



Spring Creek, Chilean Andes



IN THIS ISSUE:

- REPORTS – SALTWATER VETERANS IN BELIZE
- RETURNING TO FAMILIAR WATERS
- FLY FISHING PHOTOGRAPHY 1A: CAPTURING FLY FISHING SCENICS - PART 2
- A QUOTE WORTH REMEMBERING
- AUGUST MEMORY PHOTOS

We are in the eighth 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 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.

REPORTS – SALTWATER VETERANS IN BELIZE



Last month's newsletter carried an article which focused on newcomers to salt water fly fishing in Belize and some of their first successes with tarpon, permit, snook, and bonefish. This month, our reports come from experienced saltwater veterans on Belize mothership trips.

We are 25 year veterans of fishing Belize using a mothership as our base of operations. As a result, we have some basis for comparing the fishing over the years. In the past twelve months (beginning with the trip last September which released 17 permit and concluding with the experience last month related next by Johnny Williams), the numbers of permit

sighted and released from Belize mothership trips is at an all-time high. Simply stated – permit fishing has been the best ever. One can only hope the new catch and release laws instituted in Belize a few years ago are having a positive impact.....SOMETHING is having an impact.

Johnny Williams and David Rogers were on their first mothership trip in Belize in mid-July aboard the Rising Tide. From Johnny: ".....one day we estimated we saw about 1000 permit between the two boats. Multiple schools of 50-100 fish, along with a steady stream of singles and doubles. We often stayed in the same spot for an hour as the various schools just swam by. We only boated 3, but hooked 10, which is a ridiculous number. I hadn't hooked 3 in aggregate of all my previous permit fishing trips."

Further comments from Johnny (at right with Grand Slam permit) on the overall experience: "..... We had a fantastic time. Not sure we would have changed a thing. Dean, Noel & Velda took excellent care of us....I notched my first grand slam. Weather was windy, but mostly good. Thank you for the very accurate descriptions about everything. All your recommendations were 100% accurate and helpful.....We would like to reserve the same week next year,,,,,"



They also jumped several tarpon. Regarding the tarpon, David (below middle with permit and at right releasing a tarpon) commented, “The biggest tarpon we boated was probably 45 lbs. Jumped a couple that were around 60-70 lbs....”



The month of June saw some strange weather patterns with a low pressure system hanging over the coastal waters for much of the month. On a late June/early July trip, Ryan Hawks (with permit below left and tarpon, middle-right) and his group had some tough conditions, but Ryan happened to be in the “right place at the right time” often enough to get some outstanding results, considering the weather. He released two permit, jumped four tarpon and released three (18, 70, and 100+ pounds), and had some bonefish in the mix. The large tarpon provided some extra excitement.....“The 100 lb fish broke my 11 wt rod (below), but we were able to hand-line him to the boat, but Noel didn’t get a solid hold on him with the boga so we weren’t able to get still photos. Some video we got included the jumps. Everyone was impressed with the guides, the boat and the service (especially the food).”



Bob Woznicki is an experienced salt water angler with many weeks on the waters of Ascension Bay. Bob released his largest permit ever (at right above) and had these thoughts on the overall experience: “.....the experience on the Rising Tide was first class all the way from the boat to the fine cooking and skilled guiding.”

RETURNING TO FAMILIAR WATERS

There is a lot of value to the notion of returning to fish waters, lodges, and with guides you’ve enjoyed in the past. So many anglers are only interested in the next “new spot” that they don’t pay enough attention to digging in and really exploring the many dimensions of fisheries they’ve already visited and enjoyed.

Julie and Phil Dupuis (below left with native West Slope Cutt) just returned from their fourth trip to the Fernie, British Columbia area. Phil’s comment about how the trip went.....“very well.” Fernie offers a good variety of fishing environments from the main stem of the Elk River (big water best fished from a drift boat – at right) to the several smaller walk ‘n wade streams. The fish vary from native, surface oriented West Slope Cutthroats to arguably the best remaining Bull Trout fishery (fish that run 25 to 35 inches) with some good rainbow waters in the neighborhood. Accommodations also vary from ski-condos to motel rooms to a spectacular mountain resort (on this trip, Julie and Phil used the resort for their stay – view from their room is below right). Like most quality fly fishing destinations, there are experiences worth repeating and new waters to explore.





