



Aardvark McLeod



WELCOME TO OUR AUTUMN 2014 NEWSLETTER

Fish Tails...

2014 has again been a busy year as we explore new areas of the globe in our hunt for exciting destinations. We have

expanded our knowledge base further into Iceland, Argentina, Alaska and Slovenia and next year we venture into the Sudan, India and Mauritius. Although it is vital to continue our search for the new we retain focus on those destinations we have become associated with such as the Indian Ocean, the Caribbean, Iceland and South America.

It is with huge excitement that we welcome Lutz Schepers to our team. Lutz will be looking after our new German office and is based in Bonn. Lutz brings with him a wealth of experience spanning three decades of both freshwater and saltwater fishing and will extend our services directly to our German clients.

We are looking forward to another terrific saltwater season which gets underway in October followed swiftly by the South American season which kicks off in December. Whichever species you wish to target or wherever you are thinking of travelling we look forward to organising the perfect trip for you.

Alex Jardine

Laxardal *the trout are getting bigger*

The rugged landscape, the curving lava valley and big wild brown trout seeking dry flies. These are the reasons I return to the Laxa I Adaldal valley each year, fishing the Laxardal and Myvatnssveit beats. It is a joy to be able to take groups of avid trout anglers each time to experience this unique destination. The fishing can at times be hard, the weather can be unforgiving but when you hook one of these Icelandic monsters everything changes and you are locked into an epic battle of strength and agility.

It was noticeable this season that the average size of fish had increased, with our groups landing a good number of fish over the 6 lbs mark. Two huge fish of 9.2 lbs and 10.3 lbs were also landed in July on dry flies. It was also encouraging for future years to see numbers of juvenile (1–2 lbs) trout appearing throughout the river.

One of the great things about the trout fishing in Iceland is that there is huge scope for developing new methods. Year on year we work with the guides to find new ways to deceive these trout. The joy of our hosted trips is that we are able to share this knowledge with other anglers who venture north in search of a monster wild brown trout.

We have a growing number of rivers in Iceland offering world class trout fishing, including Fremri Asum and Minnivallalaekur. It is with great excitement that we continue to find new trout fishing opportunities so close to the UK, with more additions on the way for the 2015 season.



Alex and Charles Jardine will return to Laxardal 9 – 15 July 2015.
Three and six day trip options are available.

www.aardvarkmcleod.com



ICELAND *salmon*

Why Iceland? What is it that makes Iceland such a draw to salmon fishermen? Fishermen have been travelling to Iceland since the 1930s – could that make it one of the earliest international fishing destinations? Perhaps it is the huge number of rivers that keep us going back, each with its own character, terrain and tactics. Perhaps it is the ease of travel, a mere 3 ½ hour flight. Could it be that in comparison with our own waters the rivers teem with silver tourists and it is highly likely that we might catch something for a change?

For me it is the style of fishing. I love being able to fish for salmon with light leaders and small flies. To see the fish in the pools and to watch their reaction to a hitched fly as it wakes overhead. Even the larger rivers better suited to two handed rods still employ small flies and the experience is so visual.

I also love that fishing is sold in three day slots. This gives us massive flexibility to build combinations. It allows you to not only change the experience halfway through a trip but to hedge your bets on conditions, water and fish runs. There is nowhere in the world that so many rivers containing Atlantic salmon are in such close proximity, especially for a country of its size. It is also one of the few countries that allow rod sharing which can greatly reduce the cost.

Fishing in Iceland has been a constantly evolving process and every year we discover some new technique or new river that we have not previously experienced and are blown away... yet again. Planning a trip to Iceland can be a little daunting, not least the pronunciation of the rivers! We have built up a huge portfolio with over 30 of the countries prime salmon rivers at our clients' disposal, each one visited and fished by one of us. We have a completely unbiased opinion as we take no space at risk and will recommend the river or combination that will suit you. The country never ceases to amaze us as we find another hidden jewel around the corner. Prices start in Iceland from £2,300 for three days and the season runs from June – September.

