

New & Notable



Creek Company Voyager

The Voyager frameless pontoon boat (\$600, *creekcompany.com*) weighs 28 pounds and is easily stowed in a duffel for transport—whether it's in your car or a plane for a fishing vacation. The U-shaped hull has 8-inch diameter pontoons with a 30-gauge PVC bladder and 1200-denier Nylon shell coated with 30-ounce PVC. Setup time is less than five minutes and the price tag includes 5-foot two-piece oars, a double-action pump, and the carry bag. The 400-pound capacity boat also has adjustable foot bars, a large, insulated side gear bag, and a rear cargo area with D-rings to tie down extra gear.

Z-Pole Wading Staff

Black Diamond Z-Pole trekking poles have long been admired by hikers, backpackers, and mountaineers for their light weight, strength, and above all, fast deployment. Orvis recognized these strengths and partnered with Black Diamond to create the Z-Pole Wading Staff (\$100, *orvis.com*), a 16-ounce wading staff that is 16.5 inches long when collapsed and stores in a Neoprene, belt-mounted holster. The three-section aluminum staff has a single-button release to collapse the staff, and an inner cord with silicone connectors for quick and easy setup whenever you need a third leg. The staff comes with two tips—a durable nonscratching rubber tip for hiking and stealthy approaches, and a carbide tip for ice, slick boulders, and other difficult surfaces. The grip is made from comfortable high-density foam, and the staff adjusts from 47" to 55" to fit most fly fishers.



Simms ProDry

When the Simms ProDry Jacket (\$500) and Bib (\$400) won the awards for "Best Outerwear" as well as "Best in Show" at the American Fly Fishing Tackle Association (AFFTA) show in New Orleans, it was a little odd. Clearly, the stormproof suit is being marketed to the entire angling community, so why would the insular fly-fishing industry vote for something they could very well see on the BASS circuit next year? Because fly fishing is not just about wading in trout streams.

Anyone who fishes out of a boat, and faces potentially inclement weather, pines for the head-to-toe protection of breathable waders combined with a wading jacket. But in a boat, a wading jacket literally falls short, and bibs and short boots have been the favored attire of saltwater fly fishers forever.

Now all fly fishers in boats can forget about the rubberized Captain High-liner rain slicker and bibs. ProDry Jackets and Bibs are made from breathable GORE-TEX 3-layer Pro Shell fabric—the same stuff Simms uses in its top waders. The suit is rated for rain up to 22" per hour and has stretch fabric in the shoulders and elbows for unrestricted range of movement. Two chest pockets fit large fly boxes, and microfleece-lined waist pockets help keep your hands warm when temperatures drop. The jackets also have wattertight adjustable cuffs, a 3-point cinch stowable storm hood, and a waterproof front zipper. Available in five sizes and three colors: Fury Orange, Steel Grey, and Delta Green. See *simmsfishing.com* for more information.

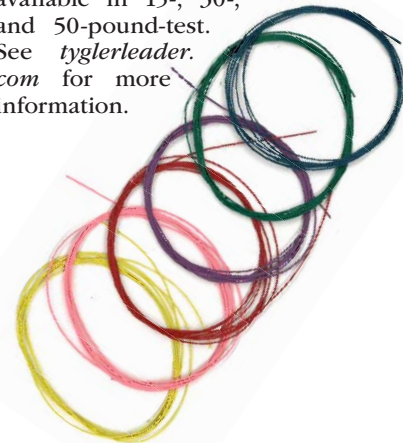


Chota Hippies

When it's hot and muggy, and you're fishing small streams for cutthroats, brook trout, or small-mouth bass, even hip waders can be too much. Chota Hippies are convertible wading socks (\$120, *chotaoutdoorgear.com*) with 3mm Neoprene stocking feet. The 3-layer breathable upper can be adjusted to fit above the calf, over the knee, or all the way up into hip-highs for deeper water or creek crossings. A cinch strap holds the socks in place at the two lower positions, and a dry string quick-locks onto a belt loop on your pants when you need to wade deeper.

Colored Tyger

Tyger Leader is micro-braided stainless steel wire coated with nylon so it can be tied in knots just like regular monofilament. Fly fishers love it for pike, barracudas, bluefish, and muskies, and it has been gaining popularity among fly tiers as a durable looped connector for large articulated flies for any species. Now Tyger has released 18 new colors of wire (10 feet for \$10), making it extremely attractive for brightly colored articulated steelhead flies such as Intruders. Colored Tyger Leader is available in 15-, 30-, and 50-pound-test. See *tyglerleader.com* for more information.



Gear Guide

[The following are two of the 47 rods reviewed in the FLY FISHERMAN 2012 Gear Guide, on newsstands now until mid-February. THE EDITOR.]



Sage ESN

Sage introduced its Konnetic Technology in late 2011 and with it, made two rod series—the ONE, and ESN, which stands for European Style Nymphing (\$700, *sageflyfish.com*). According to rod designer Jerry Siem, "Konnetic Technology allowed us to build a very small diameter shaft which enables better detection of takes while still being strong enough for a vigorous hook-set, which is ideal with Czech, Polish, French, or Spanish nymphing."

