



Tailing Bonefish, Belize



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We are in the seventh year of publishing our monthly newsletter with updates on great fly fishing venues, trip reports and insights for our traveling fly fishers. We want to help you match the right location with your fly fishing goals and objectives and properly prepare you to fully enjoy the experience. We’ve been to most locations and pride ourselves on our ability to research new sites. One of our services is to compare and contrast different lodges/outfitters. Whatever unbiased information on timing and locations we can provide comes at the same cost to you as booking direct – i.e., NO EXTRA COST.

REPORT FROM THE AGUA BOA, AMAZON



Annie Kubicka, Greg Schuerger, and Alisa and Jim Andras recently returned from a week in the Amazon where they released collectively over 800 peacock bass. Over 30 of the peacocks weighed in excess of ten pounds with several more in the 8 to 10 pound range.

The Amazon basin in Brazil must rank as one of the fishiest places on earth. For the fly fisher, the protected, clear water, “catch and release” Agua Boa watershed is the most unique fishery in the Amazon. It is one of those rare places where a fly fisher has the opportunity to get both numbers and size.

Jim (below, left), who was on his fifth trip to the Amazon (this was his first one on the Agua Boa), commented: “Alisa (with catfish) and I both had a wonderful time. The fishing was exceptional given the higher than normal water conditions. Most days, each boat caught 60 to 80 fish per day, and more fish could easily have been caught if we were focusing on (the smaller) 2 to 4 pound fish.”

Annie (above, left) took the biggest fish. Greg (below, right), an experienced globe hopping fly rodder, said, “the overall adventure of being in the Amazon was an important part of the trip. Everyday there would be different experiences and we fished different areas...from clear water, white sand bottomed river channels to small lagoons and coves in the forest. When we spotted cruising fish, they would aggressively attack the fly. Most of the bigger fish were singles, but our coolest experience was coming across a school of about 20 big fish from 8 to 15 pounds. They were swimming together in about 3 feet of clear water – it looked like the bottom was moving. We hooked two fish over 10# from that school.”



Below center, the group is ready to embark from Manaus, the jump off point, on their charter flight over the Amazon rainforest, directly to the lodge’s private air strip.



To see a photo essay of the trip, including pricing, click on the link below or paste it into your browser.
http://www.flyfishingadventures.org/Newsletter/tr_AquaBoa.pdf

THE NEW ZEALAND “THREE TIMER”



If you fish New Zealand enough, you will encounter that special trophy fish who teases you for 30 to 60 minutes, looks at 12, 15, or 20 of your flies, and leaves your guide's net still attached to his back. A year ago, our newsletter carried an article titled “The Fish That Won” about such an experience (link to that article - <http://www.flyfishingadventures.org/Newsletter/78.pdf>) This year, to provide balance, I'm writing about a fish that was as eager to eat as any fish I've ever heard of. The first cast to this rainbow landed about 10 feet in front of him. Before the Blow Fly had a chance to drift more than a few inches, this hungry trout rocketed forward and exploded on the fly. I set the hook, but felt nothing.....didn't even nick him. Maybe, in his anxiousness to grab that fly, he missed it entirely or pushed it in

front of him? Just as my heart slowed down to about it's normal rate, the fish returned to the same place. I repeated the same cast....with almost the same result – the fish shot forward and engulfed the fly again; however, this time there was a solid hook up. For a few seconds, the rainbow was still. Then, with the same enthusiasm he used in approaching the fly, he took off upstream so suddenly that he caught me unprepared, resulting in a break off. For 5 or 6 minutes I berated myself for the clumsy move that resulted in the lost fish. That was a good fish and I had blown it! After we'd tied on a new Blow Fly and prepared to move upstream in search of a fresh start, we noticed, incredibly, the fish was back.....in the same place. Must have been something special about that location? Again, I laid the fly about 10 feet above him. This time his reaction was different – he slowly swam toward the fly, approaching within a few inches. He studied it for a few seconds, and, apparently recognizing that fly as very similar to one that just a few minutes before had stung him, he turned and swam in the opposite direction.....for about ten feet. Then he did something that totally shocked us – he began a very deliberate turn and again approached the fly. Very slowly, he brought his lips to the surface and sucked it in. About 10 minutes later, after a very spirited tussle, the scale registered a solid 5.5 pounds (photo left above).



