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Photo: IRL, 2015, Steve Seiberger



Photo: *Yellowstone*, 2015, Steve Seinberg



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#keepemdry

# S.C.O.F

FALL 2015  
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#KEEPMDRY

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Summer 2015

"A change is gonna come..."

*Sam Cooke*

I'm not getting too cerebral here folks, so unwad your underpants. No politics this issue -- I'll leave that for people far dumber and louder than me. The change we will be discussing today is that for once in the history of the South, we as Southern fly fisherman have the opportunity to lead the rest of the nation as a glowing example of social acceptance in something. The social acceptance I speak of has nothing to do with the color of your skin, your sexual orientation, or even your age. No, we will lead the country in something important. We will accept everyone no matter what their particular fly fishing proclivities may be (even the really weird stuff...hot butter weird).

I am putting forth the hypothesis that we, the current generation of Southern fly fishermen, are the most tolerant ever. Perhaps the greatest "regional" generation? Perhaps.

I happily fly fish with folks who fish all kinds of ways. I have never fished with any Southerner under the age of 60 who has turned their nose up at a bobber. Hell, we call them bobbers. Calling a bobber a strike-indicator, is kind of like calling a shitter a bidet. I poop in both, don't I?

I also fish with people who drunkenly chum carp under the bar on weekend nights. None of these people think that this activity is beneath them, nor do they think this makes them expert carp fisherman. What they do think is, that it's more fun than not catching carp under the bar. They're right. We in the South led the way on rough species fishing, if you don't count the Europeans (which I don't).

The rest of the country looked down their collective noses while we "red-necks" pioneered fishing techniques for gar, bowfin, every bass that swims, and the elusive dolphin (the air-breathing one, not the delicious one). The only response I get from friends when I go fish something weird and not related to a trout is, what does it eat and how do I tie it. So in this crazy mixed-up world, Southern fly fisherman will serve as a beacon of hope and tolerance. We will lead the rest of the country down the path of acceptance and congeniality. I have no idea how we of all people became the goodwill ambassadors to the rest of the fly fishing world, but fret not. The rest of you people out there who weren't as lucky and as blessed as we were to be called Southern, take a seat. We got this.





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# Haiku

with Chad Dubose



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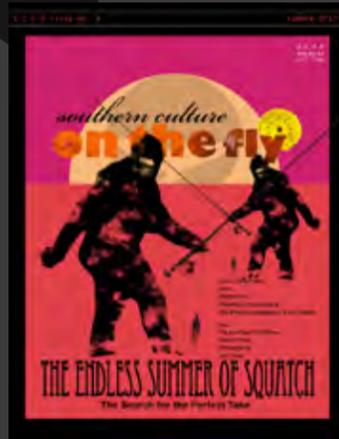
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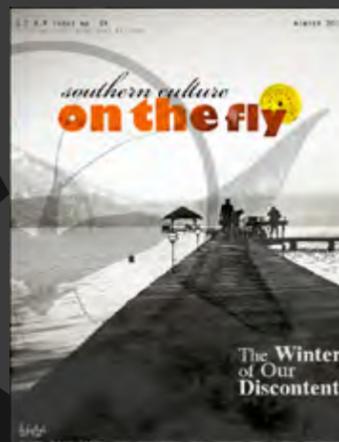
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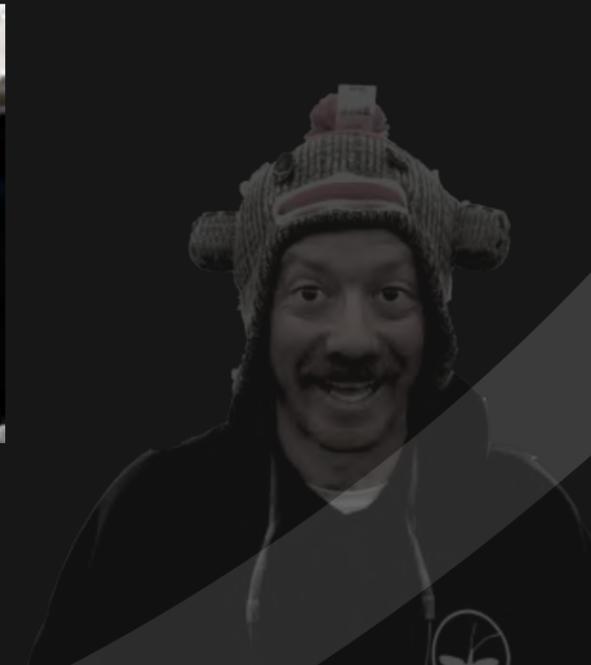
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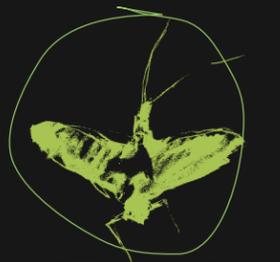
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# *nolichucky gorge*

*NO GOOGANS ALLOWED*

By David Grossman  
Photos: Rand Harcz





The Nolichucky River Gorge is the elephant in the room sitting on the Tennessee/North Carolina border. Most of us drive past it on our way to more hospitable trout waters to the north or south, but all of us crane our necks trying to get a peek into the narrow slot winding its way down from Poplar. The Gorge has always been a playground to the whitewater crowd, but to the fly fisherman in the area, the Gorge and its smallmouth have always seemed a little too big, remote, and involved for a regular gig on the Appalachian fly fishing circuit.

Having to rely on one's self in a fishing situation has become rare in our neck of the woods, and we have become lesser outdoorsmen for it. This Gorge is no place for novice oarsmen -- it flips knowledgeable boats every year. From the put-in to the take-out, you're responsible for your own safety. A point made abundantly clear when you realize the only way in or out of the Gorge is the active railroad track on river left that runs the entire course of your journey. So if somebody gets injured, don't expect an ambulance to pull up riverside. While this remoteness doesn't make a gorge trip easy or safe, it does make it a lot sweeter than car-hopping holes on the local delayed harvest. Not to say you're going to be by yourself (the exception to that rule is low water) in the Gorge, but at least the people you're going to share it with worked just as hard as you to get there.



With 25 rapids up to class IV on the run when you're fishing, you're holding on. And when you're rowing, you damn well better be rowing. In between rapids, 3000 ft of Appalachian mountain rock will be towering over you making you feel small for the first time in a long time. These walls also seem to make the smallmouth feel much wilder than their urban cousins living down the mountain. Every flash of bronze from behind a car-sized boulder is deliberate and aggressive. Lazy, pastoral eats don't exist in the Gorge. The fish couldn't survive in such a lackadaisical manner in a free-stoner that fluctuates up to 1000 cfs in a couple of hours when the rain really comes down.









