



IN THIS ISSUE:

- A “DIRTY DOZEN” ON THE AGUA BOA, AMAZON
- WINSTON MOORE ON LIFE LESSONS
- NEW ZEALAND REPORT
- DISCOUNTED WEEKS IN BELIZE – RISING TIDE
- APRIL MEMORY PHOTO

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.

A “DIRTY DOZEN” ON THE AGUA BOA, AMAZON

Well.....there were a dozen and they were on the Agua Boa River in the Amazon. How dirty were they? Guess that depends on who you ask. Mike Costello, a legendary Northern California fly fishing guide, put this dozen together. How it all began.....from Mike: “Two years ago, when I decided to go after Peacock Bass, I knew that there was only one place I wanted to go, The Agua Boa Amazon Lodge. This past January, eleven of my best fly fishing friends/clients and myself headed to the jungles of Brazil to challenge some of the hardest fighting fish in the world.”

In the realm of global fly fishing adventures, I’ve learned there is one element that is a constant. Someone will catch a few big fish in a new spot and, when the hype-mill gets through explaining it, it appears as if this new spot is the greatest fly fishing adventure EVER! In the fly fishing travel agent business, we see it all the time.....in Alaska, Seychelles, Russia, virtually everywhere and certainly including South America. Often, this “latest and greatest” destination does not make it through the scrutiny of a few short years. Then there are places like the Agua Boa Amazon Lodge that have been through more than ten years of operation and today, are still one of the most difficult operations to book space during their prime time.



Matt Goff (right), a member of the “Dirty Dozen” on his first trip to the Amazon, captured the essence of their week with this report: “The fishing was great. Lodge was amazing considering the isolated location. The most striking thing was the lack of trash or any indication a human had ever been on the river. It was much more remote than I had imagined. Well worth the effort to get there. Caught so many peacock bass each day it was silly. Guides rocked. Guides fished hard and were a joy to fish with, but learning a little Portuguese would be helpful.”



Photos above, l to r: George Strickland with peacock; Jeff Solis with large catfish; Murray Low with Arowana; and trip host, Mike Costello with 18# peacock. Also part of the “dozen” were Tom Brutsche, Ron Knowles, Mike Bates, James Lowder, Carson Chen, Jeff Stegall, and Mike Woods.

Mike on the fishing: “For the week, our group landed well over 1000 peacock bass with an amazing 75 fish over ten pounds. Over half the guys had at least one fish of 18 or more pounds with Jeff Solis landing the largest.”



Above, l to r: peacock and Matt Goff; the lodge and private airstrip on the Agua Boa; dinner; casting from a poled skiff in the normal approach. Mike on the lodge: “The Agua Boa is an amazing sight, a slice of paradise, in the middle of the jungle. Fly anglers are fished hard with great guides, and they are not only rewarded on the water with exceptional fishing and unbelievable scenery, but as the day winds down, they are pampered with great food and wonderful cocktails.”



Other important elements that make the Agua Boa special:

- the Amazon wildlife is an important part of the scene. The caiman (left) are a constant.
- hidden lagoons and canals in the rainforest provide exciting fishing away from the main river.
- exclusive fly fishing, catch and release protection is provided by government permits.

To see more of all the elements that make the Agua Boa Amazon Lodge an exciting Amazon adventure and great fishing experience, click on this link for the full photo essay produced with photos from this dozen – [Agua Boa Amazon Photo Essay Trip Report](#)

WINSTON MOORE ON LIFE LESSONS

Winston Moore is truly one of the rare fly rodders on the planet. He was one of the first to discover and develop the saltwater flats fishery in Belize and was a pioneer in developing permit fishing (has released 112 permit). Much of his fishing in Belize was done from a mothership. He is in his 90's now and not as mobile as he once was. However, he was going to take one more mothership trip on the Rising Tide with a permit-fishing friend who was battling cancer. The captain of the Rising Tide had agreed that he could provide whatever assistance was needed for these two elder, experienced fly rodders who would need assistance with any movement. Recently, his friend took a turn toward downward and is now too weak to travel. Winston is also a respected philosopher and we've used quotes from him previously in our newsletter. Photo at right: Winston with Mickey Myhre, author of Winston's biography that will be available this summer.



When Winston sent the message to cancel, he added these thoughts: “For all my adult life I've been preaching DO IT NOW because you just don't know about tomorrow. And for years, I've been seeing people who really wished they had "done it now". Life is short, my friend. ENJOY EVERY MINUTE because NOW is all you really have. With many guys, by the time they have nothing to do but watch TV, they are too old and worn out to do much of anything. Then, it's too late to “do it now.” I'm so glad that for almost all of my adult life, I DID IT NOW.”

NEW ZEALAND REPORT



Nathan Howard, his girlfriend, Anne, and his parents spent two weeks during the early part of the year in New Zealand. His comments on the trip.....”Despite all the travel hassles we encountered on the way home, I can honestly say that we had a great time in New Zealand and are already talking about what trip to take next year. Our itinerary was fairly ambitious (going from North to South Island with just 2 weeks), but despite being only a little rushed at some points in time, we were very happy with getting to see a little bit of most of the country and feel like we can now safely go back to New Zealand and pick out the places we would like to focus on. Anne and I absolutely loved the lodge near Murchison. They were great hosts, the accommodations were great, the food was great, and Scott was a really great guy to fish with. Anne (right) caught the biggest fish she has ever caught with Scott (she caught 3 the day she fished - 2 on dries). I caught about 8 the first day (with Anne) and

7 the 2nd day (with Dad). Our only regret was that we didn't decide to stay longer here since it was definitely the most relaxing part of the trip.

Our time in Fairlie was also very good. Kevin was a great fishing guide as well and he took us to some really beautiful places. I don't think I have fished with a more dedicated guide before. We had to practically drag him off the water on a few evenings. I would definitely fish with him again. We now understand why it is advisable to stay at farm stays and all inclusive accommodation while fishing with Kevin.....arriving back late, we found ourselves looking for food a couple of nights with not a lot of choices. Overall, I caught a nice number of fish each day, up to about 8lbs (above) with most in the 6.5 lbs range and we had a great time.



I could write another 10 pages about other things in New Zealand. I just wanted to tell you that all of your recommendations and everything you set up (the guides, accommodations, etc.) was spot on.”

DISCOUNTED WEEKS IN BELIZE – RISING TIDE

Can you travel on short notice and have always wanted to do a Belize mothership trip inside the second largest barrier reef in the world? If so, try now. Late cancellations can provide an opportunity. A 20% discount is being offered on two weeks on the Rising Tide during the prime tarpon months of May, June, and July. There is some flexibility for dates in the calendar. www.flyfishbelize.com

APRIL MEMORY PHOTO

Close to home in Northern California, about an hour north of San Francisco, Putah Creek flows from the dam that creates Lake Berryessa. Dave Everson plies these waters regularly and has taken some terrific fish. That's an excited Dave with a beautiful rainbow in spawning dress. Dave said, “I think it was a mayfly pattern, size 16. Time was evening twilight in December.”

PHOTO CREDITS: banner photo – John Landis; Amazon – James Lowder, Matt Goff, George Strickland, Mike Costello; Winston – Mickey Myhre; NZ report – Nathan Howard and Anne White.

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