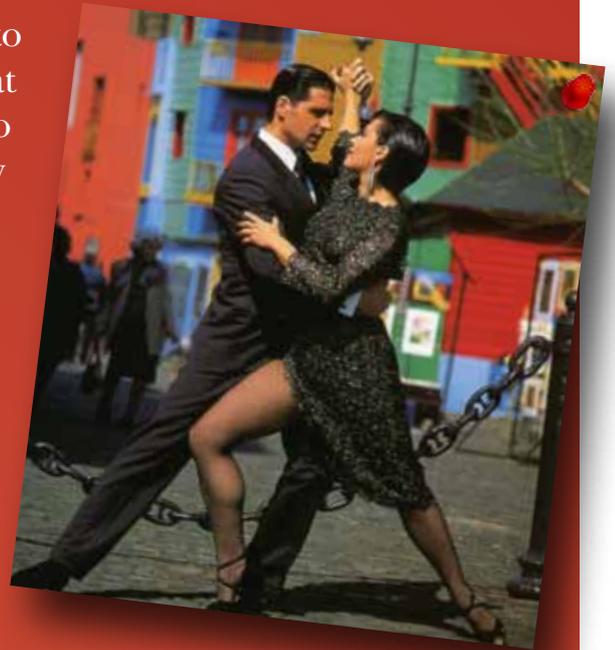
T: +44 (0) 1980 847389

Argentina

More than just fishing

There's more to your trip than fish and fishing, we understand that. Your time is valuable and great ground logistics are as important (well, nearly) as landing that next great catch. Simply put, the small things can get you off to a great start and make you feel at ease when in a foreign country, especially when you may not speak the local lingo.

To that end we are proud to be working alongside a great company in Buenos Aires who really do cover every eventuality from start to finish. Not only can they assist with check ins, help avoid overweight baggage charges, priority check ins at the airport etc they also meticulously handle transfers, hotels and activities in Buenos Aires to include Tango shows and sightseeing tours. They are most accommodating and provide an unsurpassed service.



Whether you have a day or a month to spend in Argentina we can accommodate your request. Fishing, non-fishing or a mixture of both; again, we have it covered. Why not try the Delta Day Trip in Buenos Aires, where Noel Pollack (THE dorado guru) will guide you for the day chasing golden dorado on the outskirts of the city. Or, perhaps head to Mendoza for wine tours and vineyard stays. With several daily flights from Buenos Aires it's easy to tag this on for a couple of days during your stay. For the best of both worlds contact us for our 'Rod & Reins' packages, where you can combine some fishing and horseriding during your stay in some amazing locations with truly stunning surroundings. Whatever you choose, we have Argentina covered better than anyone, from start to finish...



Rio Grande & TDF *with a difference*

What I truly love about locations such as Alaska, Canada and most saltwater destinations is that you are not confined to one species in particular during your stay. Different species present different challenges and having the chance to catch multiple species allows you to broaden your experience whilst helping you define what you may want to target more of in the future.

Many venture to the revered Rio Grande on Tierra Del Fuego for its bountiful sea trout. However, whilst this fishing really cannot be surpassed, to me – a fanatical sea trout angler, there is so much more on offer that really would add to your experience and understanding of what this island has to offer.

To target just sea trout, lodges such as Aurelia, Kau Tapen, Maria Behety and Villa Maria really cannot be beaten, and we represent them all. However, for something different Cameron Lodge on the Chilean side of Tierra Del Fuego wins without compare. You access it through the Argentine side as you would any of the Argentine lodges and the transfer time is just two hours by road. You then have the ability to night fish for sea trout, which is not allowed on the Argentine side. You also have access to a myriad of other rivers and lakes that allow fishing no matter what the water levels. You have more hills, trees and wildlife and the vista from the lodge alone is something to behold.

