

moving, such as where the current funnels up into a rapid or where two major flows merge. There's a sweet spot out there: all you have to do is poke around and find it.

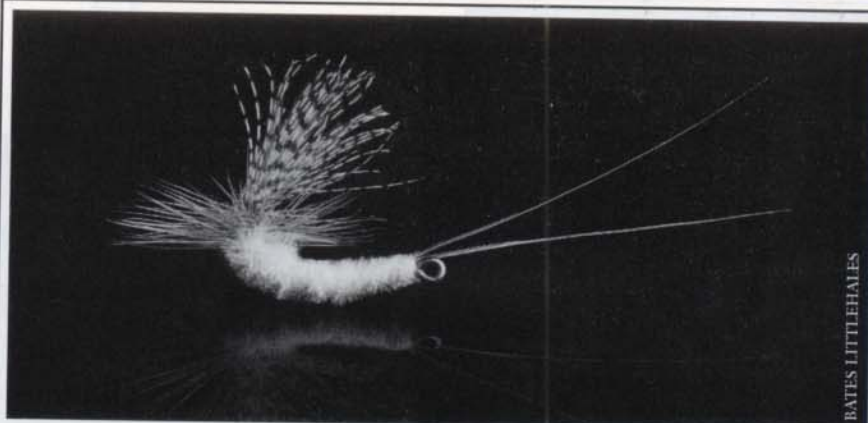
Shad can be quite picky about presentation, too. Dabbling flies at their noses might work if you're further upstream and out of sight, but the best presentation is a semi-dead-drift, casting downstream and across the current, letting the fly swing through the slip of current where shad are moving.

Spawned-out fish will often drift up into the rapids around the middle of the day when the water is low and warm. It's been suggested that they do so for the increased oxygen in the moving water. You'll also see shad wandering around the pools just under the surface, many looking beat up and lost. These fish are in some kind of aimless post-spawn stupor, and even if you do manage to hook one, they fight like a car mat. Head upriver and look for colder water, or wait for next year.

Problem 3: Shad swipe at your fly, but keep missing.

This goes back to presentation, since the most common cause of this problem is that the fly isn't where the shad want it. That is to say, while the fish may take exception to your fly and peck at it, they usually won't grab it unless it passes right in front of or just below eye level. Mend your line or add weight to your leader to get that meal onto the shad's plate.

Fly selection can be part of the problem, too. By all accounts, shad do not eat during their migration. Even if they did, they wouldn't eat anything that remotely resembles your fly, which is much larger and more colorful than even the most festive and well-fed plankton. Yet, shad do hit flies, and often the fish can be quite selective about size, pattern, and color. And you can be



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 “You got another?” “Yep.”

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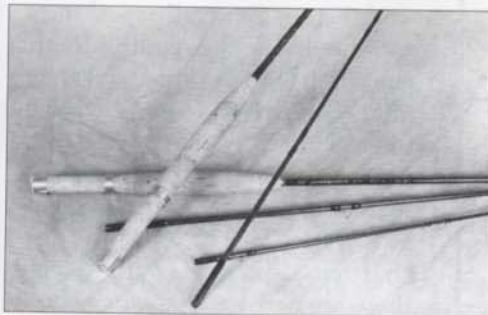
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