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We are in the seventh year of publishing our monthly newsletter with updates on great fly fishing venues, trip reports 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 destinations. 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.

WALSH FAMILY – NEW ZEALAND REPORT



When Michael Walsh first contacted us regarding his dream of taking the entire family to New Zealand with a stop in Australia for the Christmas holidays, we were both excited and challenged. This was something new for us – generally, our NZ itinerary planning is for either hard core fly fishing experiences or “couples trips” which combine touring NZ while blending in some of its best fly fishing opportunities. Michael explained that the kids were outdoors oriented and, while he wanted them to have some exposure to fly fishing “New Zealand style,” they were going to need supervised activities they would enjoy while he and the family CEO, Christie, spent some time on the water stalking the famous NZ trophy browns and rainbows.

The Walsh family in New Zealand.....Christie (below, left) and Michael (right) are Mom and Dad; Brianna (11) is surrounded by NZ's most numerous farm creatures while Austin (12 - with NZ guide) and Michael (13) do some Kiwi research on the flight over.



Michael supplied us with a wonderful collection of photos of their trip plus a detailed written report. Combining his photos and report, we assembled a photo essay of their experiences. The entire photo essay can be accessed by the link at the bottom of this article. What follows are some excerpts from that photo essay.

From Michael's report: *“The third day of fishing was the most spectacular in terms of scenery, and between Christie and I we landed 10 fish.....with insufficient humility I hereby report that I bagged 7 to Christie's 3, and landed a nice 7 pound hen in a large pool. Awesome.....the clear water allowing us to take in the entire experience as it happened.....Kevin directed our casts to cross their cruising paths, and Christie and I both landed very nice fish, hers about 6 pounds.*



Late in the afternoon, Kevin informed me that we were at 9 fish for the day at that point. So, THE HUNT was on for number 10! Well, we landed the 10th fish.....and Christie got a picture of Kevin and I shaking hands over #10.



Day two started with Kevin giving some great casting lessons to Michael and Austin.....As we walked up the river, Kevin sighted a brown across from us. Austin was up first. A few well-placed casts, and bang! Hook set, and the fight was on! Austin landed a beautiful 3.5 pound brown (below).....



Kevin has an uncanny talent for sighting fish.....it was Michael's turn in a particularly beautiful stretch of water. Michael laid a New Zealand blowfly out in front of another nice brown, and as Kevin yelled, "STRIKE!" he set the hook beautifully and then landed a beautiful 3.5 pound brown, same as Austin.



Jodi was an incredible hostess. She took our three kids, and her two kids, and led the kids on all kind of adventures over the two days Christie and I fished. They swam in the community pool and in the local river, toured a couple of museums to learn about the Maori culture, played mini-golf, went on a horseback ride, including crossing a river, and even played cricket and rugby in their backyard with her kids. The coup de gras was at the end of the second day, Jodi presented us with a CD of the photos she had taken over the two days.

This link will take you to the entire photo essay with access to Michael's complete, unedited, written report.....http://www.flyfishingadventures.org/Newsletter/TR_Walsh.pdf

ART HINCKLEY – PERMIT GUY EXTRAORDINAIRE



Taking 61 permit on a fly would qualify you as an exceptional permit fisherman, certainly among the top 10 to 15 in the world. Art Hinckley is now at 61 and counting, but it's more than the number of fish caught that make Art a special permit fisherman. He is constantly studying these selective, prized trophies of the salt water flats. The "modified for Belize" Rag Head fly he created has probably taken more permit in Belize than any other fly. Now, he has a new crab imitation fly he's developed and we're naming it the Hinckley Crab.

He and some friends began their annual 10 day Belize mothership permit trip in late February and brought along a supply of the new flies. They hit a week of constantly changing weather patterns making fishing conditions sometimes difficult. From Art's day-by-day

diary, reviewing his report of Day 7 of their recent trip will give you a sense for what "changeable weather" can be like in the tropics, especially in the early part of the year.