The lodge is clean and comfortable with the guides and staff being extremely warm and welcoming. You get a single room as standard and the quality of the catering is superb. Best of all it costs just US\$4,500 for a week in prime-time, reducing to US\$3,950 until the end of January and then from the middle of March onwards. Got a group? You get one free place with five paying rods. This includes transfers, all inclusive stay and your fishing licence. They also entertain shorter stays, so you can tag on three days to your Argentine lodge stay. It is well worth a visit and where I will be returning to in February 2015 if you would like to join me?



It is not often that an entirely new saltwater location appears on the radar, and when it does we get very excited. The Nubian flats in the Red Sea represent a virgin saltwater fishery that the last 18 months of exploratory trips have barely scratched. What the highly experienced South African guides have found is perhaps the best triggerfish and bluefin trevally fishery on the planet along with a huge variety of species interspersed with a few whopping GTs. There are bonefish, but not in huge numbers, so think Seychelles species without the bones.

Diving liveaboard operations have been working this coastline for a decade, along with regular tourism across $\frac{3}{4}$ of the country. The operation is based from a 60 ft motor catamaran and will host only six fishermen a week. At €2,750 a week and easy access from Dubai to Port Sudan this represents extraordinary value for money for the opportunity to explore this pristine wilderness.

We will be the exclusive agent in Europe for this operation and will be hosting two exploratory groups in 2015, so if you would like more information please contact us.

Peter McLeod is hosting an exploratory week 25 May-1 June 2015 if you would like to join him.

Nubian Flats - Sudan

Indian Ocean



The last year has seen some very exciting developments in the Seychelles and with the next Indian Ocean season upon us, we are all looking forward to what the new season brings. Fishing in the Indian Ocean just has to be on a saltwater fly fisherman's wish list. It is undeniably an expensive destination but, like those rivers that attach hefty price tags to their salmon fishing, the fishing here is extraordinary. The environment is varied and the species are numerous and all of the atolls have their specialities.

Alphonse sits at the top of the list as it truly is all encompassing and with the diving operation back on the island, has added yet another facet to its already considerable list of assets. They do say that nothing that is good ever comes easy and the bumphead parrotfish of Farquhar are a true testament to that, but how can you not want to test yourself against them? The legendary big fish of St Brandons are not easy to get to but that is, in part, why the fishery has so much to offer. Cosmoledo and Astove quite rightly take their place at the top of the list for GTs and the opening of the six room lodge on Astove opens up a whole new world of possibilities.

We are looking forward to seeing what will happen next and where. What new areas of the southern Indian Ocean will become accessible with virgin flats to tempt us to wet a line? For that we will have to wait, but as we already have access to the most varied saltwater fishery on the planet, we can safely say, as the Indian Ocean specialists, that we will bring it to you first.





Wallet Friendly *Trips*

Isla Holbox, Mexico Tarpon are a species that get under your skin.. the silver king is one of the largest species that can be targeted on the fly in the Caribbean and has a dedicated following. If you are interested in fly fishing for giant tarpon in the summer or juvenile tarpon in the mangroves in winter, then you should consider Mexico's greatest tarpon fly fishing destination, Isla Holbox. Located on the north of the Yucutan peninsular Isla Holbox Flyfishing Lodge is a no frills fishing lodge with rustic charm located right on the beach. Anglers and guides pursue migratory and baby tarpon, cobia, snook, barracuda and some permit in clear gulf waters, endless flats and mangrove lagoons. Non fishing partners mix horseback riding on the beach, sweet water cenote swimming, kayaking, windsurfing, birding and island exploration with hours of relaxation on the empty white sand beaches of this undiscovered island. You can also mix in a trip to Chichen Itza, the most famous of Mayan Ruins, or snorkel with the whale sharks. All of this from US\$2,495 per person offers extraordinary value for money.

