

SWING

THE FLY



Winter 2016
The Voice of Spey



Dean River, BC

Marty Sheppard Photo



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A Poem by Alexander Grant

Photo: Rain and getting soaked is just part of the deal when pursuing wild chrome along the BC coast. Squamish River, BC. -Aaron Goodis

swing

THE FLY

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Marty Sheppard Photo

A fly fisherman stands in a river, casting his line. He is wearing a dark cap, a dark jacket, and light-colored waders. The river flows through a forest of tall, thin evergreen trees. The water is clear and reflects the surrounding environment. A small splash is visible in the water to the right of the fisherman.

*TRADITION
is not Dead*

*Story and Photos by
Mia and Marty Sheppard*

A wide-angle photograph of a night sky filled with stars. The foreground is dominated by the dark silhouettes of trees and a campfire. The sky is a deep black, dotted with numerous stars of varying brightness. A faint, glowing band of light, likely the Milky Way, stretches across the center of the image. The overall atmosphere is dark and mysterious.

*The possibilities of the unknown draw you in, like
a fly in the darkness to a camp lantern.*



Planning a steelhead trip takes time, more so the ones far from home, off the grid in another country's wilderness. Logistics are time consuming and exciting, plans continue to evolve even as you close the gap on your departure date. This trip had the potential to be many things to the four of us, individually and as a group of anglers sharing a common experience. It could take many paths, go a lot of ways and develop varying dynamics.



My fascination with tradition has me tinkering with cane rods and fiddling classic flies. Many of our friends have sent well wishes for good luck and tied some truly beautiful flies that we had collected just for this trip. We had the honor of filling our beat up old fly boxes with some true classics.

Matt Zilliox, Dave Tucker, Dennis Lee and Jessica Lettich had stuck some in the mail for us and the skill involved in tying these classics is outstanding. A young and talented angler, Nic Clory, who is a superb tier from Prince Edward Island (now Vancouver, BC), spun up some of his Dee magic for us. Adrian Cortez twisted up some insane full dressed classics without the use of a vise.

It is an amazing thing to catch a steelhead. When you hook one on a classic fly pattern continually fished and evolved by anglers for 150 years, that was tied for you by a friend specifically for this river, it is nothing short of magic.





STF20



Mia and I have done this trip before, though the stage was set very differently the last time around. Less than stellar reports prior to our first visit to this place did not sway us and, sure enough, it was an amazing trip. This time around things were looking very encouraging. We had solid reports, good vibes and assistance from locals, and were feeling set. Endowed with various perks and luxuries including a pair of small rafts, a three wheeler with no brakes and a keg of beer, this voyage had stoke and optimism at an all-time high.



STF21

Is split cane dead? A fossilized version of our modern, evolved graphite fly rods? Akin to the relationship between classical music and hip-hop?

Bamboo fly rods are nostalgic; they have a feel and a look that speaks of tradition. Our fishing partners on this trip were Mark Shamburg and James Reid, both makers of these grass tools. I had cast a limited number of two handed bamboo rods in the past. My impressions were that they were quite heavy, very slow and pretty neat to play around with. I had always wanted to own one, but mostly for the novelty of it. A few years ago I cast a few rods made by James and Mark, I was blown away. The rods I had cast that day were staggering! Light. Responsive. Powerful and Crisp. I have no idea what kind of tinkering these guys have been up to in the midnight hours, some form of voodoo magic or dark deals with the devil but I knew two things. 1) I wanted to have one. 2) I wanted to know how they made these sticks and try to make one myself. So far, I have accomplished goal #1.

Contemporary Traditional is the only way I can think to describe these guys and the tackle they create.

Spending time on a river where traditional materials and modern techniques come together got me thinking about the profile of a new discovery; a contemporary traditional style, where the two come together and tradition isn't dead. The renaissance of tradition has me looking into cane rods and why an art form appears to be replaced by plastics and synthetics.

But what was the demise? Bamboo or split cane was traditionally used until fiber-glass became the predominant material for making fly rods in the mid 1950's. Fiber-glass material and construction methods developed just prior to WWII made it faster, easier and more cost effective to produce rods. These factors in conjunction with a U.S. trade embargo imposed on China in December of 1950 all but entirely halted the use of bamboo for making fly rods. As use of bamboo faded, some builders kept the tradition alive, working from dwindling stocks of Tonkin bamboo no longer available to them. Makers such as Tony Maslan and Bob Summers carried on the craft taught to them by E.C. Powell and Paul H. Young respectively thru the 1960's and 70's as did many other makers that refused to let go of the material and the fly rods that they preferred above all others .

Fast forward and there is a new generation of bamboo rod makers emerging and rekindling the affair with tradition. Why circle around to this archaic style when modern equipment gives us so many perceived advantages? Is it tradition? Listening to James ramble on about a "spectacular culm of the bamboo and the power fibers in a combination of depth and density," sounds like an orchestra playing Beethoven, complex and pleasing. In the end, it's the elegance of holding cane, the extremely deep connection to the line and the mellowness in the cast that lights my fire. I feel... Traditional.





Marty Sheppard Photo



STF26



STF27



On a river such as this, where tradition runs deep, we come together with graphite and bamboo and jet boils used yards away from a wood fire. We are equipped with an arsenal of cane rods and truly beautiful flies, colorful yet seemingly impossible creations dressed with spey hackle, turkey wings and pheasant tails. We are prepared to embrace tradition. As we sit around the campfire talking about the day's fishing, the group is still high off witnessing Mark's skilled and graceful use of a Steve Gobin 8wt single hand cane rod. His casts over the emerald green water and watching multiple surface eruptions as his bomber skated over the same lie has me contemplating traditions. Later that day the graphite rod is rigged and I fish the evening light. Tradition evolves.



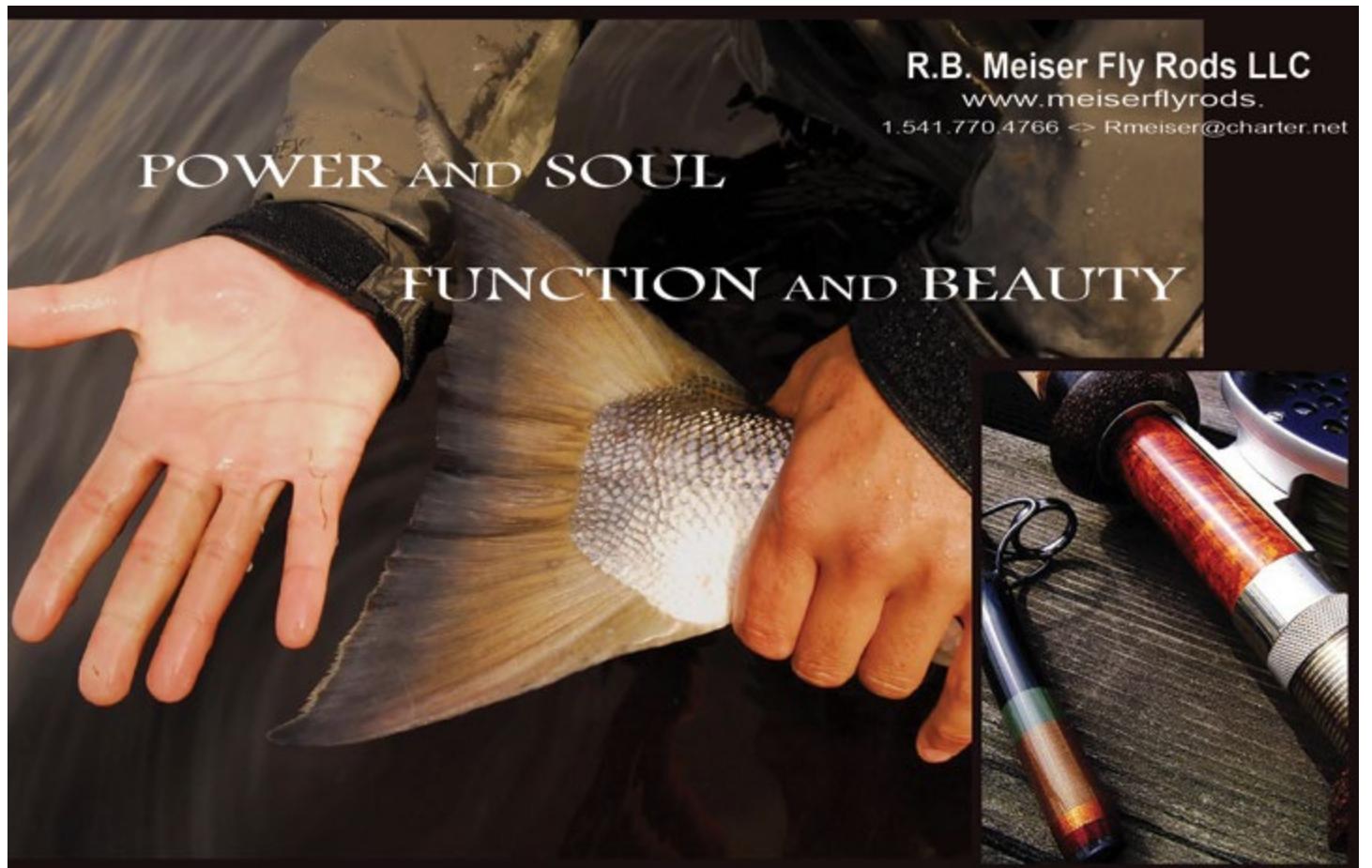
STF30



STF31



As it turns out, our trip was amazing and the stars literally aligned for us. We have unending thanks to numerous friends that assisted us along the way. The four of us banded together to journey to a truly epic place. This river feels like a steelhead rite of passage. We fished with bamboo rods, with classic flies, and with a feeling of reverence for traditions. Many of the great anglers have fished here in the past, many still do. It was truly an honor to stand in her waters and soak in the lore and legends created here. Although we are nowhere near "young" by definition, you certainly feel that way being here, your angling experience seems minuscule.



