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ISSUE NO. 13
THE WHITE ISSUE
FALL 2014

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photo: Steve Seinberg



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DEPARTMENTS



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From the Editor's desk...
to your bathroom

Fall 2014

Three years. Like most three-year-olds, we here at SCOF have finally stopped peeing and pooping on ourselves and have moved up to big boy Underoos (this morning Scooby Doo, in particular). Also, like most three-year-olds, we now think the words “pee” and “poop” are hilarious. What’s funny is that in web-based magazine years, our paltry three equals 60, which is almost as old as Steve is in human years. In the three years we have been schilling our unique brand of tomfoolery, we have had the pleasure of meeting hundreds of Southern fly fisherman. Whatever this thing is we do, makes us seek out the same affliction in each other. It’s why we are uncomfortable in social situations around non-fishing civilians. It’s why our specific brand of humor can sometimes awkwardly silence a room with the uncomfortable sense of, “did he just say that?” being the only thing left lingering.

We have been conditioned to have no filters as we have spent years on rivers and oceans where filters weren’t even considered to be part of the lexicon. It is also the reason why we have no problem striking up a conversation with a stranger with no pre-qualifications aside from the hat he’s wearing.

So after three years we would like to thank everyone that we’ve met along the way. To those of you we haven’t met yet, I’m sure we will, and when we do I’m sure we’ll be thick as thieves in no time. Enjoy our third anniversary issue -- we had a pretty damn good time making it.



**ISSUE #1
FALL 2011**



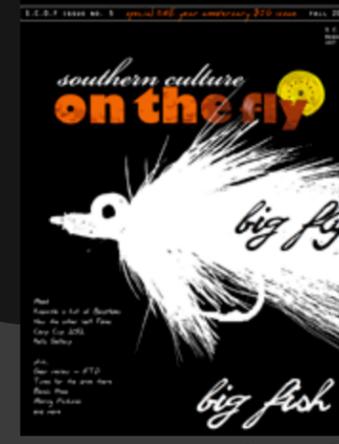
**ISSUE #2
WINTER 2012**



**ISSUE #3
SPRING 2012**



**ISSUE #4
SUMMER 2012**



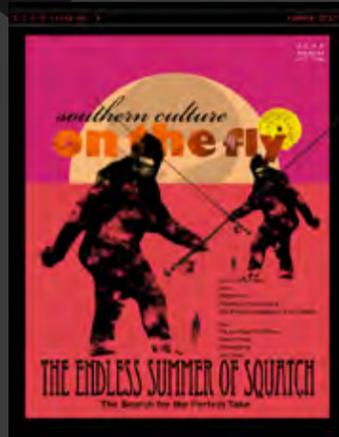
**ISSUE #5
FALL 2012**



**ISSUE #6
WINTER 2013**



**ISSUE #7
SPRING 2013**



**ISSUE #8
SUMMER 2013**



**ISSUE #9
FALL 2013**



**ISSUE #10
WINTER 2014**

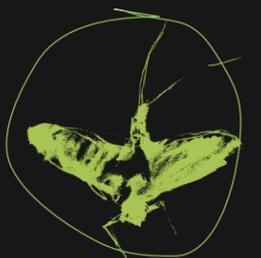


**ISSUE #11
SPRING 2014**



**ISSUE #12
SUMMER 2014**

still free... whenever you need 'em



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Haiku *double feature
with
John Van Vleet

I have two
weapons:
My rod, my
line, and my
fly.
What? Three? I
am dumb.

Don't give me
that purse.
Why did you
buy me lip-
stick?
Mom? Dad? What
am I?



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*TIP YOUR GUIDE

By David Grossman

10 p.m.

5 a.m.

9 p.m.



I was a guide for a number of years. I no longer am one, so it is without fear of financial and business repercussions that I write this. Far too many fly fishing clients are shitty tippers. If you extrapolate that out to the numbers of people that eat at restaurants, the shitty tipper numbers get mind-boggling. In order to be a good guide (we'll leave the not-so-good guides out of this conversation...tip those douches whatever the hell you want), you have to have a rather extensive knowledge on many subjects; fish, bugs, water hydrology, first aid, survival, boats, backcountry navigation, casting, cooking and last but not least a cornucopia of the trivial and mundane so that pleasant conversation can be easily faked all day, if necessary. All an accountant needs to know is how to add and subtract. Yet, an accountant often makes five to 10 times as much as a fly fishing guide. Don't be fooled. Guides are poor -- one-bad-season-away-from-homeless poor. "Long days doing what you love is its own reward," they say. I say bullshit. Long days loving what you do and still being able to pay your heating bill in the winter is a way better reward.

For lunch he will be serving his finest food stuffed with his second finest food...



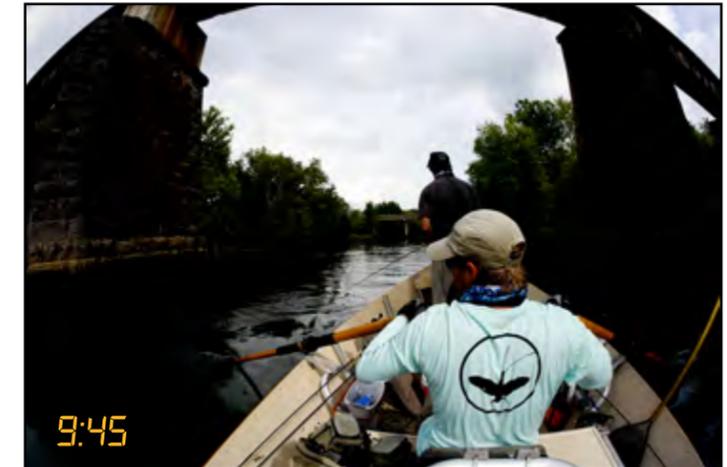
Your day starts...



Plan B anybody...



The traditional rigging of your wildy inappropriate rod for the day...



Rowing the wrong way upstream to get the day started off right...





Talking you through the whole catching thing...



"That is a real good one, they don't all have to be big to be pretty..."



"Don't see stuff like that at the office..."



Bad form that happens everyday...



That ain't no gas station sandwich from the gas station...





The average guide works an 11-12 hour day when it's all said and done. You, as the client, are only there for maybe eight hours of it. From tying flies the night before to shopping for lunch the morning of, there is no downtime during the season, and in the South, the season is a long one. The economics of your trip for the average guide is even more depressing. Out of the 400 bucks you pay for a trip, the shop usually takes a quarter or more off the top. The shuttle driver takes his 20 bucks, and your lunch costs another \$20. The guide's truck will chew another \$40-50 dollars worth of gas on an average day. Now you're talking \$200 profit, but oh, you lost 10 flies on your trip and chewed up a spool of tippet and a couple of leaders while you were flailing about. As you can see, the economics of being a full-time guide is about as prosperous as being the Congo... they're poor. On an hourly basis, your guide is probably making less than the kid at the strip mall dressed up as Little Ceaser, twirling a sign. Sad, right? Sally Struthers sad.





On the way home, with you comfortably napping in shotgun...

Another day, another dollar...

There have been plenty of articles and online information on how to tip a guide. Most often the author compares tipping a guide to tipping wait staff; 10-20% based on service. I am going to simplify this for everyone out there since I failed percentages in third grade. One hundred dollars a day for a good day, that's it. Anything less for a good day on the water, and you might as well hock a big loogie on it before you give it to him...and that's just rude.

We would like to say a big thank you to Galen Kipar for taking time out of his schedule to throw us a guide day. You should book a trip with him now...right now. Check him out at galenkipar.com



I KNOW A GOOD SPOT
BUT YOU GOTTA HOP
A COUPLE FENCES





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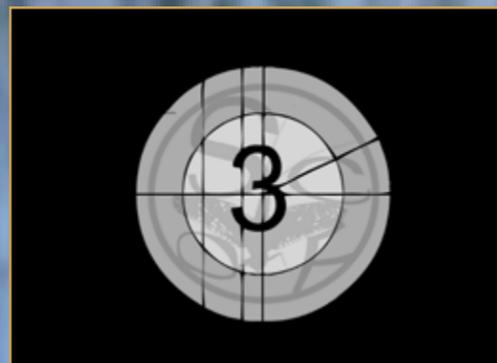


MOVING PICTURES 

LC Journal - Doug Roland



AFTER EQUINOX



NEED more in between?
... Check out the new

SCOF BLOG

Dave may be there...
(don't encourage him)

rebuild

PART ONE : THE PLAN

Steve Seinberg and David Grossman



For a small boat, a technical poling skiff can cost an ass load of money.

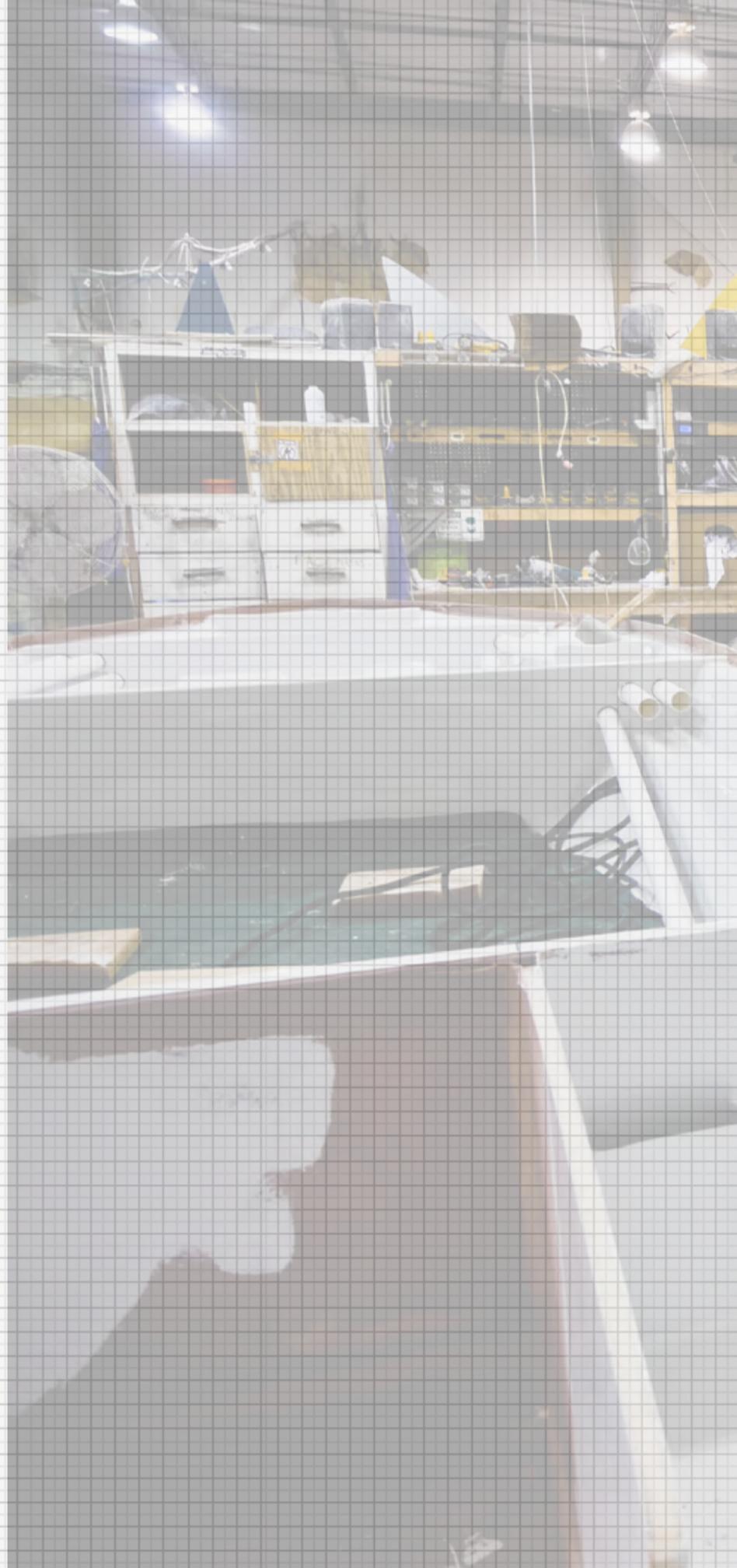
Yes, your drift boat was not cheap, but if you quadruple what you paid for that dory, you start getting into the ballpark of what a good new skiff will cost you. As soon as you start adding the niceties, costs can skyrocket out of control until you have a sweet boat but no home (and no wife), and now you're living in your boat down by the ramp. Awesome lifestyle for some, but for us non-homeless types, a new skiff is just not something that makes sense to our accountants. No, the rest of us must find our boats the old-fashioned way...on the Interwebs marketplace. Lucky for all of us dwellers in the classifieds world (we call ourselves the mole people, and we harbor great contempt for you surface dwellers with your new boats) there are usually great deals to be had on used boats all over the Southeast.