Extending your gorge trip to overnight is highly preferred. More fishing time, more campfire, more whiskey, leads to more howling at trains as they careen through the Gorge in the middle of the night only feet from your hammock. Don't be shocked by your neighbors camping across the river. If they're willing to walk the tracks a couple of miles in, you should be willing to take the all-night revelry and the best impression of Ozzy Osborne's maniacal "Crazy Train" laugh you've ever heard.





I've never been on two trips in the Gorge that were the same. The flows, the fishing, the people are always different. The only constant I find is that when I finally row out, a sense of disappointment sets in knowing that it will be far too long before I get back.



We would like to give big SCOF ups to Galen Kipar, and the boys at Asheville Fly Fishing Company, for running logistics on this Gorge run. The cushiest of the cush fellas.



A vertical red rectangular logo. At the top is a black square containing a white fly icon. Below this, the text "PREMIUM FLY FISHING PRODUCTS" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters. At the bottom, the word "HATCH" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters. To the right of the text, the website "HATCHOUTDOORS.COM" is written vertically in white, uppercase letters.



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*Drew Chicone*



**M.I.A. ANCHOVY**

Drew Chicone

# M.I.A. ANCHOVY

One of my go-to patterns for Albie's and Black Fin Tuna back in South-west Florida is Richard Reagan's Albie Whore pattern. It's a fantastic utility pattern, but due to materials used to create it and the hot glue that's used to hold it together, it's not one of my favorite flies to tie. Multiple feathers are basically spot-welded onto the hook with hot glue. It sounds easy, but managing the volume of glue applied with each application of materials is difficult at best, and the spider web of hot stringy glue and loose feathers can turn into a calamity pretty quickly.

In an effort to simplify, while at the same time produce a predictable sink rate, I started tinkering around with a pattern I dubbed the M.I.A. Anchovy. Like many of my patterns, this fly can be easily adapted to match any number of bait fish with a quick shot of color from a permanent marker. I experimented with a number of different hooks taking into consideration gap, wire, color, and shank length. For the 30- to 50-pound Yellow Fin we were chasing, the Mustad C68SN-DP 2XH -

Size 1 fit the bill perfectly. For plus-sized fish, I think 2/0 or 3/0 hook would be required.

The color of the hook didn't seem to affect the bite on this trip, but on trips past, hook colors have played a role in productivity. With that in mind, I tied a few M.I.As up on black nickel 3/0 Owner Fly Liners, and that was the fly that Susan's 40+ fish took. I think the real secret to this fly is the sink rate and where they took it in the water column. We were basically stripping out the full line and letting the fly sink naturally. The 20- to 25-foot mark seem to be the sweet spot. An ultra fast retrieve comprised of full arm strips seemed to keep the fly moving fast enough to fool the more educated, larger fish.

If you are tying a batch of these for your offshore box, you may want to beef up the weight and hook on a few so you can experiment. Also leave a few all white and pack a gray and oliver marker with you. You never know what kind of bait you might run into.



## Materials List:

Hook: Mustad C68SN-DP 2XH - Size 1

Thread: Danville Monofilament Thread - Fine

Eyes: 4-6mm 3d Stick on dome eyes - Silver

Tail: Arctic Fox - White

Lateral Line: Hedron Lateral Scale - Pearl

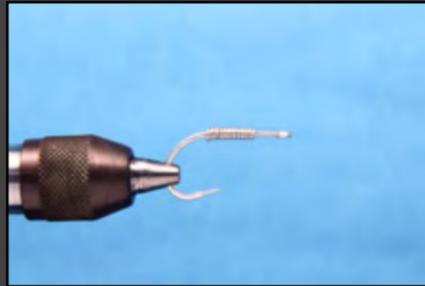
Body: Hareline Dubbin Cactus Chenille - Medium Pearl

Head: UV2 Fusion SX Brush - Silver Minnow

Misc: .03 Leadfree Wire

Adhesive: E6000 & Loon Outdoors UV Clear Fly Finish Flow

1



2



3



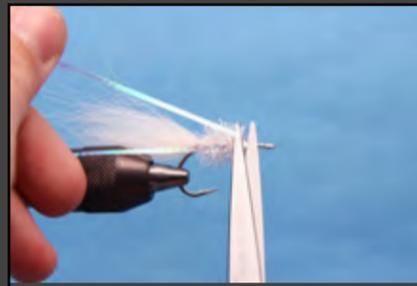
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5



6



7



8



1 Start by wrapping 15- 20 turns of .03 leadfree wire around the hook shank in neatly stacked concentric coils. Attach the mono tying thread at the eye of the hook and wrap back over top of the section of lead free wire, locking it in place. Once secured with several wraps, continue wrapping back to the bend of the hook.

2 At the bend of the hook, tie in a matchstick size bundle of white Arctic Fox fur. Secure in place with 7-8 tight wraps.

3 On top of the Arctic Fox tail, tie in the tip of the pearl cactus chenille.

4 Palmer the chenille forward covering the section of lead free wire. Pull back the fibers with each consecutive forward turn so you do not trap too many of the chenille fibers. Tie off in front of the lead free wire and cut away the excess. This bulbous bump will act as a material spreader and keep the profile of the fly from collapsing when wet.

5 Double over a single strand of the lateral scale and tie in on the side of the fly closest to you. .

6 Make several wraps over both legs of the material and cut away the outside piece. This technique will insure that the lateral scale does not pull free after a few fish.

7 Turn the fly over in the vise, so that it is hook point up and repeat the same process on the opposite side of the fly. Once complete, trim both pieces of lateral scale so that they are approximately 1/4" longer than the arctic fox tail. Return the fly to the hook point down position.

8 Directly in front of the chenille, tie in the Silver Minnow UV2 Fusion SX Brush. Once secure comb all the fibers of the brush out with a wire dog brush. Stroke all the fibers backward. This will give you a much more even looking head when palmering the brush. Skipping this step often leads to gaps or knotted sections of fibers on the head of the fly.

9



9 Palmer the brush forward to the eye of the hook, stroking the fibers backward with each forward wrap.

10



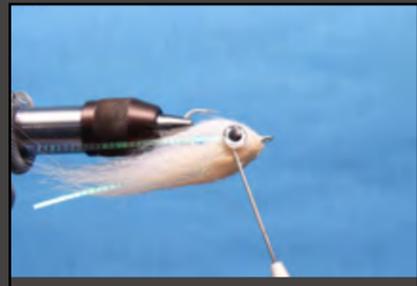
10 Tie off the brush, whip finish twice, and cut away the mono thread. Coat the exposed thread wraps with a thin layer of Loon Outdoors UV Clear Fly Finish Flow for extra durability.

11



11. Brush out the fibers one more time with the wire dog brush to insure that the fibers are dispersed evenly around the fly. Lightly paint the back of the fly with a Copic Marker. Build up the desired color with a number of coats. If you do not have an airbrush available, a few passes with a permanent marker will work just fine.

