

Results from this past winter bring several conclusions to light. For one, the trout are somewhat more tolerant of cold water temperatures than I previously thought, particularly when they are well acclimated, meaning the cold temperatures come early and often, but do not linger too long at one time.

I noted a water temperature of 41 degrees three different times at the Baffin buoy this winter. Have only seen a temp that low once before this year. Caught fish several times in water temps around 45 or even lower, including some big ones.

In fact, the catching of big trout was better than average for me, verifying what I already knew. Fishing in the Baffin Bay area in winter is better when it's cold.

I caught a bunch of big trout over sand and rocks in very cold water. This defies the old "you gotta concentrate on mud" philosophy. I have caught plenty of trout over mud bottoms in winter, but I have come to believe the main factor in locating big trout in winter is finding feeding stations close to wintering basins (deep water). The fish will go where the food is when they are hungry, regardless of what's on the bottom.

Additionally, big trout feed on a cycle which depends more on the weather and when they fed last than on the time of day when it's really cold. I caught a bunch of fish late at night/early in the morning when it was cold, defying the idea that the fish feed best only when the flats warm up in the afternoon.

I intend to elaborate on these concepts in greater detail in a feature article to be submitted to *Texas Saltwater Fishing Magazine* in the near future. Probably in the July issue.....