



SUGGESTED FLOAT TRIPS:

SHORT

Sherman Creek Rd to Balls Eddy

Situated in the peaceful embrace of an already calm river, this short stretch is an excellent starting point for beginners. It offers a view of the scenic lower West Branch, characterized by wooded slopes, grassy islands, and clear water. With limited access points and slightly warmer summer temperatures, this section experiences less fishing activity compared to areas just downstream from Deposit, making it an appealing choice for those seeking a more serene angling experience.

MEDIUM

Airport Rd downstream to OARS

Beginning at one of Deposit's well-frequented river access points, this section encapsulates the scenic beauty akin to its counterparts. It introduces livelier riffles, notably at the Sherman Creek mouth, above Hale Eddy, and sporadically from Balls Eddy to Hancock. Outdoor Adventure Recreational Services (OARS) provides rentals and transportation services for the West Branch. Call or text OARS to arrange services: 607.237.3078.

LONG

Wastewater Treatment Plant to Labaret St

Embarking from the southern end of Deposit, where NY Rt 17 intersects and traces the river's course southward, this journey encompasses the entirety of the moderate-length route. The final mile and a half unfolds as a hidden gem. Here, the water courses swiftly eventually merging with the East Branch at the renowned headwaters of the Delaware River. The take-out, also recognized as Junction Pool, lies a brief distance downstream on the mainstem.



EQUIPMENT:

Fly Rod and Reel:

Rod: A 4 to 6 weight rod is suitable for most sections. You can adjust based on water conditions and the hatch you're targeting, e.g., a 6 weight for fishing Green Drake spinners at dusk, a 4 weight for low water conditions in the dog days of summer. A 5 weight is the sweet spot and can be fished year round in all conditions.

Reel: A reel with a smooth drag system is crucial. The river's large trout might take you into your backing.

Fishing License:

The waters that form the border between PA and NY can be fished with either a New York or Pennsylvania license. The West Branch of the Delaware above the PA game lands require a New York license, as well as the East Branch of the Delaware, Beaverkill, Willowemoc and other Charmed Circle rivers.

Leaders and Tippet:

Leaders: 9-foot to 12-foot leaders. Longer than 12-foot can also be effective, but only used if you can accurately cast and drift with that length of leader. If strictly nymphing, fluoro leaders are preferred. If dry fly fishing, mono tapered leaders work just fine.

Tippet: 4X to 6X tippet in most conditions. Adjust the length and strength based on the fly size you are using. 5x should get you pretty far though and work in most situations.

Fly Line:

Weight Forward (WF) Floating Line: This is versatile and suitable for various fishing conditions.

Thermometer:

Finding water in the 52-65 degree range is key to success. The further up the river you go, the colder it will get. Above 70 degrees and the stress put on the fish will likely increase the risk of not surviving upon release.



FLOW RATES:

200-400 cfs: Wading is really the only viable option. Look for moving water as the fish can be found in the tail out of riffles and deeper stretches of pools. The lower section of the river can heat up in the thick of summer. Move upstream if temps are above 65 degrees.

1500-2500 cfs: Wading is no longer an option. Floating can still yield some nice results. Big browns can be caught on streamers and you need to find surface feeding fish along the banks and back eddies.

400-1000 cfs: Everyone is happy! Floating and wading across the entire river is possible. As the cfs approaches the high end of the range, wading opportunities drop down to about 60% of the river and be on the lookout for fish out of the main current and towards the bank.

2500+ cfs: At this level, floating is still possible and fish can be caught. Streamers along the banks can yield good results, but dry fly opportunities will be very limited.

1000-1500 cfs: At this level, floating comes into its own. Wading in areas is still possible, but a wading staff will be needed. Keep your eyes on the banks as the fish will position themselves in the slower moving water.

For up to the minute discharge rates on the West Branch, please refer to these sites:

Upper West Branch
@ Stilesville, NY:



Lower West Branch
@ Hale Eddy, NY:



CHARMEDCIRCLE.NY.COM

For more information and field guides to all the Charmed Circle rivers, please visit:

