

## NEWSLETTER #5 - JULY 2002

If you have Microsoft word, open the attachment above to see the information below in a more "reader friendly" format.

### TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE:

- A look at some of our travel venues for '03
- Trip report on a unique Belize fishing adventure
- Costa Rica Pacific lodge report
- Remaining openings for our '02 travel programs

This is our fifth of our monthly newsletters with updates on great fly fishing venues 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 most places and pride ourselves in the ability to research new locations – and whatever unbiased information on timing and locations we can provide comes at the same cost to you as booking direct.

### OUR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL VENUES FOR '03 – PRELIMINARY LIST

Kamchatka in Eastern Russia will be on our list of destinations for '03 and we're doing an exploratory trip there in August. This area is a wilderness experience with great fishing for steelhead, giant rainbows, char and all the Pacific salmon species – it is today what Alaska was 75/100 years ago and surprisingly close to the US.....about a five hour flight from Anchorage.

Minipi River: Our early July '03 "brown drake hatch" trip at Minonipi Lodge for trophy brookies and land-locked char hosted by Josh Frazier is already full. My son and I will be returning to this isolated part of Labrador for our fourth trip during another week next summer and there is space available for that week. Most likely, this second week will be at Anne Marie lodge the first week in August, hopefully targeting the green drake hatch that we hit during our first trip in '97. At this point, we're only measuring interest in this second week as the dates are not solid so contact me if you'd like to know more.

We have two of the prime steelhead weeks reserved for our shop clients on the Dean River in B.C. for next summer. The owner of this "world class" steelhead lodge agreed to give us two weeks for '03 because we had so many fisherman from the shops up there this summer. The two weeks are July 26-Aug 2 and Aug 2-9 (the July 26 week is tentatively reserved). Price: \$4,000pp, max of 6 fisherman per week.

Moose Lake Lodge is the sister lodge to the Dean River Camp, both operated by John Blackwell. Moose Lake is a wilderness fly-out lodge and provides a great experience with trout, salmon, and can include steelhead. John has agreed to let an intact group of six reserve a mid-July "split trip" dividing a week between Moose Lake Lodge and the Dean Camp. This would give those who want to try for a "world class" steelhead, (but don't want to commit a full week to the pursuit) the opportunity to pursue both destinations. This "special split week" would have to be reserved far in advance to allow the scheduling necessary to make it work because of the very limited space on the Dean.

Large bonefish have been discovered in and around many of the atolls in the Tahiti area of the South Pacific and we are in the process of gathering information about this new fishery. My wife and I will be spending time there on our way home from New Zealand next Feb (a great combination fresh/salt water trip that we're very excited about) to fish it first hand. I've seen some great photos and spoken with people who've been there – the reports are that it was a wonderful fishery with almost non-existent fishing pressure.

We still have a few spots open for our New Zealand trip next February. Josh is leading this one and covering the highlights of both the North and South islands. We have two different versions of this trip – one is the hard core fly fishing version and the other, New Zealand Light, is for the fly fisherman with a non-fishing spouse who want to see and experience the wonders of New Zealand together.

We have completed an arrangement to represent the most unique of all the Bahamas bonefish destinations – Flamingo Cay on the West side of Andros. This is a top drawer (and pricey) experience operated by Charles Bethel III, the grandson of the original owner who purchased this prime west side land in the 20's. In the past, Charles' father ran the operation as primarily a waterfowl hunting lodge catering to a most discriminating European clientele and personal friends. Charles has begun developing its bonefish potential. It is the only lodge on the entire West Side of Andros. Today, it can host both exclusively fly fisherman and those who want to mix some waterfowl hunting into their week. The lodge is only accessed by floatplane – no roads on the West Side. This small, exclusive operation hosts a maximum of 6 people per week.

We will continue booking Isla Monita Lodge in the Chilean Andes. This is the best Andes experience I've had combining big trout on the surface with a variety of fishing venues and there is a great lodge environment. This trip can also combine with some other possibilities to make a great two week package. We'll have two weeks reserved in Belize on the Meca and Seaduction for tarpon, bonefish, permit and snook also – dates not determined as of yet.

