



Permit Hunt, Belize



[www.flyfishingadventures.org](http://www.flyfishingadventures.org)

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

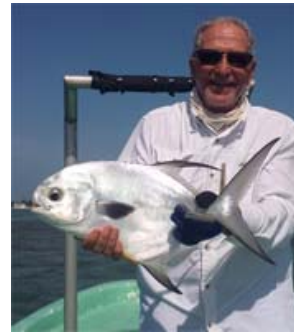
- REWARDS FOR PAYING YOUR DUES
- THE "PART REPORT" ON NEW ZEALAND
- CUBA FLIGHT OPTIONS EXPAND
- JULY MEMORY PHOTOS

We are in the fourteenth year of publishing our monthly newsletter with updates on the great fly fishing venues, trip reports and insights for our traveling fly fishers. We've been to most locations and pride ourselves on our ability to research new destinations. 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.

#### REWARDS FOR PAYING YOUR DUES

We hear the stories of anglers fishing salt water for the first time and, on their first or second day, taking a 50# tarpon, getting two permit to eat, or having a ten bonefish day. Those events happen, however, that is not the norm. Taking your first bonefish on a fly is memorable, but most of the special salt water experiences only come after paying your dues to learn how to deal with the angling challenges associated with fishing the shallow flats. Below are stories of three anglers who have paid their dues over the last few years, and, indeed, created very special "first time" salt water memories on recent trips.

#### FIRST GRAND SLAM



Lucky and Russ Leavitt took their first Belize mothership trip in 2010, accompanying a friend who had taken the trip previously. They combined scuba diving with their first exposure to fishing the salt water flats. Russ' comments from that trip included: "All of us had a wonderful time.....the learning curve was steep, but Lucky and I caught lots of bonefish.....had a good try at several permit.....two grabs from tarpon, but no real hook-ups. The fishing guides were thoroughly competent and friendly as well as eager to help. Lucky and I exasperated them with our inexperience."



Since that 2010 trip, they have returned four times, each time bringing friends along. Along the way, they have explored new areas of Belizean waters, developed skills, and many fish have been released, including Lucky's first permit. Their most recent trip on the Meca provided the thrill of Russ taking his first Grand Slam.....the bonefish, tarpon (with guide), and permit pictured above.

Comments from Lucky and Russ on this year's trip: "The trip was superb. The fishing could have been better, but the crew were the best. They all worked very hard to make our trip as successful as possible. I couldn't recommend them higher."

Photo above shows the motherships Meca and Rising Tide at anchor with their skiffs tied behind. Details on the Belize mothership trip on the website [www.flyfishbelize.com](http://www.flyfishbelize.com)

### FIRST PERMIT PART OF 8 PERMIT WEEK

Tim Bottoms and Dick Radler were introduced to the salt water flats in 2012 at Casa Blanca Lodge located in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere in the Mexican Yucatan. Since then, returning to Casa Blanca has become an annual adventure. During those past trips, many fish were taken and released and Tim and Dick developed the knowledge and skills that are only acquired with experience. The trips of the past four years laid the groundwork for a truly exceptional week recently on the flats at Casa Blanca.

Stalking and sight casting to permit is the greatest challenge in the realm of hunting with a fly rod. We'll leave it to their words to describe some memorable fly rod hunting experiences and the taking of their first permit ever.

From Dick (at right), regarding his first three permit: "While we had fished this area in the past four or five years we never concentrated on permit. We had plenty of action catching bones, tarpon, snook, etc. This year was about permit. My first permit was taken out of a pod. The second was a single spotted on the flats. The guide and I got out of the boat for the stalk. After a quiet approach in thigh to waist deep water, the cast was made. This fish was strong and quickly got into my backing. It was a real thrill being able to catch this fish while wadding the flats. The third permit was spotted feeding in shallow water on the edge of mangroves. The guide did a fantastic job positioning the boat for the cast. Following a big splash and hook set, I realized I had hooked a special permit. It got well into my backing with the guide making sure I would not get spooled. I was finally able to turn it with the next step being high fives and photos."