THE CHARMED CIRCLE NY'S Field Guide to DELAWARE RIVER - WEST BRANCH -





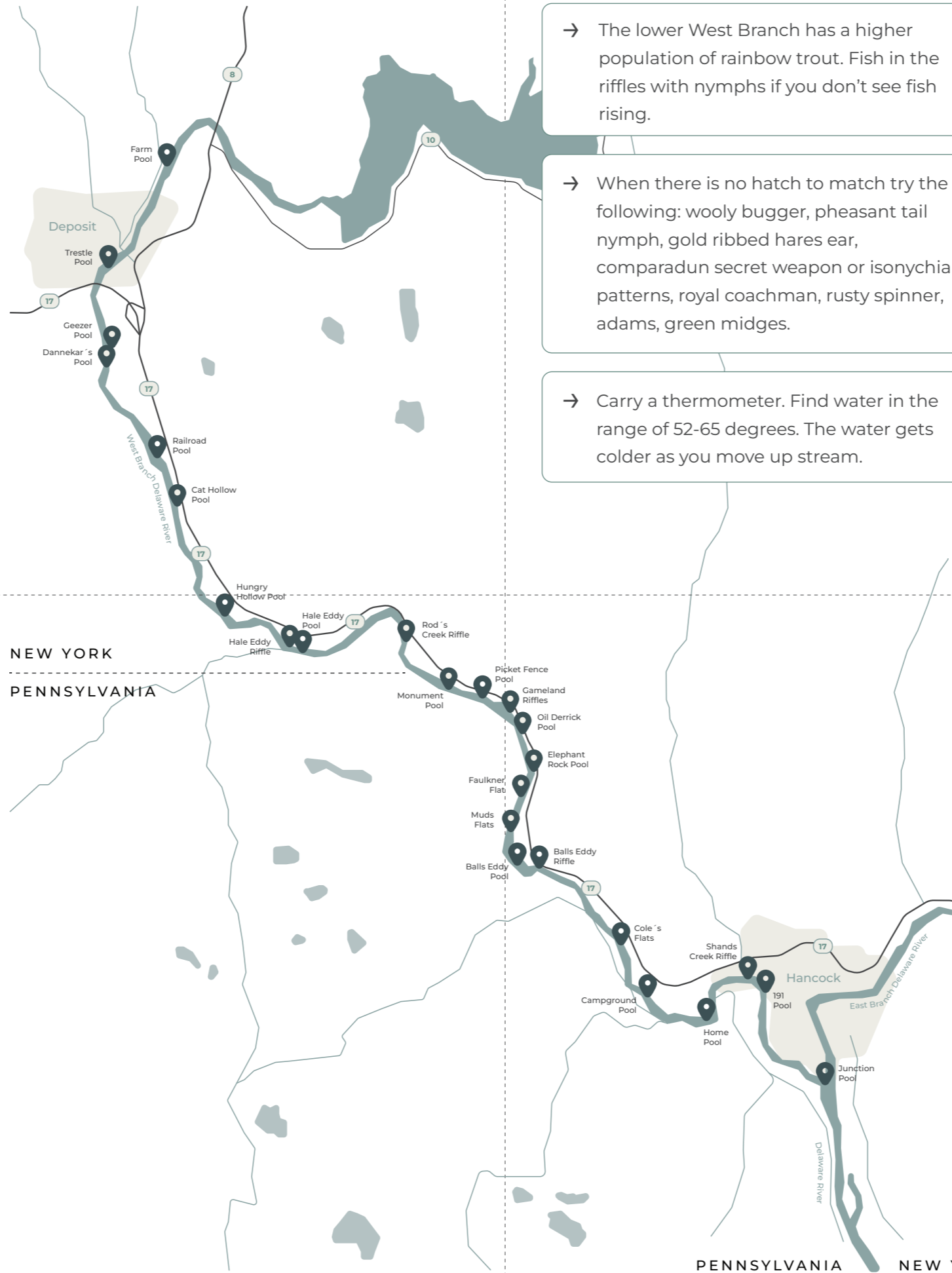
INTRODUCTION:

Welcome to the West Branch of the Delaware River!

Revered as the premier western trout stream in the East, it stands as a sanctuary for fly-fishing enthusiasts amidst the breathtaking Catskill Mountains. This guide serves as your passport to an 18-mile stretch of prime fishing territory, where the art of angling converges with the unbridled beauty of untouched nature.

More than just a river, the West Branch is an invitation to challenge your skills against the untamed. In this guide, discover essential insights into critical hatches and their timing, optimal flow rates, recommended float trips, and practical tips that pave the way for your success on the West Branch.

However, this field guide goes beyond general advice; it's your companion on a voyage of exploration. Whether you're navigating these waters for the first time or returning for another thrilling escapade, let this guide be your wellspring of inspiration, expertise, and tips. Get ready to cast into the heart of the West Branch — a river steeped in history, teems with life, and invites you to be part of its ongoing narrative. The adventure begins now.



GENERAL TIPS:

→ The lower West Branch has a higher population of rainbow trout. Fish in the riffles with nymphs if you don't see fish rising.

→ When there is no hatch to match try the following: wooly bugger, pheasant tail nymph, gold ribbed hares ear, comparadun secret weapon or isonychia patterns, royal coachman, rusty spinner, adams, green midges.

→ Carry a thermometer. Find water in the range of 52-65 degrees. The water gets colder as you move up stream.

→ Most of the banks on the West Branch are posted. There are quite a few access spots and it's governed by PA navigable river rules. Simply stay inside the high water mark and you can go anywhere you'd like. That rule applies to the Main Stem. The East Branch / upper East Branch are under NY law where the landowner has rights to the river bed and wading can / will be considered trespassing in many locations. For almost the entire length of the Beaverkill (over 20 miles) NY State has public fishing rights on both banks.



IMPORTANT HATCHES & TIMINGS:

HATCH & SIZE	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Early Brown Stone #12, #14	4/05 - 4/25						
Early Black Stone #12, #14	4/05 - 4/20						
Little Black Stone #18	4/10 - 4/20						
Little Black Caddis #18	4/10 - 4/25						
Blue Quill #18	4/15 - 5/10						
Hendrickson #14, #16	4/25 - 5/20						
Apple Caddis #16	5/02 - 5/25						
March Brown #12	5/10 - 5/25						
Gray Fox #12, #14	5/15 - 5/30						
Green Drake #8, #10	5/25 - 6/10						
Sulphur - Dorotheas #16, #18		5/25 - 8/10					
Sulphur - Stenocron #14			6/10 - 9/15				
Ysonychia - Bicolor #12		5/25 - 6/30					
Ysonychia - Harperi #14						8/25 - 10/15	
Trico #22			6/30 - 9/30				
Blue Wing Olives #16, #24		5/10 - 10/10					

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