

# First Coast Fly Fisher

November 2004

[www.fcff.org](http://www.fcff.org)

Jacksonville, FL



## Good Bye Ray

Somewhere the fishing's good, the conversation is livelier, and friends and loved ones are enjoying themselves -- all because you're there.

Scout out the good spots, Ray, and save a few fish for us. We'll see you soon enough.

### MEETING TIME & PLACE

**SOUTHPOINT MARRIOTT  
MONDAY, NOV 1**

**SPEAKER: CAPT. JOHN  
KUMISKI ON FLYFISHING**

**THE SPACE COAST**

**CASTING - 5:45 PM.**

**MEETING STARTS 7 PM**



## The Traveling Flyfisher

# Big Trout, Good Company, and Life-Long Memories

by Don Reed

Vindication and validation...it's true, the fish are giants on the Soque River. You'd have to travel to Canada, Alaska, or Russia to find rainbow and brown trout in the sizes and numbers of the fish seen in this tributary of the upper Chattahoochee River, near Helen Georgia.

Nine members of the First Coast Fly Fishers including Ray Waters, Lee Henricks, Jim McCully, Dick Choate. Dick and Kitty Michaelson, Bud and TL Larson, and Don Reed spent October 7-9 at Blackhawk Lodge on the Soque River.



Jim McCully With A Soque River Rainbow

Jim McCully had hardly gotten his waders wet when, on his third cast, he hooked and landed what he describes as the largest brown trout he has ever seen. He had no more than released the Brown when he took a huge rainbow. Ray Waters also took a really nice brown as well as many rainbows, some up to 30 inches. Ray, in usual form, decided to go for a swim ...with his wadders on, but came up laughing. Bud Larson stood and fought a Rainbow for twenty-five or thirty minutes and then sat on a log smiling at a 30 incher in his lap. Though the browns were hard to come by, the rainbows were not.

The consensus of the group was that over the two days fished, everyone caught his lifetime best trout.

Abbie and John Jackson were most gracious hosts and met or exceeded our every need. Abbie's gourmet delights were unexpected treats...no one went hungry. The days were warm and the nights just crisp enough to make the outdoor fireplace the spot to end the day. Despite a chorus of heavy snoring (with Ray singing Tenor) most everyone slept well the three nights.

Our guide George Beasley worked overtime and provided his usual superb and advice and assistance. Any one who knows George can imagine the care he took of us all.

We have reserved the Lodge next year around the same time and all of us, less one, will likely make the trip.

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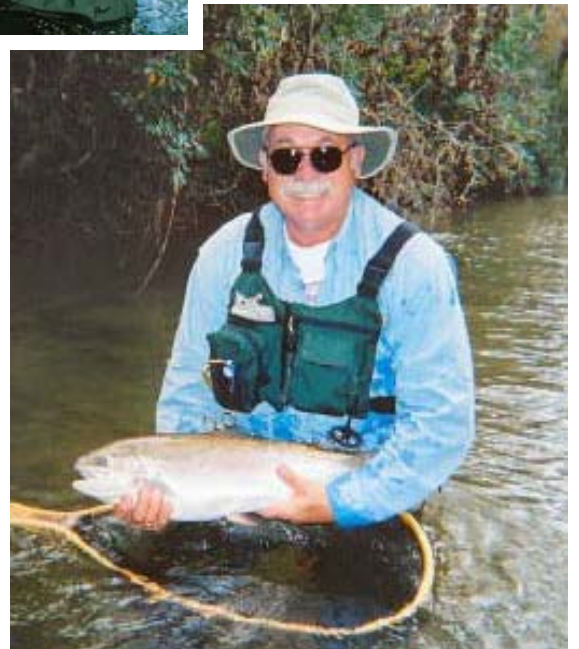
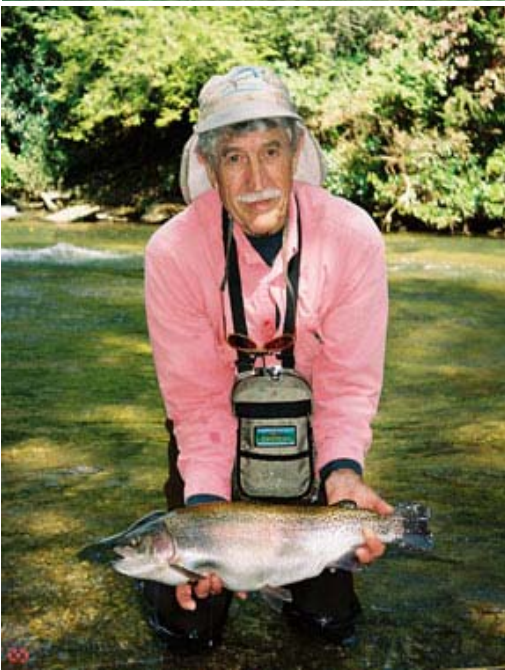
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# WONDERFUL MEMORIES OF FISHING WITH RAY WATERS

*by Donn McKinnon*

I know everyone who has fished with the late Ray Waters counts himself privileged for the experience.



**Donn With Green Brown**

I was fortunate to be able to fish two great American trout rivers with him in August – the Green River at Flaming Gorge, Utah, and

the San Juan River, below Navajo Dam, New Mexico. Ray's wife Carol, my wife Robin, and I started planning for the trip last May.

Both families were going to be "out west" in our motor-homes for the summer. We decided to meet up in early August to fish the Green for three days, then caravan down through Utah to fish the San Juan. Ray and Carol had fished the San Juan several times and I was eager for him to show me the ropes there. Neither of us had fished the Green and its reputation as one of the best trout fisheries in North America had us both excited.

