

NEWSLETTER #51 - AUGUST 2006

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Fly Fishing Adventures Travel Newsletter, August, 2006

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We are in the fifth year of publishing our monthly newsletter with updates on great fly fishing venues, trip reports 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.

ELK RIVER – FERNIE B.C. TRIP REPORTS

Last summer, we made an exploratory trip to the Elk River and it's tributaries in the area of Fernie, B.C. We fished and photographed and tried to sample as much as we could. What we found was a fabulous native West Slope Cutthroat fishery that rose eagerly to the dry fly and possibly the best remaining Bull Trout fishery left anywhere with many fish over 10 pounds taken each year. The B.C. government has done an excellent job of creating the laws and policies (actually restricting rod days on the water and closing some waters to enhance the overall fishing) to protect this fishery and the results are visible, both in the health of the fishery and the amount of pressure on the waters. Add to this that Fernie is an upscale area that transforms into a jet-setter ski destination in the winter and has many non-fishing options and you have something special. (slide presentation is available)

Our website (www.flyfishingadventures.org), at the bottom of the British Columbia page, has the complete reports excerpted below. Also, grouped with those reports is a detailed rundown on the streams and rivers in this watershed – including several interesting and productive "walk and wade" small streams.

From Josh Luftglidden –

".....accommodations were first rate. The jacuzzi proved to be a key asset as I returned home each day tired and sore. The fishing was also first rate. The first two days I floated the Elk with J.D and Jeff.....(second day) we floated the upper Elk.....caught about 20-25 fish, again all on Elk Hair Caddis. The average fish was in the 17-18" range, with the largest being a 22" bruiser hooked in about 18" of water!

The third day I went on a walk/wade trip with to the Michel and Alexander, two small creeks. The fourth and final day, I took a trip with Joel up to the Wigwam in search of Bull Trout. (see the "fantasy day" reports below for details on this day, a truly remarkable day)"

Note: Josh's full report on the website also includes a link to a photo album with several of his photos from his trip which includes a fine collection of Bull Trout photos, all taken in one day!

From Alan Spiegelman and son, Josh –

"Josh and I had a wonderful trip....Island Lake Lodge was really nice...overlooking the lake and the Rockies....The fishing was terrific. We spent our first two days on the Elk, fishing with Curtis on the first day and Joel on the second. We fished the Michel on Wednesday with Andre....We had a great day, and it really is a pretty little stream. Got some good sized fish there, the largest about 18". The biggest one we caught

on the Elk was 20".....Everyone - the people at the lodge, the guides, the shops, etc. were really friendly and accommodating. All in all, we had a terrific vacation. Thanks for putting it together....Josh had a great time and I think he is now hooked on fly fishing. He said he'd go back in a minute, so I now have a partner to fish with. The guides were really helpful in teaching us - Josh learned how to fish and I picked up a lot of good tips on casting, etc."

From Jess Erickson and sons –

"My boys and I had a great time. The whole trip fully met our expectations. That includes the fish, the guides, the weather and our accommodations. We had great guides and they taught us a lot....Floating the Elk is great. And walking and wading Michel Creek and the Wigwam was good too. Beautiful streams! Island Lake is a spectacular place. I could take my wife there. The food was good and so was the service."

THE WEST – SOME SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER IDEAS

Some would argue that September can be the finest fly fishing month in many areas throughout the West. October can share that reputation if the weather holds. Crowds are gone and the waters offer the opportunity for more solitude than the summer crush. Some spots worth considering:

Independent Guides, Colorado: this is a new operation started by a group of guides who worked for years at Elk Creek Lodge. Elk Creek used to be the finest private waters fishery in the west before becoming totally private this year. These are quality guides who know this spectacular area of Colorado well and use their long term relationships to access private waters in many locations. Using an informal B & B for their base of operations, this is a program where the fishing can be outstanding and the costs more reasonable than a high end lodge. Great spot for a long weekend type getaway – Four nights with three days fishing is their specialty.