NZ PERSONAL REPORT – A “VALUE TRIP”



We recently returned from our annual trek to New Zealand with a stop at our favorite Fijian hideaway. In the strange economic times we have today, it feels weird to term a trip to New Zealand as a value – but it is. In the face of all the negative news, one ray of sunlight is the exchange rate between the US\$ and the NZ\$. Eight months ago, the rate was hovering around .80-82US = \$1NZ. Today, it's almost \$1US = \$2NZ, the best rate for US travelers that we've seen in many years. At a ratio of 2 to 1, NZ does become a value. Of course, there is

no way to know which way the rate will move in the upcoming months, and there is only one way to lock in today's rate.

To view a photo essay report of our NZ – Fiji experiences, click on this link or paste it into your browser:
http://www.flyfishingadventures.org/Newsletter/tr_NZ_Fiji.pdf

THE ECONOMY – IMPACT ON TOP DESTINATIONS

Here's a quick review of some of the globe's top fly fishing adventures that we monitor closely on the impact of the economy on their availability for this season and, in some cases, next season. Basically, what we see happening is that bookings for the top operations for their prime times are holding pretty solid in spite of the economic times. Most of these outfitters and lodges have loyal regulars returning annually during the same time frames. However, there are a few openings during prime times for this season at this late date we would not see in normal times.



THIS SUMMER

ALASKA: The top operators are generally full or close to full for the prime time. Specifically, Bristol Bay Lodge (one of the top "A" fly out lodges) has 4 slots open during the prime mid Aug through early Sept weeks. Also, their "Family Weeks" in late June and July have openings (these weeks allow the second member of a family to come at half price). The Goodnews River Lodge, a non-fly out lodge with the perfect location to offer the finest dry fly fishing for silvers, has two of their prime August weeks still with space open.

MINIPI RIVER: Our favorite lodge for giant brook trout on the Minipi River still has 4 openings remaining during one of the three key dry fly weeks. These are the weeks that traditionally have the strongest hatches.



LOWER DEAN RIVER: Offering the finest summer run of "hot" Dean steelhead, this Lower Dean River Lodge has openings during two of their key three mid July to early August weeks. Normally, you have to be on the "wait list" to get a spot during these weeks.

BELIZE: Regarding the motherships Meca (parties of three or four) and Seaduction (one or two anglers), the Meca is full through July with the exception of one week open in June and one in July. The Seaduction has a week available

in both April and May and two weeks in June and July.

SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE – LATE SEASON AND NEXT SEASON

PATAGONIA: There are a few more late season (March and early April) openings than usual at the top Argentina and Chile lodges; however, the prime time was basically full at the best operations. Bookings for next season are starting a little slower than previous years, but the prime times are beginning to fill at the top spots.

NEW ZEALAND: Similar to Patagonia.....however, note that the top guides and lodges are already 25 to 50% full for next season for the narrow prime time window. These guides and operations have a loyal core of repeat anglers that book the same time frames each year. See below for late season deals.

AGUA BOA: A ditto to the above.....bookings for prime times for next year have started more slowly, but there are already several weeks that are fully booked. Last year, the prime time at the Agua Boa was almost sold out a year in advance (this has become a very hot global fly rod destination).



DISCOUNTED SPACE

Very few of the top operations are discounting their openings....at least as of now. However, there are a few top New Zealand lodges which have discounted packages for the late season this year. Generally, any discounted prices are going to apply to "shoulder periods" at the more popular lodges and outfitters. Be wary of discounted prices for prime times – generally those will be "B" or "C" operations so you may be taking a chance on the quality of the experience you're purchasing.

BAY AREA WOMEN FLY FISHERS – “THE CLUB”

The following is pasted from the welcome message on the home page of the Golden West Women Flyfishers website <http://www.gwwf.org>. This is a woman’s fly fishing club based in San Francisco and founded in 1983 with a current membership of 115 ladies: “The centerpiece of our club is our not-for-profit foundation benefitting women in fisheries studies and kids programs. Not being the all-business-and-no-play types, we take great pride in our frequent social gatherings and spectacular fishing outings.”

For a woman fly fisher in the San Francisco Bay Area who is looking to associate with other ladies who share the passion for fly fishing, this active organization is worth investigating. They meet monthly in the City on the evening of the second Tuesday.

FEBRUARY “MEMORY PHOTO”

Special underwater bonefish photo from Jim Nix. Great angle on the fish, full reflection from the surface, fly in mouth, eye prominent - all the “right stuff.”

PHOTO CREDITS (top to bottom): Amazon photos – Annie Kubicka, Greg Schuerger Jim and Alisa Andras.

Either phone or drop us an e-mail if you have questions or would like more information about any of our destinations.

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