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

PHILOSOPHIES OF SELECTING FLY FISHING DESTINATIONS

Because we spend the majority of our time discussing people's next fly fishing destinations, we are able to have a unique perspective on the way traveling fly fishers view their upcoming fly fishing experiences. In a very general sense, fly fishers have three different perspectives:

- Gotta Have New Waters
- Building On Past Experiences Enjoyed
- Wanna Have It All

GOTTA HAVE NEW WATERS

To some fly fishers, the best waters are only waters he has yet to fish. Whenever he considers his next destinations, he begins with the thought, "Where do I want to go that I haven't been before?" Certainly, there is value in the excitement that goes with exploring a new area or fishing for species that you have not cast a fly to previously. All of us need to get this "itch scratched" on occasion, however, for some fly fishers this is a compulsion that is the driving force behind every travel decision they make. Many anglers would say this constant pursuit of "something new" causes this fly fisher to miss out on some of the real joys associated with "familiarity."



BUILDING ON PAST ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCES

Fishing familiar waters and species year after year allows for building a reservoir of experiences to build on and anticipate. There are many "comfortable knowns" to be expected, plus, because we are dealing with fish and their unpredictable reactions, there are always surprises awaiting us. Enough experience fishing a particular watershed will make you an "specialist" on those particular waters and species available. There are two excellent examples of "specialists" at one particular species or watershed that appear often in our newsletters. Art Hinckley fishes all over, but he takes two trips each year to fish permit from a mothership in Belize. This year, Art will most likely release his 100th permit and become a member of a very exclusive salt water angling group. John Part has released over 40 New Zealand brown trout that weighed double digits from his two annual early and late season trips to



the land of the Kiwi. Both of these gentlemen have achieved remarkable angling milestones and their experiences qualify them as “specialists” or “experts” on their particular species. It is unlikely that many of us will ever become the “experts” that John and Art are at their particular destinations; however, repeating a destination several times will provide you experiences you build upon, increasing your knowledge and skill level on each trip.....and a certain degree of pride, confidence, and enjoyment comes with that increase in knowledge and skills.

WANNA HAVE IT ALL

For those who have the resources and the time, “having it all” is the best of all worlds. You may have one, two, or three destinations that you want to repeat each year (or some every other year), plus add in the spice of a new experience or two annually. That approach allows for you to be building on past rewarding trips while also checking off from your “Bucket List” a new angling experience or two each year.

PRIME TIMES AT A VARIETY OF WORLD CLASS FLY FISHING DESTINATIONS – THE BUCKET LIST

Annually, our December newsletter is primarily devoted to answering the questions we are most commonly asked about the best time to visit this destination or that destination. This list is updated from information gathered personally and through our traveling fly fishers during 2013. Listed chronologically, and all in one place, are the general answers we provide. Here is Santa’s BUCKET LIST! None of this information should be considered infallible as weather patterns, water levels, and hatch cycles are never exact – but these timeframes will give you a sense for the best odds of “hitting it right.”

We are a small, personal service oriented, fly fishing travel consultant and are not concerned with booking shoulder seasons – we want our clients fishing the best waters at the best possible time. We don’t have a need to fill an entire calendar for 1000’s of clients, just those that we work with on a regular basis in finding the perfect destination to satisfy their fly fishing dreams and stimulate the possibilities for the future.

JANUARY – MARCH

Trout: This is the heart of the summer in southern hemisphere destinations such as Argentina, Chile, and New Zealand. Late January through February usually provides the best dry fly fishing, but it’s good all through this timeframe into the brown trout spawning cycle which begins during March into April. These months would be best also for the giant sea run brown trout of Tierra del Fuego in southern Argentina.

Amazon – Peacock Bass: Water level is critical for the Peacock Bass (below, left). In the only “fly fishing only” watershed in the Amazon, the season gets started in November, but the most stable low water levels usually occur in the first quarter of the year.



Christmas Island, South Pacific: The fishery for bonefish, Giant Trevally, and Bluefin Trevally (at right) is relatively stable year round since C.I. is on the equator. However, some veterans prefer to avoid the winter months when the winds tend to be stronger.

