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We are in the fifteenth 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.

GETTING STARTED

The discussion about getting kids involved in fishing always comes to this question: "At what age should you start?" The answer to that has nothing to do with age, but everything to do with where and how. Age really is not the major factor. You want action....size does not matter. Bluegill in farm ponds are an excellent beginning. A worm, a bobber, and a Barbie Fishing Pole with built in closed face reel does the trick. If possible, you want a location that allows for the young angler to see the bluegills swimming around the bait.....nothing like the visual to spark the hunting instincts we all have. Of course, farm ponds usually have black bass also. Bobber and worm works for them also, but if you have access to a boat, you can troll for bass, even if all you have is oars, no motor (Grandpa or Dad on the oars).



Above, L to R: Abby Scheumann with Barbie rod and first bluegill; Abby watching the bluegills threaten her worm; Julia Scheumann with her first bluegill – Barbie rod; Henry Gans with black bass – bobber at far right; Nico Muelrath with black bass - trolling in farm pond.....no casting necessary! Closed faced, push button spinning reels are usually easier for the little ones to handle than open faced spin reels. Abby again, at right with black bass.

John Gans and son, Henry, submitted many interesting and relevant comments about this topic. For starters....."We started when Henry was 4, with worms in a local pond



for bluegills, perch and the occasional large mouth bass. Of course, as a youngster, he was more interested in quantity than quality, so I made sure that I took him to spots where there were many fish and they were easy to catch.”

Many saltwater locations have great numbers of snappers. Belize for example, has 11 varieties of snappers and fishing in the right places can produce large numbers of small fish. Below: I to r: Abby and Nico fishing off the front of the Rising Tide – a bit of conch does the trick. They spent almost every waking hour when they were on the boat fishing.....none of the fish taken were over six inches long; Jack Chapman with an amazing catch of snappers for the day while on a Rising Tide trip with father, Nick, and brother, Ben. There are places where bonefish can fill every need for youngsters. Our entire family did a combination Rising Tide and Belize island resort caye vacation last summer (below for details). The resort had three schools of bonefish, including one school with 5 – 8+ pound bones, they kept around the docks with feed. A little conch on the hook or fly.....it was a visual experience, watching those schools from the dock....and of course hooking a bone provided a thrill. Below right, Captain Dean coaches up Jack Scheumann; Jack with his first bone. Sophie Muelrath, at right , with Dad and her first bonefish.



From Nick Chapman: “Both of my sons, Ben & Jack (above with snappers), now flyfish. We've been fishing off the Rising Tide since the boys were 8 or 9; they're now 16. We've been fortunate in that we've taken some pretty exciting vacations, but fishing in Belize is still the one they the look forward to the most. I credit this to Dean and his crew, the atmosphere of the Rising Tide, the remoteness of the experience, and the intimate time with family and friends. Not to mention the excitement of the fishing.”

Appreciation of our natural world begins with experiences like these. Birds and wildlife are usually present.....much more healthy than sitting for hours in front of a computer or game monitor!

ROLE OF THE BARRACUDA

All that is needed to appreciate the role of the 'Cuda in helping create excitement about fishing is to look at the sampling of photos below. The guides on the Rising Tide are adept at finding 'Cuda while trolling near the reef. Trolling offers an opportunity for every newcomer to fishing to succeed, and to catch a large fish with very interesting dentures.

Below, I to r: Colby Britt; a father-son 'Cuda Combo for Andrew and Andy Harper; Nico Muelrath; Abby Scheumann



Regarding the photo of Julia Collins (below right with large 'Cuda), Father Taylor relates the story: “We were on a Rising Tide trip near Long Caye. The weather had not been very cooperative and, as a young 12 year old, Julia

was a bit bored. After some serious encouragement, she agreed to accompany me while I blind cast for Tarpon, providing we could troll a bit in the channel.

She immediately hooked this very special Barracuda. Captain Dean was there to guide and encourage her during the fight. I could not have been more proud of Julia and appreciative of Dean. Dean was very invested in the moment. We have so warm memories of our many trips to Belize with our very special Belizean family: Captain Dean, Noel, Bang, and Claude.”

Below, l to r: Jack Chapman, Julia Scheumann, Colby Britt, and Julia Collins



EVOLUTION TO FLY FISHING



Youngsters watch and hear about family members who are fly fishers. Learning to move from spin fishing to casting a fly rod is something young fisherpersons will naturally aspire to. Sooner or later comes the question: “when can I learn to fly fish?” The best answer is “you’re not quite old enough”.....unless you are sure they are REALLY ready to learn. There is nothing wrong with delaying the move from spinning equipment to fly rod as long as possible. Ideally, you can find opportunities which allow for fishing with both spin and fly rods.....they can try using the fly rod, but have the option to retreat to spin rod/reels if the frustration gets too great.

Alaska is one of the best places to take a youngster for the whole package.....nature oriented wilderness adventure and lots of fish that can be taken with both spin and fly. John Gans gives an excellent example of why Alaska fills this option.....“The turning point in Henry’s (above and at right) growth as a fly fisher was when he was 10 and we went to Bristol Bay Lodge in Alaska. There we settled into 7 straight days of King Salmon, Dolly Varden, Grayling, Char, and of course, huge Rainbows. That week, Henry caught roughly 25 fish a day in amazing surroundings. It was early season, and with the expanded light, we had 23 hours a day to fish. It seemed to me, he never slept. That set the hook deep in my son’s love of fishing. One week in Alaska cemented a lifetime of father/son bonding over fishing. Since then we have taken at least one trip a year. We have chased large Browns in Montana, Permit in Belize, Bonefish in many spots, Redfish in Florida, Tarpon in Mexico, Striped Bass on Long Island, Brook Trout in Vermont. The list is long and growing. We don’t care how many fish we catch as long as we are in a beautiful place and we are doing it together.”



The guide is critical. The “right” guide makes all the difference in helping a newbie to fly fishing enjoy and succeed at the experience. Generally, the challenging angling in New Zealand is not the ideal place to learn to fly fish, but with the “right guide,” there have been many newcomers enjoy their introduction to fly fishing there. Laura and William Owens and their two daughters were on a “family-type itinerary” in NZ and they had some fishing time scheduled with a highly recommended guide. The girls, Michelle (at right) and Leanne (left), each spent a day on the water with Dad enjoying, for the first time, the thrill of stalking trout. Neither had any previous fly casting experience except for some backyard casting



lessons. Both were able to get a photo with one of NZ’s trophy browns. William commented on what made the

experience work out well: “The girls both loved their day out fishing with Scotty and he was very patient with them when they did try their hand at fishing. I can see why you like and recommend Scotty so highly.”

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH KIDS AND FISHING.....

If you have stories that fit this column and would like to share them, hit reply and send them along - photos also!

ALL ABOUT KIDS AND FISHING – PART 2

Due to space restrictions, Part 2 will be featured in the upcoming March newsletter

BELIZE – RISING TIDE GROUP NEEDS 1 OR 2 MORE

On Rising Tide trips in Belize, the price varies greatly with the number of anglers. For instance, for the standard 7 night trip, the rate for a party of three is \$4,595 per person while a party of five or six is \$3,695. There is a group of four fly fishers booked for March 25 to April 3 who are looking for one or two more to get a better value per person. Anyone interested, just hit reply. This is the website www.flyfishbelize.com



WHAT WE DO AT FLY FISHING ADVENTURES

This is a new link to a description of who we are and what we do.....also, listing the destinations around the world that we can provide information regarding the experience and prepare clients to visit: [FLY FISHING ADVENTURES - WHAT WE DO](#)

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,
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