

## FEBRUARY BELIZE TRIP REPORT - ART HINCKLEY

Most Belize mothership clients usually fish for a variety of species, but there are some “hard-core” permit guys like Winston Moore and Art Hinckley. They normally wouldn’t “waste” their time on bonefish or tarpon. Winston is a 100+ permit expert and Art now has over 40 released. However, on Art’s trip in February, he had a friend with him who wanted to get a tarpon so they spent the first few days fishing tarpon from the mothership Meca. It turned out to be an all-around trip that is “as good as it gets.” Here’s Art’s report:

“We had a really good trip. The weather was good all week. The first two days, we fished for tarpon close to where Martin keeps the Meca docked. The first day, I hooked four about 60-80lbs., but didn’t land any. Steve and Mike each hooked one but didn’t land them and Mike caught a snook. The next day we fished for tarpon again close to the mainland. We found tailing tarpon as you saw on your January trip. To make a long story short, Steve hooked six and landed two, both a little over 100lbs. I hooked three and got one about 90lbs. right next to the boat, but the shock tippet wore through and broke. Mike hooked three and fought one about 100lbs. for two and one half hours. He ended up in the Belize River when the fly pulled out just as he was about to land the tarpon. The next day, we moved south about two hours to begin permit fishing and I got two small ones the first day there. The next morning, I probably had about 10 great shots before breakfast, but didn’t catch any. After breakfast, the fishing slowed and I didn’t catch any. Mike and Steve had several good shots also, but didn’t catch any either. The next morning, Steve caught a 17lb. permit before breakfast. After breakfast I caught an 8lb. and a 12lb. permit. During lunch, we moved to some flats about 20 miles south. Action was slow and we didn’t catch any. We moved back north to the original flats where we’d caught all the fish. I caught a 13lb. permit, but it was a fairly slow day. The last morning before we left I got one small fish and Steve caught a 15lb. permit. Also, during the week I hooked four other permit that got off after a second or two. Mike had two eat his crab, but neither one got hooked. Eight permit released in four days plus other hook-ups that didn’t reach the boat. I wonder how many we might have caught if we wouldn’t have spent two days fishing for tarpon?”

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