

NEWSLETTER #11 - APRIL 2003

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This is the eleventh edition of our monthly newsletter 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 to most locations and pride ourselves on our ability to research new ones. 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.

FRENCH POLYNESIA BONEFISH REPORT:

As referenced in the last newsletter, my wife and I stopped in French Polynesia on the way home from our New Zealand stay. The purpose was to pursue some of the large bonefish being reported in some of the newly discovered fisheries in this area. We spent a week fishing the atoll of Tetiaroa, a stunningly beautiful collection of small islands, flats, and lagoons enclosed in a barrier reef with a diameter of about three miles. Located just a twenty minute flight from Tahiti, it is easily accessed by daily flights.

THE RECAP:

- Large bonefish: yes, we saw fish that would have gone 12 or more pounds.
- The group of four (mostly) experienced salt water fly fishermen who were there with me took fish of 6,7, and 9 pounds, but not many. On a per person basis, it was one fish taken per two or three days fishing. Conditions appeared to be tough with warm weather and high water temperatures, but other reports I have show similar results.
- Accommodations: Charming thatched bungalows without fans or A/C – electricity is limited.
- Bugs: Mosquitoes are a constant irritant – netting around the beds is imperative
- Food: good with dinners best.
- Guides: good – the owner of the fly fishing operation is a delightful New Zealander who's made a commitment to exploring French Polynesia and setting up fishing operations.
- Issue: limited flats that appear to receive a lot of pressure for their size– very spooky fish.
- Non-fishing spouse: bird island and great snorkeling – not much else happening which is part of the attraction.
- Recommendation: If you were in Tahiti/French Polynesia and wanted a shot at a big bone, worth giving a try for two or three days, but not worth a trip just to fish this atoll.

French Polynesia continues to be an area with mixed results. Exploration continues by many different operations with sporadic exciting reports, but nothing conclusive. If exploring salt water with a fly rod is your thing, it could be interesting spending a few weeks checking out the entire area.

NEW FLY FISHER ADVENTURE:

For new fly fishers, young or old, nothing is better for excitement and confidence building than locations where there is lots of action on the surface without the necessity of long, accurate casts. One of the great dry fly destinations (during the right time frame) is Moose Lake Lodge in British Columbia. This is an Orvis endorsed wilderness, fly-in lodge that accesses rivers like the Upper Dean and the Blackwater via fly outs. Great scenery, food, and overall operation. We've had clients visit Moose Lake during their premium dry fly season and have 100+ fish days, all on dry flies. We have space during the peak season still available for this summer.

LELAND NIGHT THIS WED (4/2) IN LAFAYETTE SHOP:

- We're having a special Leland evening in the Lafayette Leland shop this Wed from 5 – 8pm. Twice during the evening (6:00 and 7:30) we'll be presenting a 30 minute slide show titled "Flyrodding Earth's Pristine Destinations." Also, we'll be answering questions and showing slides of many great fly fishing destinations for this summer. Lots of stuff going on including:
- Basic to intermediate fly tying demonstrations
- Refreshments served
- Powell Fly Rod Raffle
- Bring in your reels and Leland will clean your lines and check your butt leader.
- Come in and say hi.

LIMITED TIME FAMILY FLY FISHING LOCATION:

The Jackson Hole/Eastern Idaho area offers so much for families that love the outdoors and fly fishing. One of the very best adventures can be a four-day, three-night trip to this area that's built around the overnight float trip through the South Fork of the Snake River canyon. There are different options in constructing this trip – give a call if you'd like to get more info.

NEWS FROM BELIZE:

There is still space available for our Leland Belize mothership trip 9/19 – 26. You may remember we reported that Mike Sheele released three permit on a Mexican Yucatan trip in early '02 – it appears three is the magic number for Mike as he released three more on a Belize Meca trip in early March. Art Hinckley is a Belize regular taking two trips a year with Martin McCord aboard the Meca. Usually, Art only fishes permit, but on his February trip, he was accompanied by some friends that wanted to do some tarpon fishing. Art's trip report is below. My disclaimer is that this should be considered a "fantasy trip" – i.e., this is what can happen when you hit it perfect.

"We had a really good trip. The weather was good all week. The first two days, we fished for tarpon close to where Martin keeps the Meca docked. The first day, I hooked four about 60-80lbs., but didn't land any. Steve and Mike each hooked one but didn't land them and Mike caught a snook. The next day we fished for tarpon again close to the mainland. We found tailing tarpon as you saw on your January trip. To make a long story short, Steve hooked six and landed two, both a little over 100lbs. I hooked three and got one about 90lbs. right next to the boat, but the shock tippet wore through and broke. Mike hooked three and fought one about 100lbs. for two and one half hours. He ended up in the Belize River when the fly pulled out just as he was about to land the tarpon. The next day, we moved south about two hours to begin permit fishing and I got two small ones the first day there. The next morning, I probably had about 10 great shots before breakfast, but didn't catch any. Mike and Steve had several good shots also, but didn't catch any either. After breakfast, the fishing slowed. The next morning, Steve caught a 17lb. permit before breakfast. After breakfast I caught an 8lb. and a 12lb. permit. During lunch, we moved to some flats about 20 miles south. Action was slow and we didn't catch any. We moved back north to the original flats where we'd caught all the fish. I caught a 13lb. permit, but it was a fairly slow day. The last morning before we left I got one small fish and Steve caught a 15lb. permit. Also, during the week I hooked four other permit that got off after a second or two. Mike had two eat his crab, but neither one got hooked. The new crab fly worked great except that the hook turned over too easily. All the fish that ate except one were caught on that fly. Eight permit released in four days is a new Meca record and Martin was very excited. I wonder how many we might have caught if we wouldn't have spent two days fishing for tarpon?"

Art

EARLY SEASON ALASKA RAINBOWS:

The most predictable time to try for Alaska's big rainbows with a dry fly is the early season, before any of the salmon have entered the rivers. We have space with two different operations (float trip and lodge) held for those who may be interested in pursuing this opportunity.

Lodge: Rainbow River Lodge is offering a "two for one" package during the weeks of 6/14 – 21 and 6/21-28. Regular rate of \$3,900 per person is good for two people during these weeks. Fly outs are extra, but because of their location on one of the world's great rainbow trout waters, the Copper River, you shouldn't need to fly unless you want to.

Float Trip: One of Alaska's premier float trip operators has space for an adventure on a "world class" 'bow river from 6/22 – 28. Price is \$3,190pp.

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

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