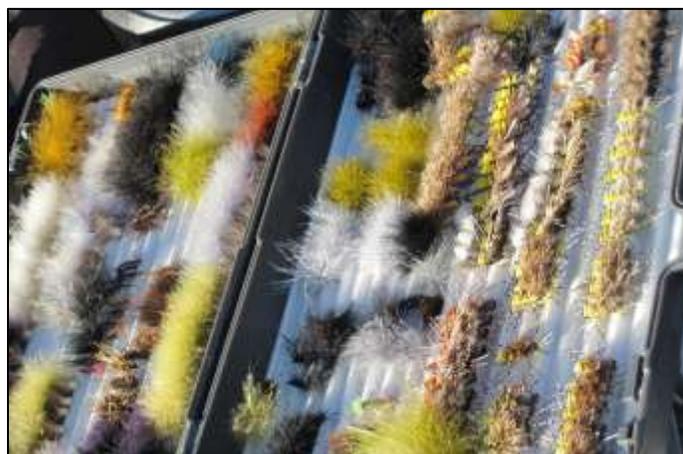


SEASONS FOR BOW RIVER FLY FISHING

We believe a timeline describing the type of fishing you can expect on the Bow River from May to November is the best criteria to use in determining when to book your Bow River fly fishing trip. Whether you are an avid dry fly fisherman, enjoy casting hoppers, love the explosive take of streamer fishing, can't get enough of nymphing, have a passion for the elusive Brown Trout, or would rather do battle with explosive Rainbows, you will be most satisfied with your fishing trip by picking fishing dates that offer you the type of fishing you want. If you are in town on business and don't have a choice of dates, the timeline will give you an idea of the type of fish and method of fishing you can expect while you are here.

Keep in mind this is just an overview and, from years of experience, a general timeline of what we expect to find on the river. Things can vary from year to year by a few days or even a week, however, our guides are on the river almost daily from the beginning of May to the end of October both guiding and fishing. They will know the most productive method and fly of choice even if things are a little early or late in a particular year.



May 1 - 15

The official start of the guiding season. The mature rainbows have been out of the mainstem of the Bow for about three weeks on their spawning run. Therefore, for the most part, the only mature (18" plus) fish in the river are Browns. For this reason, this is one of the best times of the year for catching a trophy Brown Trout. Very good fishing can be had as the water temperature starts to warm, insects start becoming active, trees are budding, and the fish start to feed heavily after a long winter. The most productive method is nymphing, but if we are lucky, we may find some browns "sucking" Blue Winged Olives off the surface. With fishing pressure very low, this is one of Tom's favourite times to be on the river.

May 15 - 31

The rainbows start to return from the spawn and although beat up, soon start to feed heavily, recuperating from their massive weight loss from spawning. As the weather continues to warm and the water level starts to rise from the melting snow in the mountains, spring run-off is approaching. Along with the weather, water temperatures also continue to rise and insect activity increases by the day. Nymphing is still the method of choice, however we now have a greater chance of finding fish feeding on the surface for Blue Wings or Caddis toward the end of the month. Fishing pressure is still minimal and exceptional fishing can be had during this pre run-off period.

June 1 - 20

June is typically our wettest month, and with the rain comes spring run-off. It is unusual for trips to be booked on the Bow during this time as the river is typically blown out for two to three weeks. If this is the only time you have available for fly fishing the Bow River, phone Tom (1-866-974-8522) for a river condition update. This is one of the best times of year to hit our still waters for Rainbows. Our Chronomid and Damsel Fly hatches will occur during this time and produce some amazing fishing for these 5 pound plus beauties. If you want to try something different, it is also an excellent time to tackle northern pike. These predators provide explosive action on both streamers and top water flies and are a must if you have never tried it. As well, our smaller mountain and foothill streams season opens mid-June and although they will still be high, can produce excellent dry fly action during the opening week and beyond.