From a personal standpoint, we mix our trips with over half revisiting places we've enjoyed in the past and the rest dedicated to trying out new fisheries and species. We take the same basic approach with our annual New Zealand trip – spend over half the trip with guides and on waters we've fished in the past (experiences we've enjoyed before) and the rest exploring new options. Places like Belize, with the great variety of fly fishing environments and species that can be accessed using a mothership, continue to surprise me with new dimensions on almost every trip, even though this is a trip we've done over 60 times since the late 80's.

Maybe this concept is best summed up from this quote (which I've saved for the past few years) from Julie Dupuis upon returning to Fernie for the second time, "why in the heck did we wait so long to come back here?"

FLY FISHING PHOTOGRAPHY 1A: CAPTURING FLY FISHING SCENICS – PART 2

One of the great joys of our fly fishing passion is that it takes us to the most beautiful, pristine environments on earth. These spectacular settings are such an important part of the attraction of fly fishing and capturing images that display them is a challenge. Part 1 of this series of fly fishing photography tips on how to capture these photos was in our May newsletter and featured some "do's and don't's" of shooting river and stream landscapes. This is part 2 with a focus on the stunning shallows of the salt water flats.



Fly Fishing Scenic – the definition of that phrase is a special photo of natural beauty with a fly fisherman in the scene. If you take the fly fisherman out of the photo, all you have is a pretty landscape (or in the case of this article, "waterscape").....nothing wrong with that, but it isn't a Fly Fishing Scenic. William Owens contributed the two photos at right from a Belize mothership trip last September which illustrate the difference between a pretty waterscape and a Fly Fishing Scenic. On top is a shot of a scenic permit flat inside the Belize barrier reef.....below is an angler stalking permit on a flat nearby. The photo with the angler in it tells a story – you get a sense that this angler can see fish in the clear, shallow water and he's preparing to make a presentation to those fish.



A few other positive observations relating to the photos above right:

- * note that the horizon is straight on both
- * the angler's motion is "into" the photo.....he's on the right side with his motion toward the left.
- * it's best to not split your photo 50-50 with the horizon. In this case, the sky only comprises about 1/3 of the photo and the water 2/3, a good relationship.



The best photos occur when you can capture the moment when all the critical elements come together. When you recognize one of those moments and capture it with your camera, you have a photo worthy of a large print for your wall, or if it is your ambition to get something published, submit a photo for publication. The three photos above:

1. Left – angler and his guide wading a spectacular bonefish flat in the South Pacific. Three distinct color variations of water over white sand accented with the blue sky and white clouds.....all good stuff and all together.
2. Middle – one of our favorite photos and someone else liked it also as it was a cover photo for *Fly Fishing In Saltwaters* magazine. Pretty fish well displayed, rod ‘n reel prominent, angler admiring his catch, and a truly spectacular background with the waves cresting on the beach. Action element provided by the waves. Even though this is a “fish photo,” it also qualifies as a “scenic.”
3. Right – this photo suffers from a reduction in size for this newsletter. In the regular size photo, the rod and fly line are visible – the angler is fighting a large tarpon on a Belize flat and the fish is running to the left. The extreme bend in the rod, strain in the angler’s posture, and tight line extending to the left are important elements and are visible. However, even without the rod and line, this is a spectacular scene with the water color over white sand highlighted by dark grass on the bottom and the blue sky and white clouds.

A QUOTE WORTH REMEMBERING

You’re not in Kansas anymore. Those of us who are fortunate enough to use our fly rods to seek adventure around the globe often realize that we are no longer in Kansas.....or California, Texas, New York, etc etc.

Every once in a while, Jim Hine reminds me of his favorite quote from Mark Twain: “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”



I’m glad he doesn’t let me forget – this is a quote worth remembering to keep our lives vibrant and alive.

AUGUST MEMORY PHOTOS



Late season in Alaska....the rainbows have been feasting all summer on the remnants of the salmon runs and are fat and sassy. From the Amazon to Alaska, Alisa and Jim Andras are adventure seekers who use their fly rods as the excuse to visit some of the world’s most pristine and spectacular destinations in pursuit of trophy fish. These are just a few of the many giant rainbows taken on their late September trip to Alaska last year.



PHOTO CREDITS: (top to bottom) Belize: top tarpon - Ryan Hawks; next 4 photos – Johnny Williams and David Rogers; next 3 – Ryan Hawks; last permit – Bob Woznicki. Fernie: two scenic shots – Dennis Smith; large Cutt and small stream – Julie and Phil Dupuis; Photography 1A: permit flats – William Owens.

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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