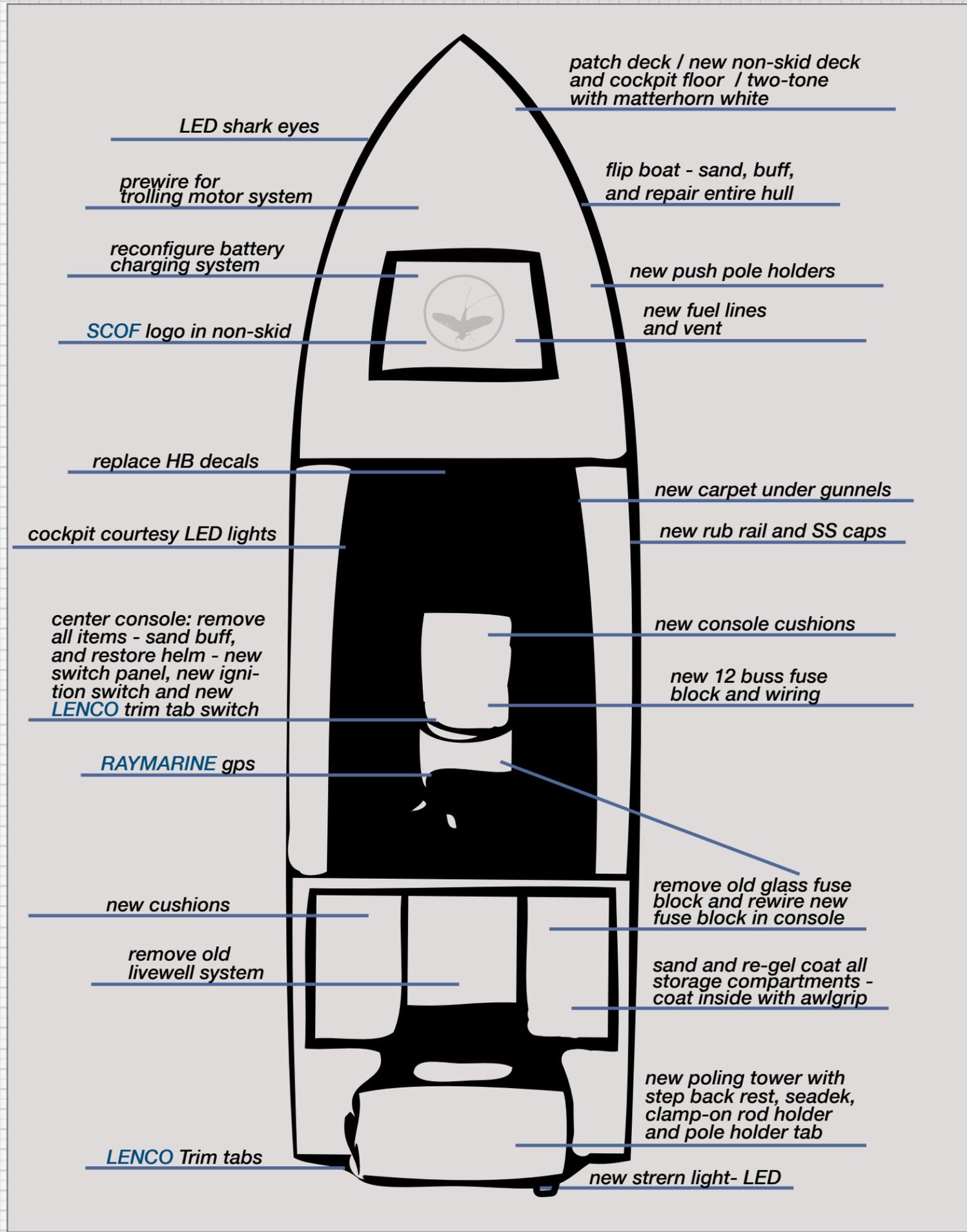
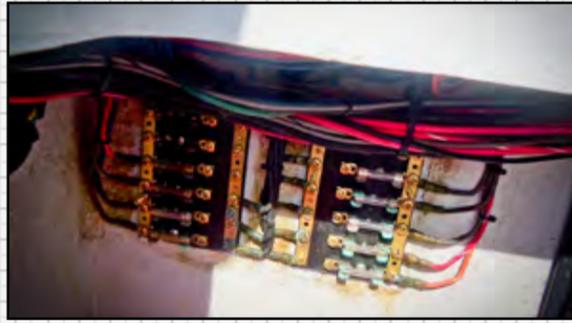


Now you have your used boat, and what was a great boat for someone else 10 years ago might not be set up the way you like, have some nagging issues that have to be addressed, outdated electronics and wiring, or as in our case the gas tank might leak like a sieve the first time you fill it up. Even with problems, a re-worked used skiff should still be able to save you some coin over going all in on that new boat.

Since we here at SCOF are scientists first, we have set out to prove that very hypothesis. For our project boat we tracked down a 2003 Hells Bay Whipray Professional. The HB Professional is as classic as they come, and we've never heard a negative word to be said about this model and year. We bought the boat down in Florida and

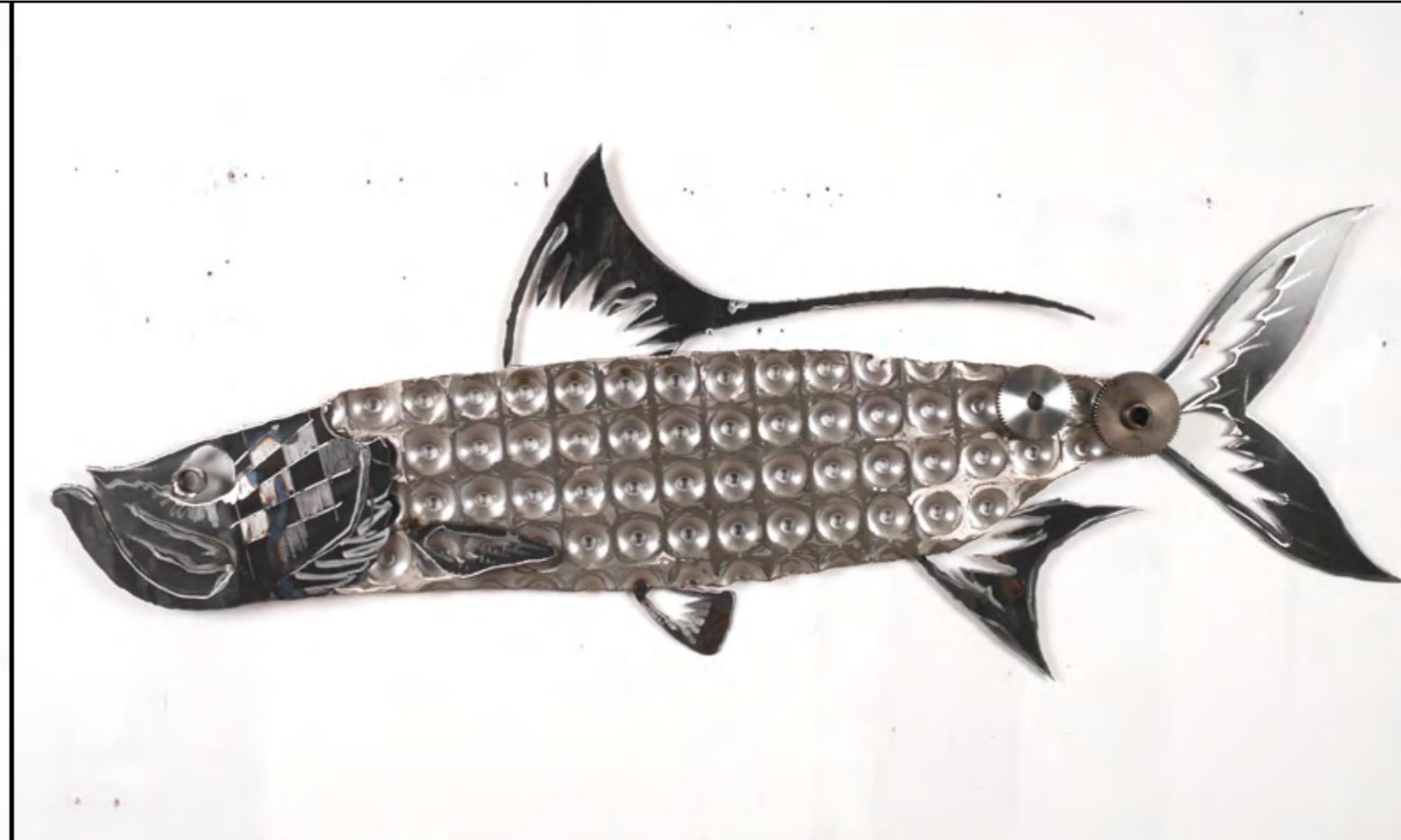
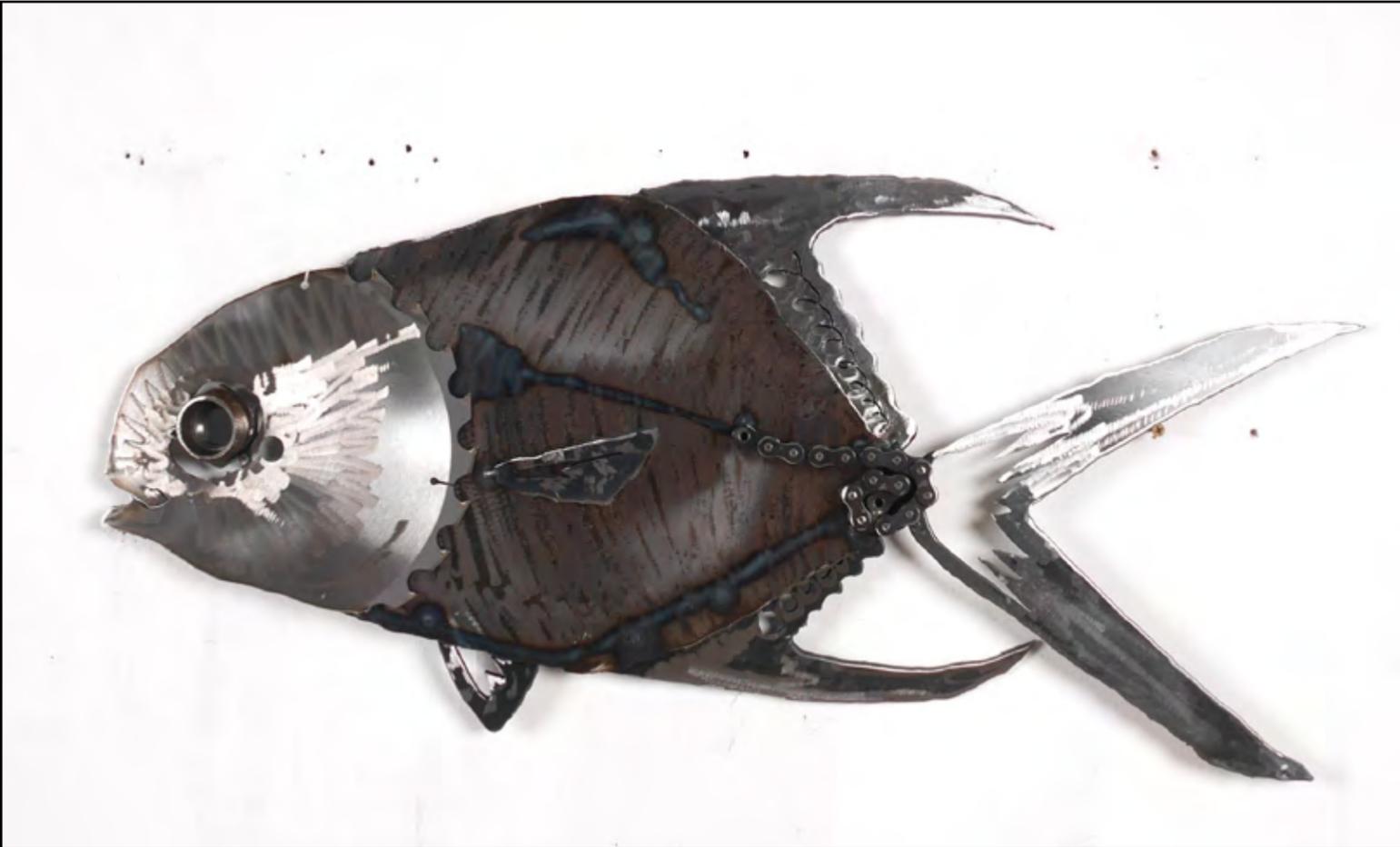
it went straight from the previous owner to the service bay at Hell's Bay HQ. What's nice about dealing with the folks at Hells Bay is that they have their program dialed to the Nth degree. They gave the boat a full exam, and when I say full I mean prostates were checked...twice. After the exam, we had a list of everything that could be done with line item pricing. Being able to restore the boat a la carte like this helped keep us in budget and triage the situations that needed it. New nonskid, cleaning up old patches, electronics, wiring and a new trailer axle were some of the stuff we needed to take care of before the boat could or would even hit the water. Check out plans below and make sure you check the SCOF Winter Issue for for *Part II....The Build*.