12



12. Using a pea sized dollop of E6000 adhesive, glue the dome eyes on either side of the fly.

13. While the glue is still wet, turn the fly facing you and make sure that the eyes are even and one eye is not higher than the other. This is often why bait-fish flies track on their side or start spinning. I like to squeeze the eyes so they tip inward or angle slightly toward the eye of the hook. Next take a look at the fly from the top to make sure that one eye is not farther forward than the other.

13



14. After a secure whip finish remove the thread and finish the fly by adding eyes to each side using Loctite gel. Make sure to hold the eyes in place until you feel them getting warm, which ensures they are securely bonded and will not fall off.





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## ART START

### *JORGE MARTINEZ*

I'm pretty sure Jorge Martinez is amphibious. There is no way a straight air-breather could depict underwater scenes as realistically or skillfully as Jorge does without spending a significant part of the day underwater. Jorge's artistic style is not ultra realism, nor is it classic impressionism. Somewhere in between those two lies underwater scenes as I picture them in my dreams, real with just a hint of ethereal fuzziness.

Jorge's success at the age of 30-something is no accidental career. After graduating from the Miami International Fine Arts College, Jorge never looked back. His designs have been featured on apparel by multiple fly fishing manufacturers. His original works on canvas have been prized at every major fishing tournament in Florida, and adorn the walls of quite a few influential South Florida collectors.



His skill at recreating underwater scenes correlates directly to the vast amount of time he spends on the water. This time on the water can also be seen in the tasty flies he spins -- just sayin'.

Jorge has been a force in the Florida marine art scene for a while now. We just wanted the rest of the Southeast to say hi.

So Jorge, the Southeast. The Southeast, Jorge. Keep up with his latest work through his Facebook page.



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# GUIDE DESKS

By Jess McGlothlin





## You're sitting in a cubicle.

An office space, kind of dark and not in a good way, the gray foam-core walls creeping a little closer every time you look away. The guy at the desk over won't shut up about his kid's hockey team, and there seems to be a perpetual stream of endless nonsense-chatter coming from all around.

That's when your brain takes a different path. You imagine what it's like on the outside. You click over to your favorite fishing video, a sure panacea for drudgery days. Look at those anglers; at those guides. Bundled up in waders, Buffs roguishly covering their faces against all manner of bad weather and bugs. Look at the huge fish they are catching. Surely that must be the best job in the world.

What the hell are you doing in cubicle-land?



It takes a special breed to be a guide. The best ones—the guides who are booked solid simply by word of mouth—have that magic balance of entertainer, instructor, and just outright fishiness. They can read water, find fish, and somehow manage inept clients without throwing said clients out of the boat or leaving them stranded on a gravel bar.

Though I have heard stories.

It's long hours—dawn to dusk is a very real way of life, and often the boundaries of the day far exceed the expected hours. And anyone who is in the fly fishing industry knows we're not here for the money. It's not a cheap pursuit, and there's a very real reason guides tend to wear clothing until it disintegrates. Their truck might be clean and well-kept, but odds are there are over 200 thousand miles on the odometer.

Fishing guides are some of the coolest people I've ever worked alongside, region and nationality irrespective. One of the most thoughtful political discussions I've ever had was talking U.S. - Russian politics with a bunch of Russian fishing guides I worked with. In Russia. And largely, in Russian (language barriers be damned). A few weeks later, we celebrated the arrival of fresh milk by doing half-frozen milk shots in the bar.

Try doing that in a cubicle.





I've stayed up late talking literature with guides in an Alaskan outcamp, had plenty of coffee-fueled 5am mornings getting guide trips out the door in Montana, and chased away reef sharks with Polynesian fisherman (flip-flops make great shark missiles). Had competitions backing drift boats through obstacle courses, chased guides down the river to retrieve their keys for a shuttle, and marveled endlessly at the patience—and teaching skills—of certain guides.





It's not an easy job. A lot of young guns think they'll give "the epic life" a try and burn out a year or two later. For others, guiding is a stepping stone to a "real" career, one with a cubicle and a coffee maker and office gossip. The guide community self-selects, and it's an interesting process to watch.

The lifestyle itself draws some pretty special people. This past summer during a photo shoot up at Bristol Bay Lodge, some of the younger guides cooked up an idea to create a “guide desk” in one of the boats and shoot some images. I left for a few days for an outcamp, and when I returned the guys had created the ultimate desk: a simple wooden table mounted on a jet boat, complete with vise, apple, bug spray, license book, Bugger Beast, yellow lab, and other necessities of Alaskan guide life. And whiskey. We headed out onto Lake Aleknagik and shot photos in the evening light. I don’t know who was more stoked—me or the guys. And all thanks to the creativity and ingenuity of some young guns.







And you know what? That little wooden desk beats the hell out of a cubicle any day.



#GoodCleanLivin

Photos: Jess McGlothlin



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# BUY THIS AD OR FACE MY WRATH

- Thus sayeth Dave

# The Lowcountry Floods



Hurricane Joaquin and big seasonal tides combined recently to send historic flooding to South Carolina.

Please consider purchasing this print, all proceeds will be donated to the local American Red Cross to aid in flood relief.

