

NEWSLETTER #2 - APRIL 2002

Topics in this issue of the Leland Fly Fishing Adventures newsletter:

- Peacock Bass Trip Report
- Tierra Del Fuego update
- Permit news
- Early reports – new Nicaragua lodge
- Why New Zealand is such a special destination
- Marin Fly Fishing Show and Leland FFO

This is the second of our monthly newsletters with updates on great fly fishing venues and insight for our traveling fly fishers. We want to help you in your research for your next fly fishing destination – we've been most places and pride ourselves in the ability to research new locations. For the same cost as booking direct we get you unbiased information on timing and locations.

BRAZIL PEACOCK BASS ADVENTURE: Wayne Henry and Tom Flood were joined by their "regular" group of traveling fly fisherman for a jungle river experience this month with peacock bass as the primary target. Wayne reports they had excellent fishing, both in numbers (over 500 peacock bass caught) and size (everyone caught at least one double digit fish led by Tom's 22 pounder). In spite of lots of travel time, Wayne said it was a good experience.

TIERRA DEL FUEGO UPDATE: John Gallo and Barney Osher visited the tip of

South America in search of the famous giant sea-run browns. This is a story of what happens when you hit it just right at a "world class" destination as well as the flip side. First, the "just right" portion - John reports the Rio Grande was experiencing a very low water year and the guide was attempting to manage their expectations on their first trip to the river. The water was low, almost like fishing pocket water, and the winds were very high - result: they released 35 fish in four days, most in

the 15 pound range, with a largest of 19 #. Next a two day stop at the Rio Gallegos, another famous sea-run brown trout river about an hour flight north of the Rio Grande. The water height was just right and the winds were calm - result: no sea-run fish, just some natives to about 18 inches; but they killed them the week before they arrived! More proof why they call it fishing and not catching.

PERMIT NEWS: The elusive permit, generally recognized as the ultimate challenge to take on a fly, provided an opportunity for celebration this January when Charles Stern released his first permit. It was caught on a shrimp pattern during the Leland hosted Belize mothership trip Josh was in the same skiff to verify and photograph the catch. Permit veteran, Mike Scheele, had a great permit trip to Ascension Bay in January that resulted in three fish to 15 pounds – all caught on crab imitations. Next week, I'll be on a dedicated permit trip aboard the Meca in Belize with two other guys who have high thresholds of frustration tolerance. The name of the permit game is number of shots. Don't know how many we'll catch, but we will get lots of shots in the waters we'll fish – I'd be happy with 3 or 4 fish for the group, but want a dozen. Report in next months newsletter.

NEW NICARAGUA LODGE – EARLY REPORTS: Many have asked about the new salt water fly fishing lodge in Nicaragua. I've spoken with fly fishermen who were there for the first two trips. One was there in January before the lodge officially opened and the other was on the first "official trip" in February. Both reports were the same – the location of the lodge is beautiful and the fishing potential "appears" great for tarpon, snook, and possibly permit. However, according to the guys who briefed me, both trips were ambushed by unseasonable heavy winds. The massive lagoon (larger than Ascension Bay) was so churned up it couldn't be fished. Also, while the new guides speak English, they are on a learning curve. I'm still going, leaving directly from Belize to check it out. Report in next newsletter.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT NEW ZEALAND THAT IS SO SPECIAL: Many of you know how excited Josh and I are about our experiences in New Zealand this past year and the trips we're planning for 2003. I recently read an article published in The Angling Report that highlighted the reasons why NZ is so special. It was written by Mark Kelly who just returned from his sixth NZ trip. On his trip last year, he caught two monsters of 29 and 33 inches. This year he didn't match that size, but did release 20 fish in seven days (and hooked and lost many others) to eight pounds. Highlights from his article include the following:

1. The anticipation of sight-casting to large trout with light fly rods and then waiting for the take – cast after cast.
2. Testing and developing your fly fishing skills
3. Beauty of New Zealand's rivers, creeks, valleys, forests and mountains.
4. New Zealanders are great people to visit and associate with.
5. Currently a great value with a favorable exchange rate of \$2.33 NZ dollar to \$1 US dollar.

MARIN FLY FISHING SHOW: The Leland shops will have a booth at the new "fly fishing only" show in San Rafael on March 2 and 3. Of special interest to those that have trips booked on the Smith River in Montana and the Minipi River in Canada will be two slide presentations on those destinations. Mike Geary (our outfitter on the Smith River and friendly face in Leland's over Christmas) will be covering the Smith River trip on Sunday at 2:00. My son, Scott, will be filling in for me while I'm in Central America and presenting the show on the giant brookies of the Minipi on Saturday at 3:00.

An Enthusiastic Traveling Fly Fisherman,

Don Muelrath

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