STF34



STF35

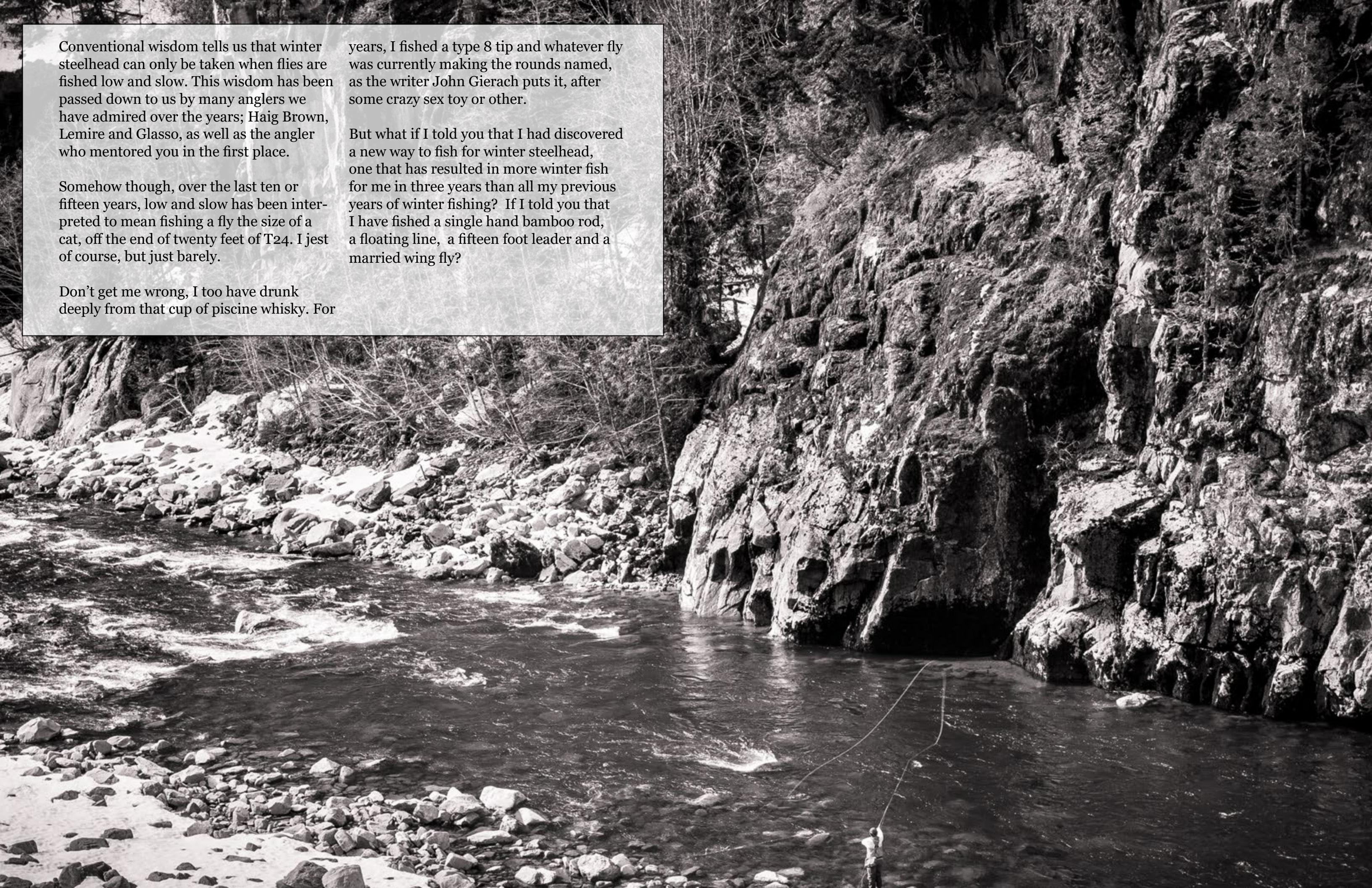


Our group is caught up in a contemporary movement of those two aspects, old and new..... Evolving Traditions. It is then that I grasp that this is it. This is how tradition works and this is how traditions evolve and become the new tradition. As much as we respect tradition and tip our cap towards it in the way we angle, we still take advantage of the opportunity to utilize modern conveniences, methods and materials folding them into our own tradition. For God's sake, we have a keg of beer sitting in the run we are camped on. Boiling water with a jet boil isn't quite the same as simmering an old cast iron pot in the coals of the fire. Plastic lines sure do throw sweet on these modern tapered split cane bamboo rods! Tradition isn't dead, it is just difficult to define.

Winter

*Story & Photos
by Jonathan Barlow*





Conventional wisdom tells us that winter steelhead can only be taken when flies are fished low and slow. This wisdom has been passed down to us by many anglers we have admired over the years; Haig Brown, Lemire and Glasso, as well as the angler who mentored you in the first place.

Somehow though, over the last ten or fifteen years, low and slow has been interpreted to mean fishing a fly the size of a cat, off the end of twenty feet of T24. I jest of course, but just barely.

Don't get me wrong, I too have drunk deeply from that cup of piscine whisky. For

years, I fished a type 8 tip and whatever fly was currently making the rounds named, as the writer John Gierach puts it, after some crazy sex toy or other.

But what if I told you that I had discovered a new way to fish for winter steelhead, one that has resulted in more winter fish for me in three years than all my previous years of winter fishing? If I told you that I have fished a single hand bamboo rod, a floating line, a fifteen foot leader and a married wing fly?



Jonathan Barlow Photo



Why bother you ask? Its hard work yes, but when is it not? Lets break it down a bit – examine why it might work –then you can decide.

Several years ago I tied up some married wing Atlantic salmon patterns. It wasn't meant as a vanity project, I believed that I was missing out on fish by not using these. If some of the gods of steelheading (you know them) caught fish on them – surely I could as well?

The funny thing was they sank like boat anchors. I became very finicky about how heavy the hooks were. The floating line followed very shortly after I lost three Jock Scotts in a row... in a row. A mono leader replaced the sinktip, allowing the fly to sink quickly without the fuss, bother and inevitable blue

cursing that comes with losing pretty flies.

Why the bamboo single hand? Single handed rods cast as far as I need to in winter. But why bamboo? Well, friends put it down to being an arse. I've learned you should always rely on friends for counsel and feedback. It makes them happy to give it and you can ignore it, even if it's true.

So it's been a learning curve. My casting has improved to the point where I no longer break hooks on the rocks from my dropped back cast. The flies spend more time in the water. I'm warmer because I am working harder and moving more. The results have been pretty good too.

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MY FIRST FISH

BY KARSTEN STANGELAND



Karsten wakes a dry fly, just like dad, through one of the North Umpqua's famous ledge rock pools.

We were driving down the road looking for a place to fish, some place with good mojo, when my dad said "Let's fish Swamp Creek."

So, we high-tailed it to the run and started to fish. I was at the top of the run with my sister next to me and my mom below. I was doing my normal thing for about 5 minutes when my dad came up to me, pointed and said, "The fish live right between those two rocks." I nodded, turned my hat around, and said "Old school baby" while flashing him a hang ten sign with my fingers.

I casted over to the rocks about 5 times before the lucky cast happened. BAM! I hooked my first fish. I yelled, "I GOT ONE! I GOT ONE!"

My dad looked over thinking that of course I had not caught my first fish but when he saw that my rod was bent over he knew it was true. My knees were shaking and I was amazed that I had actually hooked a fish, a BIG FISH.

The fight was on. I struggled with the fish on the end of my line for a few minutes and then nothing. My line went limp. I had hooked and lost my first fish. This was truly an amazing experience.



Editor's Note: Karsten Stangeland is 8 years old, seemingly well ahead of the learning curve. His teacher and father is North Umpqua Fly Guide Mark Stangeland.

To the Ends of the Earth

A SEA-RUN ANGLER'S YEAR-ROUND QUEST

Words and photos by Jeff Bright



Flyfishers dedicated to chasing anadromous fish view the 12-month calendar differently than most — we see it in terms of fish migration. The year begins not on January 1, but with the spring freshet and the arrival of salmon. In the Atlantic, this means *Salmo salar*, the royal Atlantic salmon. In the Pacific, it means Chinook, the big daddy of all sea-runs, and its various cousins. Following the Tyee come Coho, Chum, Pink and Sockeye — and finally, with much anticipation, Steelhead. For *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, summer is only the beginning of a magnificent, nearly year long parade. Opportunities to pursue steelhead throughout its native range continue into fall, winter and spring, and in the far north the window is open all the way to the mid-May spawn.

But that's not all. Arctic char offer a unique, top-of-the-world adventure in late summer, and giant sea trout in Argentine Patagonia provide ample incentive to visit the austral extremes in January, February and March. This is all to say, on any given day, somewhere on this spinning rock we call Earth, there is a bright, sea-run fish, charged with the ocean's relentless energy, pushing into a river, ready and willing to ambush a well-presented fly. All we need to do is get there and make the cast.



An unforgettable moment: After an lengthy journey from San Francisco to the bottom of the world, and at the completion of nearly two weeks fishing, the author admires a spectacular sea trout on Tierra del Fuego, its translucent fins aglow with orange light from the setting sun. Was this brief encounter worth the time, effort and expense? Hell, yeah!!

SPRING-SUMMER / CHINOOK



*Facing the salt in the delta of British Columbia's Dean River, angler and guide anticipate the Chinook grab on a particularly wet early July morning. When it happens here — in the famous Oh Sh*t Pool — it seldom ends well. Unless you're in a powerboat or fancy a swim, there's no way to follow. **Top right:** For raw power, no freshwater species can match the king salmon. Sea-licened and fresh off the tides, a bright Chinook is the ultimate speyfisher's challenge and prize.*



Bottom right: On BC's Skeena River, as the Steelhead run is winding down in late April and May, "springer" Chinook arrive and provide a rare treat for the angler fortunate enough to hook one. While springers are elusive as unicorns, summer run salmon are more plentiful and arrive on the receding freshet in June and July. It's not for the faint of heart, but swinging flies for Chinook can be powerfully addictive.

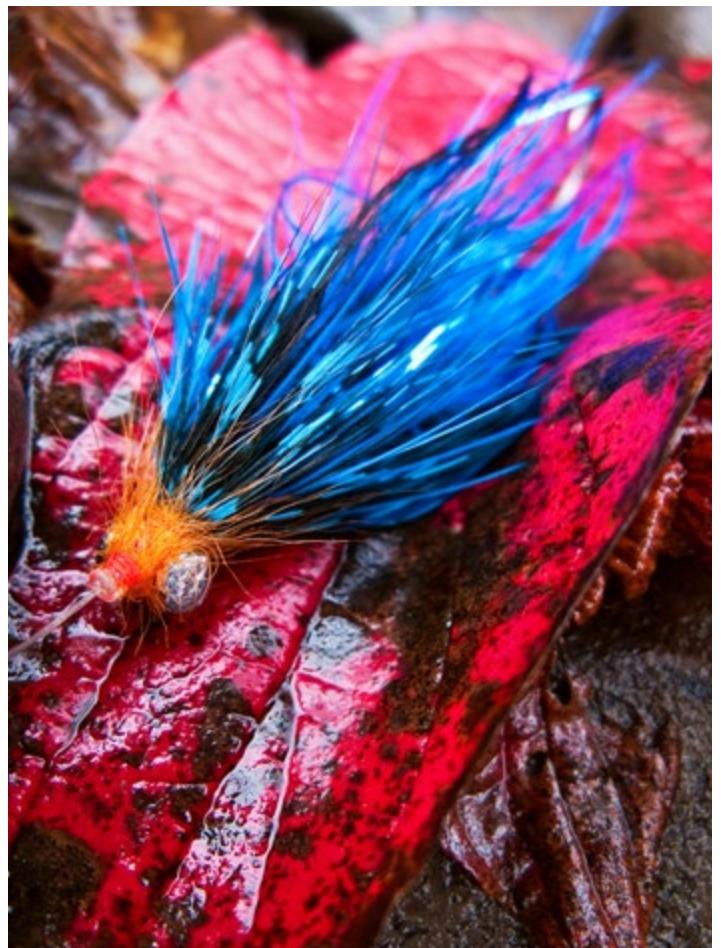
SPRING-SUMMER / ATLANTIC SALMON



*Wade deep enough into speyfishing and you'll eventually want to experience and explore the roots of the sport — flyfishing for Atlantic salmon. Many of the conventions practiced today in swinging flies for salmon, steelhead, sea trout and char were developed on the rivers of northern Europe over a century ago. **Bottom left:** In a crude john boat, headed into the morning fog on Russia's Umba River, the tackle is of recent vintage, but reflects salmon fishing's storied past.*

Top left: Today's best fishing for wild Atlantics may be on the Russian Kola Peninsula, but eastern Canada still offers remarkable opportunities. At the top of the list is the Grand Cascapedia in Quebec, where returning salmon represent the lineage of arguably the largest race of *Salmo salar* in North America. **Right:** Nowhere is the allure of giant salmon more palpable than Norway. With lupine in bloom, an angler plies the waters of the famous Rognes Bridge Pool on the Gaula.