Day 7 - The weirdest weather day I have ever had. It was dead calm at 6:30am. My guide, Noel, and I went north, back up to Sand Fly and Dennis and Don went south. By the time Noel and I got to Sand Fly the wind was howling from the northwest about 30 mph. We fished until about ten, but never saw anything. Noel called Dean, who was guiding Don and Dennis, and he said the weather had been beautiful down south all morning and there were fish everywhere and that Don had caught a 7 lb. permit. Noel and I headed back south and by the time we got back to the Blue Grounds at eleven the weather was calm and the water was perfect glass. On my first shot I caught about a 16lb permit. I think it is the first one I've caught in perfectly calm water. Right after that I got another perfect shot at about a 30 pounder, but he didn't eat the fly. It was quite exciting as his back was about a third out of the water. We saw several more large fish, but couldn't get any more shots in the calm water. Dennis got several shots also, but no luck. About 1pm the weather went from calm to howling west wind in about 15 minutes so we all went back to the boat for an early lunch.

We all had a good time and, as usual, the guides and Carol couldn't have been more enjoyable to be with.

I can vouch for the new Hinckley Crab fly (at right in permit mouth). Art left me one to use on my personal trip which follow his trip. I had my first "two permit day" in all my years of chasing these fussy buggers with the new fly. The Fish First fly shop in Albany is having some of these custom tied to Art's specs. If you want to pick some up for your salt water fly box, give them a week or so to get them in – you can reach them at 510-526-1937.



ANNUAL NEW ZEALAND NEWSLETTER

Our annual New Zealand newsletter will be sent soon. This is just a "heads up" for you in case you have no interest in New Zealand – just hit delete when it arrives in your inbox in a few weeks.

MARCH MEMORY PHOTOS – MONTH OF THE BONEFISH



For our "memory photos" space this month, we feature the bonefish in two different forms. The top two fish are taken by veteran anglers and certainly qualify as trophy bones, fish in the 7 to 9 pound range, trophy size for bonefish.

On the left is Kris Jacobs who has appeared in this column before with a large Alaska rainbow. Her bonefish was taken in Ascension Bay and measured 24 inches to the fork in the tail. The salty dude on the right is Leo Siren, the manager/owner of the Fish First fly shop referenced above. His hefty bone was taken

at a special spot in the Bahama's which is famous for the size (not numbers) of its bones.





While the big fish above were taken by fly rod veterans, the fish referenced from here on were taken by “first timers,” anglers fishing the bonefish flats for the first time. At left is Sami Hassibi who used a Belize mothership for his first saltwater flats experience. On the overall experience, Sami had these comments, “.....my favorite time was that third day when we hit the big flat by the mainland; not 5 minutes would go by without a shot at some tailing bones. That lasted all afternoon and I caught my fill. Watching the take was the best part. I did get a baby tarpon to the boat, but not inside. I would do the trip again. Though the fishing was great by Belize city, I preferred the remoteness of the more northern and southern places we visited. Those were some beautiful flats with tons of wildlife around.”

The Tymstra family and their holiday’s trip to Belize was mentioned in the February newsletter. They combined a trip to the offshore Turneffe Islands with a visit to an inland eco tour jungle lodge into a family adventure including two different environments. Matthew and Eric took their first bonefish on a fly on their first day on the flats of the Turneffe’s – combined, more than 15 fish. At left, Matthew with one of his first bones. On the right, Eric shows off a unique double header (small jack and bonefish taken on a dual fly arrangement). Right center, wading the flats near the reef and they even let Dad (Pete) get a fish or two.



PHOTO CREDITS: (top to bottom) banner photo - Tymstra family; New Zealand – Walsh family; permit – Art Hinckley; Ascension Bay bone – Brad Jacobs; Bahama’s bone – Leo Siren; first Belize bone – Sami Hassibi; Turneffe Islands bones – Tymstra family.

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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