Konnetic Technology is Sage-speak for a mix of proprietary resin, a high-modulus aerospace-grade carbon fiber, and Sage's Advanced Modulus Positioning System (AMPS)—a manufacturing process that aligns and positions the carbon fibers for the greatest blank strength with the least amount of material. And less material means less "dead stick" and more sensitivity between you and your nymphs, or more importantly between you and the trout. The 10' 2- through 5-weights all clock in at under 3 ounces.

Our tester first fished ESNs in practice sessions during the World Fly Fishing Championships on the Rienza River in northern Italy, and later on the Lower and Middle Provo rivers. "These are phenomenally light rods designed specifically for the kind of fishing I prefer," he said. "They are physically light, but more importantly they are light in the hand, or well balanced, which really cuts down on hand/wrist/arm fatigue. The ESNs are the fastest of all the rods I tested, but they still have very sensitive tips. I fished the 2- and 3-weight versions with 18- to 24-foot leaders, and two-fly Euro-style rigs and caught brown trout, marble trout, and grayling up to 18 inches. This is a superb competition rod with enough backbone to land sizable trout."



St. Croix High Stick Drifter

Kelly Galloup lives on the banks of Montana's Madison River—perhaps the world's finest laboratory for high-stick nymphing techniques. Fifty miles of endless riffles leaves a lot of space where trout hide in tiny pockets along the bouldery bottom, and much of the time, tight-line presentations are the best way to get to them. Galloup says he developed the High Stick Drifter (\$430, *stcroixrods.com*) with lightweight tips to reduce fatigue from holding the rod high during long periods of technical nymphing, and to provide extra sensitivity for better strike detection. St. Croix packs a lot of technology into its newest fly rod, with high-modulus SCv graphite, 3M Matrix Resin, REC Recoil snake guides, and a Fuji K Series Tangle-Free stripping guide.

Our tester took the 10-foot 4-weight HSD for a bath on Utah's Lower Provo River in clear water with high flows. "On the water the High Stick Drifter came alive. Once I had a reel, line, and weighted flies attached to it, the tip became an advantage for accurately casting weighted flies, and managing a long leader. I used mostly a two-fly Euro rig on an 18-foot leader, but the HSD also did a fine job with smallish dries, taking browns up to 16 inches."

Book Shelf

Atlantic Salmon Magic

Atlantic Salmon Magic by Topher Browne. Wild River Press, 2011, 455 pages, \$100 hardcover, ISBN 978-0984227174.

As a longtime steelhead junkie and sometime Atlantic salmon angler, I eagerly seek all the expertise I can on the subject of casting to anadromous fish. Topher Browne's new masterwork, *Atlantic Salmon Magic*, instantly lands itself in a class by itself. It's virtually a one-volume sea-run library. With more than 1,000 striking color photographs, original drawings, and finely rendered prose, this big, robust book is a must for the continuing education of all salmon and steelhead fly fishers.

Browne starts the reader with a fresh look at the life cycle of *Salmo salar*, taking us from spawn to fry to smolt, and then on the epic journey across the North Atlantic and back to the fish's natal stream. The author explains the latest science behind the remarkable physiology of the salmon's navigation systems developed over millennia to guide them safely home to the gravel where they were born, and he does so in the most easily understood language for lay people.

Detailed and illuminating chapters unfold on reading water; techniques for fishing dry flies, hitched flies, wet flies, and the sunk fly; and contemporary tackle for salmon fishing. Much attention is given to the always beautiful flies that not only attract salmon, but anglers as well.

Chapters on where to fish and a directory of the great Atlantic salmon rivers of the world round out the book. In both his knowledgeable coverage of fishing tactics and universal geography, the author grandly steps outside the provincial trap that has limited so many books about the subject by North American fishing writers in the past.

In his foreword, Orri Vigfússon stresses the importance of genetic diversity, and the need for conservation of this valuable species. And everybody's "Spey Bro," Simon Gawesworth, lends his passion for salmon in the introduction.

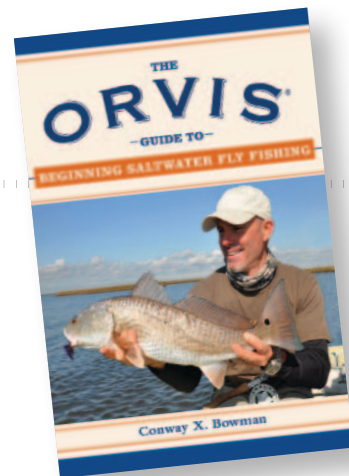
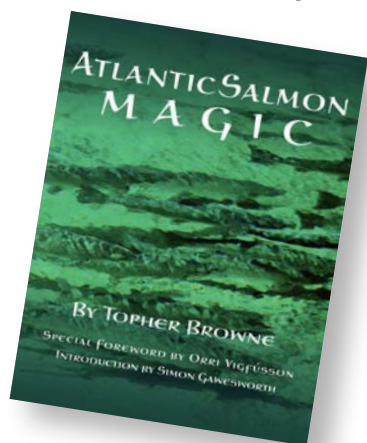
Many of the finest angling photographers in the business contributed to *Atlantic Salmon Magic* with an amazing collection of images, many of which could stand alone in a fine art gallery. Thomas Weiergang provided the illustrations that expertly support Browne's narrative. Particularly revealing are the series of diagrams showing where fish lie in the river at various seasonal water levels—this hard-won information, so vital to success on salmon water and yet seldom discussed this well in print, is by itself worth the book's \$100 price tag.

