



Casting for GT's, Seychelles



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- THE BEST OF THE SEYCHELLES
- FREE LEGACY FLY FISHING GEAR – NEED TEENAGE CANDIDATES
- A “REAL” TROPHY TROUT IS ???? POUNDS
- FUN AT PLAYA BLANCA, MEXICAN YUCATAN
- JUNE MEMORY PHOTO

We are in the ninth 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 BEST OF THE SEYCHELLES

Giant Trevally, bonefish, milkfish, and triggerfish may be considered the primary species pursued by fly rodders who make their way to the spectacular sister atolls of Alphonse and St. Francois in the Seychelles. However, the secondary species available here add to the overall appeal of this most established and reliable of the Seychelles destinations. John Landis, during his April trip combining game viewing in Africa with a week in this dynamic marine environment, captured both an outstanding collection of photos and a large sampling of the variety of fish available. John timed his trip to hit the best tides and it paid off – you could say he “hit it right” with outstanding results and a stunning variety of fish.

The four primary species: l to r – Triggerfish, Bonefish, Milkfish, Giant Trevally.



John's comments on his pursuit of the “primary” species above:

Triggerfish – “There are three species of triggers that are pursued and fished with crab patterns, similar to permit. I almost had the Grand Slam of Triggers all in one day, but the 3rd species was lost to coral after a long struggle.”

Bones – “Lots of bonefish. I took 20 or so in the mornings, largest 6#, and could have caught 70+ if that's all I did for the day, but there were so many other options.”

Milkfish – “Left this one for the next trip.”

Giant Trevally – “Hooked four GT's..... a fish of about 60# was the largest, but didn't make the net.”

Variety Species – “Took many species of grouper, snapper, and other strange things - I forgot their names.”

Regarding Trigger Fish, for John to have hooked up with all three species in one day is amazing. He mentioned that they were plentiful during his time there.....lots of fish spotted. He described fishing for them as very similar to permit....and as difficult. You need lots of shots! His description: “Crab fly and cast very close to the fish. A very SLOW retrieve. If you see 150 fish, you might get 10 to respond to the fly and one to eat it.....tough fish and a real struggle.”

L to R below: Picasso Triggerfish, school of Goliath Triggerfish on the flat, GT.



For more details and photos, this link will take you to a photo essay report of John's trip with many colorful photos of the variety of fish he took (below) when he wasn't busy with the "primary species".....report includes logistical info and the five star resort that provides the accommodations and meals for this adventure.....[Seychelles Photo Essay Report](#)



FREE LEGACY FLY FISHING GEAR – NEED TEENAGE CANDIDATES



Recently, Dave Wood (photo with a New Zealand brown), one of our long term fly fishing friends/clients passed away. Dave and his wife, Sherri, were world wide traveling fishermen, visiting places from Chile to Alaska and most spots in between. He left behind a collection of fly fishing gear that he had used to pursue many different species ranging from Rocky Mountain trout, Alaska salmon and steelhead, to giant tarpon. Included are about 15 boxes of flies, a few reels, and miscellaneous gear accumulated over a lifetime (including some salt water spinning gear). His wife, Sherri, asked me if we might know of some young aspiring fly fishers who could use Dave's equipment. The purpose of this article is to find some candidates for this legacy fly fishing gear – specifically, we're looking for teenagers who are aspiring fly fishers. If you know of a candidate, please hit "reply" and give us a brief description of him or her and their interest in fly fishing.

A "REAL" TROPHY TROUT IS ??? POUNDS

This subject is sure to raise some controversy and needs a lot of definition. The subject was spawned as part of a discussion between myself and John Part (a New Zealand veteran who has taken over 40 brown trout that weighed in excess of ten pounds) with some input from one of NZ's most outstanding guides who has seen 1000's of trophy trout in his long career. Another angler, Royce Hudspeth, provided stimulation for the topic by inquiring about how special was the 8 ½ pound brook trout he had taken on the Minipi River in Labrador (at right). Royce was considering getting a mount of this spectacularly colored male brook trout and was trying to ascertain how unique it was.



The topic for our discussion was how large does a trout need to be for it to be considered "rare enough" to be defined as a trophy in any waters on the globe. In other words, we were taking a global approach to this subject – what should be considered a trophy trout in any fishery, anywhere. Recognizing there are places in the USA where a 20 inch rainbow trout could be classified as a "trophy fish," the key element in our discussion is "taken anywhere." We were not trying to deal with fish that are "personal trophies," fish that have special meaning to one particular



angler because of a special situation or some singular event. We're only considering non-migratory fish – i.e., trout that live their lives in fresh water. We were looking at the global concept where trophy trout are “real trophies” by any standard. We felt to uncover this answer, we needed to examine results obtained and calculated over an extended period of time for fish caught in waters where enough large fish are taken and weighed to produce enough numbers to provide a meaningful measure.