Golden Dorado: The prime northern Argentina Golden Dorado (below, right) fisheries fish well during the early part of the year. There are some of the newly discovered dorado fisheries, such as Bolivia, that this timing does not apply to, but this would be a good time to visit the established fisheries in northern Argentina. The timing is such that Golden Dorado can be combined with a Jurassic Lake and Patagonia visit – even the Amazon.



Jurassic Lake, Argentina: Prime time to find the giant rainbows of Jurassic Lake (at right) in the only tributary stream, the Barrancoso River, during their spawning mode is the first two weeks of January and late March – early April.

The “New Jurassic” – Kooi Noom: In the same general area of Argentina as the original Jurassic, Kooi Noom opens for it’s first season this year. Giant rainbows in miles of streams and rivers, in addition to the still water fishing,

Seychelles: This is the middle of the season for trevally, bonefish, milkfish (below, right-center), etc at the truly world class Alphonse Island in the Seychelles. Season will conclude in April.

Tropical Flats Fisheries – Western Hemisphere: Occasional weather fronts can put a damper on the fishing in places like Belize and Ascension Bay. Fishing can be good if you avoid those cold fronts. Generally, the weather, under any conditions, is a lot warmer than our cold, gray USA skies. February and March have provided many great permit (below, left-center) trips in Belize.



APRIL - JUNE

Trout: April can provide good conditions before the runoff begins on some western Rocky Mountain waters, but weather can be an issue – difficult to plan far in advance. Tailwaters, such as the San Juan, will be the most stable. Runoff is less of a factor as we get into late June, but most waters in the Rockies (both USA and Canada) are going to fish better as we move into July.

Tropical Flats Fisheries: April and May are usually “prime” for tropical salt water flats fisheries in the western hemisphere. Migrating tarpon (below, right), in places like Belize, are on the move and beefing up the numbers of the resident fish. By June, even though fishing can be excellent, most land based lodges will have biting bugs in sufficient numbers to carry you away.

Mongolia - Taiman: May and June are some of the top times to pursue the giant Taiman (below, left) of Mongolia.

Minipi River – Brook Trout: If the spring is a little early, the giant brookies of the Minipi River in Labrador are on the move in late June sipping hatching caddis and mayflies from the surface.

Alaska: June is the early season – salmon not yet in the rivers. Rainbows chasing salmon smolt as they migrate – some good dry fly fishing in selected spots.

Belize – Tarpon: Beginning in late April and May and extending through July, migrating tarpon begin to show and the numbers of large tarpon present in the coastal waters of Belize increase dramatically.

Atlantic Salmon: Begin to arrive in many rivers around the globe. The Ponoï in Russia has numbers of Atlantics (below, center) in May. Many of Canada’s top waters, like the Gaspé region, have the largest fish entering in June even though water conditions usually are not yet ideal.



JULY - SEPTEMBER

Trout: In the Canadian and US Rocky Mountain states, the runoff is winding down in late June and through mid July, depending on the location. The best hatches of the season usually begin as the waters clear and drop. Montana, Idaho, British Columbia and the American west is at its best in July. August brings the hopper season and September sees the beginning of the fall hatches. The second week of July til mid August is usually the best time for sight fishing the large Bull Trout (below, left) in the Fernie BC area.

Tropical Flat’s Fisheries: The fishing can be outstanding, the weather is hot and humid and, for land based lodges, the bugs can be a bother. Most land based lodges close during this time. However, for air conditioned mothership operations in places like Belize, exciting results are available and, generally, you’ll have the waters to yourself.

Minipi River – Brook Trout: The first two to three weeks of July is the absolute prime time to take 5 to 8 pound brookies (at right) on the surface on the Minipi in Labrador.

Alaska: Early July sees giant king salmon begin their runs into the rivers. Most anglers consider the prime Alaska time to begin with the run of the silvers (below, right), the top fly rod Pacific salmon. This usually occurs in most watersheds beginning around the middle of August. The Rainbow fishing begins to peak around this time also and continues to be strong into September.

Bolivia – Golden Dorado: Tsimane Lodge in Bolivia offers Golden Dorado in a mountain stream and small river environment where sight fishing is the norm. Season differs greatly from the Argentina Golden fisheries beginning in June and extending into the early fall.



