**[Great Smoky Mountains National Park](https://www.nps.gov/grsm/index.htm" \t "_blank)**

***Gatlinburg, TN***

We arrived at the hotel well after midnight from a full day with Jon Oody, floating and wading the Clinch River outside of Knoxville, TN. We knew our first day in Gatlinburg was occupied by a 10am time share presentation which lasted longer than we wished. We grabbed some lunch and were finally on the water around 3pm. The sun was high and hot but would recede behind the cliff line shortly, and when it did the top water action took off. The shade made these guys a lot more comfortable to rise.

We are always a bit intimidated by the abundance of information we find on the internet including the number of waterways to choose from! Not much was happening for us the first couple hours, maybe 3 total but when the sun started to set, the conditions became right it was a blast.  Any dry fly we threw with a parachute and a good drift were slammed.

Nothing massive but a lot of healthy colorful fish that kept the excitement rolling until our eyes strained to see the fly in the dark. We were hooked and ready for day two. Us being us we left the DSLR camera in the room the first day out and the second day we may have slept in until lunch time…

We didn’t hit the water until noon after grabbing some food and driving to a location about 25 minutes out of town. It was Friday and it was apparent the weekends in the Smokies are busy, the parking lots were filling up and more fly fishers were on the water. Luckily, we found a parking spot to ourselves with a pretty worn trail and headed in.

We hiked some, enjoyed the scenery, didn’t catch much while the mid-day sun was directly above. Maybe it was due to the family of otters we kept hop scotching with, but again when the sun began to set the top water fishing and hatches turned on. The first shaded areas produced, and it didn’t slow down the rest of the evening. We opted for the 3-day fishing license making Friday our last legal day on the water. We drove around some on Saturday to experience the mad rush of tourists like us! We were not disappointed that our fishing license had expired, Saturday was a zoo!

However, if you’re relatively close to the Smokies, with the intent of heading back a couple times a year, [*the non-resident annual license*](https://www.tn.gov/twra/license-sales/fishing-licenses.html) isn’t terribly expensive. If you’ve never been to the Smokies I highly suggest you take a trip! Fly section was not that difficult, talk to some locals about fly selection, keep your approach in mind, and you’ll be fine!

If you want some extra advice visit the [*Little Rivers Outfitter*](http://littleriveroutfitters.com/) in Townsend TN for some tips! If you want to do some trip pre-planning research check out Ian Rutter’s [*book on fly fishing the Smokies*](https://www.amazon.com/Great-Mountains-National-Anglers-Companion/dp/1571882413)!

**Equipment & Notes**

* We utilized two TFO rods, a 4 wt 7′ 6″ [TFO Finesse](https://tforods.com/finesse-trout-glass-fly-rods/) glass rod and a [TFO 3 wt Drift rod](https://tforods.com/drift-fly-rods/) 10′ setup both loaded with [Scientific Angler Mastery MPX](https://www.scientificanglers.com/product/mastery-mpx/) line.
* We mostly dry fly fished occasionally adding a dropper or two. I think we only landed one on a nymph, everything else was top water.
* If you’re not familiar with the area check out the local shops and talk to people! The folks at [*Little River Outfitters*](https://www.littleriveroutfitters.com/)were very friendly!