ART START

Ryan Sharpe



Some might call us here at SCOF, patrons of the arts. Some might call us weird old dudes who stalk young artists online (six one way, half a dozen the other I suppose). I started seeing Ryan Sharpe's drawings a year or so ago and was pretty impressed. Then I saw his metal sculptures and was truly blown away. Taking scrap from his job sites, Ryan reassembles, welds and brings forth fish that are truly greater than the sum of their parts. By combining various materials, shapes and textures, Ryan is creating visually challenging representative fish sculpture by a natural intuition rarely seen in sporting art. *- David Grossman*

www.deadweightfly.com



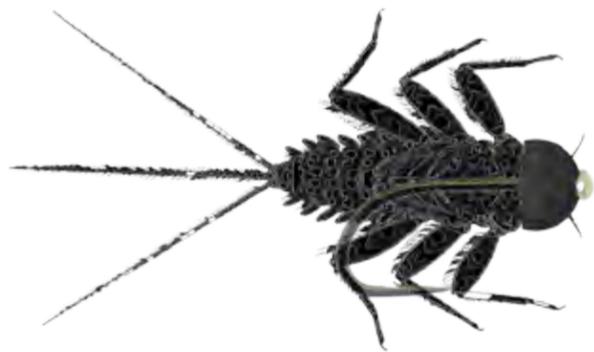
It would be better to tie a fly with a beadhead that is _____.

- A. Round
- B. Square
- C. Molded to the profile of the insect you are trying to imitate

DUH.



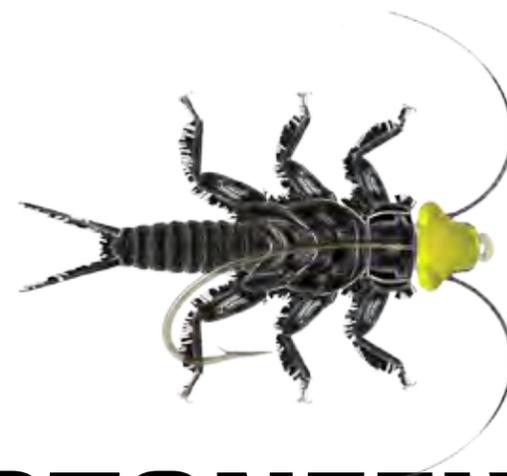
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Dave Hise



WAXY the WAXWORM

Materials List:

Hook: TMC2499SP

Thread: 14/0 Veevus

Legs: Japanese legs

Body: Virtual Nymph Skin translucent cream

Racing stripe: MFC Minnow Skin pearl

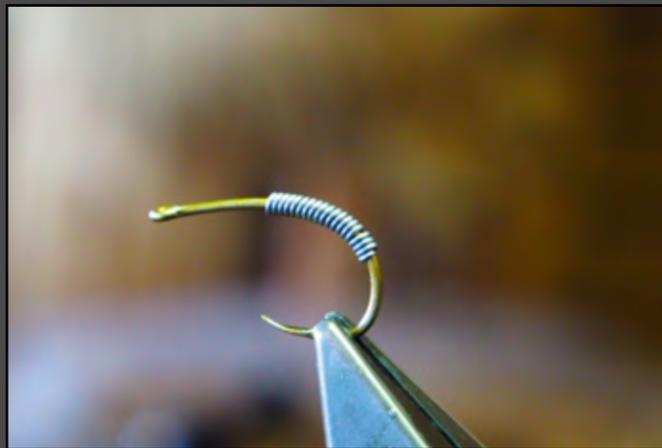
Ribbing: 3/0 Mono thread

Waterproof markers: color to suit

Finishing adhesive: Deer Creek UV resin

Have you grown tired of watching centerpin anglers in the winter months drift waxworms under a bobber and catch all the steelhead? Waxy is your answer. I have heard conflicting reports about what a waxworm actually is, but have come to the conclusion that it is the larvae of the Pyralidae moth. In the wild, these creatures live as nest parasites in wasp and bee colonies where they eat the cocoons, pollen, shed skins and wax. Fish love 'em but they probably won't ever see them in their natural environment unless they fall from a hive positioned near the water's edge. That being said, Waxy is also a good imitation of caddis and crane fly larvae. Dead drift it under an indicator or high stick nymph (Euro nymphing) it for the best results. She is effective on trout, steelhead, bass, panfish and carp.

Dave Hise
WAXY the WAXWORM



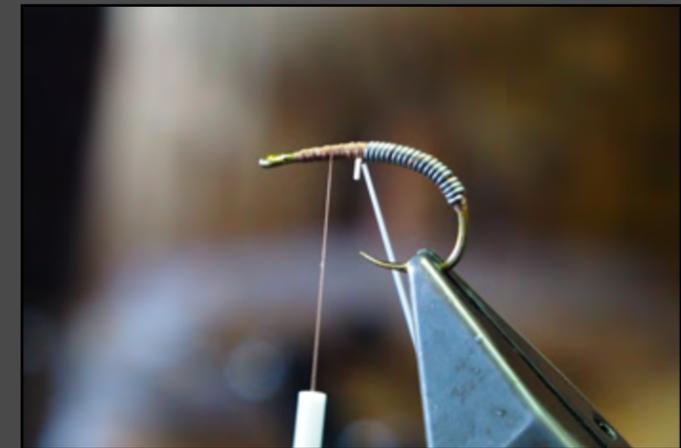
1. Wrap .020 lead wire from mid point of the shank, halfway around the bend.



2. Build a thread base at the rear and front of the lead wire to create a taper.



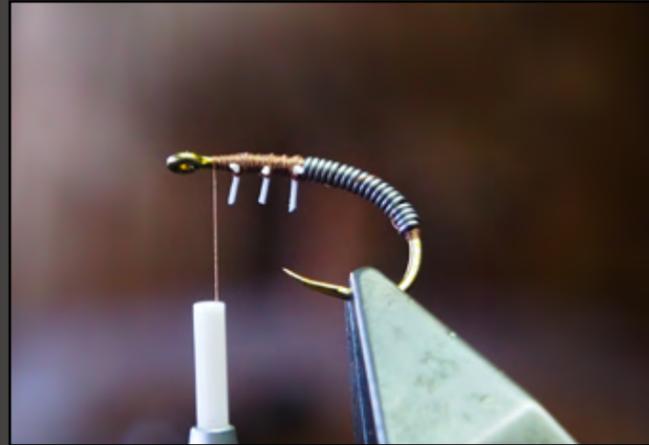
3. To create each set of legs, take a pair of fine needle nose pliers and bend the end of the Japanese leg in the shape of a U.



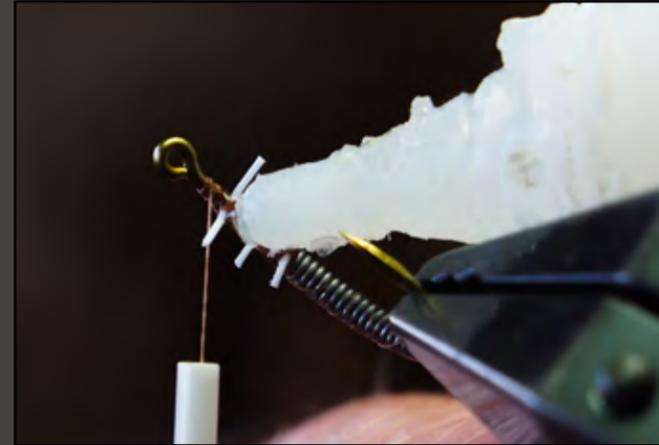
4. Secure this first set of legs at the hooks half way point (where the thread and lead meet) using a criss-cross method.



5. Create the next set of legs using the same process. Secure in place ahead of the first set.



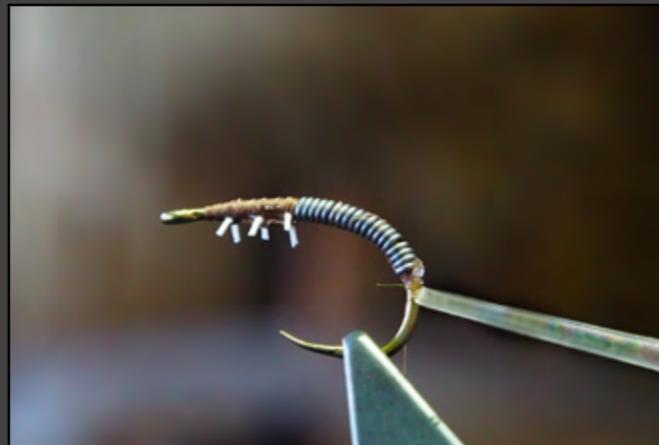
6. Create the last set and secure in place just to the rear of the hook eye.