SUMMER-FALL / STEELHEAD



*Steelhead will always be the sweetheart species for sea-run anglers in the Pacific Northwest. And there is no better place to find your dream fish than the storied waters of British Columbia. **Top left:** Summer offers opportunities to connect with these super trout at their athletic best on the lower reaches of the Dean and Skeena rivers. Any 3- or 4-salt Steelhead landed on these waters is an accomplishment; some of them are simply too hot to handle!*

Right: Fall fishing in Skeena Country means classic tributary fishing, and the chance to enjoy a variety of techniques. On this remote pool, guide and guest prepare to run a sunk fly through the boulders at the top of the run and wake a dry fly across the glassy tailout. **Bottom left:** Eyes dented from hunting among the stones, a tube fly takes a streamside break after a fish on the Kispiox River. One of the Steelhead's most endearing qualities is its willingness to occasionally humor us into thinking we've cracked the code.

SUMMER-FALL / ARCTIC CHAR



Perhaps the most prolific fishery available to the traveling speyfisher is in Arctic Canada. **Bottom Right:** In the Inuit-sovereign province of Nunavut, sea-run Arctic char grow to impressive proportions and, given the harsh reality of Arctic life, are predisposed to attack most anything resembling food. Of course, it's not always easy, but competent anglers may have to periodically pinch themselves. **Left:** The tundra appears bleak and barren, but closer inspection reveals a plentitude of hidden plant life.

Fittingly, for a brief period at the end of the brief summer, this otherwise sterile river fills with dime-bright char, in full health from six weeks of voracious ocean feeding and headed for the sanctuary waters of an inland lake, where they'll spend the dark winter under ice. **Upper Right:** In the Arctic, any pile of rocks is significant, especially if stacked into an inukshuk. Quite often these vaguely human-figured landmarks mark a spot of particular interest to the angler.



AUSTRAL SUMMER / SEA TROUT



Argentina's Tierra del Fuego is the Land of Fire, and the land of monster sea trout. **Right:** Falling from the southern Andes and draining east across the windswept pampas to the Atlantic, the famous Rio Grande is the mother of the largest population of these anadromized browns. Northern Hemisphere fly swingers in need of a winter fix will find a trip to the "uttermost part of the earth" a remarkable and unforgettable adventure. **Top Left:** Not only are the Rio Grande sea trout plentiful, they grow

to immense sizes. While the catches of 30+ pound fish seem to have fallen off from the river's heyday, each year there are significant numbers of fish in the upper 20's caught. And like vampires, the biggest and baddest only reveal themselves under the cover of darkness. The evening sessions can be epic! **Bottom Left:** One reason the Grande sees around 70,000 fish returning annually: Catch-and-release!

WINTER-SPRING / STEELHEAD



Top Left: By no means does the British Columbia steelhead story end in late fall. True winter-run fish can be found in the intimate rainforest rivers of the magical and mysterious archipelago known as Haida Gwaii (aka Queen Charlotte Islands). For the experienced steelheader, a trip here offers a refreshing off-the-grid experience. **Right:** As days grow warmer and low-level snow begins to melt, a rare opportunity arrives: exploratory fishing on the small streams of northern BC's remote coast.

Accessing these hidden valleys can be a logistical challenge, and those keen to hike often find the greatest reward. **Bottom Left:** The beauty of a fresh-from-the-sea, wild winter-run steelhead's tail is beyond description — nearly beyond comprehension. Visions such as this keep this angler traveling to the ends of the earth.



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Pilgrim

*Story and Photos
by
Nick Pionessa*

“Yeah I’ll be there, maybe a little late.”

I had zero intention of showing up, but after a couple of weeks of dealing with more people than I had in some time, I’d say anything to get off the phone. “Why would she plan another get together after all that”?, I thought to myself as I felt the road go from gravel to dirt. There were only three other cars in the lot, best sight I’d seen in days because all I wanted was to be alone so we could talk.

“I don’t want any of this prolonged,” he had said after we got my mother out of the room. He was sitting up in the VA bed and clearly had some final instructions for us. More history sat right there than all four of us could ever hope to accomplish, 87 years worth. The Great Depression, infantry in WWII, 60+ years of marriage, 8 kids, a long career as a union Carpenter and fortunately a long retirement to tinker with his guns. He had some to teach. You had to do your part and pay attention, but he had some to teach all right.

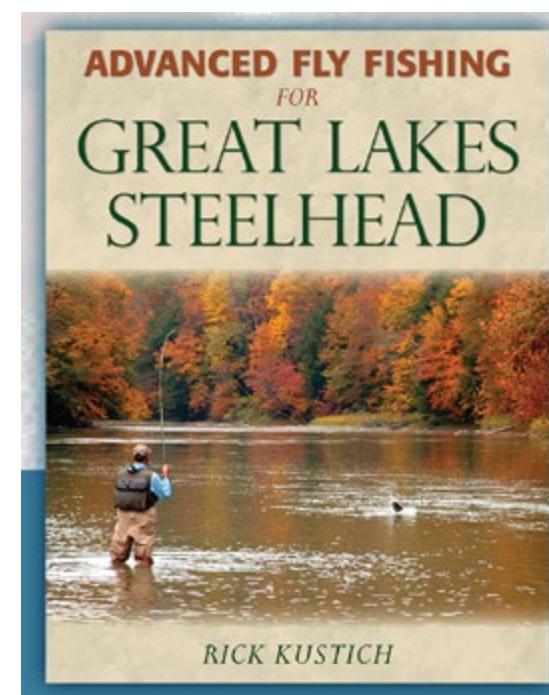




A dusting of snow made it easy to stay on the trail. When the leaves come down hard in November the scant trail is easy to lose but its wetness didn't abide the dusting. I could see it snake across the valley flat from my descending ridge. Down through the old growth Hemlocks and Oaks that always gave me a sense of how small, short lived and fragile we are. It was the only place I knew to go where I could get this done. He had taught me the names of the trees I passed.

I had to stop by the house and feed and water the birds before I headed out that

morning; Bobwhite quail, a few Ring-necks, a few wood ducks and some old chickens were all that was left. I always hated animals in cages. Inadvertent lesson number 167 right there. The old man had raised birds and various other animals long before I came along. I grew up with raccoons and squirrels and fowl of every description. They were now my responsibility. Funny how you can see something coming and still not be able to get out of its way.



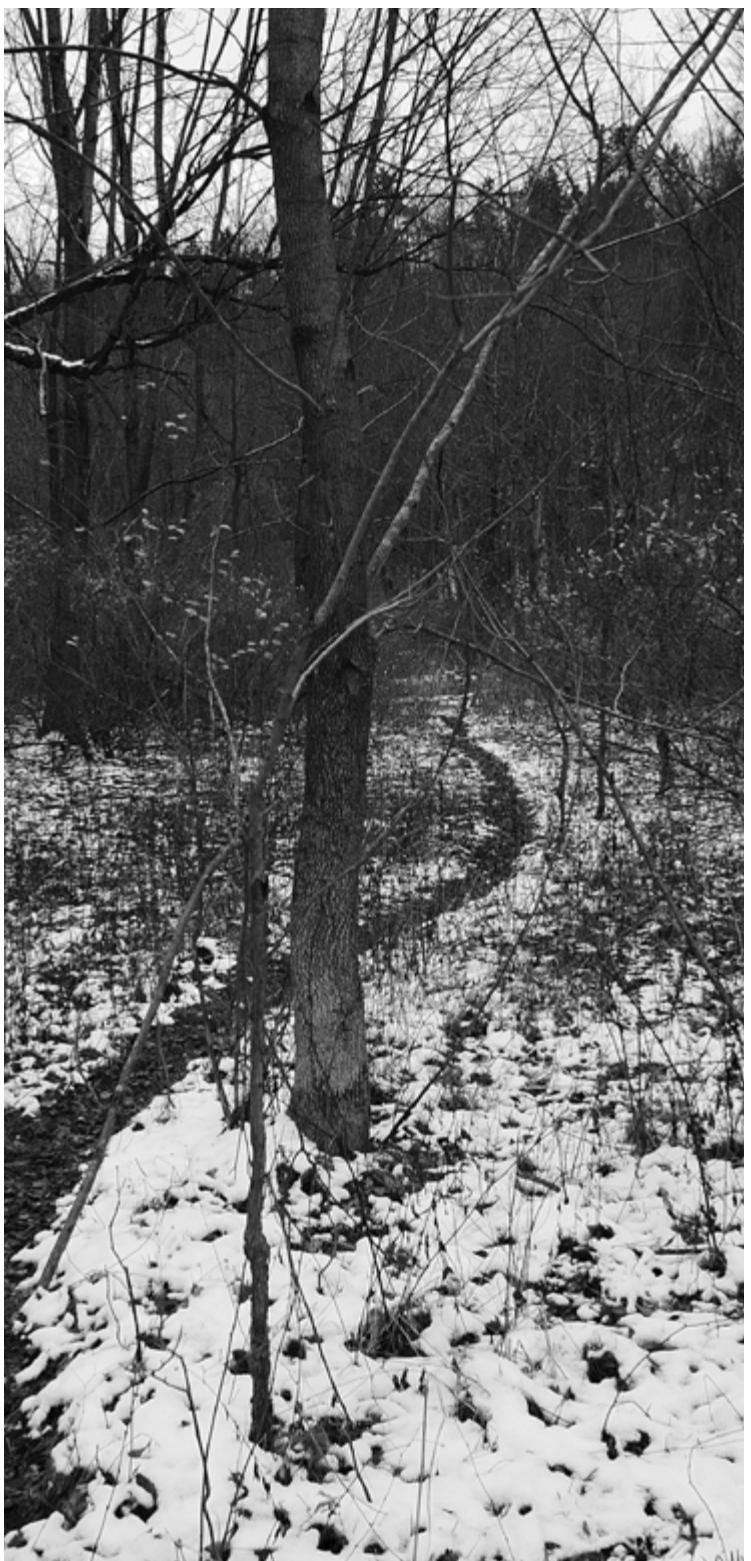
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*It's only now that I realize you never do
walk alone, especially on a Steelhead river.*



I think about fishing when feeding the birds and now that I'm fishing I think about the birds. One pinner was already coming across the pool as I approached. Two more were up at the head. "Been pretty slow," lack-of-attention-span-guy had said as we passed. It was 10:15 am.



Soon the other two followed down, even before I got to the slot. I knew what fly would work, but I also knew which fly I had to fish.

