

Muddling Along, May 17

Cranbrook Silver

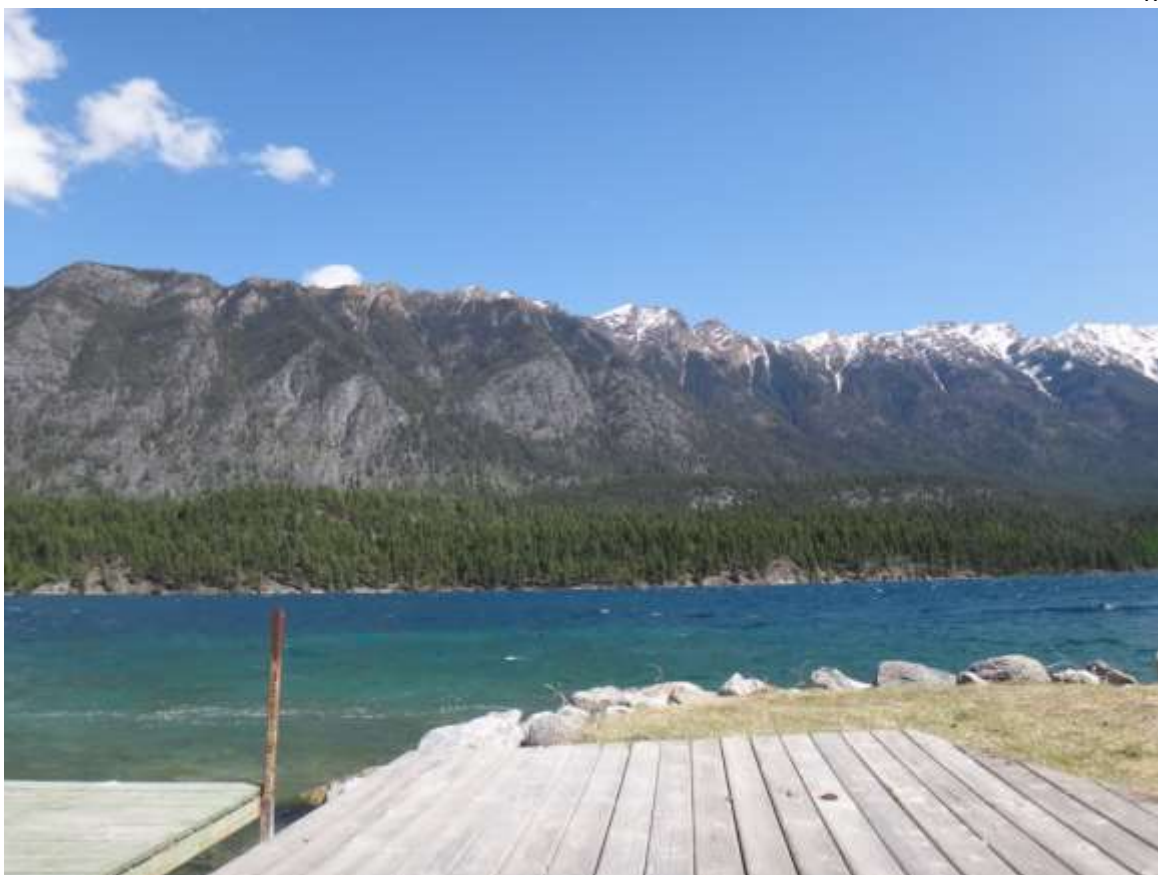
The indicator twitched ever so slightly sideways, so I lifted until I felt pressure . . . and a sharp pull set the hook in the as yet unseen trout. At that moment, my rod doubled over as a heavy fish started moving away from the boat. A flurry of head shakes confirmed that my microleech had been engulfed by a large silver bright rainbow, which rocketed to the surface and leaped in a glorious curve of heart stopping power. On hitting the water, the chrome beauty headed for Cranbrook 50 miles away and didn't stop until 90 feet of line and an equal amount of backing had stripped from the overheated reel. He finished his run with a spectacular leap, hit the water and the line went slack. I began retrieving the "empty" line when Wayne shouted "your indicator isn't showing—your fish is still on!"

I finally caught up with the fish after he had run past the boat and jumped again. It was a battle of wills to keep him from wrapping around the anchor ropes and he kept me busy for 5 more minutes with short, powerful runs and head shaking rolls. As Wayne slid the net under the 20 inch exhausted fish, the previous 2 hours of slow fishing were gone from my memory!

I had touched down 5 days earlier at the airport for my spring fishing trip to Cranbrook to join elder brother Wayne in what has become an annual pilgrimage. We made our base camp at Premier Lake provincial park and fished Premier, Quartz, Alsis and Grundy over the next 6 days. We worked hard for our fish, using every technique in our fishing arsenal from indicator fishing with chironomids, micro leeches and balanced leeches to "naked" fishing with long leaders and chironomids and various nymph imitations to fishing fast sink lines with dragon nymphs, leeches, wooly buggers and boobies.

We did not have spectacular fishing in terms of numbers but we never got skunked, with many fish in the above 18 inch size range and we were treated to 7 days of spectacular weather, beautiful scenery and beautiful clear water fish (rainbows and a few brook trout).

It is always difficult to leave that gorgeous country but I know I will be welcome again next year to join Wayne in our pursuit of the wily trout of the East Kootenay!



Windy day on premier



18 inch Premier rainbow



17 inch Premier brook trout



Glorious start to the day on Quartz



My guide does the 15 minute row to get to the shoal half way down the lake



First fish of the day on Quartz--an 18 inch rainbow



Largest fish of the trip--23 inch rainbow from Grundy Lake



18 inch Premier Brookie



20 inch Grundy rainbow



This one hit near the weed bed



20 inch chromer from Alsis



19 inch Gizzard female