7. Apply super glue to the underside of the hook to set legs in place.



8. Advance the thread to the rear of the hook.



9. Cut one end of an 1/8th inch strip of Minnow Skin (pearl) to a point and secure in place.



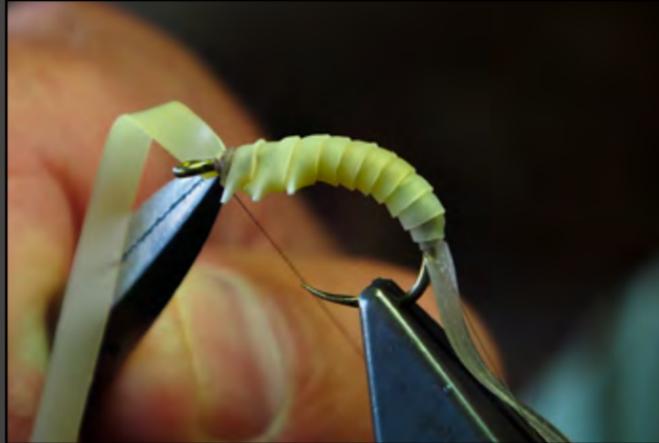
10. Tie in a length of 3/0 Mono thread on the opposite side of the shank to the tier.



11. Take a strip of Virtual Nymph Nymph Skin translucent cream and cut one end at an angle. Secure just ahead of the Minnow Skin.



12. Take the Nymph Skin and slightly stretch it for the first wrap and lessen the stretch slightly, advancing it forward to the eye. Secure in place. Hint: The back edge of the next wrap should be placed at the halfway point of the previous wrap.



13. Each set of legs should end up at the center of each of the last 3 wraps of Nymph Skin. Getting the spacing proper may take a little practice.



14. With slight stretch, pull the Minnow Skin over entire length of Waxy and secure in place behind the hook eye at the head.



15. Palmer the Mono forward, placing each wrap in the segments. Secure in place at the eye.



16. Mark and blend to your liking and artistic ability, using waterproof markers.



17. Apply a coat of Deer Creek UV Resin. I like to run it along the racing stripe and on the tip of each leg.

Dave Hise is the owner of Casters Fly Shop In Hickory, NC. Dave is also the most innovative junk food fly tyer of our generation. In other words, we admire his junk.





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GET YOUR DAILY DOSE



A black and white photograph of a river with a person standing in the water, surrounded by trees and a hillside. The scene is captured in a high-contrast, grainy style. The river flows from the foreground towards the background, with a person standing in the middle ground. The background features a steep, wooded hillside. The sky is bright and overexposed.

T.V.A.
SMASH THE STATE

By Allen Gillespie
Photos: Steve Seiberg

On May 27th 2014, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (US-FWS), Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources held a meeting in Knoxville, Tenn., seeking comments on a solution to long-term funding recommendations intended to continue popular trout stocking programs in TVA reservoirs and tailwaters across the South. Purportedly the agencies sought input from angling groups, local and regional businesses, tourism organizations and local governments that benefit from fishable trout waters in their communities. There was only one problem; they forgot to invite those parties to the table, or at least to this meeting.





The Stakes:

At stake: the annual stocking of roughly 1.5 million trout in tailwaters or reservoirs at 12 dams in both Tennessee and Georgia and all of the associated recreational benefits that accrue to local communities and state agencies.

The USFWS' ability to continue funding trout production for these fisheries has been jeopardized due to recent budget cuts. Absent a funding solution by 2016, USFWS will terminate trout production and stocking at the following TVA regulated waters:

- Apalachia Dam - Hiwassee River
- Blue Ridge Dam - Toccoa River
- Cherokee Dam - Holston River
- Ft. Patrick Henry Dam - South Fork Holston River
- Normandy Dam - Duck River
- Norris Dam - Clinch River
- Ocoee Dam No. 1 - Ocoee River
- South Holston Dam - South Fork Holston River
- Tellico Dam - Little Tennessee River
- Tims Ford Dam - Elk River
- Watauga Dam - Watauga River
- Wilbur Dam - Watauga River





Presently, a stopgap measure brokered by Senator Lamar Alexander (R, TN) ensures that the TVA will contribute more than \$900K annually in order to keep Tennessee's national hatcheries -- the Erwin National Fish Hatchery and the Dale Hollow National Fish Hatchery -- operational through 2016.

If no funding solution is found by the end of 2016, USFWS has indicated that it has no other choice than to close trout production at the national fish hatcheries.

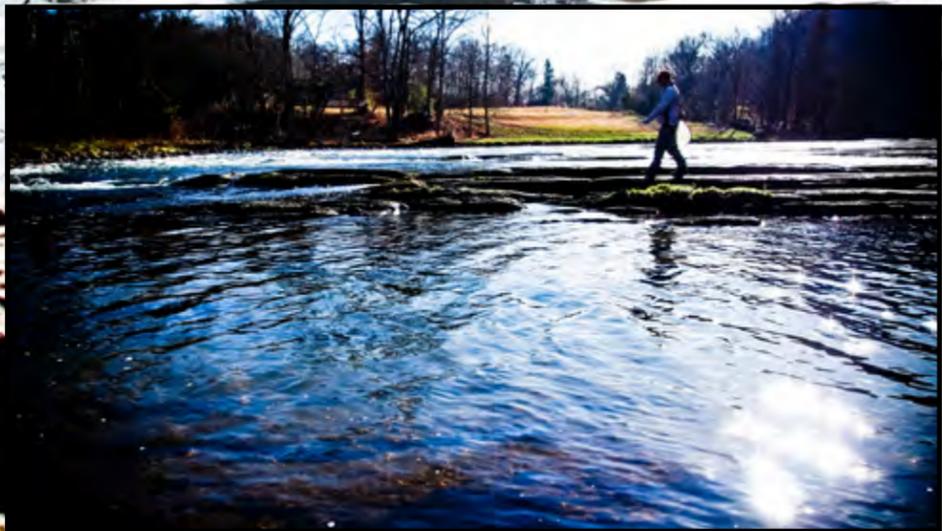
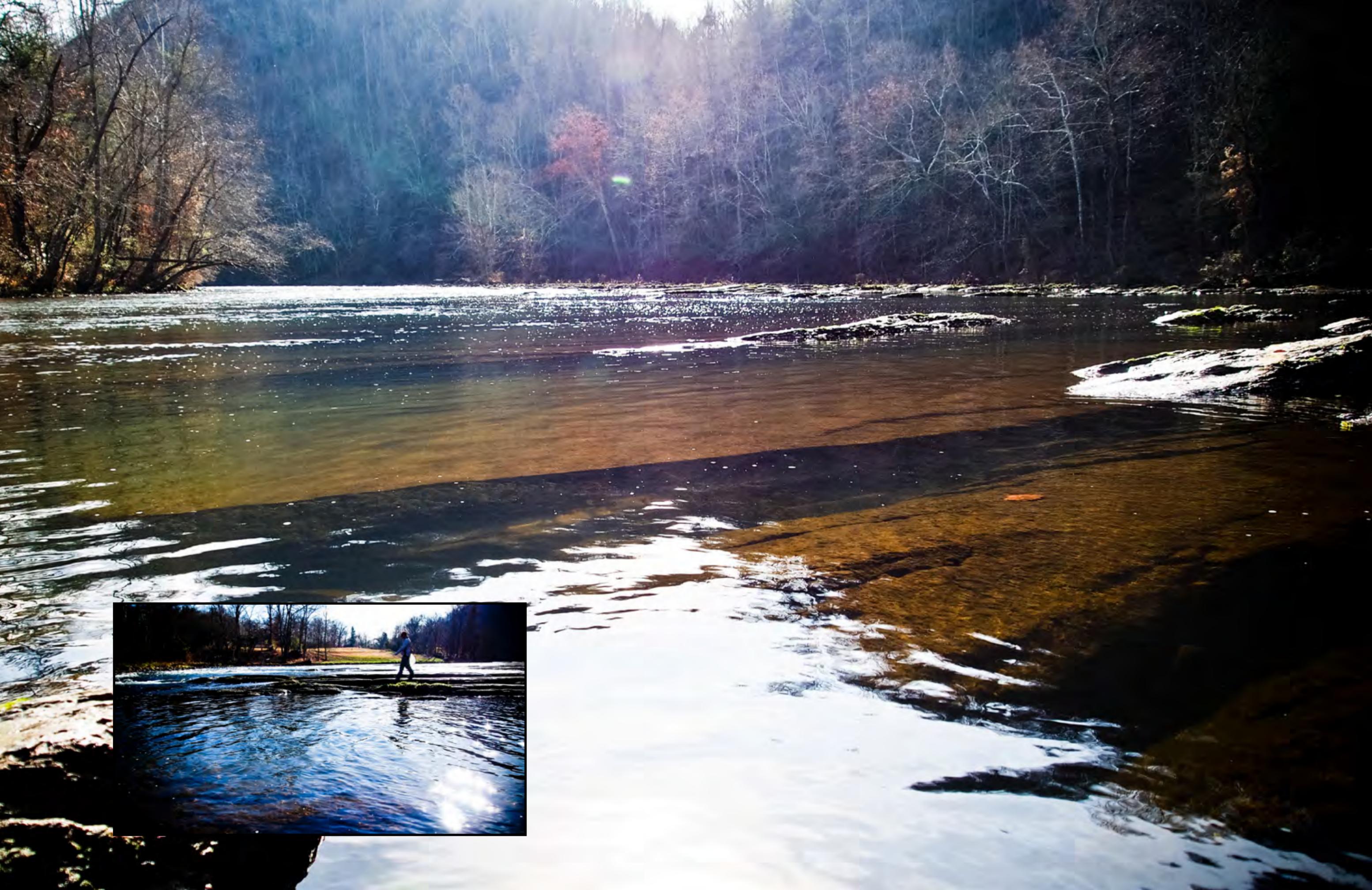
None of the agencies at hand, including the USFWS, feel it is their obligation to fund the trout production and stocking program, which, in the greater scheme of things amounts to pocket change for a giant federal utility such as the TVA.

The TVA feels that the impacts to the rivers from the dams it constructed over

the past 80 years have been more than compensated for by the fishing, recreational, commercial, and related economic benefits. Further, the TVA also contends that the sole source of its funding, its ratepayers, do not have to pay for trout. If not the TVA, then who?

The M Word: Mitigation

Frank Fiss, TWRA assistant fisheries director, speculates that every dollar spent on trout production generates \$73 dollars of economic output. Do the quick and dirty calculations on the nice round figure of the \$900K needed to continue the stocking program and you come up with an astounding \$65.7 million generated. Putting common sense economics aside, what then is preventing us from coming up with a full-time measure that will ensure this program continues unabated? My best guess is a small fish named the snail darter and that dirty word "mitigation".



For those not in the know, the TVA has been a big bully in local policy around the Southeast, particularly in Tennessee, since its inception. However, a little over 30 years ago, a very small group of advocates found themselves at the center of more than a decade of litigation that nearly toppled the construction of the TVA's Tellico Dam.

The case, *Tennessee Valley Authority v. Hill*, 437 U.S. 153 (1978), stated that the Tellico Reservoir, which would be created by the Tellico Dam, would permanently alter the habitat of the river to the point of wiping out a little known species called the snail darter. Utilizing the Endangered Species Act, opponents of the Dam (largely made up of an unlikely alliance of trout fisherman and affected farmers) nearly brought a monumental public works project to a permanent halt.