Ray and Carol spent July in Kalispell, Montana, while Robin and I were in Rogue River, Oregon and Silverdale, Washington. Ray got to fish the Big Horn while in Montana and was happy to report that, contrary to rumors, there were lots of small trout mixed in with the very large ones. We met up Carol and him on August 7 at a campground in Evanston, Wyoming. The next day we drove the two motor-



## Scenic Pool, Green River Utah

homes down to Dutch John, which is located just inside the northeast border of Utah. There were several short 14 percent grades but the diesel pushers had no problem.

Dutch John is a small town consisting of housing left over from the building of Flaming Gorge Dam about 7 miles away. As soon as our camps were set up, Ray and I hurried over to Trout Creek Flies/Green River Outfitters to check in. We had reserved guided trips for the next two days since neither of us had been there before.

On Monday morning we met our guide, Pat Nichols, a tall, wiry individual who had 14 years experience on the river. Pat would take us on the "B" section, which starts about 5 miles downstream from the dam and continues down about 7 more miles to another take-out. Pat liked to fish below the "A" section to avoid the rafters and get below the other boats who mostly nymph fished. Pat said he almost always fished with dry flies because he caught the same amount of fish as the nymph fishermen and it was a lot more fun.

Pat was absolutely right-on! The fishing was terrific! Both Ray and I lost count after about 30 fish apiece – all on dry flies. Mostly we fished with Madam X-type floaters, crickets, or one call a Sailor Ant. Pat usually dressed his dry flies with parachutes so they could be seen easier. It's critical to be able to

see the take when fishing dries with lots of line mends to get a drag free drift. The Green is an extremely clear river with lots of shadows from the canyon walls and lots of long runs and short riffles. Pat would point out the seams for each of us to cast to and, if we got the cast there, we usually hooked up. The fish sometimes just stuck their nose up and slurped the fly and sometimes attacked with a vengeance. It was awesome!

We caught mostly brown trout (about 90% of them) in the 14-17 inch range with the rest rainbows and 2 cut-bows (rainbow-cutthroat). All the fish were healthy and fought hard in the 57 degree water.

Pat told us that when the river was initially stocked after the dam was constructed, the fish could not survive. The water was too cold and sterile to support the insect life needed to sustain a good trout fishery. A system was devised to take mid level water and mix it with bottom level water and release it. The result is a fabulous fishery with the most trout per mile in North America. While the fish were not as large as some streams we have fished, they were still pretty sizeable and certainly numerous and eager to take flies. Ray told me he had never seen so many brown trout take dry flies before.

*(Continued on page 5)*

# THE GREEN RIVER *(cont'd from page 4)*

While enjoying our streamside lunch the first day, guide Pat told me that Ray was the best fisherman he had fished with this season. Then he suggested we tackle an "AB" float tomorrow if we were willing to get up early and beat the rafters down the "A" section. He told us that there would be times we couldn't fish while he rowed down several long stretches with little current, but that we would be able to experience the best parts of the river. Both Ray and I eagerly agreed to this proposal.

The next morning we arrived at the ramp just below Flaming Gorge Dam and put in with the early rafters. It was pretty cool in the early morning with the high



**Brown Trout in Green River**

close to the bank. It was the best trout-fishing day I've had in many years if not in my entire life.

The Green has to rank among the most beautiful rivers I've fished. The combination of the super clear water with the canyon walls with their multi-color layered rock and fir trees sometimes made it difficult to keep your eyes on the fly.

After two days fishing with a guide, we decide to attack the river on our inflatable pontoon boats. We decided to fish the "A" section because the take-out was much easier for Carol and Robin to find. Also the rapids were not as severe as the "B" section. What great fun we had. The boats handled the class 2 rapids with ease. Ray caught about 15 fish and I only caught about 8. We both had a lot more hook-ups but missed a lot more fish than we landed. It was a lot more difficult rowing and fishing than fishing with the guide. The most effective technique for me turned out to be to row the boat into a back eddy and fish the riffles. Otherwise the boat tended to travel down the river too fast. Our anchors were much too light to hold. Ah... next time.

Pat Nichols fishes out of Trout Creek Flies/Green River Outfitters in Dutch John. If you want to fish with an expert on fishing dry flies for lots of fish, Pat is your man. The specifics:

Trout Creek Flies & Green River Outfitters, Hwy 191 Little Hole Rd, Mailing: PO box 247, Dutch John, UT 84023; (435)885-3355; (435)885-3338 Email: [dbreer@union-tel.com](mailto:dbreer@union-tel.com) If you need a place to stay, Flaming Gorge Lodge is about 5 miles past the dam and the rates ranged from \$69 to \$129 depending on the season and the room. They also have their own guide service. The specifics: Flaming Gorge Lodge; Phone (435)889-3773; email: [lodge@fglodge.com](mailto:lodge@fglodge.com)

From the east coast, you can fly into Salt Lake City and drive to the lodge in the same day with a rental car

When we discussed our Green River experience, Ray and I both agreed that it was a great experience and that we wanted to do it again. Whenever I think of the Green, I will remember Ray and the great honor of sharing this wonderful experience with him.

Our trip to the San Juan is another story.--and another memory.

canyon walls and the 5000-foot altitude. Pat rowed us downstream for about a mile before we started fishing. This put us well ahead of the rafters. We started catching fish immediately. Both of us had over 30 fish by noon. The sizes were the same as yesterday. We caught fish in the slow water, the deep water, and the shallow water. By shallow, I'm talking about inches of water beside riffles running

## Please Support These Contributing Guides, Instructors, and Fly Shops

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Photo by Donn McKinnon

PINK SKY OVER THE GREEN RIVER, DUTCH JOHN, UTAH

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