We were alone now. November was his month. Born in it and died in it. A light



snow, a chill in the air and the quiet stillness that only remote nature can give you. We talked mostly about my mom and the birds. He needed to know both were in solid hands and I needed to tell him they were. Guns were the next obvious subject. If you knew the man you'd be surprised it took this long for it to come up. They were safe, and the legal wheels were all turning smoothly so far. He was happy to hear, though I know he wished he had them with him. They better let him have at least one to fondle on his lap while he sits.

The fly was something I had developed over the past few years. A Spey style fly tied on a tube and using bleach-burned pheasant tail as the hackle. This one was golden pheasant tail with a wood duck collar and GP slip wings. All from his

birds tied by the hands he also had a part in making. The tinkering mind was probably the least appreciated but best gift of all.

Rocks fell from the cliff wall with a plop! plop! as my first cast went out to the ledge. He knew nothing of this casting technique and had only seen it performed once but I am proud to say I may have even impressed him a little with it. Bait and boats had given him an awe of competent fly casting, and the Spey was just that much more. Running line slipped then came tight and the fly landed with the same plop! as the stones had. Mend into the slot, get the line straight and slowly walk the fly back to my side. Idle chitchat now that the big topics had been covered. A few reminders of stuff I still needed to do,

the this and that of what I was doing to try and catch a Steelhead.

We were getting into it about the house when I felt the first tug. Back in the moment now, I repeated the cast, and got the same result. I pulled in the fly and clipped the hook off. Ran the tippet through the tube, looped the hook on and trailed it further back off the tube a little. Nervous now with someone looking over my shoulder but he saw the logic in my adjustment. Made the cast again, swung to the hangdown and hooked up. Not really sure who was more surprised or happier. Good to know your kids aren't idiots.

A darkish buck of about seven pounds came up and thrashed then bulldogged as they do when the temps are down. As I got him coming in I started to cry, simple as that and nothing I could do about it. Tears rolled down my face and dropped into the stream. I tailed the fish and just sobbed. Snapped a few pics with the tears blurring my vision and then sat down and

blubbered like a child for probably ten minutes.

I was alone for the rest of the day. Never saw another angler. When I got back to the lot it was empty.

I went four for four that day, in a season where one fish was a great day. I had hooked four and landed them all. Including the brightest and hottest fish of the season. I have not done that again. I've been fishing by myself, of course, ever since. Without the help I got that day it'll probably never happen again. I hope it was him, but of course I'll never know. It's only now that I realize you never do walk alone, especially on a Steelhead river. You need to know and remember that wherever you are, many have gone before. Let them teach you the way.



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TWO HAND ALASKA



Beer break. Squamish River, BC.

Friends

*A Photo Essay by
Aaron Goodis*





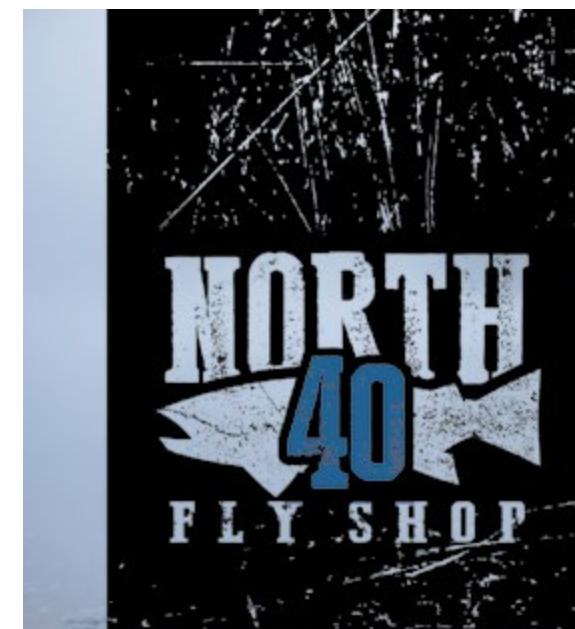
My cousin and long time fishing partner gets a much needed morning off on the flow. Fraser Valley, BC.

Aaron Goodis Photo

Fly fishing has always been a huge part of my life. Growing up on the West Coast in Vancouver, British Columbia has made a huge impact on me. My work, hobbies and social life have always revolved around water and lush green forests in one way or another. Early on, I skateboarded and snowboarded along with fly fishing. Now, I choose to shoot pictures and fly fish regularly even though the camera often replaces the fly rod. Through solo sports and outdoor activities I have found a common theme. They unite people and facilitate close relationships among those who share the same passion. It is a lifestyle glued together by memories and experiences only made more incredible by sharing them with your close friends. I have been very fortunate to be tight with a small group of amazingly talented and creative folks.

I have learned that it does not matter how many or how big the fish are or even how remote or epic the locations that we search and explore. What truly matters are the people who share these experiences. As a fly fishing lifestyle photographer, it is these people that make my job possible and enjoyable. Without them, there would be no images and only empty landscapes. I can't thank you all enough for allowing me to point my lens in your direction. This is a showcase of images starring my friends and family who I have had the pleasure of sharing time on the water with:

Philip Goodis, Andrew Redmont, Tim Arsenault, Zak Banwell, Dimitri Roussanidis and my close friends in Squamish, BC.



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Left: My dad Phil and good bud Zak along the trail heading out towards a run on the lower Vedder River. Chilliwack, BC.

Right: Line testing and casting practice at Alice Lake, Squamish, BC.

Below: Jeremy and Zak take a quick pit stop for snacks and refreshments during a long day scouting a local flow. Fraser Valley, BC.





Zak spots one from far above, should we try and make it down there? Oh yea!
Squamish River, BC. -Aaron Goodis Photo



*Tim rigs up before a long day of hunting the elusive silver prize.
Thompson River, BC.*



Top: Sharing motel rooms with your buds is a money saver but always remember the spey rods get dibs on the bed first. Bait Motel, BC.

Bottom: We truly live and play in an amazing place full of lush green landscapes and beautiful clear flowing rivers. Fraser Valley, BC.





Good friend and master caster Tim Arsenault loads up one of the pointiest D loops I have witnessed. Thompson River, BC.



A beautiful bright wild Steelhead released back to the Thompson River, BC.



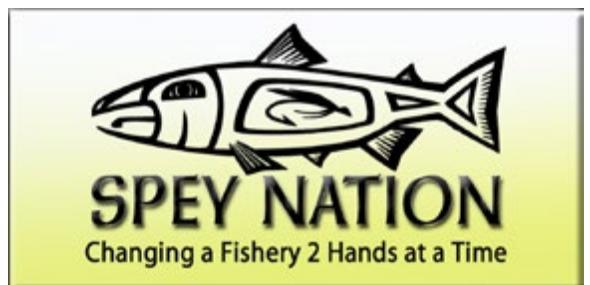
Tim peers into our home water hoping to spot one. Capilano River, BC.

Aaron Goodis Photo

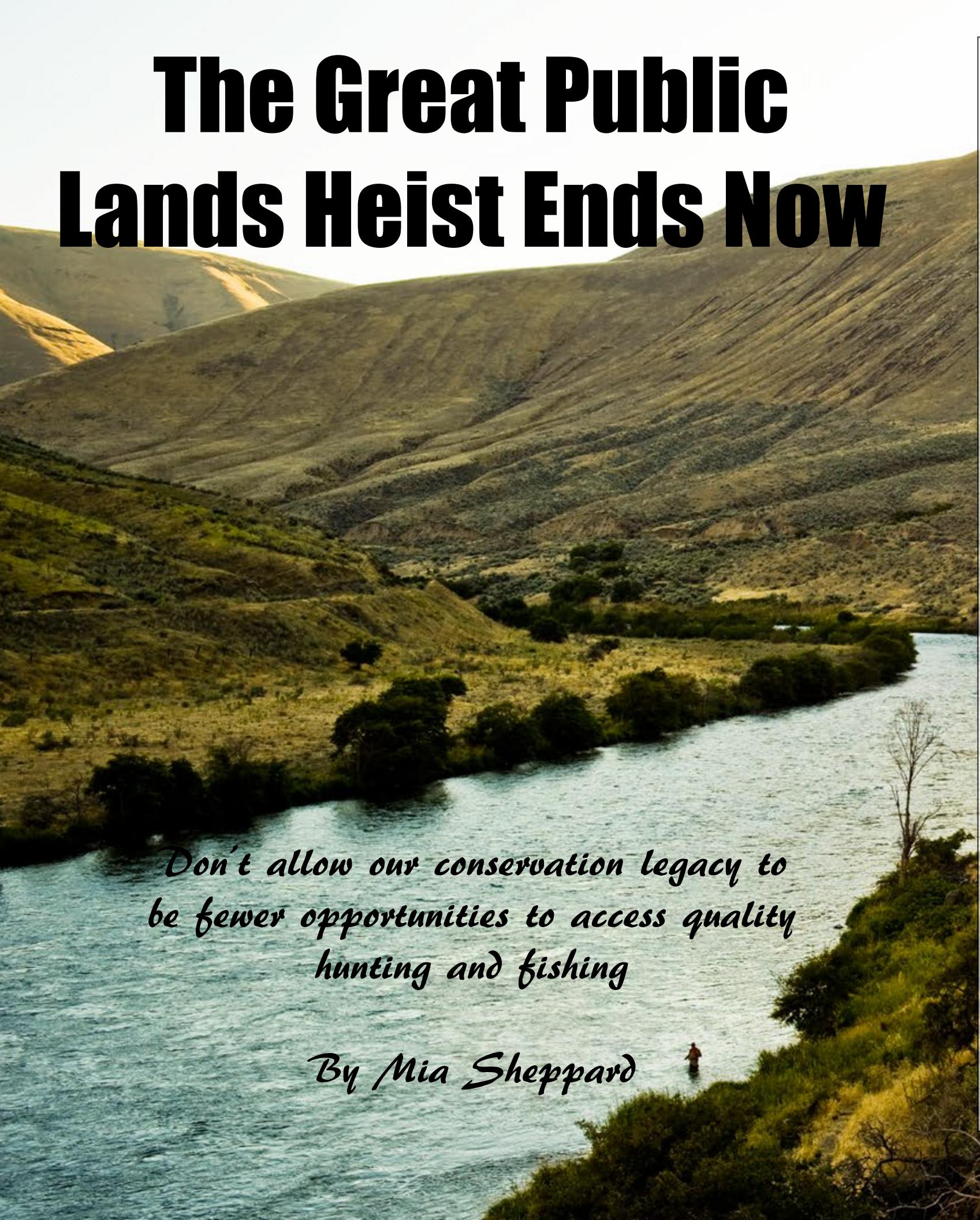


*Dimitri leans on one but this Steelhead wants
nothing to do with us! Thompson River, BC.*

Aaron Goodis Photo



The Great Public Lands Heist Ends Now



Don't allow our conservation legacy to be fewer opportunities to access quality hunting and fishing

By Mia Sheppard

As a steelheader, chukar hunter, fishing guide, and mother to a young daughter, I've made central Oregon, and the rivers that flow through its basalt outcroppings and sagebrush foothills into my playground. Like most steelhead and trout rivers, ours are held in a trust for the American people by the federal government and managed, along with the rest of our country's 640 million acres of federal public lands, by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service.

These are lands that give us access to fish whenever we want, at minimal cost. And it's comforting to think that if I lived in Florida, Texas, Vermont or Indiana I'd have the same claim to the rivers that I love in Oregon, anytime that I wanted to visit them.