Tim released five permit, his first permit ever, and relates this exciting story of one that got away: "We were fishing for bones when we spotted 3 large permit tailing in a small bay, working along the shoreline. I had first shots and, the fish that Dick would later land, tried to eat my fly, but missed. Then I had a couple more casts to him coming out of a little steam like opening (he would go in and then come back out). We then lost him and Dick took over casting. Voila, he appeared again. Dick's first cast got him. While he was landing him, our guide pointed out two other big permit close to our boat. So, after we finally landed Dick's fish, I was back up. Sure enough, here comes another big tail working down the shoreline. I set up perfectly with a cast and waited. Kept coming. Our guide said to start long slow strips with our crab imitation, and he turns and eats. Our guide yells 'fish on,' and

instead of a final strip to set the hook, I do the stupid trout set and he is gone!! Could have been two great permit within minutes of each other. Story of my life."

Photo above shows the undeveloped shoreline with some mangrove lagoons in the background near Casa Blanca. The protected Sian Ka'an Biosphere has restrictions which don't allow the building of resorts like those that crowd the Mexican Riviera south of Cancun.

### THE "PART REPORT" – NEW ZEALAND RECAP



(Once again, we are proud to bring to our newsletter the "Part Report." This report comes from John Part. For the past 15 years, John has been a twice a year visitor, always in April and October, to New Zealand. John is an outstanding trout angler who has a passion for stalking brown trout in New Zealand. He fishes with arguably the best overall Kiwi guide who, during all that time together on the water, has become a very close friend. Along the way, John has taken many 10+ pound browns and now has a total of 57 double digit fish released.)

"The richness of the New Zealand fishery is its options. While fishing with Scotty, we do not just pursue large fish. While we do spend a few days targeting

the big boys, but we are just as happy with a bunch of the classic NZ 3 to 5 pounders.

My April trip was amazing.....just a microcosm of what New Zealand can do to a man! On our first day, the first fish of all was a tad over 10lbs. Later a 10 and a half pounder, and then an 11 and a half pounder. This last fish was a spectacle of its own. It played around in a gentlemanly way for a while, and then headed off downstream fast. I followed, fell over and lying sprawled on the stones made sure the reel was clear of snags and just watched backing spooling off. Scotty ran downstream, picked up the line and gently steered the by then exhausted fish into the shallows and netted it. Not my proudest moment, but straight off the plane from London, I plead jetlag!!



One day of 41 fish, a lot small, but 17 of them between 3 and 6 pounds. Then one adventure day up a nothing stream with rock climbing thrown in. Just two fish seen and both caught. We've had success there in the past, but not then. Two more adventure trips to high country, but the water was too low to have encouraged the big boys upstream, and the other day one 7 pounder, and then absolutely nothing. Where do they hide??

A few more days of fish up to six pounds, periods of nothing and then fresh boot prints.....just about every type of experience.....Bonanza, good numbers, drought and one day when all but one had disappeared.”

### CUBA FLIGHT OPTIONS EXPAND



From our personal exploratory trip to Cuba plus reports from other Cuba travelers, we have learned that the logistics and travel hassles involved in fishing and touring Cuba have been a deterrent to making the trip.

We have been hearing for the past six months that, with the increased USA travel to Cuba, flight options would be improving. Now, it is being reported that major carriers from at least ten different USA cities will be making direct flights to Havana. These flights are scheduled to begin in the fall. Some travel hassles may still exist, but at least getting to Havana will be much improved!

### JULY MEMORY PHOTOS



Don Olen is a globe-hopping fly rod hunter. In the past, he and his wife, Cheryl, have contributed other excellent photos and reports to our newsletter. He had an exceptionally exciting trip to Tsimane in the jungles of Bolivia. There were several memorable experiences with Golden Dorado (two photos on the right above) and Pacu (left).

Comments from Don: “The water was very clear allowing us to do quite a bit of sight casting.....we each wore- out 3 fly lines.” Memory photos.....indeed!!

PHOTO CREDITS: banner – Adam Baker; Belize – Lucky and Russ Leavitt; Casa Blanca – Dick Radler and Tim Bottoms; NZ – John Part; Cuba bonefish – Jon Covich.

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,  
Don Muelrath  
Fly Fishing Adventures  
[www.flyfishingadventures.org](http://www.flyfishingadventures.org)  
888-347-4896