British Columbia - Fernie and the Blackwater River: September may be the best month for settled weather in B.C. (October can be a little "iffy") In eastern B.C., on the Elk River drainage (Fernie), the cutthroat are still rising to the surface and the Bull Trout are in their spawning mode. Although some waters are closed to protect the Bull Trout, others are available. In western B.C., this can be a wonderful time for the float trip on the Blackwater River with its prolific native rainbow trout fishery.

On the high end of the scale, if you like first class service and the best private waters fishing in the U.S., Three Forks Ranch in Northern Colorado has two open slots for five night trips in September still open. This has been described by one of our best clients as "decadent fly fishing" and it has received rave reviews from everyone we've sent up there.

FANTASY FLY ROD DAYS AND EXPERIENCES

We reserve this column for those special days when the fishing gods smile on you and everything lines up perfect.....or you have one of those truly unforgettable experiences that can only happen with a fly rod in hand. For starters, here's our first fantasy Bull Trout experience:

From Josh Luftglidden on the Wigwam River (see Fernie reports above):

"The Bull Trout did not disappoint and the fishing was red hot all day.... I landed something like 15-20 monster Bull Trout. The average fish being around 28", with the two largest fish coming in at 34"-35". The fishing was so hot at one point that I was hooking a fish every 2-3 casts! The last fish of the day proved to be the biggest and hardest to net. He took off downstream as soon as he was hooked, and at one point he had me 100+ yards into my backing. We finally netted him almost a full mile from where he was hooked!"

On our July Labrador trip for giant brookies (see last months newsletter for details), Jeff Reinke had a day where he took 3 brookies over six pounds each, all on dry flies. That certainly qualifies for "fantasy stuff." However, he had a very memorable experience that merits this column. Many of the brookies are tagged and accurate records kept to track the movement and growth of these special fish in the watershed. On his first day, while fishing some caddis beds, Jeff took a 4.75# brookie. The guide tagged the fish before releasing

– tag number #204. On his last day, fishing the same caddis beds, Jeff took the same fish - #204. Unusual to start and end a trip with the same fish!!

From Belize comes a way-out report from Belize mothership veteran, Gary Bulla, titled “How do you break \$1500+ worth of fly rods in less than 2 seconds?.” At dusk, Gary hooked a 60# tarpon and it was pitch black by time he got the fish to the boat – by itself not unique enough to qualify for fantasy stuff as hooking big tarpon near dark is fairly common in Belize. However, Gary decided to bring the fish into the boat for photos....and lost control. In a flash, 2 Loomis GLX's and a Winston 12 weight Boron 2X were in pieces on the bottom of the skiff.

DISCOUNTED BELIZE MOTHERSHIP TRIP – OCTOBER

Due to an unexpected pregnancy, a disappointed couple are going to have to bail out of their paid for Belize mothership trip on the Seaduction with Captain Charles Westby. The trip includes seven nights inside the sheltered waters of the Belize barrier reef on the 37 foot Sea Ray, the Seaduction. Your flats skiff is towed behind to use to pursue the great variety of salt water flats fish including tarpon, permit, bonefish, snook, barracuda, etc. This is a trip for a single, couple or pair of guys – two people max. The charter is yours, accompanied by just whomever you brought with you, your captain and cook – check out the Belize page on our website for some trip reports and more details. Regular price is \$5,800 for the 7 night trip – the current holders are willing to discount it to \$4,000. There is some flexibility in the dates the trip can be taken, but it must be from late September through the end of October. For specifics on dates, hit “reply” or give a call.

“SAN FRANCISCO DAY” – AUGUST 29

If you are in San Francisco, we have scheduled August 29 as our next day in the City. To view a list of the slide presentations we have available, go to our website www.flyfishingadventures.org Under the link for “Newsletters/Trip Reports” is the list of slide shows. I am available by appointment to stop by your office or home for discussion and/or slide presentations from our library. Also, I'm available to get together for a cup of coffee almost anywhere in the City.

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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