Have you ever wondered where you would go fishing if you didn't have public access? Without our public lands, there might be premiums to pay for hunting and fishing as we know it today.

We can't take this lifestyle for granted, because there's a movement afoot to take the public lands that fuel our sports. Harking back to the homesteaders of the 1880s and the Sagebrush Rebellion of the 1970s, this group is rallying around the idea of taking back federal lands that supposedly belong to the states. This modern-day sagebrush rebellion, which is well-funded and well-organized in places like Oregon, Idaho, Utah, and Montana, advocates for the transfer of millions of federal acres to the states that claim to be able to manage them better.

In 2012, the Utah state legislature passed the "Transfer of Public Lands Act and Related Study," demanding that 31 million acres of federal land be given to the state by December 31, 2014. (This demand was never met.) As futile as Utah's effort may sound, a total of 37 bills were introduced in 11 Western states promoting the transfer of federal public lands to state holdings during the 2015 state legislative season. And the fight has moved to Washington, D.C.: This spring, the U.S. Senate passed a non-binding budget resolution that encourages Congress to "sell, or transfer to, or exchange with, a state or local government any Federal land that is not within the boundaries of a National Park, National Preserve, or National Monument." Read that again—your Senators passed this symbolic measure 51-49. Idaho's Senators Mike Crapo and James Risch both voted for it.

You may be asking, why should it matter to me whether I'm stepping onto federal or state lands, as long as I'm having a great day on the water?

Well, because states manage their lands quite differently (hint: it has everything to do with profit) from the feds, who are constitutionally mandated to make your access to fishing and hunting areas a part of the equation. And states simply don't have the financial means to take on the vast amount of public lands that they're demanding from the federal government, so they'll have to liquidate to make their profits.

Think about the exorbitant cost of fighting wildfires and noxious weeds or maintain-

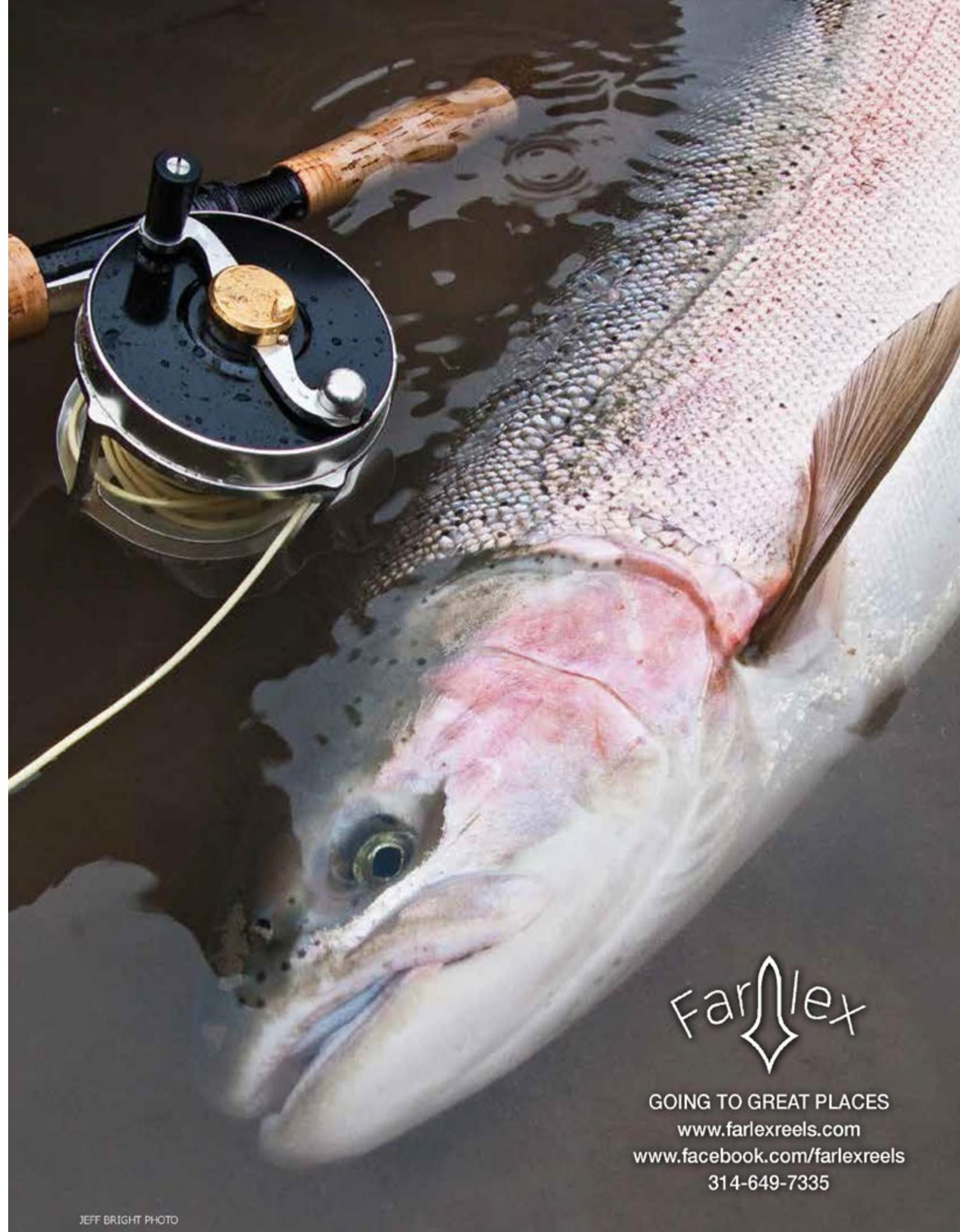
ing roads and campgrounds. How will states fund these projects? When state lands lose money, places like the Elliott State Forest near Coos Bay in Oregon are sold off. Our federal public lands—what every American can now enjoy as a birth-right—would likely face the same fate under state ownership: Privatization or development barring nearly everyone, from hunters and anglers to birdwatchers and backpackers, from accessing them forever.

Furthermore, this idea is a distraction keeping us from finding real solutions to federal land management challenges. Congress should be focused on innovative policy solutions that better prepare for natural resource management and protect communities. We need to tell our lawmakers at the local, state, and national level to reject unworkable ideas, such as handing over millions of acres of federal public lands to individual states that simply can't

afford to manage them.

As an angler, I'm disturbed by Congressional actions that would limit my right to access the rivers that I love on public land, and you should be, too. In an increasingly crowded American West, where open space is a valuable asset to our way of life, ensuring that public lands stay in the public trust is more important now than ever before. Help your lawmakers to understand the value of our public lands, and let them know that sportsmen won't stand for the loss of our access to hunting and fishing.

Sign the petition and learn more at sportsmensaccess.org.





ENCHANTED

with

Haida Gwaii

Story and Photos By

Bill Marts

For several years in the late 70's and early 80's, a friend who lived on Queen Charlotte Islands told me tales of fantastic fishing in the primal streams that flowed through the thick rain forests there. Another friend and I decided to visit him and see for ourselves.

We fished small rivers and streams every day for a week. While we did not find huge numbers of fish, we did hook and land some steelhead and silvers. These are beautiful creatures that have never seen or heard of a hatchery. They were First Nation steelhead and salmon. But the fish were not the highlights of our trip, the rivers and the forests were.

To get to some of the fishing runs we had to follow active lumber roads. The trucks that traveled these graveled roads moved at a fast clip to get the logs to the yard as soon as possible. They were the widest trucks I'd ever seen, taking up three-fourths of the road, which didn't leave any room for another vehicle. If we were to meet one

going the opposite direction, we would be no more of an obstacle than an opossum, just another road-kill. So, to avoid this unpleasant end to our fishing adventures, we were advised to wait until a logger was trucking in the direction we wanted to drive. Sometimes we waited for over an hour to follow in the draft of one of these oversized trucks and be escorted to a side road to the river we were to fish. I had never felt so privileged to be fishing on dam-free

waters for a run of steelhead and salmon that had never known concrete prison walls.

I didn't realize at the time what an influence the First Nation peoples of there would have on me until I started wood carving some 10 years later. I had tried my hand at shaping birds, novelty characters, and various animals when I discovered a book on Northwest native carvings. I fell in love with the totems, masks, bowls, and amulets associated with this and discovered that so much of it originated with the Haida First Nation peoples.





Bill Marts Photo



Of that first trip, I mostly recalled the eerie feeling that I was not alone. The rivers were guarded on both sides and sometimes overhead by ancient trees dripping in softly flowing moss. My fishing companions were up and down-stream, out of my sight, but I felt being observed by (I know this sounds weird) spirits. I would

even turn around quickly to see if anyone was following me. I did not feel threatened, but accompanied. Later, when I started carving I recalled this feeling.

It was 32 years later when the same friend and I returned to the Queen Charlotte

Islands.

In 2010, the islands changed names from Queen Charlotte Islands to Haida Gwaii which means “Islands (or place) of the people.” According to John Vaillant in his book “The Golden Spruce” (absolutely necessary reading BEFORE you go to

Haida Gwaii), “there is an older name, and it translates, roughly, to Island Coming Out of (Supernatural) Concealment. In this sense, the islands represent a sort of existential intertidal zone – not just between the forest and the sea but between the surface and spirit worlds.”

A watercolor painting of a large rainbow trout lying on a dark, textured rock. The trout is pinkish-white with a greenish-blue back. A fly rod and a fly are positioned near the trout. Below the painting, the text "Bordash Fine Fish Art" and "Specializing in Watercolor Artwork for the Spey Fisherman" is written, along with the website "Visit: BordashFineFishArt.com".

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A photograph of a person holding a large rainbow trout by its gills. The trout is pinkish-white with a greenish-blue back. The person is wearing a blue shirt and camouflage pants.

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The people of Haida Gwaii have inhabited the approximately 150 islands of the archipelago for about 13,000 years.

They were a seafaring, warring, slave taking tribe of people that relied on fishing for their existence. They were known for their craftsmanship including dug-out war canoes as long as 30 meters (according to Vaillant).

So much disappointment can result by returning to a place that you've been before and that means

so much to you, but we were not disappointed with our return trip. We were both as enthused and excited about our second visit at the end of our week as we were when we first arrived. Actually, the hills were more tree-covered and inviting than when we were there last, when

great patches of hillside were stripped naked of all but the lowest of vegetated growth by the logging operations. The trails, now along the rivers, ventured further into the forests to more isolated upstream destinations. They weren't like interstate highways cutting through the trees, but more like subtle game trails, where one still has to cross small creeks on fallen logs and choose between humping over felled trees or ducking under them to continue.

This time we were there in February when

there was snowfall and freezing temperatures. We had icy patches on our trails and soft, swampy mud where the sun had raised the temps high enough to melt the frozen matter covering it only days earlier. Traveling to the runs we wanted to fish was not easy and required careful observation to avoid a slip or fall.

The waters were cold, low, and clear. The fishing was slow, but steelhead were caught, so spirits were high all week. The fish, again, were not the headliners.

