# Four trolling tactics to increase your catch rate

by Vickie Loftus

**Want to increase your catch rate while trolling? Click here to learn trolling tactics to add to your presentation to significantly improve your catch rate.**

Want to increase your catch rate while trolling? As cooler temperatures beckon us back to our favorite fall fishing waters, try adding the following trolling tactics to your presentation strategies. These tactics have significantly improved my catch rate over the years.




*Trout caught at Oregon Fishing Club's Schmadeke Pond, on Vickie's UV Crystal Pupa*




*Vickie's Burnt Orange UV Crystal Pupa*




*Vickie's UV Crystal Pupa under UV light*



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***1. Stop and Drop:*** Stop trolling approximately every 40 feet and execute 5-10 slow strips including a long pause between each strip.

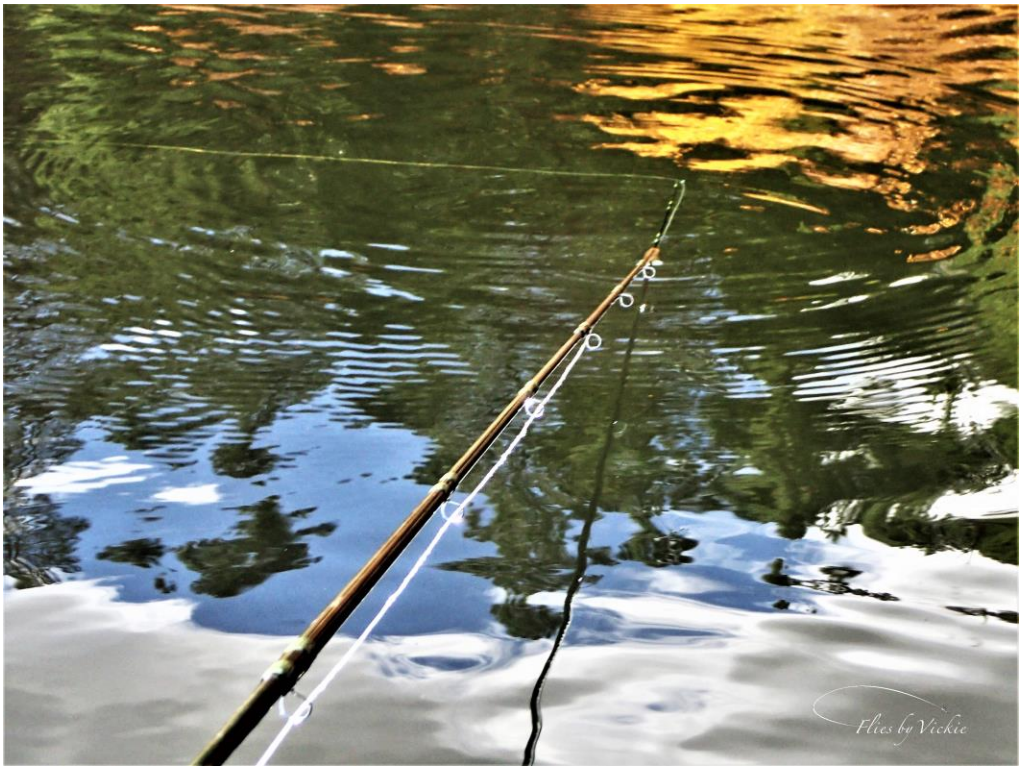
This method is effective because it allows the fly to drop during the pause. 90% of the time trout will take the fly when it is dropping. When stripped, the fly moves upward mirroring the up and down movement of the pupa stage of aquatic insects as they ascend toward the surface. Vary the length of the pause and rate of the retrieve until you find the right combination.

The stop and drop technique is also productive when trolling during cold water temperatures. Trout become lethargic in colder water and may refuse to chase after a fly pulled horizontally in the water column. However, I have found they will hit a slowly dropping fly that imitates an aquatic insect moving through the water at a leisurely pace.

**Note: Avoid stripping while your boat is moving.** If you strip while your boat is moving, the combined speed will move the fly unnaturally fast. If the fly moves too quickly, trout will often reject it. Since aquatic insects move slowly, the presentation of the fly should mirror the speed at which the natural insect moves. Therefore, strip only when you have stopped moving your boat.

***2. Rod Side Troll:*** Place the rod tip in the water to the right or left of the boat – well outside of the disturbance from your fins while trolling.

Positioning your rod so the fly is presented outside the disturbed water directly behind you will help minimize spooking trout. If the fly is pulled through a disturbed area, most likely the trout will have left the area making it a trout-free zone.




*Rod tip in water to the side of the boat*



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***3. Troll your fly at various depth to determine where the fish are feeding:*** Since fish move up and down in the water column based on conditions, I take rods with me already rigged with lines designed to present the fly at various depths.

For example, during early fall before the sun hits the water, I begin trolling search patterns close to shoreline with a Cortland camo slow sinking intermediate line. When the strikes begin to fade, and I start observing insect activity and fish feeding close to the surface, I adjust the trolling depth by using a different line. I select an unweighted pupa pattern and switch to the Cortland intermediate 7-foot tip line which presents the fly in the top two feet.

Line selection is important when trolling because the fly it needs to be presented at or above where the fish are feeding. If you're not getting hit it is most likely due to the fly being trolled outside their feeding zone.

***4. Use suggestive flies as search patterns when trolling with no signs of feeding fish or during windy conditions:***



*Caught on Vickie's Predator Leech*

Flies designed with marabou, rabbit, or squirrel tail display movement effective in triggering a trout's reactive response. My Predator Minnow, Predator Leech, Predator Bugger and Grizzly Bug patterns are designed with a lot of movement and work well as search patterns.

Add these techniques to your trolling presentation and see how it impacts your catch rate.

Vickie Loftus



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