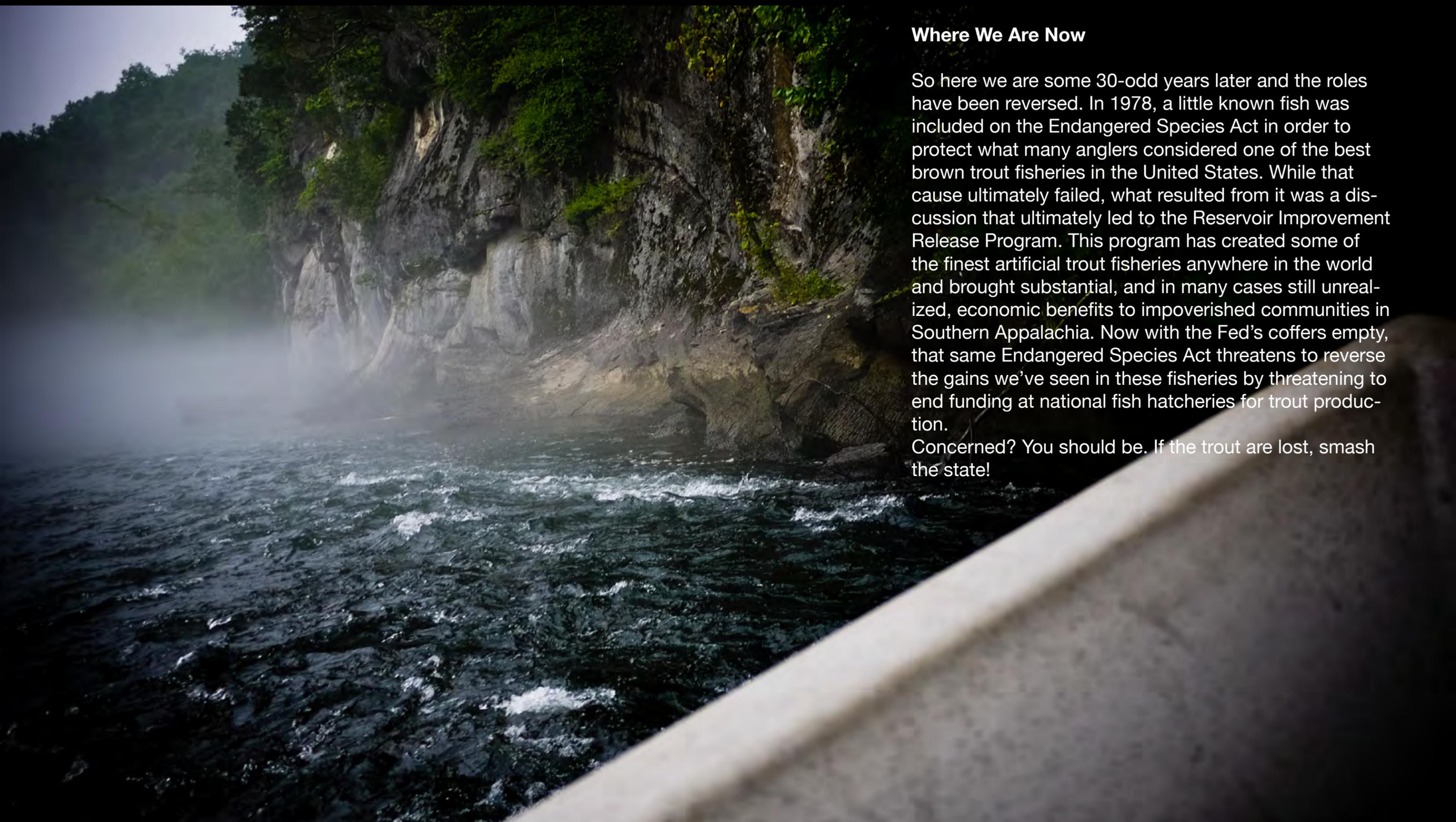




It was from this seminal case that TVA ultimately found its white hat and began to recognize that they had an obligation to mitigate the changes that they forced upon the rivers in the valley. A prime example is the case of the Clinch River in Norris, Tenn. The Clinch, now known as one of the premier tailwater fisheries in this country, was little more than a sluggish flow connecting puddles barren of any aquatic life in the 60s and 70s. Dissolved oxygen problems and no minimum flows on the tailwater relegated it to a cold water wasteland with little or no recreational value.



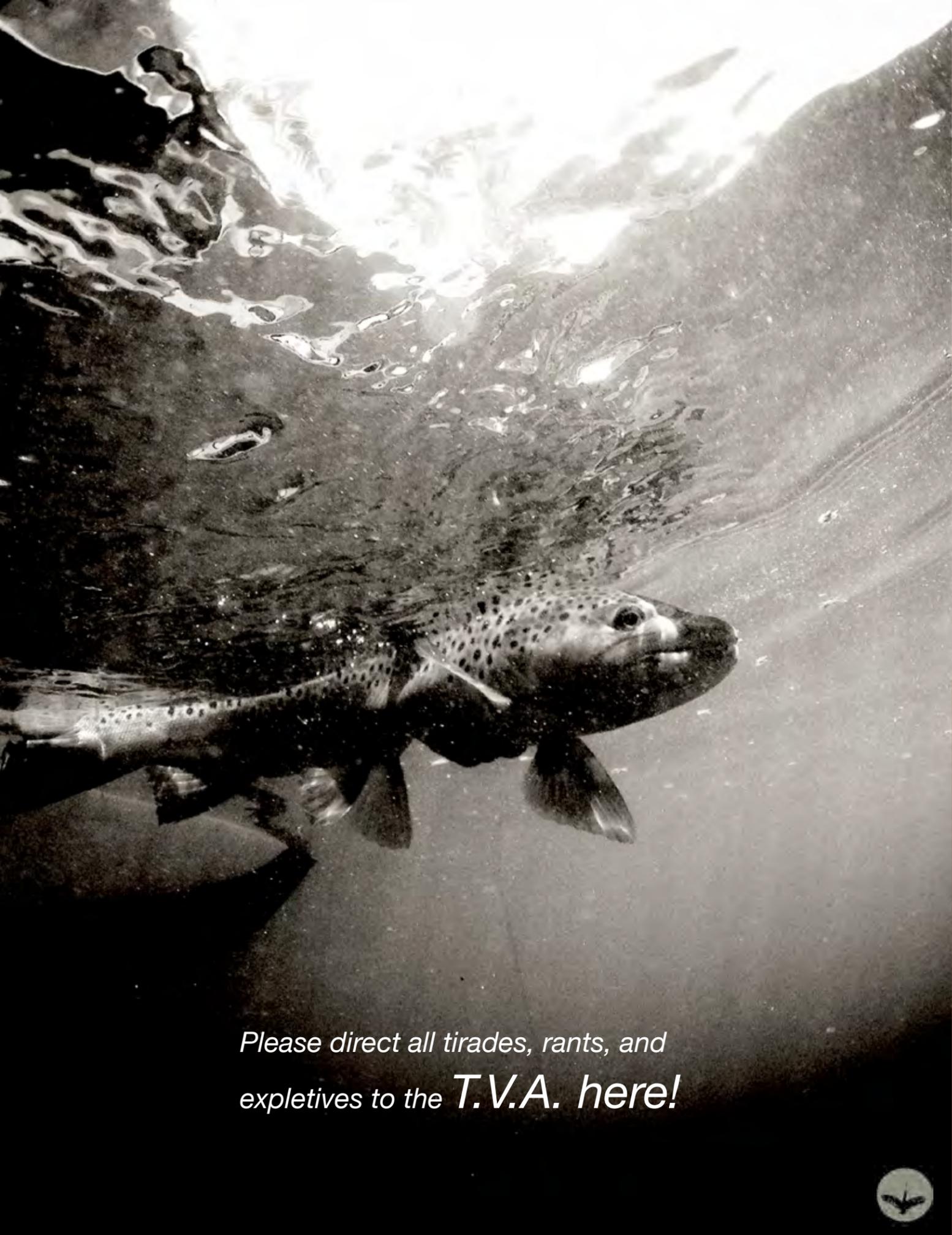
In 1981, just a few short years after the snail darter case, the TVA established its Reservoir Improvement Release Program. As a result of this program and its considerable costs, a regulating weir dam was constructed on the Clinch in 1984 about a mile below Norris Dam in order to ensure a minimum flow of 200 cfs below the weir. At the same time, the TVA reengineered the turbines of the dam to aerate the water flowing through them thereby improving the dissolved oxygen content of the water below the dam and significantly enhancing the ecology of the Clinch tailwater. The results of these improvements are a trout factory that grows fish to epic proportions in a minimal amount of time. Four years after these improvements, the state record brown trout was pulled from just downstream of the weir dam on the Clinch weighing in at just over 28 lbs. The TVA was not forced to make these changes but rather did them on their own, perhaps as a result of the bad press that resulted from the snail darter case.



Where We Are Now

So here we are some 30-odd years later and the roles have been reversed. In 1978, a little known fish was included on the Endangered Species Act in order to protect what many anglers considered one of the best brown trout fisheries in the United States. While that cause ultimately failed, what resulted from it was a discussion that ultimately led to the Reservoir Improvement Release Program. This program has created some of the finest artificial trout fisheries anywhere in the world and brought substantial, and in many cases still unrealized, economic benefits to impoverished communities in Southern Appalachia. Now with the Fed's coffers empty, that same Endangered Species Act threatens to reverse the gains we've seen in these fisheries by threatening to end funding at national fish hatcheries for trout production.

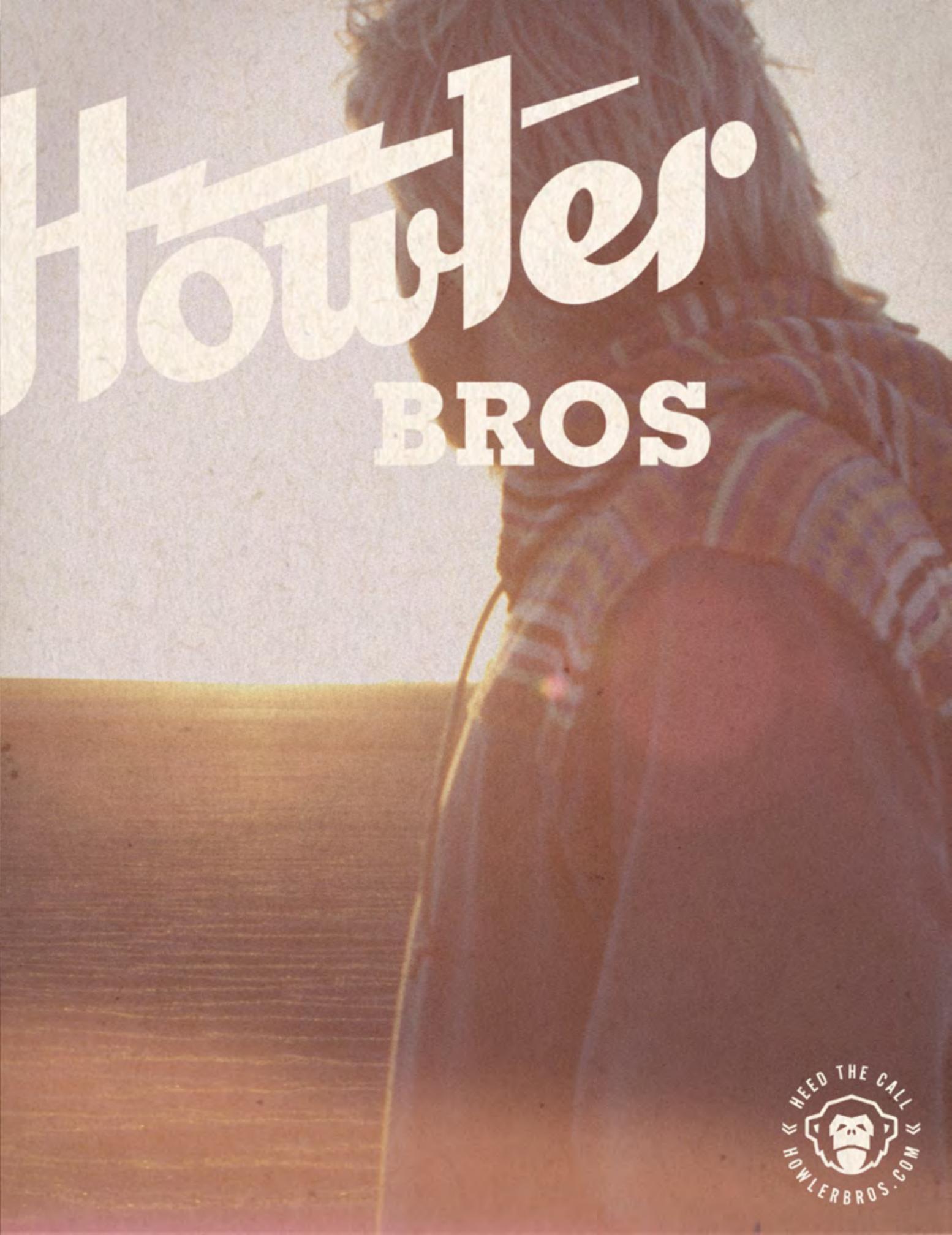
Concerned? You should be. If the trout are lost, smash the state!