The weather was beautiful. Actually, more rain would have been welcomed. Clouds were present every day along with a healthy dose of sunshine. The sun, spotlighting the stream and trees with deep shadows and "God rays" of

light seared forest and river scenes into my brain. I have only been stricken by rivers this deeply twice in my life; Haida Gwaii and the Thompson River. I love many rivers but these two places hold mysteries that I hope are never solved.

I left this visit with a sense of joy and feeling almost satisfied, but I wanted more. I return to the lodge the following January, 2015, with no expectations except to walk the trails to the rivers, to fish for wild steelhead and hopefully get a few good





pictures. Of course, we would love to catch a couple fish but if we didn't, it would still be a great trip. Haida Gwaii is definitely for those who enjoy the whole steelhead experience.

The weather this time was warm and wet, the exact opposite of last year. We encountered rains every day, very heavy at times with temps in the 40's and 50's.

This put some rivers way up in the trees and some unfishable. But our guides at Copper Bay Lodge got us into fish every day by knowing how each river reacts to rains and river-flow changes. I have never fished in runs and situations like these. It was extremely challenging and enjoyable. No two runs or rivers were the same and each demanded a different approach, presentation, casting technique, wading experience, and faith in your guide. I still cannot believe some of the places they put us into.

Even with it raining hard, none of us lost the joy and fun of what we were doing. When it got really bad, we could only laugh and smile because we were so high on being there. I remember hiking through dense 2nd growth trees, it would get so thick above us that it was hard to determine if it was raining or not.

The lichen and long hanging moss on the trees that lined our trails tended to make me feel a little closed in; not like a cocoon but more like when I was small and having a baby's blankie wrapped around me. I liked it. It made me feel protected: Like I belonged. This trip, I felt like I "got it". I felt a part of it. If there is a womb of fishing and rivers it is on Haida Gwaii. Every drop of rain invigorated me.

I didn't get spanked and I didn't cry out, but I have to tell you, I felt like screaming out. YES! I grew and learned like a baby

through adulthood how to approach and wade the assortment of runs I was introduced to. I learned to change tips or lines as situations dictated. I changed flies if I lost confidence in the one at the end of my line. Take the time to do it right. That became my mantra. It is still.

If you go:

The fishing is done with single or double-hand rods. The guys up there making living guiding the rivers swear by intruder type flies with pink somewhere in the recipe. Off-colored waters are well-fished by patterns as dark as a bruised raven. Clear waters are fished with overall brighter color and maybe smaller than in dirty water. You will never know what it will be until you get there so take a wide assortment. I prefer to take some weighted flies and some split shot to really drop a fly down through heavy, dark currents if required. All of the fishing is done by swinging the fly. No indicators. It's a beautiful way to fish.

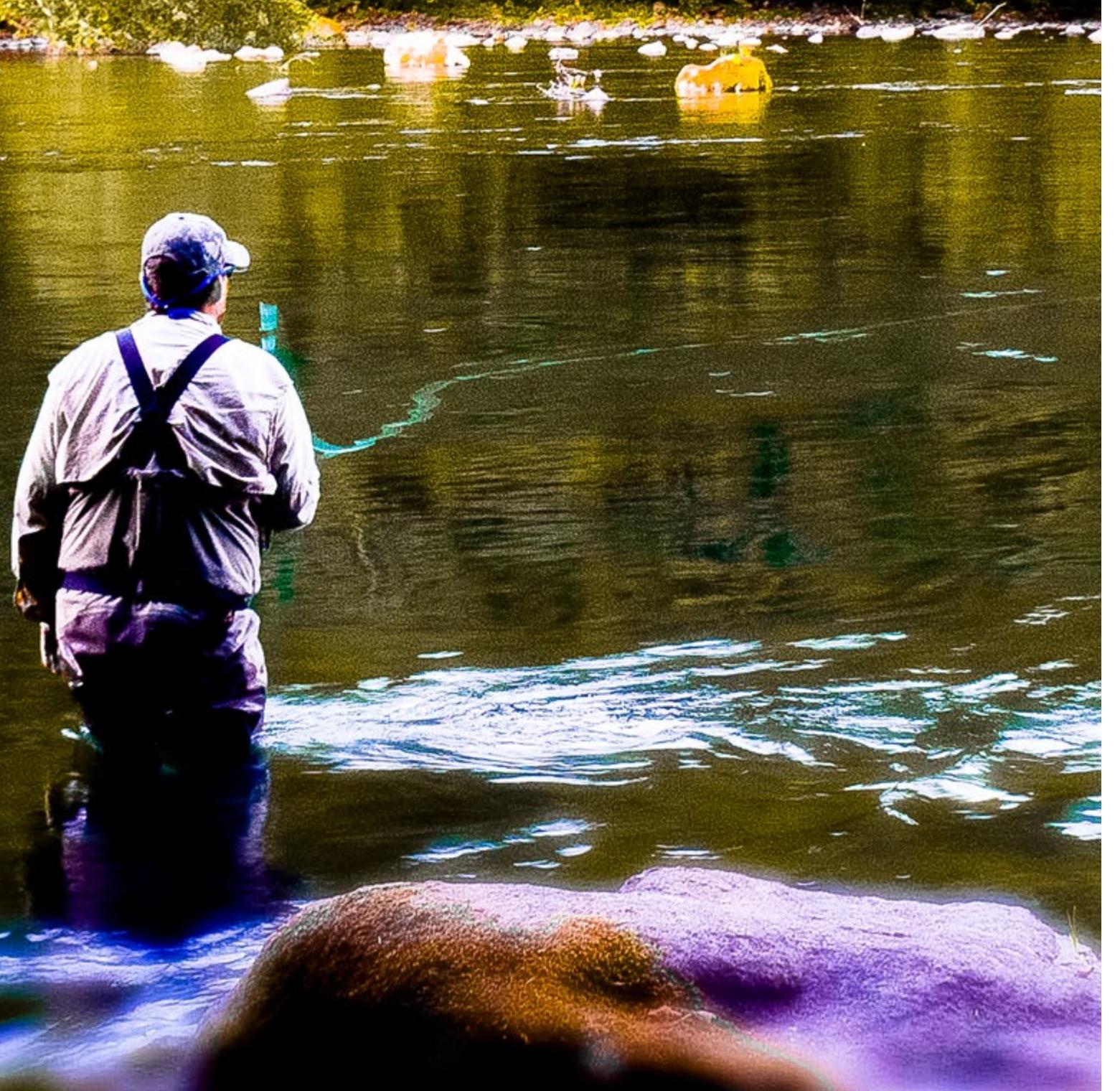
Contacts:

Derek Botchford at Copper Bay Lodge
www.copperbaylodge.com
Cultural Center - (info@haidaheritagecentre.com)
Art Studio (sitka@qcislands.net).

Fishing the Greased Line

Written by Trey Combs

Photos by Marty Sheppard



A hundred years ago Englishmen traveled north to Scotland to fly fish for spring-run Atlantic salmon. They brought to their rivers exquisitely crafted 15-foot two-hand cane rods, Hardy reels filled with linen backing, and silk double tapered lines. The lines had a taper at both ends of their lengths—over 120-feet—and after “broken in” and the production sheen worn off, the lines absorbed water uniformly and had an “Intermediate,” (slow) sink rate. Once a comfortable amount of line was worked out, the same cast could be repeated over and over again without either stripping in or shooting line, doing so even when wearing gloves. Any additional sink was gained by tying on a larger, heavy wire hook to the gut “cast.”

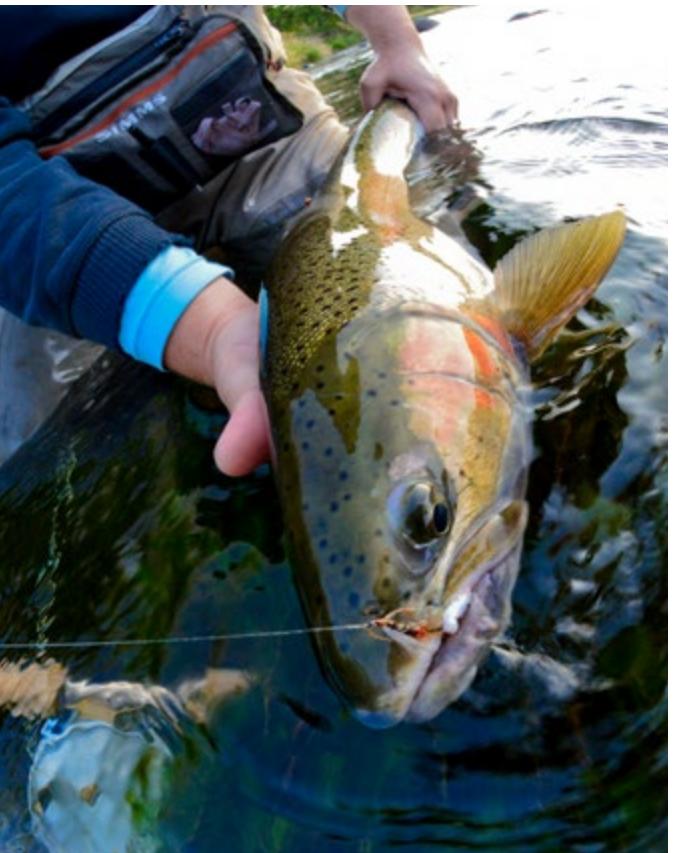
While quartering casts across the down, currents would occasionally catch part of the line and begin to drag the fly behind. Anglers pragmatically called this “drag.” In the course of the fly’s passage, drag was reduced by strongly leading the fly, sometimes in conjunction with briefly raising the rod. This was basically how an angler fished a wet fly for Atlantic salmon.

Arthur Wood, engineer, businessman, and a person of considerable wealth, advanced salmon fly fishing in a more exact and

refined direction that became known as “Greased Line Fishing.” Students of these techniques are still exploring the wisdom of Wood’s methods with each passing generation.

Scotland’s Dee River became Wood’s laboratory when he first set up residence there in 1918.

The Dee was Cairnton Estate water. The Burnette Family owned Cairnton and scheduled bookings, made the financial transactions, and managed beat rotations. (Today, Cairnton takes pride in its self-description as the birthplace of salmon fly fishing.) Wood annually leased both beats and the neighboring property until his death in 1934.



The property came with a modest cottage. Wood had this razed, and a mansion built in its

place that had separate quarters for the servants. Two “lunch huts,” really small luxurious homes, were added along with two riverside rain shelters. Curiously, Wood so disliked wading he had jetties built that permitted him to walk out and reach distant lies with his flies.

Wood kept extremely detailed records of his fishing, naming the pool, weight of the salmon, fly pattern, hook size, time of the day, and day of the year.



Wood had scale samples taken from each catch. He aged the scales and recorded this data, salmon life histories that turned his written observations into historically important scientific journals.

J. W. Hills, a friend and sometime fishing companion, gained temporary possession of these records after Wood died, and wrote an instructional account of Wood's angling techniques. He titled the resulting book "Greased Line Fishing." As the author, Hills took the pen name "Jock Scott," then, as now, a legendary salmon fly pattern.

If Wood disliked wading, he detested Scotland's cold, wet, and dreary spring weather. He generally waited out the season, and when the Dee dropped and sun was on the water, Wood fished and fished hard, breaking only for his chef and chauffeur to deliver meals to one of his fishing huts.

