



Stalking Steelhead, "Unnamed" BC Coastal Stream



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We are in the ninth 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.

THE GOLDEN DORADO – A TRIP REPORT FROM BOLIVIA



The Golden Dorado is an incredible fly rod fish that is found in rivers and streams in the latitude of South America that includes Bolivia and northern Argentina. Its aerial antics are similar to a baby tarpon and it is an aggressive and beautiful fish. It often attains weights of 15+ pounds, with fish over 20, and even 30 pounds, possible. A jungle area on the eastern edge of the Andes in Bolivia has become famous in the last few years for taking these “golden rockets” in smaller streams and rivers, often sight casting to specific fish.

We first met Bill Hudspeth, and his brother Royce, while fishing for giant brookies on the Minipi River two years ago. At that time, Bill described their fly fishing skill as “advanced beginners.” They had recently taken up fly fishing and had a large bucket list of the top global fly fishing destinations and species they were pursuing. Since our first meeting on the Minipi River, they have checked off some of that bucket list including pursuing permit and tarpon from the mothership Rising Tide in Belize, and

most recently, Bill taking Golden Dorado and Pacu in Bolivia. Based on his results in Bolivia, Bill thinks his fly fishing skills have graduated to “advanced intermediate.” Looking at his photos from Bolivia, it would appear that graduation has been earned!

Bills comments on his Bolivia adventure: “Had a great time at the Tsimane Lodges.....more physical than I anticipated considering I had hip replacement in January and back surgery in July. No fish were officially weighed, but our experienced guides were very confident in their weight estimations.....it normally took 2/3 guides/boatmen to agree on the weight.”



“The two largest were ‘close to 20lbs’..... I had several of each in 18lb range, 15, 12 and 10 lb range. Had some breakoffs, including the 40# wire tippet. Many in the 1 to 3 lb range.....these were taken similar to trout fishing... The Pacu (another terrific fly rod fish – above left) was 16lbs according to Bolivian opinion.

Both lodges were run very professionally (rotated between two lodges, splitting the week between them). All of the fishing guides were fluent in English, helpful from the 1st meeting of the day after breakfast to the end of the day. You fished each day in a dug out canoe with two boatmen (boys) handling the poling. Between beats, they would have their bow & arrow shooting Sabalo for dinner. They also had the best eyes when it came time for sight casting for Dorado! Lunch was served stream side each day, normally under shade with tables and chairs set up by your team. All meals and appetizers were delicious! Service staff was over the top... Sometimes it was hard to imagine that we were in a remote jungle. Each day ended with happy hour and swapping fish stories of those caught and the "really big ones" that got away. After a couple of gin and tonics, each day ended perfectly.”

Note: next season will see some changes/improvements at Tsimane. New skiffs will be utilized on some of the waters. An additional lodge has been built on a new watershed. Two separate groups of eight anglers each will be rotated between two lodges in two different areas of this isolated jungle environment. We have reserved both lodge rotations for early next July and so far, have 12 anglers joining us to tackle this adventure. Space remains during our week for four additional anglers. If you have interest, ask for further details.

A GRANDSON LEARNING WITH LOUISIANA REDS



Dave Ellis has been fly fishing with his older grandson, Ben, a college senior, for the last five years. Ben’s younger brother, Jake, a high school senior, is a “new and learning” angler. Jake accompanied Grandpa Dave to southern Louisiana in June to gain some experience fishing for redfish.....and they had some exceptional results. They had an excellent guide who knew the water and how to find the fish, but equally important, as Dave states, “was the perfect choice as he was very tolerant of Jakes mediocre casting abilities, didn't get upset when he missed easy casts to tailing fish, and maintained a very encouraging demeanor throughout our trip.”

Regarding the fishing, Dave reports: “Our trip was a great experience and we have already booked for our return next June.....We caught big reds every day although the first two days were a bit slow as a storm had blown thru the day before our arrival and the water was very muddy. It cleared up nicely by the third day and we were able to have a terrific day, which is normal for the area. We had three doubles on the last day and caught many singles as we usually took turns casting to the hugh pods of redfish. They are a real load and after landing one you needed a rest. The redfish averaged 24-28 lbs. and the smallest fish we caught was an 18 lb black Drum (right, with Jake). We had an opportunity to cast to lots of huge tails and Jake is working on his casting so next year he will be more successful.”



The fishing area is close enough to New Orleans that it is possible to stay in NO. In the last two weeks, this particular guide has had two days where his anglers took over a 1,000 pounds of reds in a single day.

