



## Stalking Permit and GT's Inside The Ningaloo Reef



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We are in the sixteenth 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.

### THE "BUCKET LIST" AND PRIME TIMES

Annually, our year-end newsletter is primarily devoted to answering the questions we are most commonly asked about the best time to visit various destinations around the globe. This list is updated from information gathered personally and through our traveling fly fishers during each year. Listed chronologically, and all in one place, are the general answers. Here is the BUCKET LIST along with the most productive times to fish! 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 boutique, 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 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 (left) of Tierra del Fuego in southern Argentina.

**Amazon – Peacock Bass:** Water level is critical for the Peacock Bass (below, left). In the only "exclusively fly fishing" 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 (right), Giant Trevally, and Bluefin Trevally 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 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 allows for combining Golden's with a Jurassic Lake and Patagonia visit – even the Amazon can tie in.



**Jurassic Lake, Argentina:** Prime time to find the giant rainbows (above right) of Jurassic 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 has similar 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, trigger fish (left), bonefish, milkfish (below, left-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 in the early part of the year 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, right-center) trips in Belize.

**Ningaloo Reef, North West Cape, Australia:** A relatively new discovery in the world of salt water flats fishing, this spectacular spot located in NW Australia is a great tie-in for New Zealand travelers who have the time. The pristine waters of the Ningaloo make an exciting contrast to NZ. Large bonefish, Giant Trevally, world record Golden Trevally (below right) and both Indo-Pacific species of permit are part of the mix here along with other saltwater trophies.



#### 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, May, and June are usually “prime” for tropical salt water flats fisheries in the western hemisphere. Permit (left) and bonefish (below, right-center) are a constant. Migrating tarpon, in places like Belize and Florida, are on the move and beefing up the numbers of the resident fish. Cobia (at right) and Barracuda are occasionally available on many saltwater flats. By June, even though fishing can be excellent, many land based lodges will have biting bugs in sufficient numbers to carry you away.



**Cuba:** Now that US citizens can access Cuba, the many different Cuban fly fishing operations are in their prime. The seasonal aspects of the fishing here are very similar to Ascension Bay and Belize with migrating tarpon showing in April through July.

**Bolivia – Golden Dorado:** Tsimane Lodge in Bolivia offers Golden Dorado (right) in mountain streams and large and small river environments where sight fishing is possible. Season differs greatly from the Argentina Golden fisheries. Tsimane’s season begins in June and extends into the early fall.



**Mongolia - Taiman:** May, June, and early July are some of the top times to pursue the giant Taiman (below, left) of Mongolia.....also late August into September.

**Minipi River – Brook Trout:** If the spring arrives 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 with the exception being early King Salmon (at left) in late June in some rivers. Rainbows chasing salmon





smolt as they migrate to the ocean – some good dry fly fishing in selected spots.

**Belize/Florida – Tarpon:** Beginning in late April and May and extending through July, migrating tarpon begin to show and the numbers of large tarpon (below, right) present in these coastal waters increase dramatically.

**Atlantic Salmon:** Begin to arrive in many rivers around the globe. The Ponoï in Russia has numbers of Atlantics (below, left-center) in May. Many of Canada's top waters, like the Gaspe 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 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 (left) in the Fernie watershed.



**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. Many land based lodges close during this time. For air conditioned mothership operations in places like Belize, exciting results are available and, generally, you'll find the waters uncrowded.

**Minipi River – Brook Trout:** The first three weeks of July is the absolute prime time to take 5 to 8 pound brookies (at right) on the surface of 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 early to mid August. The Rainbow fishing begins to peak around this time also and continues strong into September.

**Bolivia – Tsimane:** Pacu (below, right-center) join the Golden Dorado as trophy species available in this fishery.

**Kamchatka:** About mid July, the dry fly activity begins in earnest on some rivers. Various watersheds have their 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 of steelhead (below, left-center) peaking the last two weeks of July into early August. For the majority of the great steelhead rivers, early to mid September through October finds the runs of fresh fish to be in full force.