The Clearwater, Idaho Ever wondered where to go in October or November to fish for migratory fish? Over 400 miles from the Pacific Ocean, flowing through the interior state of Idaho, the Clearwater River's unique run of steelhead have evolved larger and stronger than any other summer steelhead in the United States. A lengthy fishing season begins in July and can last until March. Prime angling time occurs during the Autumn months when peak numbers of fish and favourable water temperatures make the Clearwater one of the worlds' premier floating line steelhead fisheries. Favoured by many anglers, the Clearwater steelhead are extremely surface oriented, preferring small traditional wet flies and waking dries fished on a floating line. Flowing through diverse habitat from alpine forest in its upper reaches to an arid desert in the lower river, there are 70 fishable miles of river reaching from Lewiston, Idaho to the small town of Kooskia. The guides of the Clearwater Steelhead Syndicate are seasoned experts on the river, knowing the best holding water, fly patterns, and techniques for enticing the Clearwater's amazing steelhead. When most other areas of the world are not in season and to fish floating line for aggressive steelhead, look no further than the Clearwater. Prices are from £2,000 for six days fishing excluding flights.



Steffan Jones

Cuba is an amazing country to visit whether you are sporting bound or not. From a sporting perspective the fishing is consistent and provides excellent value for money. There are a wealth of options open to you, but a very popular avenue to explore if you are an intact party are the yachts that operate out of notable areas such as Jardines de le Reina and Isla de la Juventud. These liveboards allow you to truly escape the madding crowd and experience Cuba in a unique way. A superb choice if you're looking to stay with a group of like-minded individuals and not be interrupted by other anglers or tourists and have the water and fishing literally outside your front door.

Cuban Liveboards

A host of liveboard options exist with the following giving you a brief overview of what may suit you best:

Jardines de la Reina

Avalon Fleet I & II; Fleet I can accommodate groups of 8-10 anglers whereas Fleet II can take 10-12 (greater capacity for non-anglers). These are the newest and flagship yachts in Cuba and are superb for larger parties.

La Tortuga; A large, double level floating hotel. Recently refurbished, this fixed location houseboat has seven rooms capable of accommodating two anglers in each.

Halcon; A recently refurbished luxury yacht that can accommodate 6-8 anglers across six cabins, with four private bathrooms. air conditioning and all mod cons – seventy feet of floating comfort.

La Reina; The perfect choice for smaller groups. This smaller yacht takes 4 anglers in four double rooms, each with private bathrooms.

Caballones; Perfect for smaller groups of 6-8 anglers. Great for those who want to

try varied fishing techniques, including spin fishing and trolling etc.

Isla de la Juventud

Georgiana; One of the newest yachts to the fleet. This exclusive yacht takes 6 anglers in six deluxe cabins, all with air conditioning and private bathrooms. Comfortable inside and great fishing outside.

Perola; A luxury 75ft long yacht that has been recently refurbished. Perfect for up to 6 anglers with most rooms having private bathrooms.

Cayo Cruz

Avalon Fleet I; Fleet I, as described above, now operates in this new and largely unexplored area of Cuba that has been providing some fantastic fishing of late for bonefish, tarpon and permit.

Prefer to remain on Terra Firma? We have a myriad of options that may suit from Cayo Largo and Las Salinas in the south through to Cayo Romano and Cayo Santa Maria in the north. Let us know your requirements and we can tailor the location accordingly.

T: +44 (0) 1980 847389

HOSTED TRIPS

Fishing abroad for the first time or on your own can sometimes be a little

intimidating but travelling with a group can remove much of the hassle. Our group led trips continue to prove popular and we look forward to taking you to more destinations with a mix of tried and tested alongside more exploratory trips.



Why join a hosted trip? As a single angler, you avoid single supplements, are travelling with a group of like-minded people and have an instructor on hand to help. As the lodge operation is normally taken privately it also allows more flexibility during the week to look for other species and try something a little off the wall if you are that way inclined. With all of our hosted trips, there is no additional cost on

top of a normal week for the host to be there, therefore you get our experience alongside the great knowledge offered by the local guide teams, all at no extra cost.

Tried and tested hosted trips in 2015

South America, Aurelia and Cameron Lodge with Steffan Jones, 20-28 February 2015

This is a rare opportunity to fish the Rio Grande in both Argentina and Chile in a split week. The week has been picked to target both numbers of sea trout along with a good head of fresh fish.