For starters, to answer Royce's question about how rare was his 8# brookie taken from the Minipi River watershed in Labrador, we didn't have to go further than the fishing diaries of my son and I. We have taken eight trips to the Minipi River over the last 15 years and had accurate records of weighed brook trout landed and released. I had not taken the effort to go back and combine the results of those trips so was curious myself what the results would show. Here are the numbers of fish taken by us over the years – the four and five pound fish are common here (about average) so we began the measure with fish of six pounds or more:

Brookies from 6 to 7 pounds – 64.....Brookies from 7 to 8 pounds – 31

Brookies over 8 pounds – 4

A footnote that points to the uniqueness of the Minipi fishery – over 90% of those 6+ pound fish were taken on dry flies. Yes, those big fish in Labrador do look up for their meals.



John Part had meaningful numbers from New Zealand, having kept careful records from his 30+ trips over the last 16 years. His 43 browns over ten pounds are the stuff of legends, but what about the “smaller” fish. The four pound brown in New Zealand is about average and, like the Minipi, the majority of fish fall into the 4-5# range. The six and seven pounders become a lot less common. John's records showed a total of 139 browns between 8 and 10 pounds, about an average of 4 fish over 8# per trip. My personal NZ records do not reflect the depth of John's simply because of his numbers of days on the Kiwi waters (and I believe him to be a more effective brown trout angler than I), but also show a severe drop off in the numbers of fish taken over 8 pounds. However, my records only show an average of 1.5 eight-plus pound trout per NZ trip.

The top NZ guide referenced above chimed in with his opinion – i.e., he felt that the 8# fish is the right number to be considered a trophy brown as there are many more fish in the 6 – 8# range than fish of 8+.



The numbers would seem to point to the 8# brown trout as being a “trophy” regardless of where it is taken. Comparing all the numbers, the 7# Minipi Brook Trout may match the uniqueness of the 8# NZ brown to qualify for the “trophy category.” If you would, you could say there is a “Super Trophy Category” that includes the 8# Minipi Brookie and 10# Brown.

A few important notes:

- When I took my first trout of over five pounds, that fish was definitely a “trophy” to me personally. This discussion is not meant to dis-respect “personal bests” - those personal angling milestones are truly “trophy fish” to the angler involved.
- for size comparisons, all four photos in this article are of weighed fish of 8 to 8.5#. There are different ways to get to 8#.
- today, in the Argentine waters of Lago Stroebe (Jurassic Lake) and Kooi Noom, there may be new standards being set for trophy rainbow trout. Because of the newness of these fisheries, we don't yet know of anyone with the long term experiences to supply the depth of data needed to contribute to this discussion. However, based on my very limited experience of one week, I suspect there is a good chance that the 8# number may hold, although I wouldn't be surprised if it actually turns out to be 9 or 10# rainbow in those watersheds.

FUN AT PLAYA BLANCA, MEXICAN YUCATAN



Trip reports from Mark Wilson and John Siegfried (left – Mark with big snook and John looking on) always bring a smile to my face. John's description of his experience hooking a giant permit estimated at 30#: “I had a huge permit, guide said 30 lbs., yeah sure, (maybe) and I didn't "drive the bus". Line around the rod butt and 20lbs. leader broke like I had a real bus on the end. Was too busy dreaming of my fish of a lifetime and watching him run. Oh well. Took 15 shots at 1 tarpon - couldn't get him to eat. Had 2 tarpon eat, but couldn't hook them. We got into bones - you catch 3, I'll catch 3. We tired of them. Great trip, lots of action. Think I'm starting to get it.”

Mark and John were at Playa Blanca, the sister lodge of Casa Blanca, on the Mexican Yucatan. Mark came close on two days to a grand slam – his comments: “Playa B was great once again. I'm still looking for my grand slam. I had permit (photo at right) and bonefish before 10:00 am on two consecutive days and couldn't close the deal. I had a tarpon hooked the second day but he threw the hook. We had lots of shots at permit bones and tarpon every day except one.. Everything at the lodge was handled expertly and the food was great as usual.



This was the third consecutive year that Mark and John had returned to Playa Blanca, building on their previous experiences.

JUNE MEMORY PHOTO



In our April newsletter, we reported on the mothership Rising Tide's record permit trip taken on the world's finest permit flats inside the barrier reef in Central Belize. A group of three anglers released 23 permit. Among those 23 fish were some very special ones. Dennis Banks landed his 50th, a milestone that places him in a very small group of anglers to have taken 50 permit. In the photo is Brad Jackson with one of his 8 fish from that trip. However, while all permit are “special,” this permit was a little “extra” special. During the struggle to get the fish to the skiff, the permit wrapped the line around a coral head. Not to be outdone by something like a misplaced coral head, Brad handed his rod to his guide and dove overboard, freeing the line and saving the fish. These buggers are indeed difficult enough to hook-up.....can't lose it to some coral!!!

Fast action by Brad gave this permit a chance to pose for the camera.

Photo Credits: banner photo – John Landis; Seychelles – John Landis; Dave Wood – Sherri Wood; Royce Hudspeth – Bill and Royce Hudspeth; Playa Blanca – Mark Wilson and John Siegfried.

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,
Don Muelrath
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