

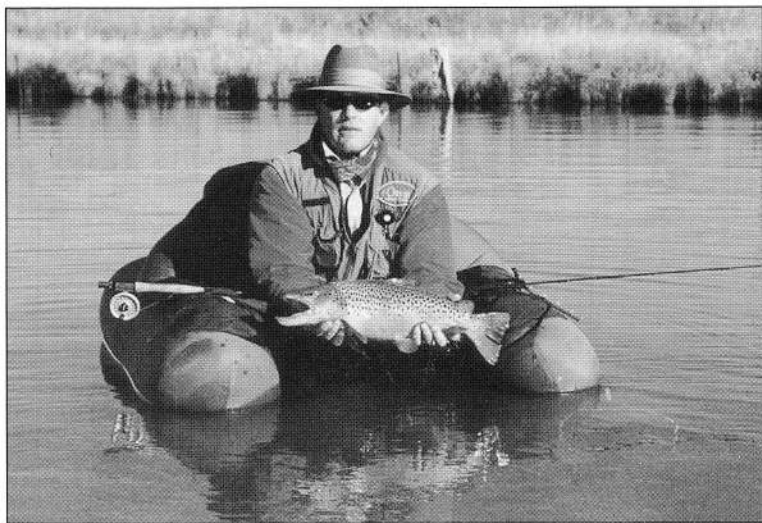
Great day at Vrederus

Diary extract of the NE Cape trip

Day 5 - September 26, 2002

By Alan Hatton

A great night's sleep in our oh so snug little cottage. Woke at 4am. First cockerel let rip at 4.05am. The farm is full of cockerels and the next hour was cockerel chorus hour. Out of bed at 5am, tackle up and off towards the shallows - via a few casts into the willows. The shallows were alive - fish nympling sporadically all over the place - good old head and shoulder rises (when did I last see them!!). Got four fish and lost as many. The tally: one fish of 46cm (about 3 lb plus), three of 43cm, and one of 40cm (must get a scale - how will I never know when I get that 5 pounder - and here is as likely as anywhere!). Took them on Lake Dragons and Xmas Xaddises - great sport. Back in the cottage at 8.30ish for a lekker fry-up brekkie. Then tied lots more Xmas Xaddises and a bunch of Shipman's Buzzers for those cruising nymphers. Back on the water for a midday cast or two with Alison in tow spotting birds - got a new one today (Maccoa Duck). Then got a great fish (not huge, just great) from the wrong side of a barbed wire fence - spotted him while walking, cast a Shipman's over the fence onto his nose, tweaked him onto the hook and then landed him through the fence - absolutely consummate fishing skill all round.



A typical brown trout caught in the dam on Donie and JuanMarie Naude's farm, Vrederus, midway between Maclear and Rhodes in the north eastern Cape Drakensberg.

Alison went off for a route-march around the dam, so I chased a few more feeding fish, but to no avail. Back in the cottage for a late lunch and tying up a few Red Butt Woolly Worms for some deeper fishing some time. Fished the evening rise along the same bank - got one (43cm, but a real goer), pricked lots and got horribly smashed up by a rip-snorter that ran half the length of the dam to grab my Xmas Xaddis. Tomorrow they die! Wet wood again while I type this. (PS - think about it - today I have probably slept in the same bed, showered in the same shower and tied flies on the same bed post as the great Sutcliffe and Herbst! Oh, the world is a wonderful place.) (Phone 045 9321572/juan@vrederus.co.za)



A double rainbow over the dam at Done and Juan-Marie Naude's farm, Vrederus on the Naude's Nek Pass between Maclear and Rhodes