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SHAD SOLUTIONS

in the kind of numbers that allow you to fish them effectively with a fly.

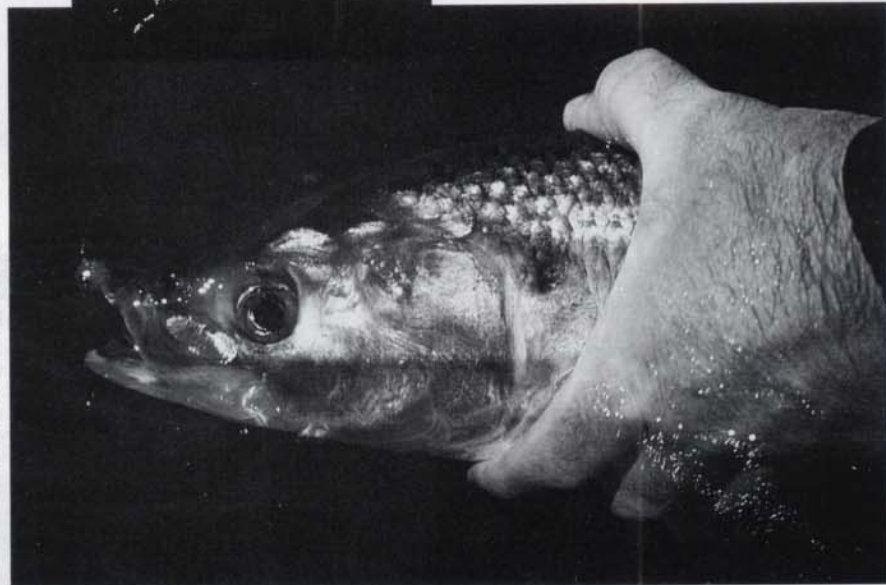
Weather plays a somewhat secondary role in how shad move. Changeable light conditions can spook the schools; constant conditions are best. Times of steady drizzle and steady sunshine are equally productive, but expect the run to halt an hour or so after the sun comes out, or when evening shadows hit the water. Variable skies where cloud shadows pass over the water tend to spook shad, and a bright day after several gloomy ones can stagnate the run temporarily.

Problem 2: *The river is full of shad, and you put your fly right on a shad's nose, but it still won't hit.*

Shad may be stupid, but they ain't dumb. In fact they're quite sensitive to what's going on overhead, those large eyes sending alarms to their tiny brains at the approach of a cloud, swooping swallows, or an angler's white shirt. If the shad are sitting right in front of you and you can see them, then they can see you and they probably won't hit unless you blend completely with your surroundings.

Shad won't hit your fly just because it's there. They hit flies most eagerly at select points in the current where they are either in the process of moving upriver or where they have gathered in anticipation of doing so. In other words, they are most prone to strike when the school is excited and eager to move. Now if you're looking at all these fish and they're not moving much, your best bet is to hike upriver a bit to where the fish are

◀ *Periods of consistent weather can get the shad moving on their way upstream, and make them more receptive to your flies.*



▲ *Shad may seem to behave like the will-o'-the-wisp, but their activities are actually quite ordered. Understanding what makes them tick can make catching them much easier.*