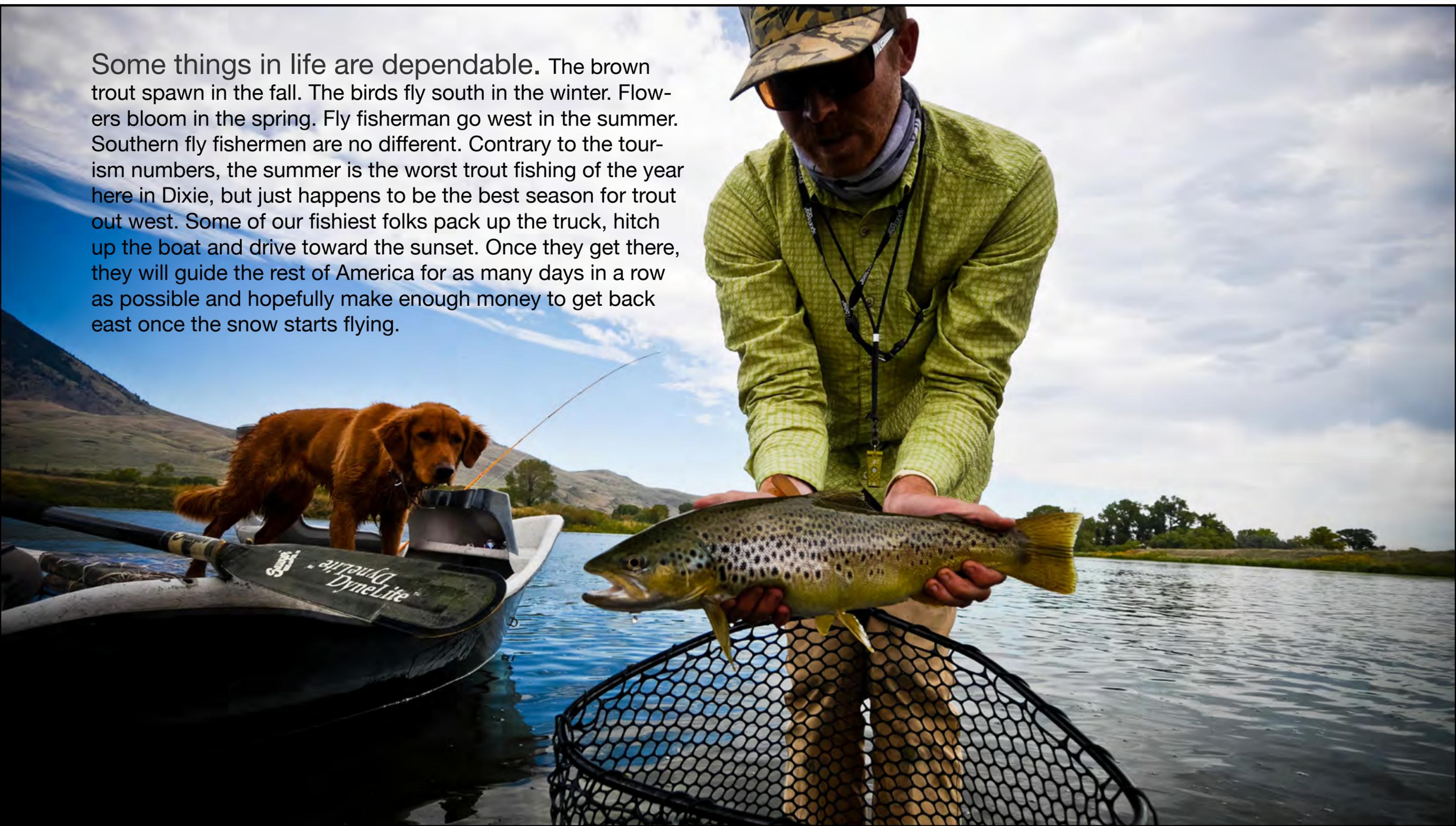


GO

>> WEST

By David Grossman  
Photos: Steve Seinberg

Some things in life are dependable. The brown trout spawn in the fall. The birds fly south in the winter. Flowers bloom in the spring. Fly fishermen go west in the summer. Southern fly fishermen are no different. Contrary to the tourism numbers, the summer is the worst trout fishing of the year here in Dixie, but just happens to be the best season for trout out west. Some of our fishiest folks pack up the truck, hitch up the boat and drive toward the sunset. Once they get there, they will guide the rest of America for as many days in a row as possible and hopefully make enough money to get back east once the snow starts flying.





The lodges and guides of the Rocky Mountain West are beyond most of our reach. So for the best of the rest of us, an alternative path must be taken to reap all the piscatorial benefits the west has to offer.

Planning and executing a trip out west is a little bit different than most. Please note when I use the word “tourist,” I get the irony.

***Pick a Date.***

Don't be a sucker. Go pre-runoff or go after school is back in session. These so-called shoulder times are when your buddies out there have free days and most places you want to go will be devoid of the summer time tourist machine. You will give up some dry fly fishing these times of the year, but we're Southerners, and we give up dry fly fishing a lot of the year. It's worth it to not fish in a crowd. If you're planning a Yellowstone trip, go in October when the RVs and accompanying savages have left for the season.





***Call In All Favors.***

Remember that dirtbag who lived on your couch last off-season... for free? Six out of 10 times that guy is a guide out west. Call him. This kills two birds with one stone. Free lodging and free guiding (kind of). If you call him far enough ahead, he can probably squeeze in a few days on the river for you, as long as you weren't guilty of some variety of douchebaggery.

At the very least, he's got a couch to sleep on. At the very best, he is a semi-responsible adult and has a guest bedroom. Either way, remember that you do have some responsibility in this hobo arrangement. Buy the guy a decent meal -- it's cheaper than a hotel or probably even a campground. If he's taking days off to fish with you, pay for the gas and shuttles. You should also offer to row, if you have the know-how. The golden rule is don't be a tax. Better yet, be an enjoyable human being.

***Stay Flexible.***

Stretching is the key to a long and healthy life. Just thought I'd throw that in here.

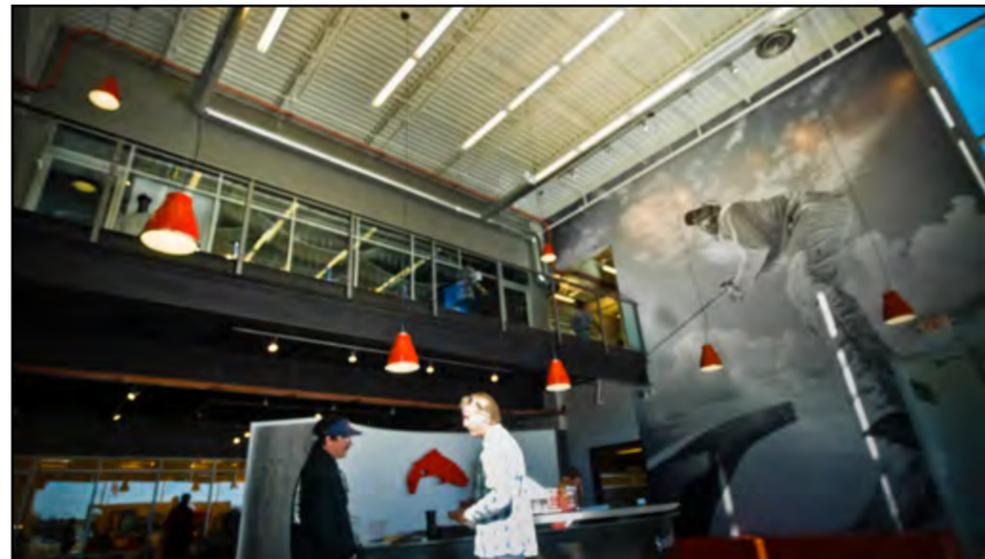






***Overplanning kills.***

There is nothing worse than being tied to a river with no bite. And contrary to popular belief, the fishing is not good everywhere all the time in Montana. All rivers, everywhere, have off days and sometimes off weeks. If the fishing sucks, go somewhere else. Try to pick a target-rich environment for your trip. A bunch of different rivers all within a two- or three-hour drive is way better than one famous river all out by its lonesome. Be the predator, not the prey.









***Don't Beat A Dry Fly Horse To Death...It's Inhumane.***

Everyone wants to fish foam when they cross the mighty Mississipp' into Wonderland. Unfortunately, the fish don't want to eat foam from April through October. The hopper bite is not the endless summer. Be different. Throw a nymph rig. I guarantee you nobody else is. I'm not advocating reverse dry fly racism, but if they're not eating on top, catching fish the way we all know how is better than not catching fish. Just sayin'.