Cost: *US\$6,295 + US\$295 fishing licences per person*

Seychelles, Alphonse Island with Charlotte Chilcott 14-21 March 2015

There are only a handful of people who know this atoll as well as Charlotte and she returns in March to target one of our favourite mixed species saltwater destinations.

Cost: *US\$7,200 plus internal flights of US\$1,300 per person*

Pacific, Christmas Island with Clare Carter 5-12 May 2015

A destination that has been at the forefront of bonefishing for several decades yet remains relatively untouched

as a mixed species location. Join Clare as she targets GTs, triggerfish, milkfish and many more.

Cost: *US\$2,650 per person*

Iceland, Laxardal with Alex and Charles Jardine 9-15 July 2015

Laxardal continues to offer world class dry fly fishing, Alex and Charles will return to Iceland during the prime week of the season as they continue the hunt for some of Europe's largest wild brown trout.

Cost: *£1,865 per person (based on 2014 but is expected to remain unchanged for 2015)*

Mongolia, Delger Muron with Alex Jardine 28 August-7 September 2015

Alex will be travelling to the Hovsgol region of Northern Mongolia to fish one of the best taimen rivers in the country. This is a prime week, giving the group the best chance of capturing the world's largest salmon species.

Cost: *US\$5,550 per person*

mail@aardvarkmcleod.com

2015 ideas...



St Brandons

If wading and sight casting to large quantities of massive double figure bonefish, gloriously finicky Indo-Pacific permit and a host of trevally species on powder white sand flats in the Indian Ocean appeals to you, then St Brandons Atoll is for you. It is saltwater fly fishing wonderland with scattered islands, vast connecting sandbanks and flats of hard white sand and broken coral. These islands have a total land area of only 1.3 km² with a reef measuring more than 50 km from north to south and 5 km wide cut by two major passes. The bonefish are perhaps the largest average size in the world and can be found in huge schools, singles and doubles. Do not think that as they are bonefish they are easy to land as bones of this size run more like permit. Your fishing is punctuated with shots at golden, bluefin and giant trevally. Accessed by a 96 ft long range mothership this destination is only for the true adventurers, but for those that make the journey it could represent the trip of a lifetime.

This freshwater wilderness should be on every travelling anglers bucket list. If you have had a disappointing year in the UK then why not consider a trip to rivers quite literally teeming with fish. Alaska has everything from top end lodge operations that fly you out to different rivers, Russian style fixed camps using jet boats and total wilderness float trips. Most rivers contain all five species of Pacific salmon along with incredible rainbow trout fishing.

Alaska

After our recent exploratory trip this year we can bring you the very finest lodges for whichever species you wish to target, based on our personal experience. Whether you want to do battle with the mighty chinook salmon, hit large numbers of coho, witness the extraordinary rivers of red sockeye or target the magnificent leopard spotted rainbow trout we can tailor the perfect itinerary. Wipe this season off the books and start 2015 with a bang. The Alaskan season spans June to September with prices starting at US\$3,500 per week.



The Himalayan rivers of the Saryu and Ramganga are home to the majestic mahseer. Not an easy species to target on the fly, the mahseer is building itself a reputation as a hard fighting freshwater opponent for the intrepid fly fisherman. Visiting the stunningly beautiful part of the world is not purely about the fishing; there is a rich and vibrant cultural heritage to explore whilst the proximity to Corbett National Park is an ideal place to spend a few extra days enjoying the flora and fauna of what was Asia's first national park. The Saryu's fishery has two main mahseer runs, March to June (an upward migration) and September and October (which sees a downward migration).

India

The spring season of 2014 saw two stunning mahseer in excess of 40 lbs landed on fly. Costs vary as trips are invariably tailored to suit and it is an ideal destination for small groups. Prices start from US\$3,800.



