

Wade Fishing Our Local Waters

Within a three mile radius of Westport Outfitters, the wading enthusiast can access four great venues that are easily accessible, easily fishable and will produce fish throughout the season.

The first spot to hit is the Saugatuck River. Originating from the Saugatuck reservoir, this small river offers great trout fishing in its upper section. The lower tidal area which flows through town crossing first Route one and further down I-95 is fishable from mid April to late November, with two high peaks for good action. First peak is between mid April to mid June, mainly stripers. Although no monster fish will be taken, the numbers of smaller fish will tire out any avid fly caster. Daytime fishing is the best when the tides cooperate. Try to hit the water the last three hours of the incoming and the first three hours of the outgoing tide. At this time the main forages are killifish (*Fundulus heteroclitus*) and mummichogs (*Fundulus majalis*) which invade the brackish water to spawn. Spawning times vary depending on the water temperature; generally these two species will start spawning in April and continue into September. Killifish and mummichogs are very similar in colors and body shape. Both are olive-drab to brassy olive-green and have a pale olive belly. The males have longitudinal stripes and during spawning they are brighter to attract their mates. Fly selection to "match the hatch" should include clousers, half & half and synthetic imitations of baitfish between 2-4 inches. The line of choice should be a clear intermediate with a 9 foot leader. Even though the water is murky, schoolies seem to get spooked easily, so a good presentation will get more strikes. The second peak is late October to mid November. That's the chance to hit the fall migration. Once the snappers leave the river, bigger stripers will come in search of the last schools of baby bunker. Any baby bunker fly 3-5 inches will do the trick. Stick to the same tide-frame of the first peak, keeping in mind that the daytime/afternoon tides are the strongest.

The second venue to try your luck is Grays Creek, located close to the mouth of the Saugatuck River at Longshore Golf Club. Drive inside the Golf Club and at the end of the long driveway bear the right, first stop sign left and immediate right into the dirt parking lot. Gray's Creek is tidal and originates from the marshland which is landlocked north near Compo Beach Rd. and south by the Owenoke peninsula. You'll be fishing facing the Owenoke peninsula. When wading please pay maximum attention to not step on the spartina grass. Gray's creek can be fished similarly to the Saugatuck River in terms of seasons and tides, but here you can add to your fly selection some grass shrimp or crabs imitations. The outflow of the marshland offers a great variety of forage, experimenting with different flies will increase your success. Some fellow anglers have been experimenting with mole crab (*Emerita talpoida*) imitations with noticeable success. Note that Grays Creek is very well

know among locals, most of the locals welcome visitors but space is very limited so casting courtesy will be in order.

The third venue is Compo Beach. Outside the Longshore Golf Club make a right, and at the first stop sign and Compo Beach will be on your right. This spot can be fished with great achievements throughout the season. From April to June concentrate your fishing on the day outgoing tide and then in mid June to September focus on the night tides and September through November hit the afternoon tides. You can start your casting close the Yacht Basin, putting your fly directly into the channel, then work your way South East on the jetties and shoreline, finishing at Cedar Point. Cedar point is very rocky, cleat or felt soles are a must. This spot seems to attract bigger fish in early and late season. Intermediate lines are necessary while sinking (no more than 300 grains) are recommended at high tide. Cedar point has a nice current coming from the Saugatuck River. Finding the current and slowly stripping your fly is key for success. Always look at your tide chart and fish the stronger tides. If Cedar Point is not producing, try wading on the beach and work your way up north until the rock jetty. Sometimes bass hang on the shallow beach, hence it's worth the walk. During July and August, expect to run into blitzing blues.

Last but not least is the Old Mill Pond. From Compo Beach make right, drive along the beach, at the first stop sign, turn right and continue along the coast until you see an Italian restaurant on your right (Positano) and park on the street. The Old Mill Beach is on your right. This venue is most renown because of the cinder worm hatch that takes place in May, June and July, triggered by the phase of the moon. If you happen to run into one of these hatches it will be an exciting experience. During this time fishing can be tough but the feeling of having 20lb stripers going between your legs while wading is unique and memorable excursion. If the fish are refusing your worm imitations, try some big deceivers or sliders and perhaps some annoyed striper will hit it...You can wade at the Mill following the current coming off the channels by the rock jetties. Intermediate lines and flies similar to what you were casting at Compo will do fine. As long as you fish the current and rips most likely you'll find them. Old Mill seems hotter at night, mid June to mid September, once the bait has moved out of the area the chances of hooking a fish are very slim but still is worth a try.

If you have any questions give us a call or stop by the shop before your outing. We are local and more importantly we fish some of these spots daily so we can give you an up to date report. Moreover we offer guiding services just in case you need to know exactly where to step...

Tight Lines,
Westport Outfitters Crew

Shop Under New Ownership

Eric C. Johnson
Owner/Proprietor