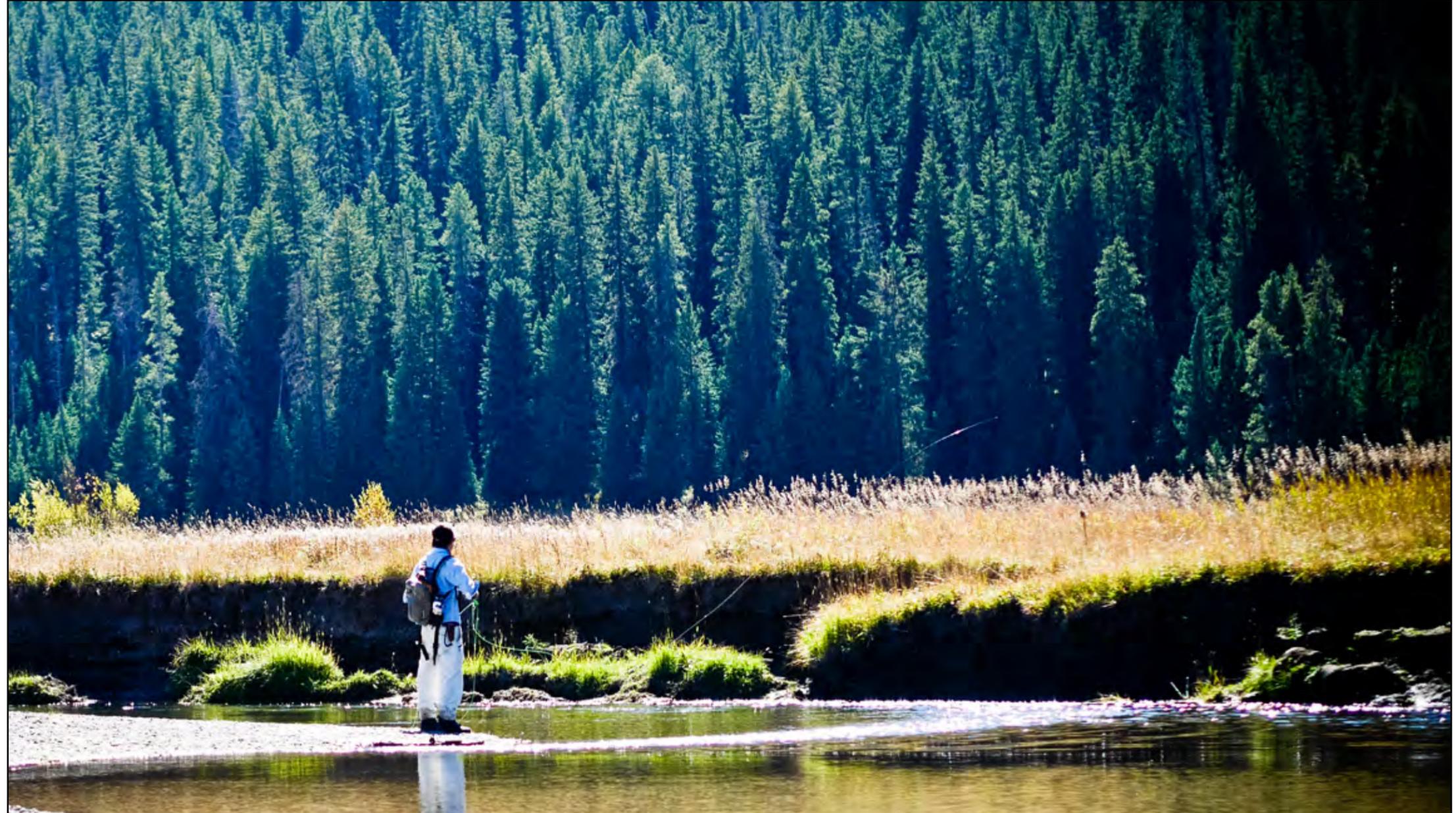






***Don't Assume They're As Civilized As We Are In The South.***

Good fried chicken joints are few and far between. Stock up when you can. If you order an iced tea, it will be served unsweetened. There are no headache powders for your hangovers. Bring your own. This is not to say that the West is completely devoid of anything resembling civility. The meat is delicious. Eat a buffalo, or what Kevin Costner referred to as tatanka. The elk, antelope, moose and a variety of other critters literally spill from the menus of every roadside dive. Enjoy.







The great American West is just that: great. It should be fished at some point by everybody who gives a shit about fly fishing. Traveling there from here is not an easy, short, or cheap affair. You have to work to have fun. It's my only wish that all of you make the most out of your opportunity when it comes.



There are a lot of thank you's to be given here, so sit still for a second. Rich Hohne, Jon Van Vleet, Reba "Gonzalez" Brinkman...thank you for the couches, beds, comraderie, fish, and the clap (I'm looking at you Van Vleet). A special thank you goes to Chad Dubose for just being Chad Dubose. Book him out of Missoula...do it.

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**ON DELEGATION**  
By J.E.B. Hall



For many a Southern trout angler, fall trout fishing can be summed up in two words: Delayed Harvest. Commonly referred to as “DH” by those who stare with bloodshot eyes from behind the scratched lenses of polarized sunglasses, Delayed Harvest streams can make heroes out of even the most inept experts. While this resource is invaluable to the local sport fishing economy, and provides countless hours of quality fishing time for resident and visiting anglers alike, it also breeds a subculture of trout fishers that range from comical to downright obnoxious. This heterogeneous mixture of salmonid-obsessed humans is comprised of some very unique characters who wouldn’t be caught dead in each others’ presence. That is unless they’re all trying to fish the same hole that they risked life and limb to get to. This DH Delegation can be broken down into the following personality types: the Reelback, the Big Hat, the Greek Squad, and the Flat Brim.

Reelbacks are the only truly indigenous members of the DH Delegation. Hailing from hollars unknown, Reelbacks can be heard approaching from great distances as their modified early 90s pickups rumble and screech their way up winding roads just left of the center line. The typical Reelback fishing technique is to descend upon unsuspecting anglers working a run and perch on rocks directly adjacent to the optimum drift line. Upon placing their 20 oz. Mountain Dew in an upright position, they unleash repeated long casts with a variety of hardware ranging from Vibrax spinners to “brokeback” Rapalas. No matter what lure is used, water depth fished, or structure covered, the presentation is always the same steady turning of the reel handle. After a nearly eternal 10 minutes of casting and retrieving, the Reelback usually retreats up the small footpath from which they emerged, leaving only a spooked pod of finless Brook Trout and the aforementioned Mountain Dew as evidence of their existence.