Throughout, Browne demonstrates an ability to handle the written word as deftly as he handles a two-handed rod. My favorite pieces are his vividly written and amusing anecdotes recreating the chatter between guide and angler on a salmon river. He puts you right there in front of the vise tying flies—while trading barbs and Scotch—with some of the colorful characters in the salmon world.

Browne has traveled the world in pursuit of his favorite gamefish and learned much along the way. He covers the ways of modern-day sport completely, always with a respectful undercurrent of tradition. As a life-long student of fly fishing, a former guide, conservationist, flawless fly tier, much-sought casting instructor, and now first-rate writer, Browne has given us a full and immensely enjoyable slice of magic.

Just as when your fly swings through the sweet spot in your favorite run, when you flip open *Atlantic Salmon Magic*, I promise you an unmistakable sensation that good things are about to happen.

—Greg Pearson



Saltwater Fly Fishing

The Orvis Guide to Beginning Saltwater Fly Fishing by Conway X. Bowman. Skyhorse Publishing, 2011, 192 pages, \$12.95 softcover, ISBN 978-1-61608-090-7.

Conway Bowman wasn't the first guy to catch mako sharks on a fly. But he was the first to focus on makos to the point where his study of their feeding habits, migrations, and moods made him the world's leading expert on fly fishing for the high-jumping pelagic sharks.

The host of *Fly Fishing the World* (The Sportsman Channel) is the 20-pound-test IGFA record holder for redbfish—a 41.65-pound bull drum—and has fished extensively around the globe for everything from tarpon to striped bass. Indeed, he has been pushing the envelope worldwide on such large and difficult fish, that you might imagine him talking over the heads of beginning saltwater fly fishers. But you'd be wrong.

As it turns out, Bowman is not only a great angler, he is also a skilled teacher, and this book shows he has an immense depth of experience with anglers getting salty for the first time.

Bowman starts with the basics and presents 101 succinct tips over the course of 192 pages. He covers knots, tackle, and casting knowledge that will help in salt water anywhere in the world, and later in the book he gets specific with tips on how to catch species like bonefish, bonito, and sharks. While intended for beginners, there is something to learn here for everyone, and the photography by longtime Fly Fisherman contributor John G. Sherman makes it a visually entertaining browse no matter what your level of expertise.

—Ross Purnell

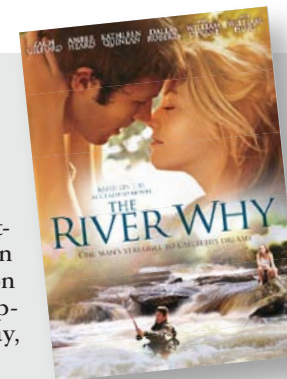
DVDs

The River Why

The River Why directed by Matthew Leutwyler. Produced by Kristi Denton Cohen and Peloton Productions in association with Ambush Entertainment and Stop-time Productions, 2011, DVD & Blu-Ray, PG-13, \$25.

David James Duncan's 1983 novel *The River Why* is likely the second-most widely read fly-fishing book of its kind behind Norman McLean's *A River Runs Through It*. It tells the story of Augustine Orviston (Gus), son of a bait-fishing mother and a fly-fishing snob of a father. The clash between parents causes Gus to burn "Nijinsky"—his father's prized mounted steelhead—in the fireplace and storm out of the house to start a life of his own in a secluded cabin on a riverbank.

Gus, (Zach Gilford, *Friday Night Lights*) plans to spend his time fishing all day, but after catching a corpse on a soggy dry fly he begins to philosophize with his pipe-smoking intellectual friend Titus about whether he



has a soul. He also meets the beautiful river-nymph Eddy (Amber Heard, *Zombieland*) on the river and courts her with bumbled dialogue from his father's "Bible" *The Compleat Angler* by Izaak Walton.

While Gus comes across as authentic and likable, the rest of the all-star cast—including real-life fly fishers William Hurt and William Devane, as well as Kathleen Quinlan—is wasted on shallow character development that provides only caricatures, not real people you can identify with.

And the philosophy and prose that made the book *The River Why* a cult classic comes across in the screenplay by Tom Cohen and John Jay Osborn as pretentious or misplaced in a modern setting.

Filmed in Oregon on the Wilson, Clackamas, Nehalem, and North Umpqua rivers, the scenery and cinematography are beautiful, but fly fishers will be equally annoyed with the hyperbole of the fish-fighting sequences, and the overblown volume on the Hardy reel sound effects that take over every time a fish is hooked.

—Ross Purnell