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**IFTD 2015
NEW IDEAS**

Another year, another unholy marriage reception between the fly and spin industries. IFTD '14 in Orlando, Fla., was a much a shorter drive than IFTD '13 in Las Vegas, and we can dig it. Some people might be of the opinion that we all have more than enough gear to chase fish on the fly (those people would be your wives and we do not agree). Here's some of our favorite new stuff coming down the pipe. Funny enough it's that same pipe that connects your wallet to the local fly shop's cash register.

Fish Skull Fly Tester

Flymen Fishing Company

Stoners and fly tiers and stoner fly tiers rejoice! Flymen Fishing Co. has brought us the fly tester. Fly tiers no longer need to

fill the tub with no intentions of bathing. Fly shops no longer need to take customers home with them to show them flies in their personal bathtubs. Continuous water flow, a clear acrylic body, and setups for nymphs, dries, and streamers up to a foot long make the Fish Skull Fly Tester one-stop shopping for anybody who's serious about fly design, or anybody else who eats Funyons on a regular basis.





Tacky Slit-Silicone Fly Box

Tacky Fishing

I see fly box design in the past 20 years a lot like Pizza Hut. At a certain point a pizza is a pizza. So when you've run out of any way to change the fundamental properties of the pizza, you resort to the ridiculous. Let's put cheese in the crust, now lets put meat in the crust, and then we'll start making

wings so we can stuff that into the crust of a pizza. So when someone comes along with an idea that changes the pizza into a calzone, it's a welcome change. We're not idiots. Foam is a horrible material to stick flies into and pull flies out of. Silicone is the way of the future and we'll all be eating calzones soon.



Vedavoo Kids Sling

Vedavoo

As a father who fly fishes, buying anything made for kids can be a sucky experience. Stuff that says "kids" but must have been designed for rather large, Nordic looking, corn fed Mid-western giant children, or stuff that fits but has a quality level akin my first pair of pvc waders from Wal-mart is the norm.

Fit and quality are not words that seem to have been mentioned a lot when discussing kids' lines in the heralded halls of the fly fishing industry. So leave it to our favorite seamsters at Vedavoo to show the rest of the industry what's up. The new Little Bugger Kids sling has most of the same features as the bigger one I wear and 100% of the handstitched-in-America quality that all Vedavoo products have come to be known for. It's about time.

Air-Lock Strike Indicators

Rajeff Sports

Nothing has changed in trapped air strike indicators for awhile. That "nothing" might be more aptly described as a sucking vacuum of a black hole in the market segment. The Thingamabobber has ruled with an iron fist. The Thingamabobber is not without its problems though. Especially attachment, adjustment, and it's propensity to kink things up, and not in the good way. Enter the Air-lock by Rajeff Sports. Inner and outer threaded rings with a slotted post make for a secure, infinitely easily adjustable, non-kinking next step in the modern day bobber....or as I call it, Bobber 2.0.



Umpqua Tailgater

Umpqua

There once was a man from Nantucket, he used to keep all his crap in a bucket...well, you know the rest. We are big fans of products that transform buckets into anything -- chairs, toilets, anything really. So when we saw Umpqua's newest organizer, angelic singing and soft spotlighting ran amuck. Take that ubiquitous Rubbermaid tote that you already keep your waders, boots, boxes, vest/pack, leaders, net, pliers, a small Latino family, and who knows what else in, and slap one of these bad boys on it and let the organization begin. I mean you already have the bucket, you might as well just say fuck it, and get organized. (Couldn't resist.)



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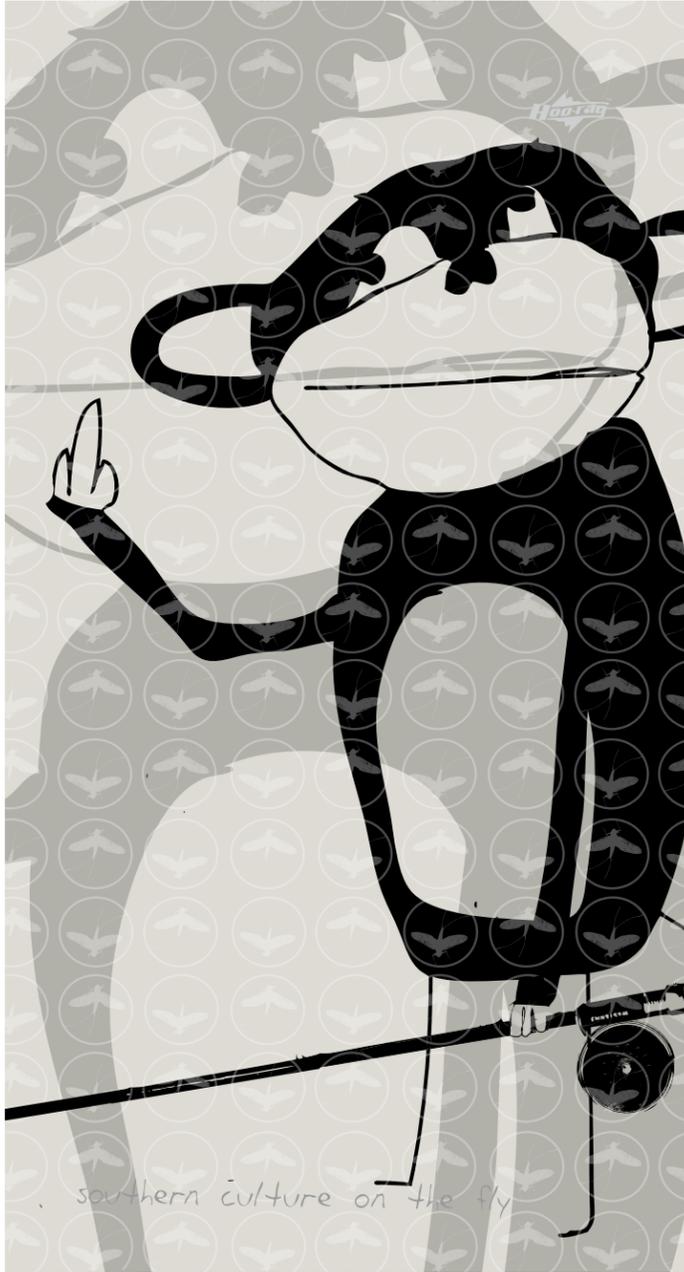
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THE BIG UGLIES

GIANT BLACK DRUM IN TAMPA BAY

By Joshua Broer

Photos: Aaron Carraux and Brad Lowman

For decades, Tampa Bay locals have been catching enormous black drum around bay area bridges. Historically, these have been caught fishing from the bridge or by boat, soaking half or whole blue crabs around large pilings. I did the same in my youth in the early 1980s, fishing from the top of the bridge with 4/0 grouper tackle. It was always strictly for fun and to see who could land the largest fish that day. Those who dared to clean one of these monstrous, old fish learned quickly that they are filled with worms and somewhat lacking in quality table fare. Many moons have passed since those early bait soaking days, but with some patience and plenty of time on the water, a small group of us have finally learned how to trick these fish into eating one specific fly. Getting these beasts away from the barnacle and oyster-encrusted bridge pilings without getting broken off, well, that's a whole different matter altogether.





The day I realized that the “Big Uglies” just might take a fly was during an outing with a pompano fisherman who was working the pilings with artificials on light spinning gear. I noticed a behavior I’d never seen before. These normally bottom dwelling fish actually tail. Like their shallow-water grass flats cousin black drum sometimes perform a rooting around of sorts when the time and tide is right. During the high tide, the drum would rise up from their deep, dark haunts and make their way to the top of the water line along the pilings for their food -- barnacles, oysters, muscles and crabs -- that during low tides were out of reach. Finding fish is the first important step and not always an easy one. At times you’ll get lucky and they’ll be one to three fish tailing at any given piling. Other days, even on the highest of tides, there are no fish to be found.







Although not the spookiest fish in the Gulf, positioning the boat too close to the fish or plopping a heavy fly on their heads will surely make them run for cover. Finding that sweet spot, usually about 10-15 feet away, can make the difference between a solid eat and a spooked fish. In this particular game, getting as close as possible to the fish is a must.

We learned early on that these old bridge dwellers could not be cast to using any type of light crustacean pattern as we had imagined would work. We spent many fruitless

days, weeks and long, hot summer months making pinpoint accurate casts to these fish with no eats. It was only when we tried a larger, heavier crab pattern that we began to hook up. Through reflection on the days of my youth, fishing for these brutes on large blue crabs, I finally realized what was necessary to feed these Jurassic-size black drum on fly and the back-breaking tug of war that would follow.

We settled on a rather large,

dark-bodied crab imitation on a 2/0 hook that would prove to solve the mystery. The fish will immediately turn off the piling and inhale the fly without hesitation. You see this, you strip hard. At times, they seem to not know they're hooked. This begins the five- to 15-second window in which you use both the trolling motor to help turn the fish



away from the pilings and lock the drag down tight in order to muscle that behemoth out into open water. A few different scenarios can follow.

With a bit of skill and some luck, you'll be able to turn that fish away from the pilings and avoid an immediate break off. We'll use a 10-foot, straight piece of 30-40 lb. test fluorocarbon depending on the water clarity, but if you're taken around the piling, game over. If you keep relentless heat on the fish and can immediately turn him, you've made it through step one of the fight. The key: get that big ol' ugly away from the bridge and into open water.



If you're successful at muscling the drum into open water, it gets a little easier. Keeping the fish from making runs back into the pilings is a must. Solid fights last typically between 15-30 minutes. A net, Boga-Grip or gloved hand is usually enough to boat your fish, but they can be green boat-side, so don't celebrate prematurely. An average size Big Ugly runs about 40-50 lbs. Some of the larger fish get well into the 60-80 lb. range. The world record black drum was recorded at 113 lbs. I can't even imagine.

Even after lengthy battles, large black drum revive rather quickly and can be released without much resuscitation work needed. Find yourself a large, deep water bridge in the Gulf of Mexico or even on the Atlantic side and watch for tailers at high tide. Creep up to them, get that heavy crab in their face, and you will likely come tight to one of the largest and oldest fish in your waters.





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Josh Garris

Terrestrial





Photos: Josh Garris

When the word terrestrial is brought up, immediate thoughts of Montana, Colorado, and large hoppers pop into the minds of almost everyone. But what most people don't realize is the importance of them to us in the South. Sure, most of us will have our bass box that will have some hoppers and some other terrestrial patterns to lure the bucket mouths or their feisty pond mates bream/bluegill to the surface. But during the summer months, terrestrials play a huge role in the feeding of trout.

The first thing we have to get past is the idea that terrestrials mean hoppers. Wikipedia defines terrestrial as an animal that lives on land opposed to living in water, or sometimes an animal that lives on or near the ground, as opposed to arboreal life (in trees). Our hatches are not of the fabled variety because of the acidity of the water. It does not support mass quantities of aquatic insects for the most part, and this is one of the reasons that terrestrials are so important to us in the South.