June 21 - 30

Peak run-off is usually behind us and with each day the water level will start to drop and clean. This is typically the best streamer fishing of the year. The fish have not been able to see for up to three weeks and as the river starts to clean, mature trout stack up along the banks and eagerly chase big flies. Although the water conditions are not ideal, we will start getting amazing results with only two feet of visibility. We usually find more Browns than Rainbows fishing this method and some of the biggest trout of the year will show themselves at this time. These conditions are short-lived and in normal years, the river is clear by the end of the month.

July 1 - 15

Immediately following the run-off we get our Golden Stone Fly hatch. Typically the second week of July will see its peak activity. This is the most consistent time of year to catch Bow River trout on a dry fly. The Rainbows gain back much of the weight they lost during the spawn during this hatch. Surface action can be spectacular with 20" plus trout coming completely out of the water on the take. A typical day will find us nymphing during the morning and afternoon, then late in the afternoon, on the first shady bank, we will switch to adult stones and hopefully fish them until the end of the day. This is one of the busier times of the year as it coincides with the World Famous Calgary Stampede. Booking early is imperative to ensure accommodations.



July 15 - 31

Water levels start to moderate and the trout start to move off the banks into seams and runs for protection and feeding. Water temperatures are ideal. With insect and fish activity peaking, it is one of the most consistent times of the year for fishing. It is also the time when the Rainbows are most likely to display the acrobatics they are famous for. Nymphing produces excellent results during this time and with the lower water levels, favourite runs and seams are more readily accessible. Evening Caddis hatches are consistent now, PMDs will be hatching in the late afternoon

to early evening, some fish will still remember the adult Stones, and for a few days, action will be good on streamers. It is a very diverse time of the year, when some days all fishing methods will produce very good results.

August 1 - 15

Typically this is the hottest part of our summer with daytime temperatures in the high 80s°F (30s°C) not uncommon. Evening temperatures will often stay above 65°F (18°C). This combination causes the water temperature to be the highest it will be all year. Early mornings and evenings produce best with trico and caddis providing the majority of the surface activity. Midday nymphing is most productive in deep holes and fast runs where the water is coolest and has the greatest concentration of oxygen. Don't let this scare you off as rarely do our rivers get as warm as those in Montana. Good fishing can be had here even during the peak of the summer.

August 15 - September 15

Temperatures start to moderate and although daytime highs can still be in the 80s°F (30s°C), the evenings start to cool off. By now the hoppers should be mature and able to fly, causing the trout to start to look up for them. Some of the biggest fish of the day are taken along the banks in less than two feet of water. The majority of the fish will be rainbows, although on rainy, cloudy days the browns will move into the shallows. A favourite technique at this time of year is to use two droppers under a hopper allowing the fisherman to cover three different water columns with each cast. Often this will be



the only method we use all day, however nymphing can also be very productive. The most prominent hatch during this time are the Blue Winged Olives, some days literally blanketing the river. Although the fish may not come up for the adults, their nymphs are the food of choice and using a nymph imitation under a hopper can be dynamite.

September 15 - October 15

One of the prettiest times on the river. The leaves are turning colour and the river has dropped in volume to almost winter flow rates, transforming itself into a gentle stream rather than a large river. In concert with the trees, the Browns are also starting to colour up in preparation for the fall spawn. Although not all, the majority move up the river and congregate in the city to spawn. This time of year we do a lot of float trips within the city limits in search of these trophy trout. This is another time when the bigger Browns in the Bow show themselves to us on a fairly regular basis. It is also another time when streamers seem to be effective on both species, but in particular, the Browns as they become more aggressive. Nymphing is still productive and dry fly action in the late afternoon and evening on Fall or October Caddis is a possibility.

October 15 - November 1

We have now lost most of the leaves, especially on the lower sections. The insect life becomes smaller and smaller with the start of midge season. Nights get cooler and cooler lowering the water temperature, slowing everything down. Nymphing is again the most productive method, however streamers can still be effective on warm days. The chance of dry fly action is all but gone as we near the end of the season. Fishing can still be good right into November, however weather is our biggest challenge. Although we can get highs in the 70s°F (20s°C) in November, we can also get snow in October. Certainly if planning a trip, Tom would recommend coming earlier in the year, but if this is your only chance, excellent fishing can still be had.

