

NEWSLETTER #28 - SEPTEMBER 2004

If you have access to Microsoft Word, open the attachment above to see the information below in a more "reader friendly" format.

Leland Fly Fishing Travel Newsletter – September, '04

TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE

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This is the twenty-eighth 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.

BUSH STREET SHOP DESTINATION DAY, TUES, SEPT 28 – WHAT MAKES THE NORTH PLATTE A SPECIAL EARLY/LATE SEASON FISHERY?

Next Thursday has been designated as our monthly Destination Day in the Bush Street shop. I'll be in the shop from 11:00am through the evening. The scheduled slide presentations will be at 12:30 and 5:00pm and will focus on the North Platte and what makes it a special early and late season fishery – Also, I'll have with me the photos from our recent trip to the North Platte (see below). Personal slide presentations by appointment can be scheduled on any of our great destinations. Let me know if you'd like to make an appointment and what destination you'd like me to be prepared for. Drop in and say "hi" and let's discuss the exciting possibilities of fly fishing travel.

STARTING CHILDREN IN FLY FISHING – HOW OLD SHOULD THEY BE?

What is the right age to take a youngster fishing for the first time? There may not be an exact answer to this question, but there are some definite guidelines. If the fishing environment is one that guarantees fast action and easy hook-ups, a child of three or four can be captured by the magic and excitement of fishing. I recently accompanied my four year old granddaughter, Abby, and her father, Jody, on her first fishing "trip." A few months ago, Jody gave Abby a pink and baby blue "Barbie" spin-cast outfit made by Shakespeare, complete with a "Barbie" landing net. The rod was about two-and-a-half feet long with a closed face spinning reel built into the rod (like the old Zebco reels with a push button release for free-spool). He taught her how to cast it on their back lawn. Surprisingly, she got very good at it quickly – heavy weight tied to the end of the line helped.

We went on a picnic to a small farm pond up the Napa Valley that held black bass, but more important, lots of bluegills. We used a small row boat and pushed off shore about 20 feet. We could see the bluegills over the weedbeds beneath the boat in about three feet of water. Our choice of fly was a small bead head nymph with a bobber above it to give it weight. After a few failed attempts by Abby to get the fly in the right spot, Dad took over the casting duties. We had Abby jig the fly as she reeled it slowly. A few minutes of this without a solid hook up (lots of eats, but no sets) and we went to "plan B." Out came the container of worms. Bang – a little piece of worm on that nymph sure did get results. This turned into a great sight fishing experience, the three of us leaning over the side of the boat and watching the bluegills fight over the "worm enhanced fly" as Abby reeled slowly. Soon the bucket of water in the boat had 9 bluegills swimming in it. Abby was really excited about her success as a fisherperson. We decided it was time to quit and leave the experience on a high note. The last cast produced a special thrill as a small bluegill was hooked and was swimming frantically. Out of the weedbed below came a black bass and ate the bluegill. The drag on that little Barbie set-up turned out to be very smooth as Abby struggled with that bass. We released the bluegills and the bass back into the lake, had lunch, visited with the goats and cows, and took a very excited little girl home. A great "fly fishing" trip and the sort of experience that provides a foundation to build a fly fishing buddy for life.

NORTH PLATTE LODGE – A TRIP REPORT

Regular readers of our newsletter have read reports from many clients in the past few years who've had very enjoyable early season trips in late March and early April to the North Platte Lodge in Wyoming. I recently took a trip with Bob Noyes, John Gallo, Bob Friend, Barney Osher and friends to NPL to check it out.

What I found confirmed the reports I had been hearing for three years:

A large average size fish of about 15 inches with several in the 18 to 20 inch range.

Good numbers of healthy, football shaped feisty rainbows (one 26.5 inch brown was released the day after we left).

A comfortable lodge hosting only 8 anglers, making it a great location for a small group of friends or family.

Great guides who really know the water and can work with newcomers to fly fishing.

The lodge owns the lease rights to over 25 miles of river meaning that only their guides can anchor or beach their boats and wade fish. No one else, by Wyoming law, can even drop anchor or set foot out of their drift boat in that section of river. This keeps the crowds down.

A reasonable package that includes flies and leaders (see below).

August/September downside: the weed beds are prominent in the river after a summer's growth and you are constantly cleaning your fly. However, there is some dry fly action in the fall. During his last two days, Bob Noyes hooked three fish on size #22 trico spinners that went 20 inches, an interesting 20-20 combination.

If you want to "scratch your itch" as the spring begins in '05, here are the early season time frames with openings:

3/17 - 21 (3 day fish)

3/21 - 26 (Easter Special \$200 discount - 4 day fish)

3/28 - 4/1 (3 day fish)

4/1 - 6 (4 day fish)

4/10 - 14 (3 day fish)

Prices - 3 day fishing, 1125

4 day fishing, 1500 - Easter Special, 1300

"FANTASY STUFF" FOR THIS ISSUE

While fly fishing is pursued for many reasons, having a "fly fishing fantasy" experience is something we all chase. Once in a while it actually happens and this column is devoted to sharing those special moments/days.

Rex Titus, as reported by his fishing companion Rich Hosley, was fishing the Williamson River in Oregon with guide Marlon Rampy. The day had been slow as the day's end neared. Several fish had been hooked, but they either pulled loose or broke the 5x tippet, and no fish had been released. In the last hole, something big grabbed Rex's #8 black leech. Twenty minutes later, a monster wild rainbow of 14.5#, fresh out of Klamath Lake, was weighed and released.

In the last few years, Don Nelson has taken 20+ pound steelhead on the Dean River and a nine pound rainbow out of the North Platte among his trophy catches. But, the big tarpon had eluded him.....until last month. For the last two years, Don has been searching in the Florida Keys and Belize for that fish. On a Belize mothership trip in August, Don crossed the tarpon off his list of "must catch species" when he hooked and landed a seventy pound silver king after a mammoth battle of over an hour.

On that same Belize trip, San Francisco shop co-manager, Keith Westra, also took his first tarpon, a 60 pounder. Keith also had his fly eaten twice by permit, but alas, like most of the salt water fly fishing world, he's still looking to release his first permit.

QUIPS AND QUOTES

Steve Raymond defines winter steelheading: "Long hours of cold, interminable work, punctuated with breathless moments of excitement."

LELAND-FRONTIERS AGENT AGREEMENT

In addition to the many great destinations that we represent, Leland Fly Fishing Adventures also has an agreement with Frontiers to represent all their properties (many of which we already book independently). If you are considering any of the destinations that Frontiers offers, please give us a call as it's virtually the same process as booking through Frontiers, and we need the "bonus points." And, we may have some personal experiences that can add to your knowledge and preparations.

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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