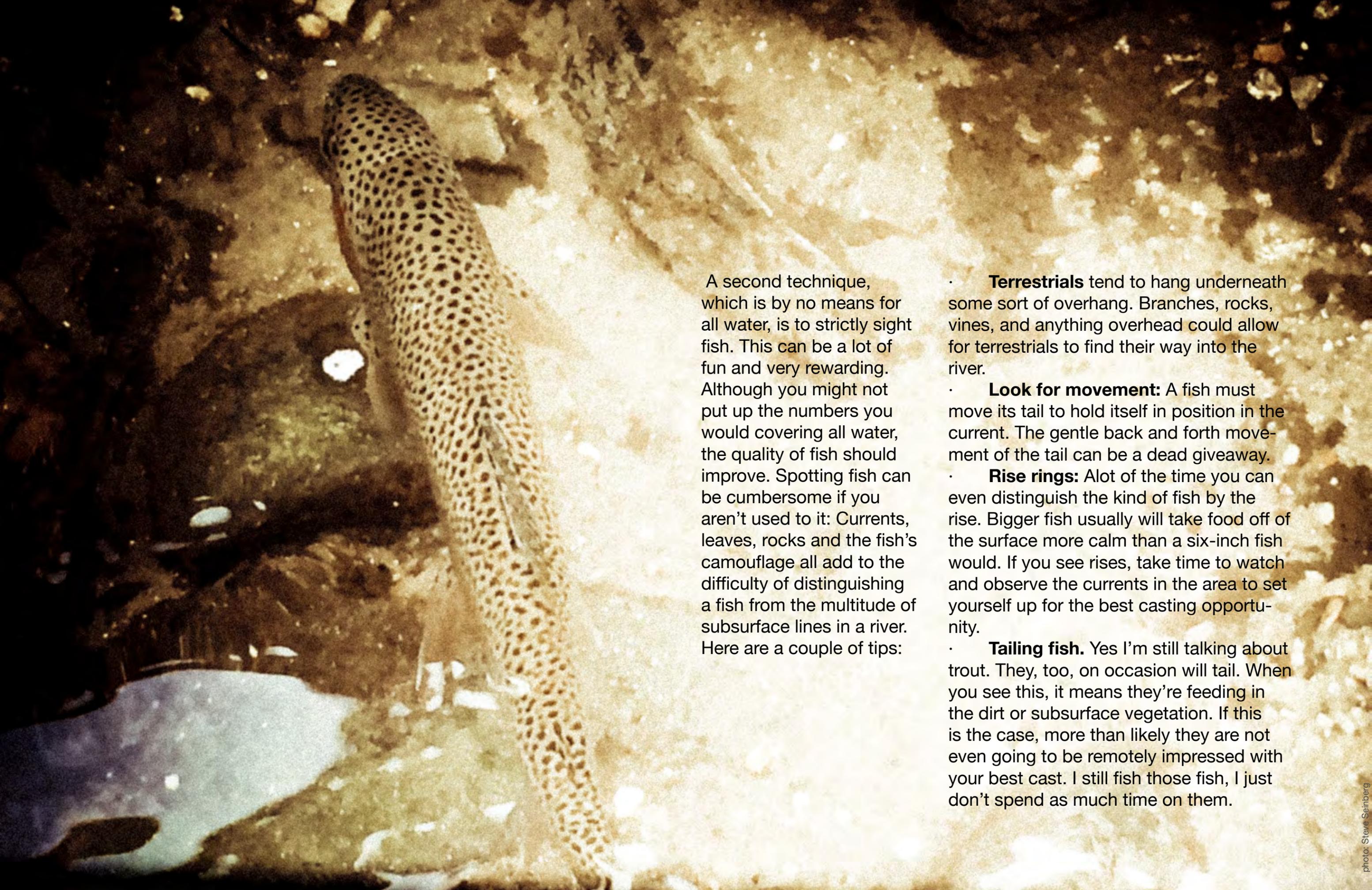


From the definition alone, the list of terrestrials is quite a large one, and fish exposure to these terrestrials will depend on their environment. To discover what bugs fish in a certain river are exposed to, take time and observe the river bank and branches hanging over the river. These areas are a highway for the six-legged critters that tend to end up accidentally in the river. Another great way to find out what is going on is to listen. Cicadas and many hoppers make very distinct noises in order to attract the opposite gender. A seine can help in figuring out what is actually in the water. They can be picked up at most fly shops or fairly easily made using fine screen from a hardware store. Our fish get an abundance of exposure to smaller terrestrials on the river banks like ants, beetles, inch worms and caterpillars. Although these bugs will be found in varying species and sizes, I tend to hang closer to the small side. We do have some hoppers, and even some large ones, but the ones that are most often seen will also be on the small side. On occasion, we will have some grand emergences such as cicadas, june bugs, or the

one that we have seen for the past several months: stink bugs. Most of these larger hatches will be regional and won't affect all trout streams in an area and possibly not all areas of a single stream.

As is with any other fly category, there are hundreds of patterns in every imaginable size and color. Pick up some terrestrials that could match a number of insects you've encountered on your stream banks and you are taking some of the guesswork out of the process.

As for the fishing with terrestrials, you can take one of several approaches. First, fish like you would by just covering water. Fish all likely spots and spend more time one place based on the size of the hold or if a fish shows itself. Drifts don't have to be long, just precise and dead. Drag can be one of your worst enemies. Most terrestrials don't have means of fast movement on the water so they are a victim of the currents. If your fly is going faster than the current, it doesn't look realistic, and even if fish did decide to eat it, they'd have to catch it first.



A second technique, which is by no means for all water, is to strictly sight fish. This can be a lot of fun and very rewarding. Although you might not put up the numbers you would covering all water, the quality of fish should improve. Spotting fish can be cumbersome if you aren't used to it: Currents, leaves, rocks and the fish's camouflage all add to the difficulty of distinguishing a fish from the multitude of subsurface lines in a river. Here are a couple of tips:

- **Terrestrials** tend to hang underneath some sort of overhang. Branches, rocks, vines, and anything overhead could allow for terrestrials to find their way into the river.
- **Look for movement:** A fish must move its tail to hold itself in position in the current. The gentle back and forth movement of the tail can be a dead giveaway.
- **Rise rings:** A lot of the time you can even distinguish the kind of fish by the rise. Bigger fish usually will take food off of the surface more calm than a six-inch fish would. If you see rises, take time to watch and observe the currents in the area to set yourself up for the best casting opportunity.
- **Tailing fish.** Yes I'm still talking about trout. They, too, on occasion will tail. When you see this, it means they're feeding in the dirt or subsurface vegetation. If this is the case, more than likely they are not even going to be remotely impressed with your best cast. I still fish those fish, I just don't spend as much time on them.

Once the fish have been found, there are a couple more things that you should be thinking about. Just like most other dry flies, I like to put my cast a bit above the fish so that it has a bit of time to see the fly before it gets to the actual fish. Most times I prefer a downriver cast so that the fish will see my fly first as opposed to my fly line or leader. That being said, if a fish is showing interest, but no commitment, try landing your cast closer to it. Sometimes even plopping it right on their heads can get their blood pumping. This can play to the fish's natural survival instincts and you might get a reaction take.

As with almost every aspect of fly fishing, just don't get stuck in a rut. Try different flies casted and drifted different ways. Usually a pattern can be figured out. When you do, focus on that but remember, things can always change at any second.



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re-Flamingo

By Mike Benson
Photos: Jeremy Clark





In fishing, nothing is dealt
in absolutes.

We spend thousands upon thousands of dollars to travel to the furthest reaches of the earth with no more guarantee than the hotel/lodge/island we have decided to visit will be there when we arrive.

In this, there is an insanity that we all know exists, but never acknowledge. Having done this Everglades trip twice now, there's certain satisfaction found in gearing up at the marina in the pre-dawn light. Having made the trek and survived, having arrived at our destination no worse for wear with nothing but fire in our bellies, and hunger for the unknown. That feeling never dissipates no matter where I go, or what fish I chase. The unknown holds an attraction that can never be explained away, and I've spent the better part of my life chasing, and sometimes achieving it.

No matter the emotions we all felt, we began gearing up. Piecing together fly rods, picking out leaders, and tying on flies. Eventually nothing was left to do but splash the boats and head off to find our quarry.



There were four of us: me and my best friend, Tucker, in a borrowed 19 flats boat, and Jerms and Luke fishing in Jerms' custom Gheenoe. This meant that Tucker and I would be out front looking for the tarpon pushing up onto the banks out of the gulf and Jerms and Luke would be pushing back into the backcountry chasing snook and any tarpon they might happen across in the dark tannic waters of the back.

We knew we had two good days of low wind to put as much time into chasing tarpon out front as we could before we were going to be forced into an as of yet unknown "plan B" when the wind showed up the latter part of the week. Knowing this, we fished hard out front the first two days only to find that the tarpon, while present, weren't as thick as we'd hoped. In two days of pushing, we managed a handful of shots, but I was the only one who managed to get eaten. I talked three different laid up fish into inhaling the small black toad, only to have the fly slip out of their mouths without ever connecting.



It's an altogether consuming thing to watch a big tarpon eat a fly. To see the way their body language changes the moment they decide they're gonna kill something, the way they slide up behind the fly, never taking their eyes off of it, and at the last moment open their gaping mouths taking in a huge swatch of ocean, your fly being dragged in with it. All of that happens in a matter of seconds, and while you watch in awe, you're already playing out what happens next in the back of your brain. The line coming tight, the moment of hesitation as the fish takes in what has happened, and then... chaos. Pure, raw, unadulterated fury. There is nothing else on the planet quite like a big tarpon losing its mind in three feet of water.



Strip... strip.... Strip... EAT!! I hammer the strip set home only to feel no resistance. Nothing. I check the fly, it's fine. I check the leader... it looks like someone took sandpaper to the two feet of bite tippet in front of the fly. I move through the five stages of grief as I change out the leader and then keep looking, trying to find another one. This was all that we would get out of tarpon fishing this trip.