**Canada – northern waters:** Northern Pike (below, left), 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 October, November, and December – the spring months. These months provide some of this country's famous stalking experiences for large rainbows and browns (below, left). The big fish are well rested after their winter. The upsides are unpressured fish and few anglers; the downside is the weather can be more unsettled 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 (at left) in Belize.



**Ningaloo Reef, North West Cape, Australia:** This is a place to attempt the global Permit Trifecta – adding both Indo-Pacific permit species to our Caribbean species (at right, one of the Indo-Pacific subspecies, *Trachinotus Blochii*). For the permit fishery here, tides play an important part – some tidal phases are definitely preferred for the most productive permit times. This is basically a year-round fishery, but best to avoid June through August which have the strongest unfavorable easterly winds.

**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, left-center) 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 Bluefin (below, right) and Giant Trevally (above - right) are eager and aggressive.

**Redfish:** The shallow flats of the Lower Laguna Madre estuary system in Texas and the coastal Gulf waters, provide their best sight casting for redfish (below, right-center) in October and into early November. Much of this water is shallow making stalking these brutes a visual experience.



## SPECIAL FISH



Some fish represent special experiences or benchmarks which become a part of your lifetime angling memories. For this salty ole guy (me), one of those special fish came this month.

At right is one of those special fish for Art Hinckley – his 50<sup>th</sup> permit was also his largest to date (Art has now taken 126 of these devil fish). Art gets the credit (or the blame, depending on how you choose to view it) for inspiring my recently set goal to take 100 permit by time I'm 84. That gives me 9 more years.





I was hoping my 50<sup>th</sup> would be as dramatic as Art's. That was not to be (above at left), but after having fish turn my hook, then a hook-up where the hook broke, I was finally able to get #50 in the net earlier this month on a Rising Tide permit trip in Belize.

## RISING TIDE PERMIT TRIP REPORT

Mike Dawes and Frank Jackson joined me for a dedicated permit trip in Belize in early December using the comfortable atmosphere of the Rising Tide as our base of operations. We spent a week pursuing permit on arguably the best stretch of permit flats on the globe. The ability of the Rising Tide to change anchorages to maximize our access to these flats, without long boat rides, is a key to this trip. We did hit some "tropical wintertime" weather, but overall, saw lots of fish and even got some to eat! For those who are interested in our results from this trip, this link will take you to a detailed report of our results – tailing fish seen, number of eats, etc. [Belize Rising Tide Trip Report](#)

## WHAT WE DO AT FLY FISHING ADVENTURES

This is a link with a description of who we are and what we do.....also, listing the destinations around the world that we can provide reliable information regarding the experience and how to prepare for your visit: [Fly Fishing Adventures - About What We Do](#)

## COLD, GRAY SKIES OF WINTER – VERY TIRING!

For us, the cold and gray skies of winter get old very quickly.....and we live in California, the land of "sunshine." Planning to get out of here soon – Belize in January and a combo of New Zealand and the Ningaloo Reef in Feb/March.

Marte and I hope your holidays are everything you want them to be and you get to spend them with the people most important in your life. For 2019, I hope you get to knock a few items off your personal bucket list.

PHOTO CREDITS: as they appear, top to bottom – Brent Kitson, Lucky Leavitt, Jeff Reinke, John Galiparo, John Landis, Matt Goff, Heather/Blake Mycoskie, Shawna Droese, Mike Parker, Keith Talbot, Steve Simco, Don Olen, Jerry Saltzgaber/Chip Fudge, Lance Ruffel, John Gans, Brad Jackson/Dennis Banks, Scott Muelrath, Jim Hine, Frank Jackson, Jack Edick, Josh Luft-Glidden, William Owens, Andy Vockler, George Toledo, John Part, Paul Wilms, Terry/Gary Butts, Bill Pihl.

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