The most benign member of the Delegation is the Big Hat. As you can guess by their namesake, Big Hats often sport some type of oversized head gear. These sweat inducing skull furnaces can range from felt Fedoras to Martha Stewart Living straw gardening hats. This cranial fashion was most likely inspired by the movie *A River Runs Through It*, and capitalized on by brands such as Tilley, Filson, and Orvis. Thankfully, Cialis and Viagra have picked up on the trend and kept the flame of fishing hats burning brightly. Big Hats have a well planned vision of how their angling day will go. From the two-egg-white senior's omelette at Denny's, to the parking space in which to plant their Yukon XL, everything has been thought out in excruciating detail. Alas, sometimes things don't always go as planned, and other anglers have to be smoked out of the planned fishing spot through a two-tiered approach of

steady wading and menacing glances from furled bushy eyebrows. Once the nuisance has been removed, new fangled flies such as olive Woolly Buggers are used to entice fish with "The Dance of Death." Similar, but in reality, nothing like the George Harvey Slack Line Technique, The Dance of Death involves precise angler and fly placement. This technique involves the presenting angler to stand midstream, cast directly downstream, and strip the fly back in two inch strips. The fly must have a light olive body with a dark olive tail, or a dark olive body with a light olive tail. The body and the tail can in no circumstance be the same color of olive. After several hours of plying the chosen water, Big Hats often retreat back to the safety of their gated communities to recount the exploits of the day over a glass of cheap scotch and the comforting murmur of Fox News.

This brings us to the Greek Squad. While almost all of these anglers are destined to join the Fedora Fraternity in their later years, Greek Squad anglers remain in a category of their own. Spending somewhere between five and seven years as undergrads at a Southern university, the Greek squad makes sure to take time to explore their secessionist sporting heritage on your local Delayed Harvest stream. Greek Squad members typically possess somewhere between 50 to 90 percent of the necessary equipment it takes to trout fish. Typical attire for a Greek Squad fishing trip includes dad's 15-year-old canvas wading boots, khaki shorts, khaki fishing vest, and last year's white t-shirt from the fall semi-formal with Gamma Phi Beta. The troubling part about this ensemble is that it is almost always topped off with a high-end pair of Costa Del Mar sunglasses, the retail cost of which could have went toward any number of breathable wader options to wear over the oh-so functional December cotton wading shorts.





If Big Hats are the least of one's Delayed Harvest worries, then Flat Brims are the most caustic. Referring to everyone around them as Bro, Brah, or "Their Boy," Flat Brims are on a quest for fly angling fame. Flat Brims are cooler than cool, and it all starts with the SoCal style flat-brimmed baseball hat. Oversized, and slightly cocked to the side, the flat brimmed hat brings skate park cool to an otherwise nerdy endeavor. Flat Brims are very competitive and are often involved in the lucrative worlds of tournament angling, and/or guided fishing excursions. For Flat Brims, the river is just a playing field

occupied with only targets (fish) and obstacles (other anglers). The object of the Flat Brim's game is to catch as many targets as possible while being observed by as many obstacles as possible. If there are no other anglers around to watch, a GoPro must be used to document the day's adventure so it can be downloaded, set to Dub Step music, and viewed on Facebook by literally dozens of followers. Be warned that Flat Brims will always fish through your water shouting expressions such as, "I'm in a comp," "I'm practicing for a comp," or "I'm trying to guide."



Delayed Harvest is an incredible fishing resource for the trout fishing community and is always a highlight of autumn in Southern Appalachia. DH is a great place for beginners to learn, experts to relax, and for guides to make the magic happen. With that in mind, remember that no matter how early you get to the river, or how well you plan your day, the DH Delegation will always be there to greet you.

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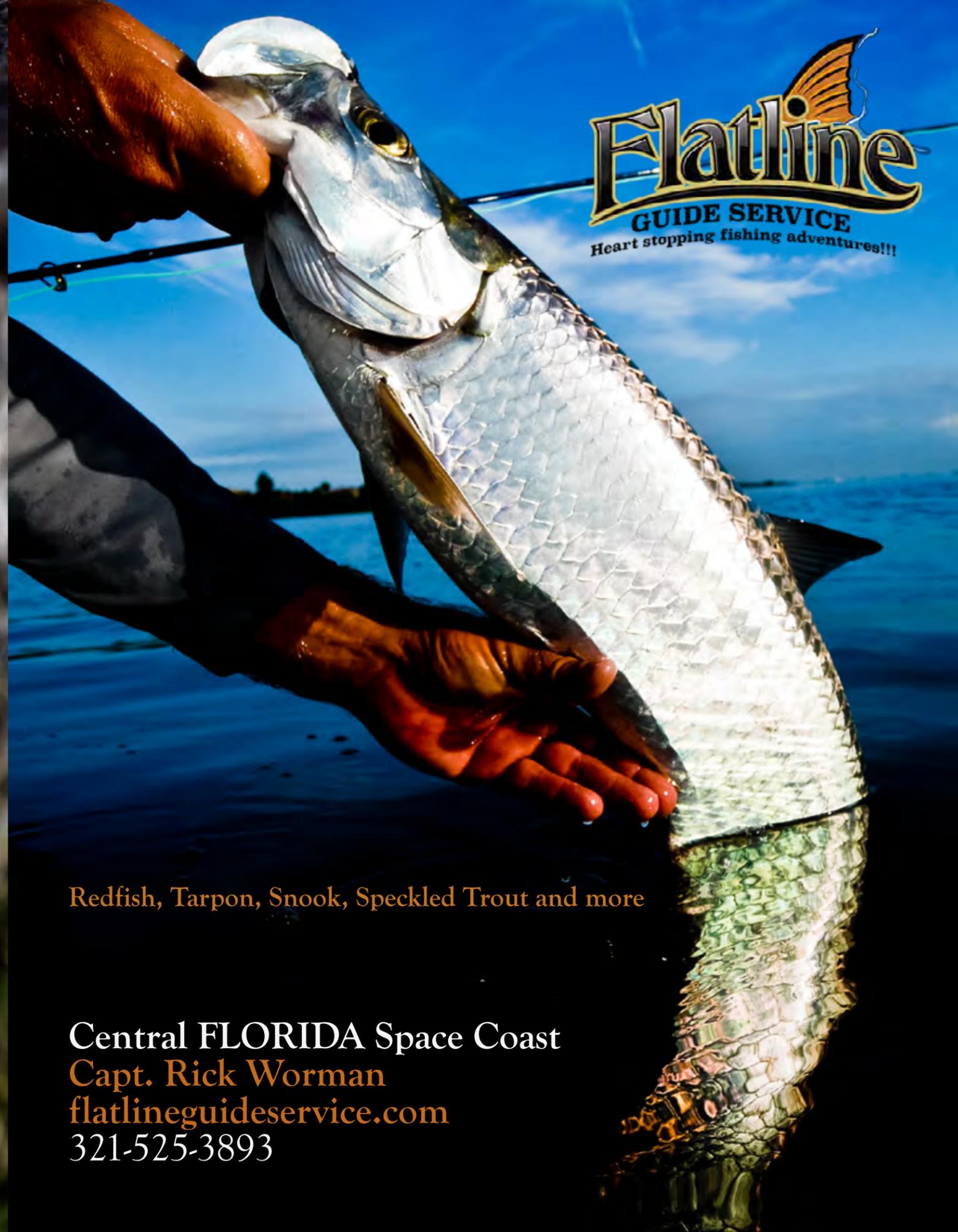
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It seems that every time I read an article about improving your fly fishing skills, it is about casting. And yes, casting is a crucial skill, because if you can't get the fly to the fish, you certainly can't feed them. However, that's only half the battle. To me, a skill just as vital as casting is an angler's stripping technique. Essentially, the strip is the art of moving your fly in a manner that triggers your target into eating your offering. You can be the best caster on the planet, but without the ability to entice the fish through your retrieve, you are doomed to only fool the foolish.