Neither was Wood a fan of two-hand rods. He fished custom built 12-foot cane rods that varied in power. Weighing from

about 12 to 13 ounces, they would be considered heavy by today's standards, but not tip heavy. Wood demanded that the rod must balance in his hand with his reels, a Hardy St. John for the #1 (lightest), the 3 3/4" Hardy Perfect for the #2, and the 4" Hardy Perfect for the #3.

Wood cast Kingfisher silk lines, carefully dressing the lines with Hardy's Cerolene, a lanolin based product that kept the line floating and more easily mended under all current situations. This was key. Wood, a big, athletic, powerfully built man, could cast prodigious distances. (He was once observed single-hand casting a 16-foot two-hand cane rod.) Wood could easily mend his line to eliminate drag, and did this so skillfully that the fly was not moved. If an errant current caused a small belly to appear, what Wood called a "knuckle," he would remove it by more strongly leading the fly. The fly passed broadside downstream, and was taken by salmon in this attitude. The rising salmon was securely hooked in the corner of its mouth.

When steelhead fly fishers dusted off this classic in the 1970s, almost no one understood what Arthur Wood was writing about. Sometimes, great lengths were taken to write around this ignorance. The first problem was the word "drag," a word we apply to unnatural tension on a dry fly on its downstream float and NOT to a belly in the line that drags a wet fly downriver. Trying the fish a wet fly drag free in this context defies the laws of physics. Toss a wet fly in a river and it sinks to the bottom of the river. To accentuate this misunderstanding, Wood described his fly's passage as like a leaf floating down the river. This reference in particular drove our fly fishing's deep thinking Wise Men crazy. Even as we came to understand UK drag and US "drag's" huge differences, how does a wet fly swim downstream like a leaf on the water?

I've seen this in my fishing for Atlantic salmon in Russia's Kola. When you cast across and slightly down and mend to take out any drag, and you LEAD THE FLY, the fly will pass downstream like that proverbial leaf. But, and this is a big BUT, because you're

leading the fly, you're drawing the fly across the river as it passes downstream, and the fly is under tension the entire way.

When I first read "Greased Line Fishing," I didn't know anyone who had fished for Atlantic salmon. I accepted the common belief that steelhead and these gamefish of nobility were closely related. Both were taxonomically placed in the genus "Salmo." I even heard steelhead described as "the poor man's Atlantic salmon."

Upon additional research aided by DNA technology, the steelhead's taxonomic association to Atlantic salmon proved far more distant than scientists had first thought. Steelhead and western trout were grouped with Pacific salmon, genus *Oncorhynchus*. Atlantic salmon and brown trout remained "Salmo." In short, Atlantic salmon and steelhead were very different gamefish, perhaps most dramatically exemplified by their rise forms. Nothing really more advances an appreciation as to why greased line fishing is so effective on Atlantic salmon until this is fully appreciated.



Photo by Mark Martin

First, remember that the fly is passing down river broadside. The Atlantic salmon's classic rise to the fly is purposeful and astonishingly slow as it draws in the fly and water as one. (This can even result in the fly getting flushed through the salmon's gills.) There's no comparable rise form in steelhead fly fishing. Wood described that the most effective way to hook a salmon during this rise is to "drop a loop," and

cause the fly to come free.

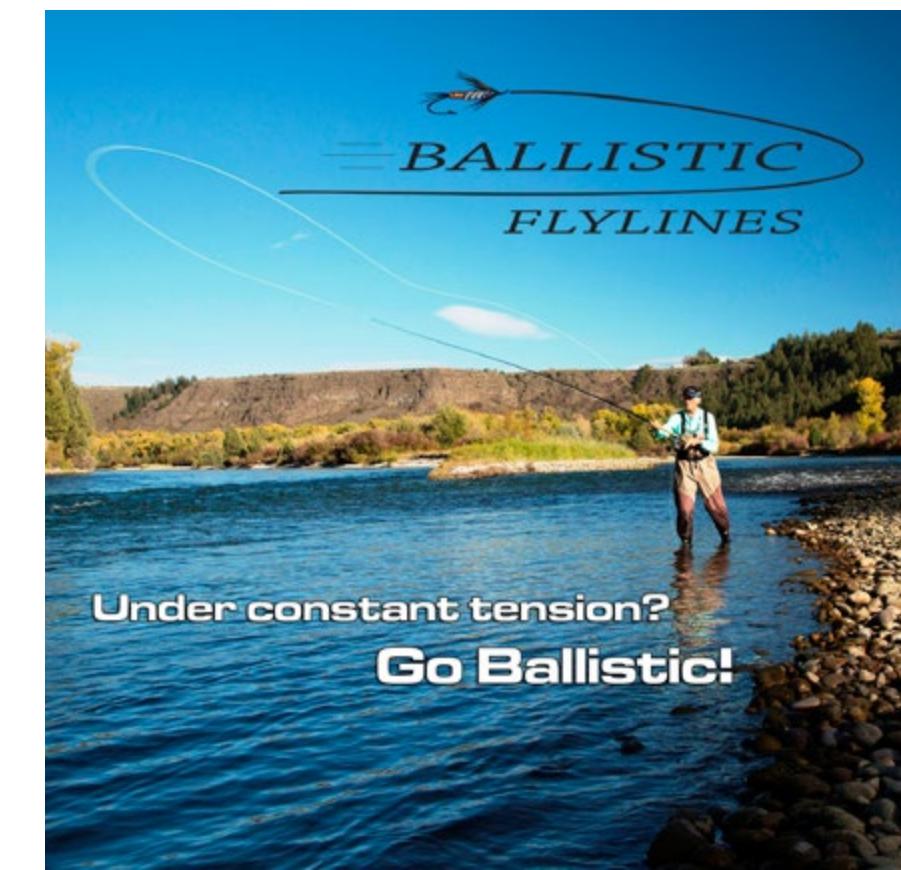
What fly to use? Wood wrote, "As regards pattern, I do not believe that this matters at all." I should add that Wood had his flies dressed sparsely, what we now call "low water," and that his appetite for variety, entirely to amuse himself, was satisfied with a Blue Charm, Silver Blue, and March Brown.



have the current take that loop at the hand down river and form again past the salmon, the modest drag drawing the fly to the corner of the salmon jaw and taking hold in the corner. However, the fly in the corner of the jaw didn't necessarily guarantee a hooked salmon. Wood would keep the rod low and swing it toward the shore and opposite from the direction of the salmon. This was in no way a "strike," but rather a slow tightening on the line. Wood emphasized that coming tight immediately or worse yet, raising the rod, was likely to

"Greased Line Fishing II" will appear in a future issue of "Swing the Fly." This article will describe fly patterns, both historical and current, that are most effective when led and fished broadside to the river.

Above: Eoin Fairgrieve Photo





Thread: Lagartun X-Strong Thread - Red

Tube: HMH small ridged plastic tubing (add on junction tubing). (or you can use a copper tube if you want to add more weight.)

Weight: Lead wire (0.025) - doubled over and tied to underside of tube

Tip: Lagartun oval tinsel Medium- Gold

Tag: Dubbed mixed Seal fur and Ice Dub - Yellow and Orange

Tail: Polar bear (or substitute) with sparse Krystal Flash strands - Orange and Pink

Horns (Feelers): A pairs of Lady Amherst Tail fibers - Natural

Eyes: E.P. Mono Shrimp Eyes - Small or Medium Black

Rear Hackle (Butt): Large Mallard Flank - Hot Orange (one side stripped)

Rib: Lagartun oval tinsel Medium - Gold

Body: Lagartun French Flat Braid - Hot Orange

Body Hackle: Large Strung Saddle Hackle Large - Hot Pink

Head Hackle: Rhea (or Heron) - Hot Orange

Collar: Guinea Hackle - Kingsher Blue

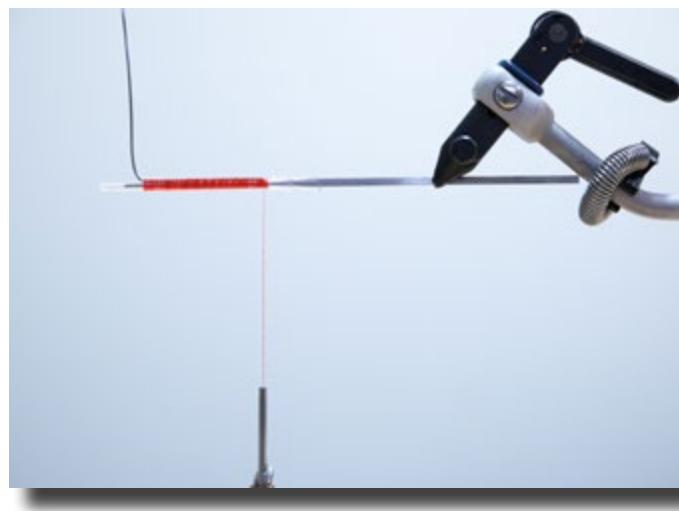
Underwing: A Golden Pheasant sword - Natural

Underwing Wing (Shell back): Golden Pheasant breast feathers - Yellow and/or Red

Wing (Shell back): 3 Ringneck Pheasant feathers - Orange, Yellow, Olive (or all Orange.)



1. Secure the tube on your tube needle/vice setup. Tie in your thread.



2. Securing the thread down the tube, tying in the lead wire along the underside of the tube, and then doubling over the wire (note vice is flipped in photo.)



3. Tie in the oval gold tinsel to create the tag, followed by a dubbed Butt (this is to help create a platform for the tail to jut up.)



4. Add in sparse strands of pink krystal flash, I use roughly four strands. Now tie in the tail, using pink and orange Polar bear (or substitute.), followed by white Lady Amherst horns on either side of the polar bear as "prawn whiskers or feelers".



5. On the top of both sides of the tail, tie in the mono eyes.



6. Now tie in orange dyed Mallard with one side stripped. Wind in as rear hackle to create "prawn legs".



7. Tie in gold oval rib, then pink body saddle hackle and hot orange atbraid.



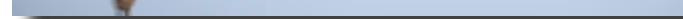
8. Wrap hot orange atbraid body, then pink body saddle hackle and counter wrap the gold oval rib following to secure the hackle for durability.



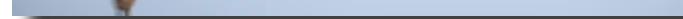
9. Splay down body hackle then tie in and wrap Rhea head hackle.