Christmas *Island*

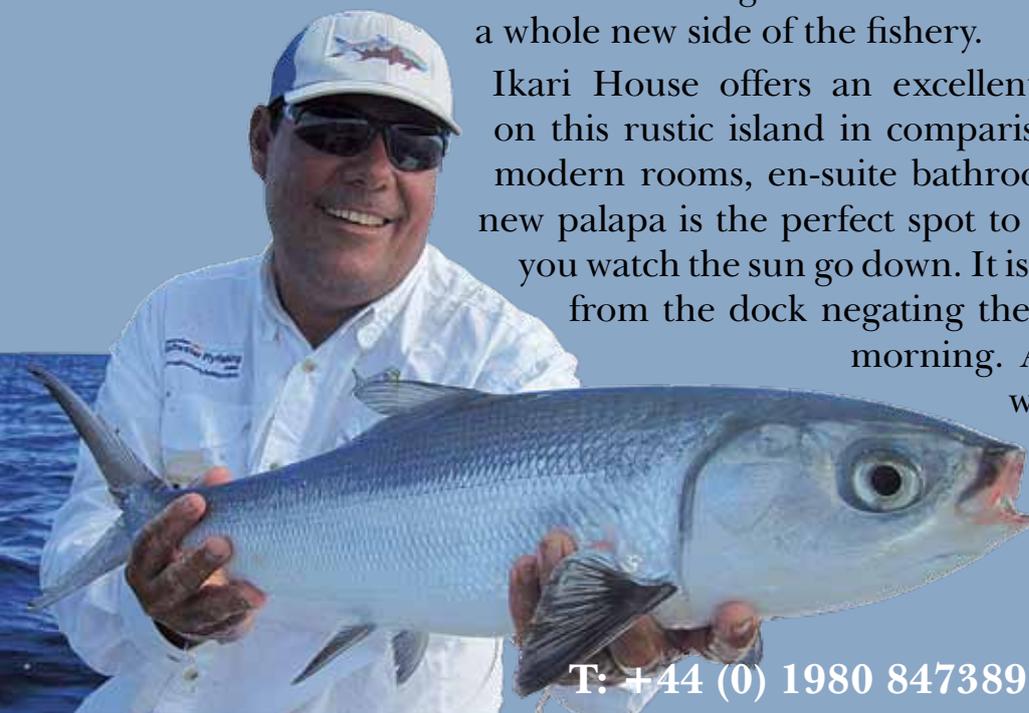
Since our exploratory trip to Christmas Island (Kiritimati) last October we have had huge interest in this historic saltwater fishery. So close to the equator it truly is a year round fishery offering incredibly consistent bonefishing, some of the largest triggerfish in the world and of course the numerous trevally species. The main lagoon is 160 square km with an extraordinary network of flats, channels and coral bommies to target. White sand flats up to nine miles in length can be waded at your leisure as you target the prolific schools of bonefish and massive triggerfish. There are some really large bonefish on these flats, well in excess of 10 lbs and one of our clients this year landed six fish over 30 inches (10 lbs +) during his stay.



What is most exciting is that this could be the worlds' most prolific milkfish fishery. Having never really targeted these magnificent gamefish the guides at Ikari House have embraced the techniques with open arms and are now consistently catching them on fly... proof in the main image.

The southern coast down to the Korean Wreck area is a 50 km GT hunting ground of coral coastline. The high backed beach is ideal for spotting these marauders as they hunt down the large bonefish feeding along the edge. Until you have experienced Christmas Island it is hard to put into perspective the sheer size of the fishery. You could fit three Seychelles atolls inside the lagoon system with space to spare. As the largest atoll in the world there are areas of Christmas Island that are still being explored. The owner and guides at Ikari House are at the forefront of this exploration with their new fibreglass boats and large 4 stroke engines opening up a whole new side of the fishery.

Ikari House offers an excellent standard of accommodation on this rustic island in comparison to other operations. It has modern rooms, en-suite bathrooms and air conditioning. The new palapa is the perfect spot to enjoy a well deserved drink as you watch the sun go down. It is also perfectly located 3 minutes from the dock negating the need for the long drive every morning. At US\$2,650 per person for a week it offers excellent value for money, and combined with a few days in Honolulu on the way over makes for a fascinating adventure.



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