The most common mistake I see with anglers on the bow of my skiff is they fish all species and all fly patterns with the same retrieve or strip. Mostly this is a 10- to 12-inch strip with a slight pause in between. It doesn't matter if they are throwing a baitfish pattern to a snook or a crab pattern to a tailing redfish. There are times when this standard strip works and there are times when it absolutely will not. The majority of the fishing I do is sight fishing the shallow flats of the Indian River Lagoon located in east central Florida. At times, it can be very easy to feed the local fish populace, but there are times when it can be a very technical fishery. During this time, I find the ability to adapt your strip to the mood of the fish and a proper presentation of the pattern is the difference between success or a long day of blown shots.



In order to effectively fish a pattern you must have some understanding of what the pattern is imitating and how it behaves naturally. For example, when throwing a crab pattern it helps to understand that a crab in its natural environment will typically not flee when approached by a predator, but will try to hide if possible or just try and remain motionless so as not to be discovered. Having this knowledge and being able to impart it into your strip will greatly increase your odds for success. When I tie on a crab pattern for a client, I explain to them that keeping the crab near the bottom and moving very slowly are key to getting bit. A good percentage of redfish “eat” on a crab pattern in my area when the fish notice the fly and start to follow, but will not commit to eating until it stops moving.





All fish seem to have a trigger that can be pulled to entice them into eating your presentation. That trigger is almost exclusively exploited on the strip. In my region, our main targets are redfish, juvenile tarpon, snook, gator trout, and black drum. Some days on certain flats having shots at all of these species is a possibility. One minute you'll have a shot at a laid up redfish. The next, a rolling tarpon. On days like this, I typically go to one of my favorite patterns. It has the ability to feed each one of these species if stripped properly, but each species will require a different strip with the same fly. When throwing this fly at tarpon, we are trying to trigger a feeding response by moving the fly quickly with very short sharp strips. But when presenting the same fly to a redfish, it is fished very slowly on the bottom with lots of pauses. A good percentage of eats actually happen for redfish and black drum when the fly is lying motionless on the bottom. My point is, being able to adapt your stripping technique to different species and patterns will increase the amount of fun you have on the water.



*Capt. Rick Worman looks a lot like Sammy Hagar. He fishes a lot like Hagar the Horrible. He can be found pilliaging the Florida space coast with clients 12 months a year. Check him at [flatlineguideservice.com](http://flatlineguideservice.com)*

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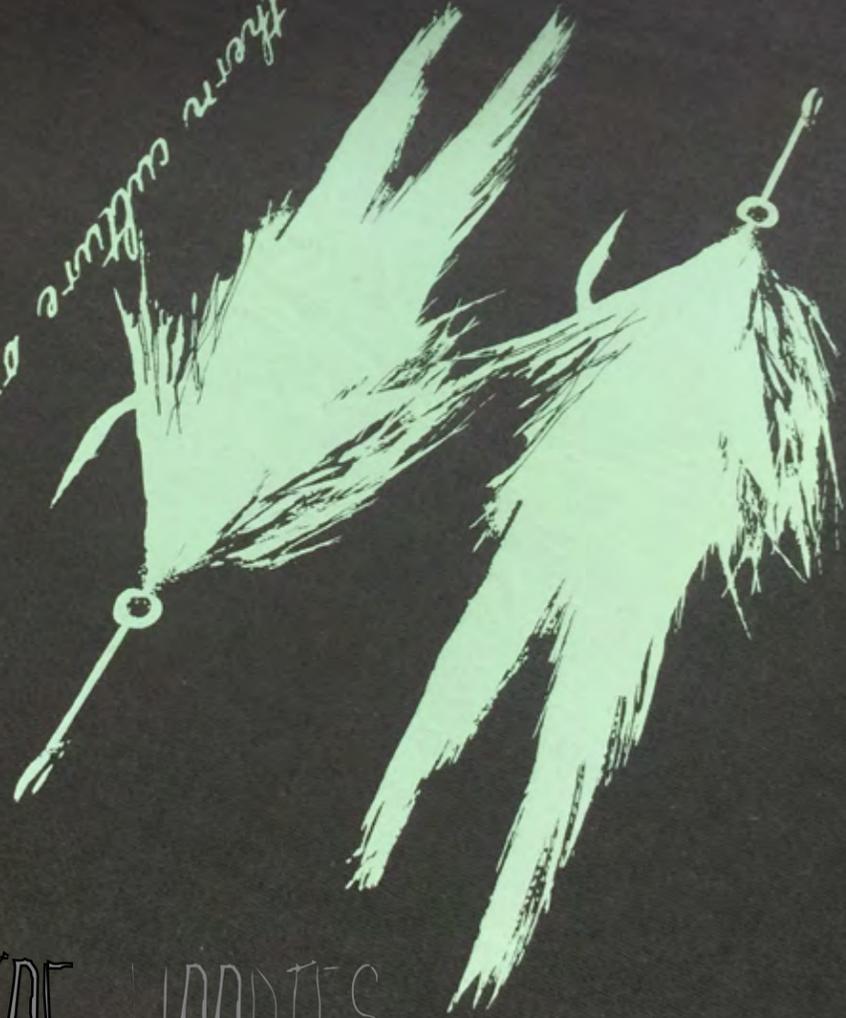