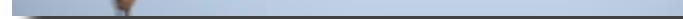
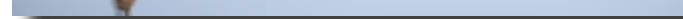
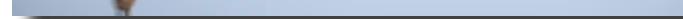
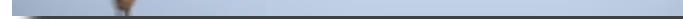
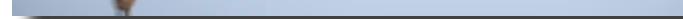
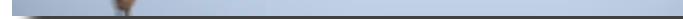
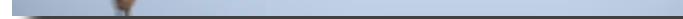
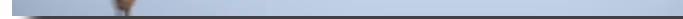
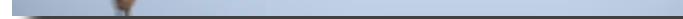
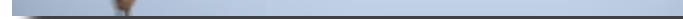
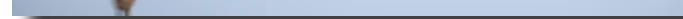
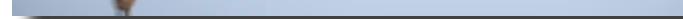
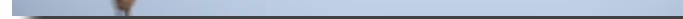
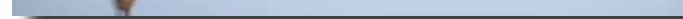
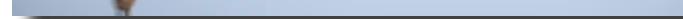
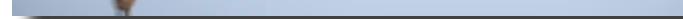
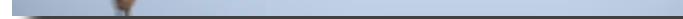
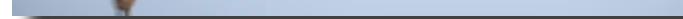
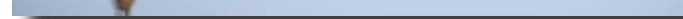
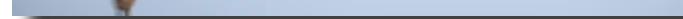
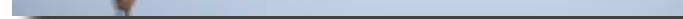
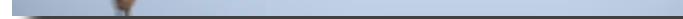
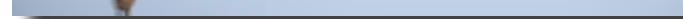
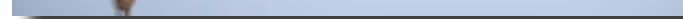
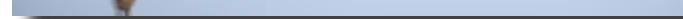
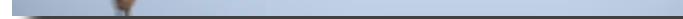
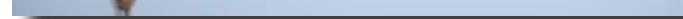
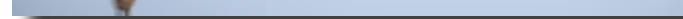
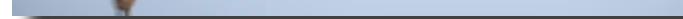
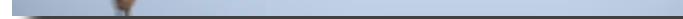
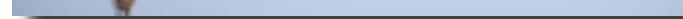
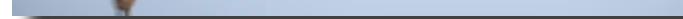
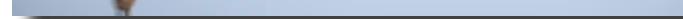
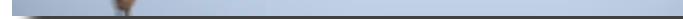
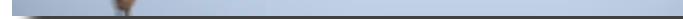
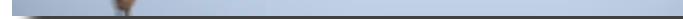
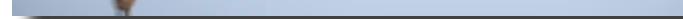
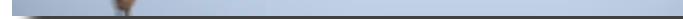
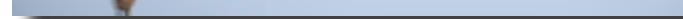
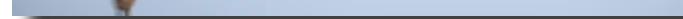
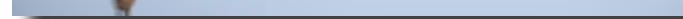
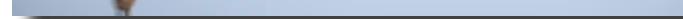
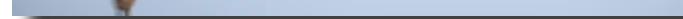
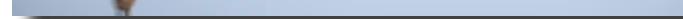
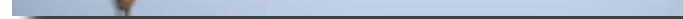
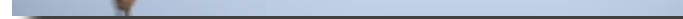
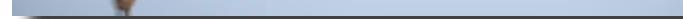
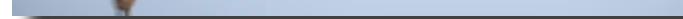
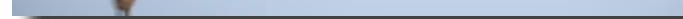
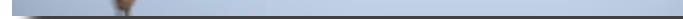
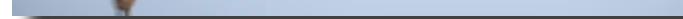
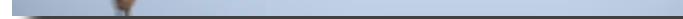
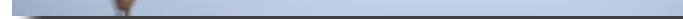
10. Tie in golden pheasant sword as the underwing, have it center between the “prawn eyes” and extend past them about 3/4 of an inch to simulate “prawn head”.



11. Tie in kingsher blue guinea hackle, add a golden pheasant breast feather as part of the underwing to simulate the underside of the “prawn shell back”.



12. Tie in the wing with 3 ringneck pheasant feathers (one at a time), varying in length. This should create the “prawn shell back.” I have used a orange(long), yellow (mid.) and olive short to show the effect. Now tie off the head and apply head cement on your B.C. Prawn tube!





Adventure Awaits

Deschutes
Grande Ronde

Sandy
John Day

Contributors



Alexander Grant is the pseudonym of a Montana based writer, musician, poet and avid steelhead fisherman. Raised in Eastern U.S. , he fishes traditionally with single hand cane rods and salmon flies, tied in hand. He is a self described curmudgeon although friends disagree. When not pursuing the arts, he plays hockey and lacrosse.



Mia Sheppard. When Mia isn't guiding, doing dishes, or working on conservation issues for The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, she is living life like a kid steelhead fishing, bird hunting and playing with her daughter Tegan.



Nick Pionessa works in the fly fishing industry full time. He is a highly recognized commercial fly tier and designer. Nick's photography masterfully captures the world of angling with a fly. He lives in Lancaster NY, with his wife and fly fishing partner Suzanne.



Jonathan Barlow. Trained in photography in Toronto in the 80's, Jonathan moved west to Vancouver with his wife 25 years ago. One of his friends recently paid him the compliment of referring to him as a steelheader, above all. More of his work can be found at his Barlow Photo Arts blog.



Bill Marts spent almost his entire adult life in the fly fishing business as a guide, fly shop manager, owner and before he retired in 2012 as the saltwater travel expert for The Fly Shop. He loves fishing and tying patterns for any fish that will eat a fly; especially steelhead. His fly patterns are fished in waters around the globe. He spends his time now, fishing, tying, writing and photography.

Aaron Goodis owns and operates Aaron Goodis Photography, a small solo freelance photography business located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He is an ambassador for Echo Fly Fishing and pro staff for Airflo Fly Lines.

You can find him online at
www.aarongoodisphotography.com
Facebook.com/aaron.goodis.photography
Instagram.com/agoodisphoto
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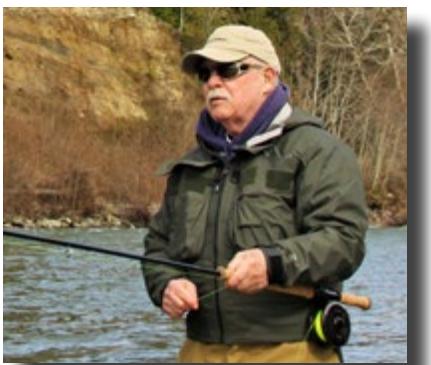
Marty Sheppard. Born and raised in Oregon, Marty grew up on the banks of the Sandy River. With his dad as tutor and angling mentor, Marty landed his first steelhead at the age of five. Marty now spends his days guiding adventurous anglers in Oregon's best wilderness settings with his wife Mia at Little Creek Outfitters. Read a lot more from Marty and Mia at their Metalheads Blog.



Karsten Stangeland is 8 years old and has been casting a two handed rod since he was 4. He rose his first steelhead to a dry fly in the summer of 2015 and is learning the intricacies of the North Umpqua. He is hooked for life! He is active in Kung Fu, skiing and soccer and enjoys all things outdoors. He wants to be a photographer for National Geographic when gets older.



Jeff Bright. In service of this passion for fish, Jeff is a writer, photographer, travel specialist and host. His published works include the book *Found in a River: Steelhead & Other Revelations* and numerous articles in premier North American and European flyfishing magazines. When not off in planet's far corners combing the currents for a new, shining thrill, Jeff resides in San Francisco with his wife Clair and reminisces about the ones that got away.



Trey Combs is the author of books such as *Bluewater Fly Fishing* and what is widely regarded as the Bible of our sport, *Steelhead Fly Fishing*. He lives with his wife Phyllis in Port Townsend, WA and guides / hosts steelheaders for the Evening Hatch Fly Shop on the Klickitat and Quinnalt Rivers.



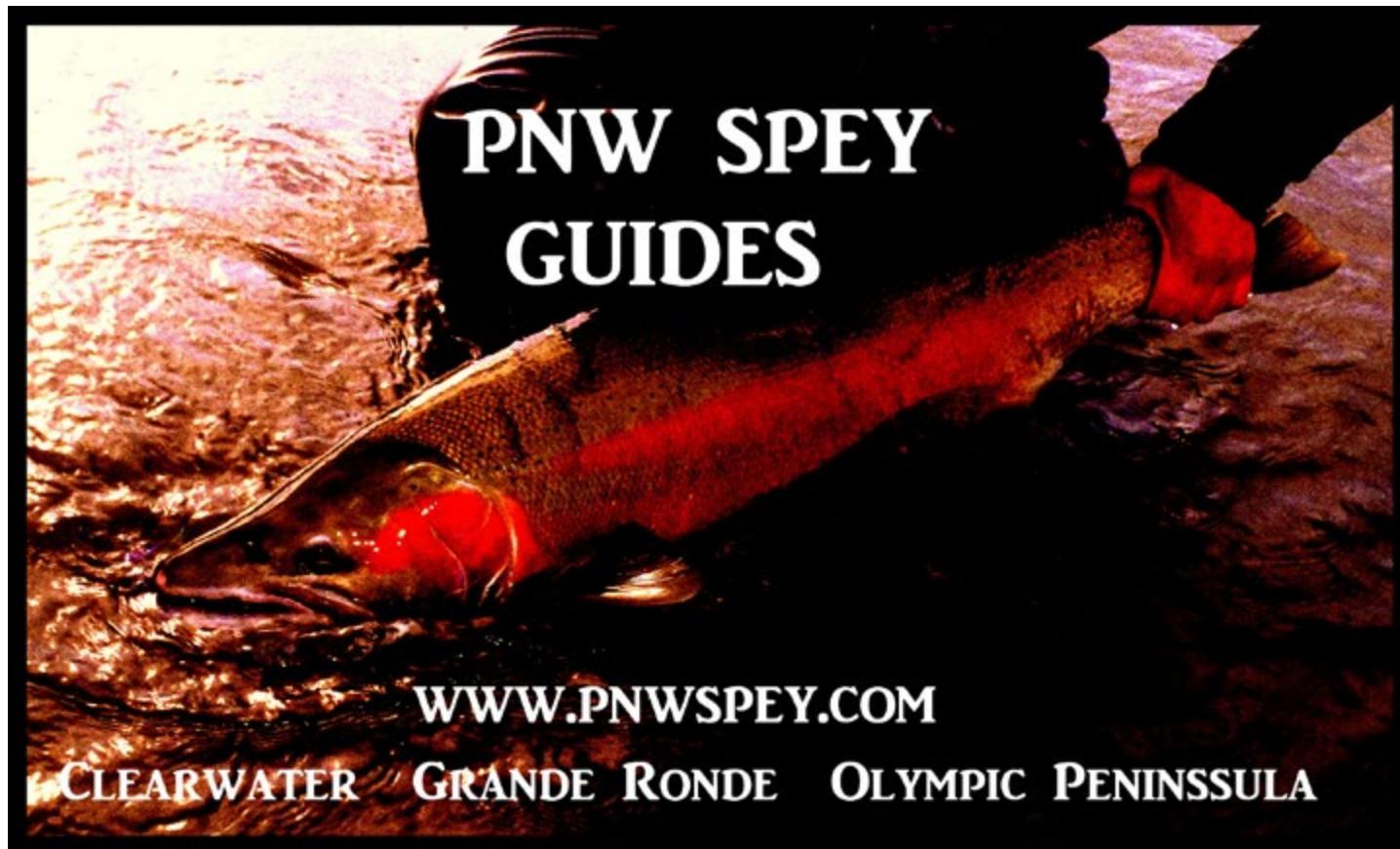
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CLEARWATER GRANDE RONDE OLYMPIC PENINSSULA

The River Tender

By Alexander Grant

The finest mist
And the lightest rain
Sizzling on the water in the early twilight
Shiny rocks worn smooth
And tufts of grass
With cornflower blue accents

An imperfect cast landing
Mending, swimming the fly
An ancient pattern tied by lamplight
The line connecting me to all this

The things in my pockets
Old friends I've fished with
For decades
And the smell of tobacco

The river touches me
Slows my heartbeats
An almost tender murmur
As I step down

I carry this with me
Like the things in my pockets
And the sound of the water
Forever...if I'm lucky
I become this

Jonathan Barlow Photo





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