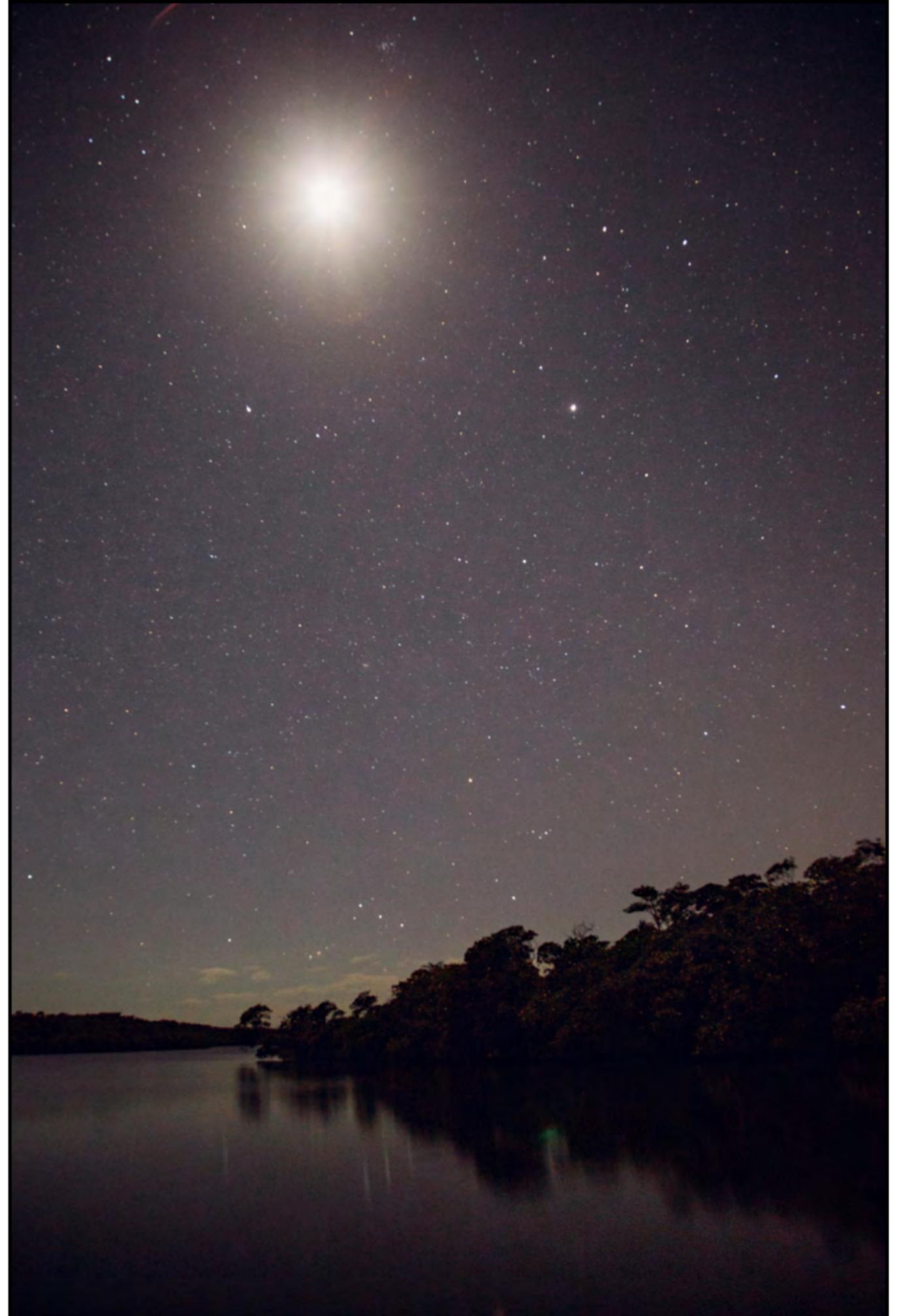
A thought came to me sitting there looking at the cape, something from a fishing magazine I had

read in a john somewhere. Snook like to leave the backcountry in the spring and move out onto the beaches, and there just happened to be quite a few beaches on the west side of the cape that would be perfectly out of the wind in the coming days. We decided after the tarpon fishing slowed at the end of day two, to go around the cape and take a look at some beaches to see if there were in fact any snook, or any fish at all for that matter. Turns out not everything you read in magazines is crap.

We found snook. We found a lot of snook, all hungry and prowling the beaches in no more than six inches of water ready to kill anything that got in their way. They were so tight to the beaches in fact that we took to staking the boat out and walking the beach to get our shots rather than attempt to pole a boat. This led to long pleasant strolls down the beach broken up only by the occasional, "Here comes one... hold my beer."

We spent the remainder of the trip this way. By the last day, however, the wind was so vicious that we had to run the entire length

of the backcountry and pop out of Shark River to access the west side, seeing as how the front side was so rough. Mile upon mile of twisting mangrove creeks. More species of water birds than I've ever seen in one place. It was quite possibly one of the coolest experiences of my life to navigate my way back through there.





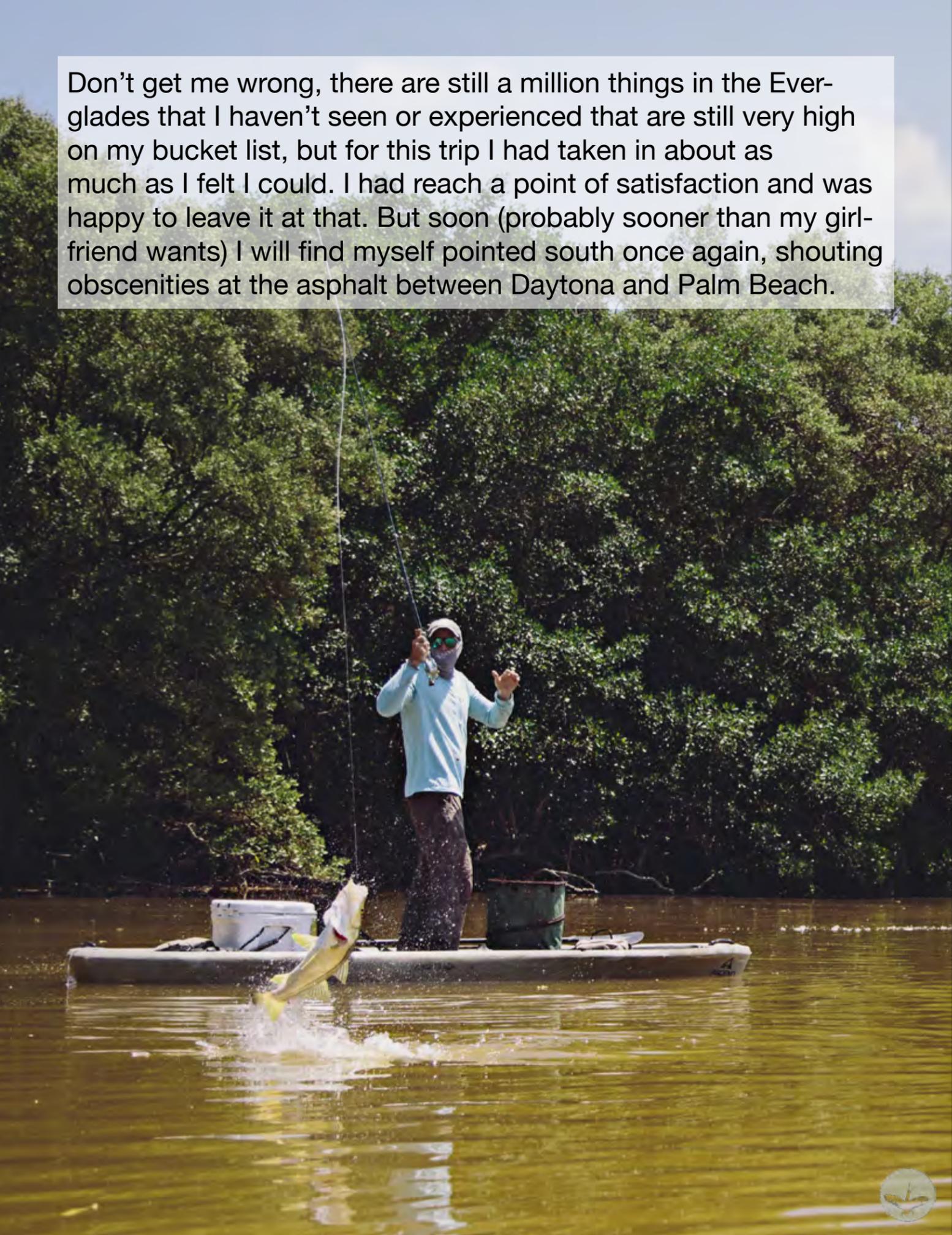
Jerms and Luke felt the call of the back much stronger than I and had pushed back to the Chick-ee on the Joe River on our first night. They came back with tales of beauty, silence and had some amazing photos to back it up. Tucker and I got drunk and chased baby tarpon up and down buttonwood canal; to each his own, I guess.

All in all, I spent five days down there. I saw and did things that I had never done before, and managed to catch a few fish in the process. Tired, sunburnt, and riddled with bug bites, my liver had stopped functioning at a normal capacity and I was in a state of dehydration that probably called for a few liters of fluids administered intravenously. But more importantly, I felt that I had fulfilled my purpose for coming. I was leaving nothing undone, nothing nagging at the back of my head that I just had to do.





Don't get me wrong, there are still a million things in the Everglades that I haven't seen or experienced that are still very high on my bucket list, but for this trip I had taken in about as much as I felt I could. I had reach a point of satisfaction and was happy to leave it at that. But soon (probably sooner than my girlfriend wants) I will find myself pointed south once again, shouting obscenities at the asphalt between Daytona and Palm Beach.



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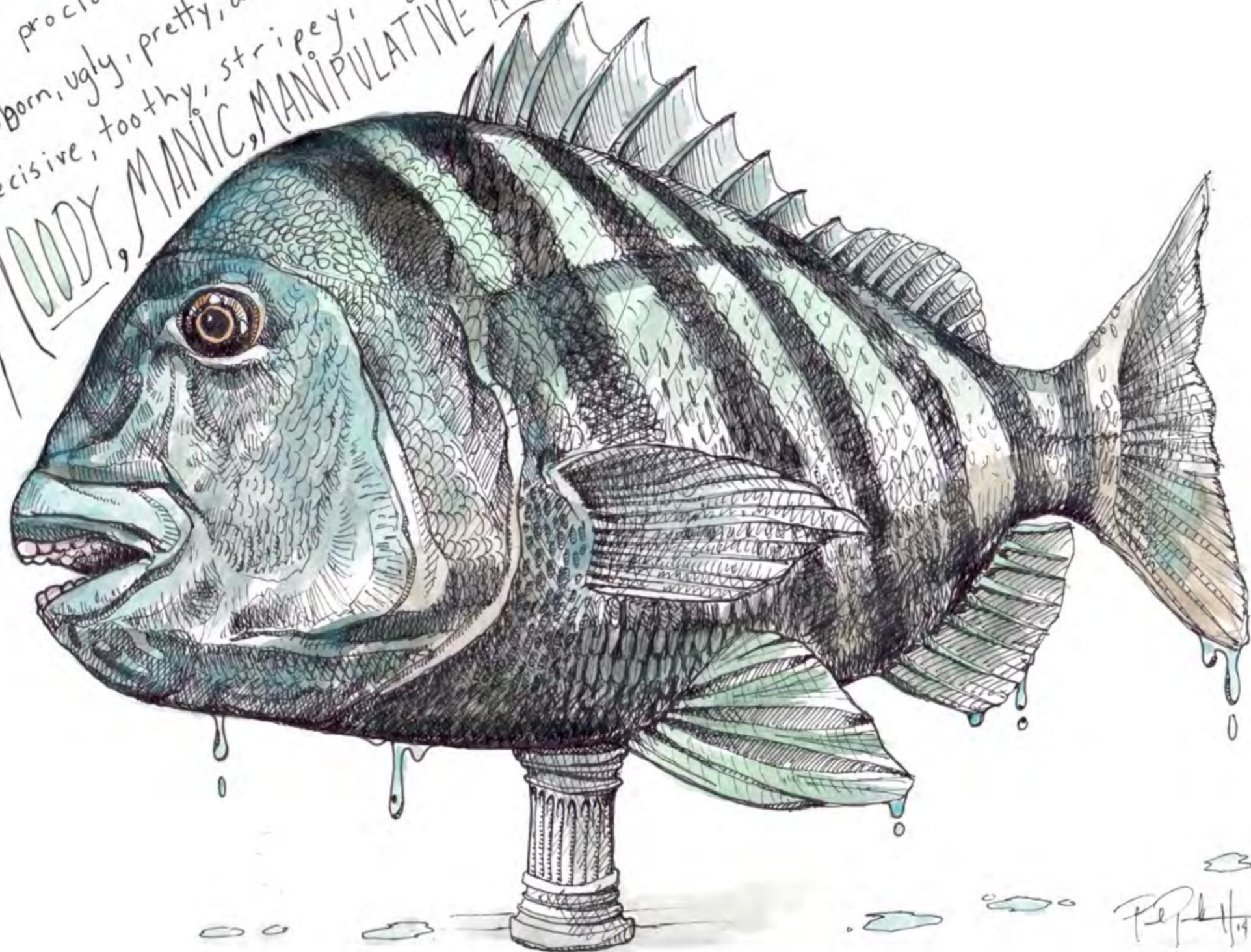
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