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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 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.

FAMILY ADVENTURE – NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA

This is a report that includes far more than references to some of New Zealand's classic trophy trout stalking experiences. In the Beard family, only father Ben and son Nate pursue the passion of fly fishing. The family as a whole are all adventure seekers who challenged most of the high adventure activities of the Kiwi's and Aussies during an ambitious three-plus week itinerary over the holiday period. With Ben and Nate (23) were mother, Linda, Josh (21), and Catherine (16). Photo from left to right: Catherine, Mom and Dad, Josh, and Nate.



Since this is a Fly Fishing Adventures report, naturally, we begin with the fishing pursuits. Mostly, they had decent conditions which allowed for their results. Ben and Nate stalked, hooked, and released an average of six fish a day on their guided fishing days with an average weight of four pounds. By New Zealand standards, averaging six fish released a day are exceptional results. Of course, they would be the first to give some of the credit to two of the most renowned independent NZ guides they fished with and the excellent waters they were guided on.

Below, l to r: Nate and guide discuss presentation strategy to feeding fish; fish to net; brown in net; Ben with brown; casting to sighted fish on Fiordland river while guide observes fish's response.



Below, l to r: at both ends, Nate displays browns which were about average size; we like to say that New Zealand streams come in three basic forms – mountain rivers, farm waters, and stunning giant river valleys.....when fishing farm streams, you often have an audience like below; brown released; spotting fish.



Below, l to r: As they moved down the west coast of New Zealand's South Island, they spent time at one of the famous glaciers and did a heli'hike. Also, stayed in a coastal, nature oriented wilderness lodge where they did some beachcombing on the spectacular west coast shoreline.



Below, l to r: Then it was the outdoor adventure capital of NZ, Queenstown, for bungee jumping from a bridge, a gondola ride to the top of the mountain and para-sailing to the bottom, and rock climbing. Finishing in Fiordland allowed for a cruise on Milford Sound and hiking some of the famous trails in the area. Then off to the land of Kangaroos.



Below, l to r: Linda bottlefeeds a growing kangaroo, Catherine entertains a slimy native, Nate hugs a Koala, hiking trails, and more rocks to climb.



Below, l to r: Spectacular Aussie coastline, snorkeling on the barrier reef, and sailing on Sydney Bay.



Ben summed up the trip with this thought: “If we could do it over, we wouldn’t change a thing. Not sure that all 5 of us would agree on that, but it would really be difficult to improve on it.”

If you want to see the complete photo essay report, this link takes you there: [Beard Family Trip Photo Essay](#)

ALBERTA SPRING CREEKS WITH JURASSIC SIZE RAINBOWS?



We can’t vouch for how many giant rainbows are in these spring creeks in Alberta, but we know there’s at least two of them. We know because Paul Souza is pictured with two of them in the photos accompanying this article.

From Paul.....“In Alberta, we fished the St Mary’s River and some freestone creeks. I managed to catch a 16 pound Rainbow that measured 34.5 inches ((photo is at left). What a hoot. Sight cast in a spring creek – 5x tippet. Our guide had some interesting private spring creek waters.” Paul has fished these waters with the same guide for three years and knows the program well. His trips have always been in the fall when he could tie in some excellent duck hunting with a “cast and blast” program.

The private spring creeks are part of a water system that has several beaver dams on a private ranch a few hours drive from Calgary. The dams create an almost still water environment as these spring creeks wind their way across the ranch property. What accounts for the growth of the fish are the same elements that cause that growth in the “Jurassic Rainbow” waters in Argentina – outstanding food sources. There are ideal water conditions and an abundant population of scuds, mayflies, and damselfly nymphs.

However, this is one of the few places in the Rockies (Canadian or our US Rockies) that fishes best in May and June when runoff is plaguing the famous rivers throughout the west.....no runoff issues here. The best package in May/June is for a group of four anglers. There is a small personal lodge that holds four anglers and an excellent chef – takes four to support the lodge. In the heart of the summer and fall, this spring creek fishery is primarily an evening event.

As far as the rest of the summer goes, there is a lot of great water within an hours drive. Most of these waters open for fishing on June 16. Runoff is still an issue at that time in some of these rivers, but tailwaters fish well. From mid-June to the end of June, both the spring creeks and other waters can be combined.



This area is within a few hours drive from Fernie, BC, one of our favorite western Rockies destinations. If you had the time and inclination, these two different fisheries can become an excellent combination in one trip. There are still some openings on the private ranch for this May and June. If you’d like further info, hit “reply.”

QUOTE FOR THE DAY



I can’t bring myself to call this the “quote of the month,” but given the topic, we’ll credit it for a “quote of the day.” I’d like to consider Gary Martin as one of the benefits of my retirement business as a fly fishing travel consultant – a good friend whose connection was made over a fly rod. From New Zealand to Golden Dorado in Argentina, I’ve fished with Gary. We’re both fans of the giant brook trout of the Minipi River in Labrador. I received a call from Gary a few days ago. He knew we were returning for our 8th trip to this Labrador wilderness this summer and wanted to let me know he was going to be there also, a few weeks after us (he had bid on and purchased the trip at a charity auction). I commented that I would try to leave him a few

giant brookies who didn’t have sore lips from our visit. His instant reaction was to comment, “Just leave me a few gudes without sore and bloody backs.” Since he is aware of my sometimes errant casts, I couldn’t run and hide from his comment – just shared the chuckle with him. However, I’d bet that we take the largest brookie this summer!!!!

FEBRUARY MEMORY PHOTOS



Pyramid Lake, in western Nevada, is renowned for producing very large Cutthroat Trout. Jim Hine (in float tube) and Steve Simco (holding large cutt at left) visited in November.



This is a unique fishery that allows for sight casting to large cruisers using a ladder for elevation, a float tube, or just wading. The original Pilot Peak strain of cutthroat were reintroduced into the lake in 2006 and seem to be taking hold with strong growth patterns (Steve's fish is the original strain). In years gone by, the lake produced fish of 20 – 30+ pounds, but the previous original strains have been hybridized over the years and do not attain the size of the original Pilot Peak fish. They are expecting to see some of the reintroduced original strains of fish attain the 30+ pound range in the next five years or so.

Jim commented: "We caught them on ladders, in float tubes and just wading (steve killed'em that way) casting streamers. We probably caught 10 fish over 5lbs."

PHOTO CREDITS: Australia/New Zealand - the Beard family; Alberta rainbows – Paul Souza.

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

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,
Don Muelrath

Fly Fishing Adventures

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