

NEWSLETTER #43 - DECEMBER 2005

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Leland Fly Fishing Travel Newsletter – December, 2005

TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE:

- TRIP REPORT: AMAZON PEACOCK BASS FISHERY
- WED, DEC 14 – SPECIAL HOLIDAY DESTINATION DAY AT BUSH STREET
- BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR A FLY FISHER? *THE HUNT* MAY BE IT
- LIMITED '06 SPACE AT 'TOP OF THE LINE' WESTERN FLY FISHING RANCHES
- PRIME '06 STEELHEAD OPENINGS ON THE DEAN AND BABINE
- LAST MINUTE PLANNING FOR EXOTIC WINTERTIME GETAWAYS
- HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

We are in the fourth year of publishing 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 sites. 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.

TRIP REPORT: AMAZON PEACOCK BASS FISHERY

The requests of clients during the last few years had prompted me to research many of the Amazon Peacock Bass operations. I could never get my fly fishing enthusiasm revved up. While a trip to the Amazon had appeal, the reasons for my reticence were:

1. generally, a "bassmaster" type of fishing environment and clientele
2. muddy or blackwater jungle river fishing.

Our interest level was stimulated when a respected source told us about a relatively new fly fishing lodge they had visited on a clear-water river where sight-fishing was possible from a poled skiff or, during certain water conditions, while wading. The primary target was the aggressive peacock bass of the Amazon as well as other secondary species (like the surface-feeding, acrobatic, arowana). After further investigation supported the initial report I had heard, we made a quick decision to fill a vacant slot on our calendar for the week after Thanksgiving with a trip to the Amazon. Joined by Scott Ellison and my wife, Marte, we purchased airline tix and made preparations.

Basically, our expectations were met in a positive fashion. What we found was a well operated, remote, tropical lodge in the Amazon on a river protected from other fisherman as well as local netters. We did some sight fishing from poled skiffs everyday and the fishing was at times electrifying. The group of 12 we were with took over 50 peacock bass that topped 10 pounds with two 18 pounders heading the list. We also sight cast and took aowwana, a great surface oriented fly rod fish.

This fishery and location is so different from our standard salt water or freshwater destinations, we decided to do a comprehensive report to cover all the elements involved in the trip. So not to fill the regular newsletter with Amazon info for many who may have no interest, that comprehensive report will follow in the next e-mail. If you have any interest at all in the Amazon, you may enjoy it – if not, hit the delete key and move on.

WED, DEC 14: SPECIAL HOLIDAY DESTINATION DAY IN THE BUSH STREET SHOP – AMAZON SLIDE SHOWS, BOOK SIGNING, WINE AND CHEESE, LATE HOURS, ETC.

I'll be in the Bush Street shop next Wednesday, December 14 for a special holiday Destination Day. The shop will remain open til 8:00 with wine and cheese spread available starting at 5:00. There will be two scheduled slide presentations on our recent Amazon trip at 12:30 and 5:00.

I'll have with me some enlargements of photos from *THE HUNT* and will be honored to sign any copies of the book.

We'll also have slide shows available on a variety of destinations including our New Zealand tour, Patagonia, Labrador Brook Trout, Alaska, and Belize and all the saltwater destinations. If you'd like to get together and view slides and discuss different possibilities, it's best to set an appointment so I will have time set aside for you and won't have you waiting when you come in. Just hit "reply" and let me know what you'd like to view/discuss and we'll share some fly fishing excitement together.

If possible, make some time available to come in and say "hi."

BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR A FLY FISHER? *THE HUNT* MAY BE IT

Our just published new book, *THE HUNT*, captures the essence, in both photo and story, of stalking the world's great gamefish with a fly rod. Reviews have called it "...one of the great fly fishing classics of all time..." and "...the finest collection of fly fishing photos ever..." Most of all, it's a "fun read," a book that's enjoyable just to pick up and thumb through. We're very excited by the enthusiastic responses from everyone who's seen a copy.

Winston Moore, one of the legendary figures in the realm of fly fishing, flattered *THE HUNT* when he submitted, with his order for two cases to use for Christmas gifts, a note that stated in part: "I'M 81 YEARS OLD AND I'VE READ EVERY FISHING BOOK THAT LOOKED WORTHWHILE TO ME. HOWEVER, I'VE NEVER IN ALL THAT TIME SEEN ANYTHING AS PROFOUNDLY SPECIAL AS THE HUNT! IT IS AN ABSOLUTE MASTERPIECE!"

I'M SURE THAT EVERY READER COULD, AND PROBABLY WILL, SPEND MANY HOURS READING/VIEWING THE BOOK AND THOSE FANTASTIC PHOTOGRAPHS OVER AND OVER AGAIN THRU A LIFETIME, NEVER EVER HAVING DIGESTED ALL OF IT OR GROWING TIRED OF IT.

THE HUNT CERTAINLY TOPS ANYTHING I'VE COME ACROSS IN THESE 81 YEARS.
WARM REGARDS, WINSTON MOORE

THE HUNT sells for \$45 and is available at www.ffhunt.com

LIMITED '06 SPACE AT 'TOP OF THE LINE' WESTERN FLY FISHING RANCHES

Private fly fishing ranches in the west provide a wonderful, high-end, fly fishing experience for both newcomers and veterans alike. The norm is large average size fish, private waters, beautiful streams, and outstanding western cuisine. However, they are getting hard to find. One of the favorites of many of our clients over the years was Elk Creek Lodge, but ECL has just announced they are going entirely private. Another new one on the scene, Val Kilmer's Pecos River Ranch in northern New Mexico, is undergoing some changes also and part of the property is going to be sold. As of now, it's unclear how these changes will affect the private waters fishery on the Pecos.

All of this puts extra pressure for space on what may be the Rockies best private fly fishing operation, Three Forks Ranch. We are currently holding some dates in early July, August, and September that will have to be released soon if not booked. If you have an interest and would like more information, let us know.

PRIME '06 STEELHEAD OPENINGS ON THE DEAN AND BABINE

While it's not definite at this writing what the final number of openings will be, we will have space open for our spots on the two of the world's finest steelhead rivers. On the Dean, the spots will be on the lower Dean during the last week of July and first week of August, prime time for this world class summer run. The Babine Steelhead Lodge week we're holding is the second week in October, normally a very good slot. If you have interest in either of these fisheries, let me ASAP as they must be deposited soon to lock up the space.

LAST MINUTE PLANNING FOR EXOTIC WINTERTIME GETAWAYS

If you're a little late in planning your getaway for the dead of our winter, there are still opportunities, especially if you can be flexible in your travel dates.

Patagonia and the Chilean fjords: Many of the top lodges still have space open.

Amazon: the lodge we visited is full through January, but has spotty openings in Feb/Mar

Saltwater: Christmas Island, Los Roques, Belize, Bahama's, Ascension Bay, etc – openings are available for selected dates.

New Zealand: best to plan way in advance for NZ, but if you have flexibility in your travel dates, usually something can be put together to meet your objectives on a few months notice.

Tierra del Fuego: need to find a cancellation to get space at the better lodges.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

We wish you a holiday season that is filled with all the good things you're hoping for and the people you want to share them with. Hope I get to see you on the 14th in the Bush Street shop

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

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,

Don Muelrath

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