### **UNIQUE BELIZE MOTHERSHIP EXPERIENCE – A REPORT**

I've taken well over 20 Belize mothership trips since 1986 and I believe it to be, all things considered, the best of all the saltwater fly fishing experiences. However, I just completed a trip that was the most unique trip I've taken for several reasons. The group consisted of my son, Scott, myself and five of his UC Davis friends who graduated together 10 years ago. The trip had been booked for over a year, utilizing both the Meca and the Seaduction. What made this group unique was that none of them had any salt water fly fishing experience; most had limited trout fly fishing exposure (one had never fly fished before). During the last year, some of them worked on developing their casting skills, primarily the double haul, with the objective being able to catch bonefish (and hopefully tarpon) on a fly. Because of the nature of the group, we carried spin equipment in each skiff and most of them combined spin fishing with their fly fishing – an idea that I think makes a lot of sense for all but the most experienced salt water fly fisherman.

We were greeted upon arriving in Belize by tough conditions: winds were up and heavy rains on the mainland (however, we only had rainfall after dark on the water) had muddied the rivers. The muddy waters spewing out into the ocean made some of our favorite coastal tarpon flats, bonefish flats, and mangrove areas (snook and baby tarpon) unfishable. Not ideal conditions for a group of inexperienced salt water flats fisherman. However, these young execs brought a degree of intensity (matched only by the energy of our very experienced group of four guides who worked with us for the week) to the effort. They overcame not only their lack of experience and skills, but also the lousy conditions.

There were many trip highlights:

- Everyone caught bonefish on a fly.
- Everyone experienced the thrill of having a tarpon in the air – 15 tarpon were jumped for the week, and experience being a limiting factor here, four were caught to 80 pounds. Two rods were broken in the process.
- The variety of the Belize fishery held true - numbers of barracuda, jacks, snappers, and a few snook were taken and released.
- One young man had the rare thrill of catching a permit on his first day!! He went on to get another one later in the week. Both of these were caught in areas I didn't know even held permit. For myself, this was the first trip in memory that I didn't cast to a permit as we spent the whole week in the northern areas and didn't venture south to the special permit flats.
- By the end of the week, each of them had become fairly productive casters and had learned how to deal with the wind. They all graduated with honors from Salt Water Fly Fishing IA and developed skills that can be built on the rest of their lives as they broaden their fly fishing horizons.
- The biggest highlight was how much fun we had. They knew how to have fun and enjoyed being together in the special environment created on a mothership trip – a great experience for either family or close friends. Even though the “catching” was less than most trips I've taken in Belize, I

can't recall enjoying a mothership trip as much as being with them and sharing their thrills as they experienced the excitement of sight fishing the salt water flats for the first time.

### **FIRST CLASS COSTA RICA LODGE WITH SAILFISH, ROOSTERFISH, AND MARLIN COMBINED WITH ECO TOURS FOR THE NON-FISHERS**

Bob Dahlberg recently spent a week at Crocodile Bay Lodge on the Golfo Dulce Bay on the Pacific side of Costa Rica. He submitted a very comprehensive report on both the fishing and the lodge itself. Bob's experiences were generally very positive. The three-year old lodge was comfortable with A/C in the rooms and the food was "very good." They fished both offshore for sails and marlin; raising 12 sails one day and boated 5. The inshore fishery included jacks, roosterfish, and bonita. Also, they did a day of eco-tourism viewing wild life on the Montepalo Peninsula. Bob's complete report is available and can be e-mailed to anyone requesting it. Leland Fly Fishing Adventures is happy to represent this fine Costa Rica property and can book space.

### **REMAINING 2002 PROGRAMS WITH SPACE STILL AVAILABLE**

- Ladies Week at Three Rivers Ranch (Sept 7-13) still has openings for two ladies – or a couple.
- Our September Alaska trophy rainbow trip has space still available.
- We have room for three rods on our Belize mothership trip Oct. 13 – 20.
- The Deschutes River September steelhead float trip has space remaining.
- Christmas Island trip (Oct 27 – Nov 3) can take more rods.
- We may have one opening, due to a late cancellation, on our second week (Aug 3 -10) on the Dean River for what many believe is the world's best steelhead fishing. These spots are hard to come by and sell out very early – if you have an interest, give me a call.

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,

Don Muelrath  
Leland Fly Fishing Adventures  
888-347-4896  
[flyfish@napanet.net](mailto:flyfish@napanet.net)

[www.flyfishingoutfitters.com](http://www.flyfishingoutfitters.com)  
e-mail Josh Frazier at [Josh@flyfishingoutfitters.com](mailto:Josh@flyfishingoutfitters.com)

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