, then your flies are at an adequate depth.

Often times, fishermen will not fish flies on the bottom due to fear of hang ups. There are only two things that can hang your flies-rocks or fish. That is a 50/50 chance, so I would rather take my chances with the latter. If you want to be successful, the fish must be able to make the choice to refuse or accept the offering. I would rather dredge my flies on the bottom and risk the chance of a refusal than to drift my flies over a fish without them ever noticing. I suggest fishing a section of stream at which it has been difficult to determine depth. Try gauging the depth visually and rigging for it as previously discussed. With enough practice, you will be able to make rigging adjustments by simply looking at the river bed.

****BONUS****

One cool way I've learned to adjust to variable depths when nymph fishing is to rig an adjustable *Thingamabobber*. Simply take an old piece of fly line and tie a four turn nail-knot directly onto your leader (preferably on the butt section). Then slide your indicator on the leader. The indicator will rest on the previously tied nail-knot. Take the remaining piece of fly line and tie another four turn nail-knot directly onto the leader just below the indicator. The nail-knots will provide just enough friction to keep the indicator in place. The best part about this rigging technique is that the nail-knots will slide up and down the leader allowing for the indicator to be fished at various depths. Typically, the indicator can be moved between two to three feet in length.