“HITTING IT WRONG” IN ALASKA

What creates our expectancies for a flyfishing adventure? Usually, expectancy is formed from brochures, websites, reports from friends, newsletters (like this one), agents (like me), and other miscellaneous input. Obviously, the most meaningful creator of expectancy is actual personal experience – what has been my actual experience with a certain fishery. If that experience was fruitful and enjoyable the first time, you expect (and hope) that it will be again on a subsequent visit. Even more solid is the expectancy created from several positive trips to one location. So.....that leads us to Josh Luft-Glidden (at right with a large Dolly Varden from a previous year) and his report on his recent trip to the Goodnews River in Alaska.



The Goodnews is one of Alaska’s premier rivers with a strong population of all of Alaska’s target fish.....and, due

to agreements with the native Indian nation, only one permanent lodge on the river. For the fly fisher, the most pursued species here are the rainbows, Dolly Varden, and Silver (Coho) Salmon, the top fly rod fish of all the Pacific salmon. Most anglers who have fished both, put the fresh-run Silver Salmon just below the steelhead on the ladder of exciting anadromous fly rod fish. The Goodnews is unique in that it offers arguably, for a few weeks in August, the best chance to take numbers of trophy, fresh run silvers on the surface. A morning of taking five or more aggressive eight to fifteen pound silvers on the surface is one of flyfishing's great experiences! And, if you can follow that by moving upriver for an afternoon of fishing on the surface for large rainbows and dollies, it becomes the perfect day on the water! That "perfect day" is possible on the Goodnews.....most years.

Photos from Josh's trip this year: left and right, silvers. Middle – rainbow.



Josh has been making an annual trek to the Goodnews in prime silver time (mid-August) for several years so has clear memories of what it means to "hit it right." Josh describes his past trips when conditions were "normal" in this manner: "30-40 fish is a typical day on the Goodnews with 50-70 fish being a really good day. Largest rainbow is usually 24+ inches, Dolly Vardens about the same, but I have seen 30 inch dollies caught just about every year. The largest silver usually tops out at about 17 lbs with most taken on the surface."

This year the water levels were very, very low due to a light snowpack in this part of Alaska. Regarding his recent August trip, Josh states, "No surface action for silvers on this trip at all. The shallower sloughs and braids, where just about all of the surface action takes place, were just not holding water. This year I was taking 4-6 silvers per day, with most in the 8-10 lb range. It did rain for most of the week, and the water did rise a little each day. The south fork was not navigable for a good portion of the week, and the rainbows were sparse once the water came up enough to get a boat up this fork. The fishing did finally pick up on the last day and I managed to boat 30 silvers, most in the 8-12 pound range. Three took me deep into my backing before I finally managed to get them into the net.....the large dollies were pretty elusive this year. I did get a couple of 20+ inch rainbows on a mouse and a couple of arctic grayling took the mouse as well. The grayling were pretty funny. When they wanted the mouse, they *really* wanted it. They would usually miss the mouse a few times, before doubling back to chomp on the fly."

Note: The lower stretches of the Goodnews River in Alaska remain as arguably the best place anywhere to take good numbers of fresh silvers on the surface, plus trophy rainbows and Dolly Varden. if you want to visit this "world class" silver fishery in prime time, getting space is a challenge since that timing is very short. A few spots still remain for next season, as of this writing. Fishing conditions should return to "normal" – the odds are good that will hold true.

NEW AMAZON PEACOCK BASS FISHERY – RIO MARIE

There has been a lot of publicity about the "new" Amazon peacock bass fishery on the Rio Marié. It has been described as the ultimate trophy Peacock Bass fishery.....even the locals call it "Rio de Gigantes!" The headwaters of the river system is in the rainforest near the Brazil – Columbia border and the area the watershed covers encompasses nearly 500 miles of virgin waters.....water that no previous sport fishing outfitter has fished. The fishing is accessed from a "floating lodge," a mothership which tows the fishing skiffs. This season, they are doing some exploratory trips, with the first full season slated to be next year when they will do 12 weekly trips between September and December. We have a first hand report on file from an angler who was on the second exploratory trip which took place a few weeks ago. If you would like to hear more about this first hand report, just hit "reply" or give us a call.



OCTOBER MEMORY PHOTO



Jeff Pisani captured this underwater photo of a rainbow on his trip earlier this year to New Zealand. The combination of the fish, crystal clear stream, free stone river bottom, and the reflections makes a truly outstanding photo! A great example of this principle: the best photographs occur from those instants when all of the critical elements come together.

Photo Credits: banner photo – Jeff Bright; Golden Dorado – Bill Hudspeth; redfish – Dave and Jake Ellis; Alaska – Josh Luft-Glidden.

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,
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