



Permit on, Belize



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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.

**A REPORT FROM THE PONOI RIVER**

In 2006, Jerry Saltzgaber, Chuck Ferrell, and Chip Fudge ventured to the Ponoï River in Russia to sample what most consider to be the finest Atlantic Salmon (right) fishery on the globe. They returned this year and brought a few more friends with them.....since most of the group was from Oklahoma City, they



are active Thunder supporters as witnessed by the t-shirts. At right, L to R, top: Chip Fudge, Jerry Saltzgaber, Chris Carey, Chris Degner, and Gus Pekara. Sitting: Ron Arvine, Larry Davis, Cindy Ruffel, Lance Ruffel, and Chuck Ferrell. Often, when this group travels on a fly rod adventure, they tie in some cultural stops in the country they visit. This year, for some of the group, that included St. Petersburg and/or Moscow.



Gus Pekara (left below), who was new to the group this year, summed up his trip with this comment: "This was a fishing trip of a lifetime for me – great fishing,

great food, great experiences, great bunch of guys." They recruited a large enough group that we were able to negotiate a special rate on the owners residence, known as the Guest House (below, left middle), their own private lodge. Some late season Russian snow was part of a few days. Right, Chris Degner with nice Atlantic.



Unlike Pacific Salmon, the Atlantic returns to the ocean after spawning and revisits the river of their birth to spawn year after year. That explains why they can reach the giant sizes they attain – fish well over 50 pounds are possible. The Atlantic is renowned as a great fly rod fish.....a very hot fish when hooked in moving water. The first year returnees are usually 3 to 6 pounds and known as "Grilse." At left below, Ron and Larry show a double of Grilse. Cindy was one of three women in camp. This was her first time wearing waders and casting a spey

rod. And, catching Atlantic Salmon (right of casting). Hubby Lance reported, “Cindy was a great trooper and had a great time. That said, nails and manicure was on her first agenda when we got back.” At right, Chuck and Chip take a lunch break in a special tent set up on the water during one of the snowy days.



A collection of Atlantics with (L to R): Lance, Chris Carey, Jerry, and Chip with the largest fish for the group, 37”.



## PERMIT – FROM #1 TO #100

This article covers a wide range of permit fishing experiences, from Lucky Leavitt taking the first permit she’d ever seen, to Art Hinckley joining a very select group of less than ten anglers with 100 released. Everyone remembers their first permit, regardless of how many they end up with. It is one of anglings great challenges and thrills, knowing you have just taken one of those very finicky and hard to fool devils of the flats!



Lucky Leavitt was on her third Meca mothership trip in Belize with her husband, Russ, and a few friends. They had chosen for their route to go north, into Chetumal Bay. Some comments from Lucky: “We love the Meca because of its intimacy and closeness. This year’s trip was slightly different because we opted to head further north toward the border with Mexico.....we were wading on hard packed sand flats and casting to a large school of bonefish when we noticed that there were also permit swimming among them. I had never seen a live permit so I asked my husband, a much more accomplished fly fisher, to cast for the permit. His angle toward the sun didn’t allow him to see the fish so I made the cast. Seconds later, I heard the music: zssssszssssssss.....Permit on! Needless to say I was excited, but also surprised. I landed the very first permit I ever saw (photo, left) and finally had my opportunity to see one up close. Although this was a small permit compared to some photos I have seen, I was hooked.”

Perry Harvey and Andy Baxter were on their first Belize mothership trip, aboard the Rising Tide. Both of them had fished for and taken permit previously and understood the challenge so they had dedicated this trip to permit, covering the best permit flats on the globe, beginning about 15 miles southeast from Belize City and extending southward. Although they encountered some windy days (not unusual), they had a good trip overall ([www.flyfishbelize.com](http://www.flyfishbelize.com)). Report from Perry (photo at right, now up to nine total permit released!): "Captain Dean (our guide and captain) impressed us with his knowledge and his passion for hunting Permit. On day one we each boated two and had three others come unbuttoned. Overall, we fed 11 permit and landed five. We will absolutely return next year. 'Rising Tide' is the best way to travel and to access untouched water with lots of shots at Permit." It is very unusual to see another angler on much of the water covered on their trip – almost like fishing “private waters for permit”.....with today’s crowded fishing environments, this aspect is one of the primary reasons the Belize motherships have a loyal following of repeat clients.





The photo collage below commemorates Art Hinckley's taking of his 100<sup>th</sup> permit which occurred on his most recent Rising Tide trip in August. Art needed four fish for his 100 and took four the first two days to end the drama! Included in the collage was Art's 50<sup>th</sup> (and his largest fish to date), Captain Dean Myers and guide Noel Westby (the guides who have been with him for over 3/4's of his 100 permit), and photos of #98, #99, and #100. Art and friends do ten day permit trips twice a year on the Rising Tide in search of permit. With him in August were Don Wilkerson, Dennis Banks (who took his 53<sup>rd</sup> fish on this trip – photo at left), and myself who joined the group to document the event. If you'd like to see the report Art submitted to the Angling Report explaining his view of the overall mothership experience, just ask and we'll forward it to you.



### FAVORITE CHILEAN ANDES LODGE REMAINING DATES

If you'd like to know why this particular lodge is our favorite in Chile, just ask (hint – it has to do with continuing outstanding client reports + personal knowledge). The remaining open dates for this season follow. Note – they have both a 7 night program and an 11 night program.

7 nights / 6 days of fishing:

- December 26 to January 2 - 4 rods
- January 23 to January 30 - 6 rods
- February 27 to March 6 - 2 rods
- March 13 to March 20 - 4 rods

11 nights / 10 days of fishing:

- January 9 to January 20 - 4 rods
- January 20 to February 3 - 3 rods
- March 13 to 24 - 4 rods

## EAST COAST FALSE ALBACORE RUNNING



John Gans checks in with this report on a great start to the season.....he also has a great guide he recommends for anyone that's going to be in the area: "We are having a great start to the fall season in the New York area. The False Albacore showed up off Montauk and have been there for the last 7 days. They are eating 1 inch bay anchovies. Since there really aren't any lures small enough for the spin casters to simulate that bait, the fly fisherman have a huge advantage. I caught a bunch of these torpedoes on Sunday. Huge fun." For anyone who has not experienced the False Albacore, they are an amazing fly rod fish who think they are three times the size and behave in kind!

## SEPTEMBER MEMORY PHOTO



That big smile and red shirt belong to our grandson, Nico. The smile comes from obvious reasons – that is his first tarpon ever. It was taken on a family vacation when they found a little time to do some fishing. Also on the trip were mother Michelle, dad Scott, and sister Sophia. Bet that memory lasts a lifetime! Nice job by Dad on that jump photo – spectacular!



Photo Credits: banner photo – Art Hinckley; Pono - Chip Fudge, Jerry Saltzgaber, Chris Carey, Chris Degner, Gus Pekara Ron Arvine, Larry Davis, Cindy Ruffel, Lance Ruffel, and Chuck Ferrell; permit photos

in order of appearance – Lucky Leavitt, Perry Harvey, Dennis Banks, and Art Hinckley; False Albacore – John Gans.

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,  
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