

NEWSLETTER #35 - APRIL 2005

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Leland Fly Fishing Travel Newsletter - April, 2005

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This is the thirty-fifth 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 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.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND DAY AT THE BUSH STREET SHOP, THURS., APR 28

Christmas Island is the featured presentation at the shop this Thursday for our monthly Destination Day. We just had four guys return from a trip there a few weeks ago and this will largely be a trip report (see some trip highlights below). It's one of the premier destinations for newcomers to salt water fly fishing and also for those veterans looking for a giant trevally on the fly. The presentations will be at 12:30 and 5:00 on the 28TH at the shop.

Additionally on Thursday, I'll be available by appointment for discussion/slide presentations on other destinations.

SPRING STEELHEAD ON THE SKEENA

When I think of early spring in Northern British Columbia, I tend to have visions of snow covered trees, very cold weather, and frozen water. Evidently, I don't have the right mindset. Jeff Bright is one of our steelhead veterans (steelhead addict is a better description) and he returned recently with Jeff Reinke for a spring steelhead adventure on the lower Skeena and tributaries. Jeff reports that the attraction for him is that water levels are more constant than the fall and there are lots of fish in the river system. And, on the lower river, these are "hot" fish not far removed from the salt. He reports averaging 3 hook-ups a day with a big fish released of 17 pounds and with fish to 30 pounds possible. March 15 to April 30 is the window of opportunity with this fishery. We are considering booking a week for next spring - let me know if you would have any interest or would like to know more.

".....WE'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE FOR A LIFETIME"

In the last week, I've fielded several calls from Dad's booking summer trips for them and their sons and/or daughters. It seemed to tie in with the series of new TV ads being run by some national boating association. They are cute and certainly strike a nerve with me as one of those lucky Dad's who has both a son and son-in-law to share his fly fishing passion with. If you haven't seen them, a few quotes will put you in touch with the essence:

Cute little boy says, "Take me fishing Dad and we'll have something to share for a lifetime."

Or the one that really gets to me: Cute little girls says, "Take me fishing - my wedding day will be sooner than you think."

Excuse me for appearing too commercial or crass attempting to build on these very emotional thoughts, but this is the time of year to be thinking and exploring the possibilities of family adventures built around a fly rod and fish. There certainly are many opportunities to match the budget and experience level of those involved. There are some high end destinations with great guides and private waters with "can't miss" trophy fish to more budget oriented trips - lots of possibilities to capture a young person's imagination and begin their involvement enjoying the excitement and benefits of learning to use a fly rod.

TRIP REPORTS - NORTH PLATTE, BELIZE, CHRISTMAS IS, AND PATAGONIA

As usual, our early season trips to the North Platte River in Wyoming produced comments about above average size fish, good numbers, and over all success. And, no snow (the group in '04 did have one snowy day). Ron Chauvel and Al Haas

were up with a group in early April. Al commented: "Great guides. A well run lodge. Brett knows his business. The fishing was out of scale to any I have known. Many more large native fish than the lower Sac. Many more large rainbows than I have ever caught in a day on my favorite Montana Rivers."

We send several people each year in early April to the North Platte and the comments are generally the same - believe this is the best early season fishery in the Rockies. Great way to start your trout season.

Salt water first timers, Peter Pervere and Sam Miller, joined Josh Frazier and Eddie Howells for their initial bonefish adventure to Christmas Island in the Pacific. Some of the comments from Peter: "The trip definitely exceeded expectations. The fishing was great - the last day I was one short of catching a 12 bonefish by 12 noon. Would also note the scuba diving is outstanding there. We're looking forward to the next trip."

John Bobbitt and sons have made a 10 or 11 day trip in Belize with Martin McCord on his mothership the Meca an annual event. This year he was joined by Dr. Charles Webster who filled in for one of his sons who lives in England and was detained on business. Trip highlights included John taking an IGFA certified inshore grand slam his first morning with six bonefish, a snook, and a 40 pound tarpon. John and son Mike had a double header hook-up with twin 60 pound tarpon with Mike boating his. Dr. Webster released a 40 pound tarpon and a cobia of the same size for his highlights. Dr. Webster, on his first Belize mothership trip, commented on the stunning marine scenery including the coral reefs, shallow flats, and azure colored waters. And, getting 12 hours of guided fishing a day helped make it a great trip.

Regarding our favorite Patagonian operation, Gordon Taylor recently returned from his second consecutive trip and stated: "The lodge, the guides, and Marcel (the owner/operator) remain great."

BIG HORN RIVER CABIN AVAILABLE

A top drawer cabin on the Big Horn, owned by one of our clients, is now available for rent. Two bedrooms, each with it's own bath and two single beds, fireplace, BBQ, and fully equipped kitchen - can get cook and guides. Rent is a minimum of \$150 a night for three or less and \$200 per night for four. 40 miles south of Hardin and 3 miles north of Fort Smith.

QUIPS AND QUOTES

One of our recent New Zealand travelers (who requested to remain anonymous) described the experience of watching those big New Zealand browns and rainbows stick their noses out of the water and gulp a dry fly in this fashion: "It's more addictive than cocaine and potentially more expensive. Makes you greedy - you want more."

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

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