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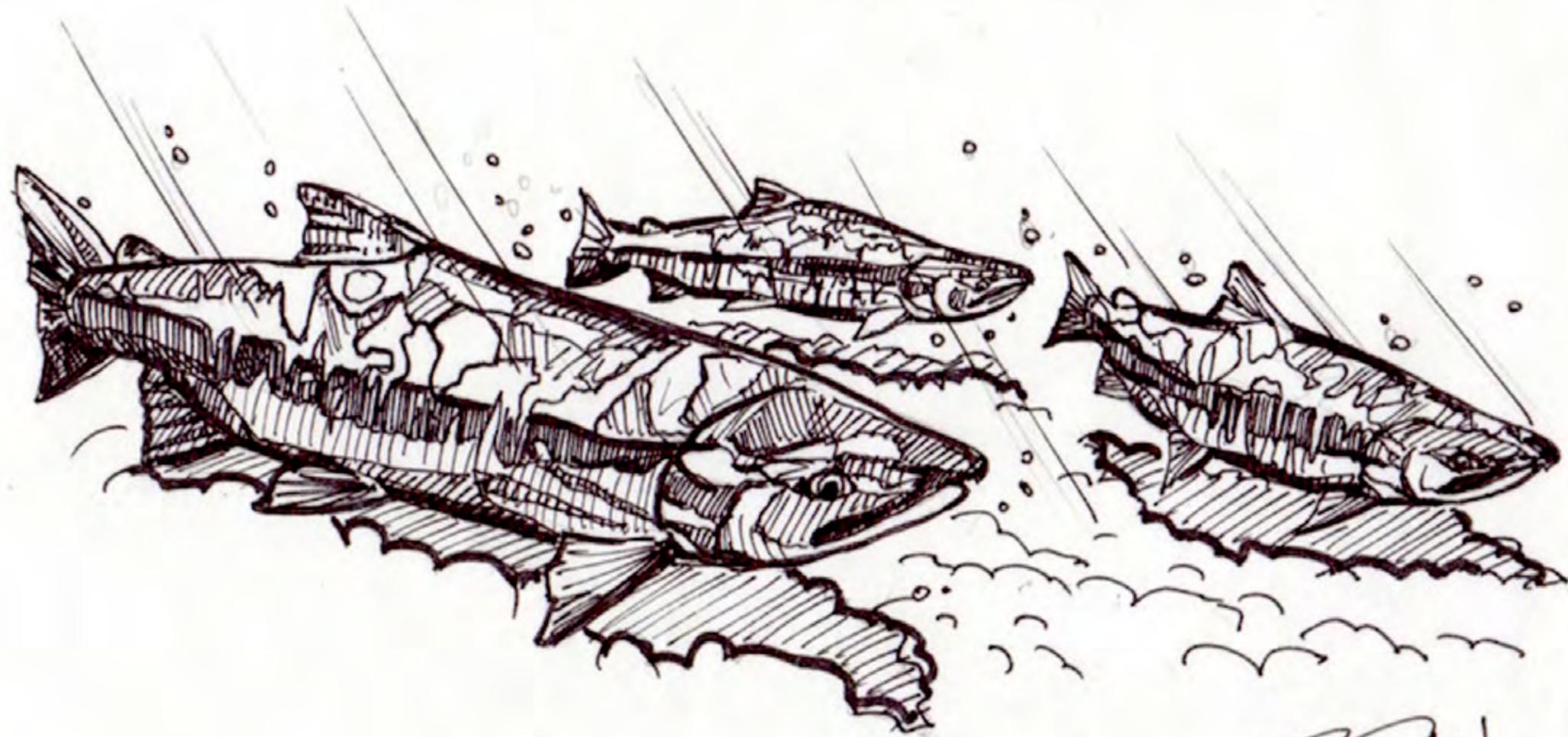
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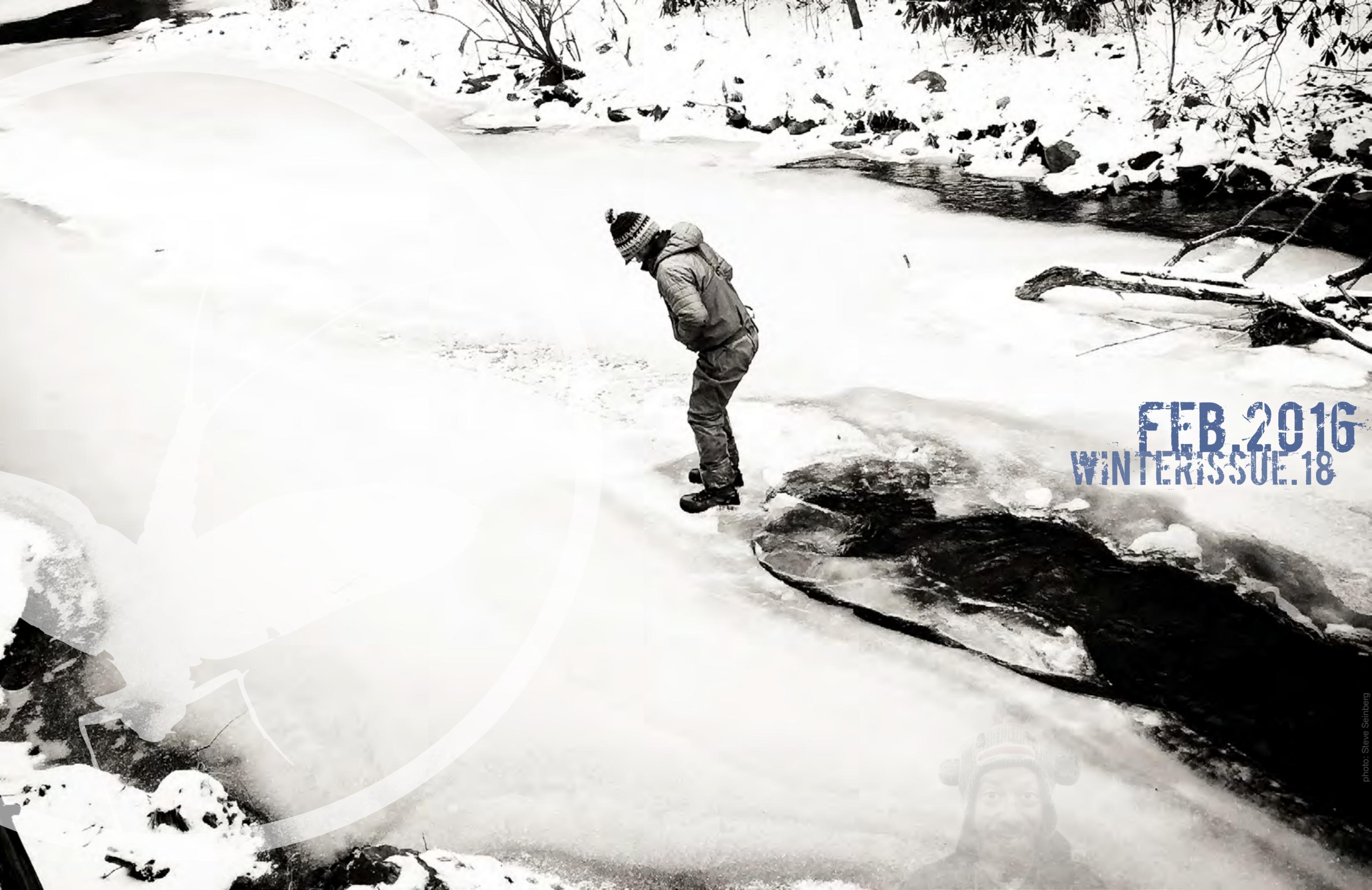
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