Kamchatka: About mid July, the dry fly activity begins in earnest on some rivers. Different watersheds have the prime times (depending on the individual definition of “prime”) in slightly different times during the next 6 weeks.
B.C. Steelhead Waters: The lower stretches of the Dean River begin to host their famous summer run peaking the last two weeks of July and into early August. For the majority of the great steelhead (below, left-center) rivers, look to early to mid September through October for the runs of fresh fish to be in full force.
Canada – northern waters: Northern Pike (below, right-center), grayling, and lake trout in the northern Canadian waters are at their best soon after ice-out. Late June and into July are prime.



OCTOBER – DECEMBER

Trout: Weather begins to become an issue as we get into the fall in the American west; however, there are some waters that provide a good October opportunity.

New Zealand: The “early season” in New Zealand is the fourth quarter with November and December providing some of this country's famous stalking experiences for large rainbows and browns (below, center). The upsides are unpressured fish and few anglers to pursue them; the downside is the weather can be more unsettled during their spring than their summer.

Tropical Flats Fisheries: October can be a month of settled weather in the tropical climates for bonefish, tarpon, and permit,.

Belize - Snook: the spawning season of November, December, and January provide the greatest numbers of snook (below left) in Belize.

Jurassic Lake: In Argentina, November begins the runs of giant rainbows into the only stream flowing into Jurassic Lake, the Barrancoso River. November and December can actually have times with too many fish in the river and waters can be high. Prime times are a little later. The lake fishes well throughout the season.

Tigerfish, Africa: The Lower Zambezi River National Park provides a protected tiger fish (below, right) fishery that many believe to be Africa’s best. If you measure both quantity of fish and the opportunities for large tiger fish, it passes all the tests. October is the end of the dry season. Waters are at their lowest and clearest – great conditions for game viewing (safari style) because the animals are congregated around the river as the water holes and smaller rivers have dried up. Plus, tiger fishing is at its best at the same time – an exciting dual purpose destination.

Seychelles: October sees the opening of the season at Alphonse Island. No anglers have been on the flats for several months and the Giant Trevally (below, right-center) are eager and aggressive eaters.

Redfish: The shallow flats of the Lower Laguna Madre estuary system, which cover over 150 square miles off the South Texas coastline, provide their best sight casting for redfish (below, left-center) in October and into early November. Much of this water is a foot or foot and a half deep making stalking these brutes a visual experience.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

We wish everyone a holiday season that is everything you want it to be with lots of time spent with those most important to you. And, a new year that will allow you to enjoy your favorite waters and also have time to discover some of the destinations on your “bucket list.” From our end, we plan to do our share of fly rod travel beginning in February with our “almost annual” three weeks in New Zealand – this will be our 13th NZ visit in the last 14 years.....just can’t get enough!! Following our stay in NZ we’ll be moving over to northwest Australia to sample a recently discovered salt water flats destination with an amazing variety of species from very large bones to permit and GT’s. More on this in the March newsletter.

DECEMBER MEMORY PHOTOS



It only seems appropriate that for our December Memory Photos we selected shots which appeared on a family Christmas card. Terry and Gary Butts are famous for their “cute fly fishing couple” photos from New Zealand. They have been fly fishing with their kids and grandchildren for years. These two treasured photos graced their family Christmas card this year. How cute are these kids!!

At left, Gary is surrounded, left to right, by Garrett, Hattie, and Sophie. On the right with that big rainbow is Hattie in the center with Sophie on the left and Garrett on the right.

Who caught those fish anyway???



PHOTO CREDITS: (top to bottom): bluefin trevally – Loren Irving; peacock – Annie Kubicka; permit – Art Hinckley; milkfish – Rich Cheatham; dorado – Mark Cowan; taiman – Jerry Saltzgaber and Chip Fudge; tarpon – Todd Roebken; brookie – Jeff Reinke; steelhead – Lance Ruffel; northern – Jim Hine; silver – Henry Gans; snook – Steve Mitchell; redfish - Barbara Klutinis; brown – Paul Wilms.

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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