

NEWSLETTER #31A - DECEMBER 2004

If you have access to Microsoft Word, open the attachment above to see the information below in a more "reader friendly" format.

Leland Fly Fishing Travel Newsletter - December '04 (A)

TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE:

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- ANSWERS: "Why" and "How" to learn to salt water fly fish
- WORLD CLASS STEELHEAD: Report on Babine Steelhead Lodge
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- FANTASY FISH AND DAYS
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This is the thirty-first edition of our monthly newsletter with updates on great fly fishing venues 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.

BUSH STREET SHOP DESTINATION DAY, THURSDAY, DEC 16 – EARLY SEASON AT NORTH PLATTE LODGE FEATURED

Next Thursday, Nov 16, has been designated as our monthly Destination Day in the Bush Street Shop. I'll be in the shop from 11:00am through the evening. The scheduled slide presentations will be 12:30 and 5:00 and feature one of the most productive early season options in the US – the North Platte Lodge. For the last four years, we have been sending clients who want a great early season US trout experience here and the feedback we've received has been very positive. This year, we are holding some space at North Platte for this early season period. Openings still exist for these time frames:

3/17 - 21 (3 days fish)

3/21 - 26 (Easter Special \$200 discount - 4 day fish)

3/28 - 4/1 (3 day fish)

4/1 - 6 (4 day fish)

4/10 - 14 (3 day fish)

Prices - 3 day fish, 1125pp based on double occupancy and shared guide

4 day fish, 1500 - Easter Special week, 1300

Personal slide presentations by appointment can be scheduled on any of our destinations. Let me know if you'd like to make an appointment and what destination you'd like me to be prepared for. Drop in and say "hi" and let's discuss the exciting possibilities of fly fishing travel.

"WHY" AND "HOW" TO LEARN TO SALT WATER FLY FISH

- **HOW** - In the last few months, it seems I've had lots of conversations relating to the subject of salt water fly fishing – i.e., the shallow water flats. The most common question I'm asked is how difficult is it to learn the skills necessary to enjoy the challenge. The simple answer to the "skills issue" is that you should learn to throw 40-50 feet of line directly into the wind with a degree of accuracy. If your "skills" can get that done, you have a good foundation to build from. How to acquire those skills? Practice is an important element..... but you must be practicing the right things. It's best to take some lessons to get you on the right track. To accelerate your progress, consider taking a hosted trip to a salt water destination with one of our shop veterans.
- **WHY** - Why learn how to salt water fly fish? In short, there's an exciting array of electrifying fish you can pursue in stunning tropical environments. The size and strength of salt water fish far exceed the fresh water varieties. And, most of your salt water pursuits will involve the "hunt" – i.e., the extra added element of stalking and sight fishing. Lastly, learning to salt water fly fish will make you a much more effective fresh water fly fisher.

WORLD CLASS STEELHEAD: Report on Babine Steelhead Lodge

When the Babine Steelhead Lodge decided to go "public" last year, we were there to negotiate rights to one of their prime weeks for this season – Oct 8 – 14, 2005. Below is a condensed version of a report from a steelheader who has been fishing the Babine from the upscale Babine lodge, the Silver Hilton, for years. This year, he moved upstream to the BSL and here's his comments:

"This year several of us from Texas fished the Babine from the Babine Steelhead Lodge for the first time. Our 8 rods landed 92 fish with probably twice that many hooked. Biggest fish was a 25# buck – two weeks earlier, a 43 x 23" buck was taken estimated at 37 pounds. It is the best river in the world for trophy class steelhead. The food was excellent and the guiding good. I would rate my experience as excellent." John Pettigrove

The prime spots on the lower Dean are full for '05, but some space still remains at the BSL for Oct 8 – 14.

Call for details.

TRIP REPORTS: New Zealand, North Platte Lodge "Cast and Blast"

Zoe and Terry Sternberg spent a few weeks hopping around New Zealand's North and South Islands with an itinerary that combined some great fly fishing with an overall "couples experience." Excerpts from their trip report follow (full report available upon request):

"Our trip was fantastic. Weather varied from warm and sunny to cold and windy, sometimes in the same day. We caught some great fish and had a wonderful time. Needless to say, I'd return to fish with the guide

you recommended and Poronui Ranch in a heartbeat. I'm hoping to get our kids and their respected others to NZ so we can share this together." See "fantasy fish" section for highlights.

Phil Dupuis became our first visitor to North Platte Lodge on a "cast and blast" package – two days fly fishing and one day bird hunting. Phil's comment was "most excellent." Average rainbow was in the 2# - 17 inch range with a big fish of 22 inches. There is just a narrow fall window to book this combo program and the dates usually fill up far in advance

FALL DELTA STRIPER REPORT – GOOD SEASON!

You may recall last year we reported on Paul Wilms taking the new record fly caught Delta striper – a whopping 42 pounds. Paul and fishing friend Mike Dinega (guide Mike Costello) checked in with an early Nov. day this fall with over 30 fish taken, including a 14#, 16#, and 28#. However, just to prove the delta gods don't always smile on these guys they had a tough day two weeks later, working hard for just seven fish.

Jim Taylor and I had a wonderful late November day with guide Doug Lovell. We totaled 134 pounds of stripers released for the day. Most were the 2-4 pound schooly variety, but we did also have 5 fish in the 6-7 # range and one each of 8,9,10,11, and 12 pounds. Overall, very good stuff.

SECOND DEC EDITION COMING FEATURING BELIZE

Just not enough room this month so we're doing a first – a second newsletter next week. My wife and I just completed ten days in Belize. While we spent the majority of our time with our favorite Belize fly fishing operation, we stayed an extra three days and checked out two upscale private island experiences. Both were fabulous - great for couples, families, and one of them could be an excellent corporate destination. Worthy of an in-depth report and next week we'll report on both the fly fishing and the islands

"FANTASY STUFF" FOR THIS ISSUE

While fly fishing is pursued for many reasons, having a "fly fishing fantasy" experience is something we all chase. Once in a while it actually happens and this column is devoted to sharing those special moments/days.

The fantasy stuff this issue comes (as it so often does) from New Zealand and the Sternberg's early season trip. Zoe's top highlight included chasing a big rainbow over half mile downstream from where she hooked it. Terry reports that her guide, Kevin, was hanging on to her as she waded back and forth, sometimes in deep water, crossing the stream in the chase. They did get the photo.

Terry had one of those days that, to my knowledge, only happen in NZ. Sight fishing the entire day, hooking over 10 fish, and releasing a combination of eight browns and rainbows with a collective weight of over 40 pounds.

QUIPS AND QUOTES

Classic Martin McCord (our favorite long time Belize guide and friend) quote while poling across a beautiful 3 foot deep tarpon flat: “If you see a big log, get ready to cast because there are no logs on this flat. Just try to find the head first.”

LELAND-FRONTIERS AGENT AGREEMENT

In addition to the many great destinations that we represent, Leland Fly Fishing Adventures also has an agreement with Frontiers to represent all their properties (many of which we already book independently). If you are considering any of the destinations that Frontiers offers, please give us a call as it’s virtually the same process as booking through Frontiers, and we need the “bonus points.” And, we may have some personal experiences that can add to your knowledge and preparations.

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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