

# ROTORUA ANGLERS ASSOCIATION



# INCORPORATED



Bill Matches and his Tiger fish trophy mount, read his story inside

# February 2014



Charlotte risking life and limb on the Ruakituri River, see her story inside.



## *EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEE 2013/2014*

These are the new office bearers and committee elected at the AGM for the coming year. Welcome to the newcomers and thanks to the incumbents for supporting the club once again. (Area code for Rotorua is 07)

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PRESIDENT	Larry Ware	348 0388
VICE-PRESIDENT	Nigel Wilkinson	349 0336
SECRETARY	Charlotte Wilkinson	349 0336
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Neal Hawes	348 1734
TREASURER	Wade Fleet	345 9913
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A-Z SCHOOL	Wade Fleet	345 9913
ACTIVITIES (Trips)	Larry Ware	3480388
(Flytying)	Roger Bowden	3487816
SOCIAL	Piet Otto	3502200
LIBRARY	Tanya Stern	357 2573
BUILDING	Terry Wood	345 5587

**Please feel free** to contact any of the above if you have any queries, comments or items you may like to discuss. Our email address is [rotoruaanglers@gmail.com](mailto:rotoruaanglers@gmail.com)

**Visit our website** on [www.rotoruaanglers.org.nz](http://www.rotoruaanglers.org.nz)

**Remember**, Roger Bowden is always grateful for any contributions to the magazine. (email [rogerbritta@orcon.net.nz](mailto:rogerbritta@orcon.net.nz) or post to **3 Rostrevor Place**)

**Thank you** for your contribution to our club and we hope you have a very successful season.

Larry Ware     **President**

# Presidents Report

Welcome to 2014, I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and the Windy New Year did not ruin your holiday.

We are more than half way thru the first month and since the last magazine we have had a successful Christmas picnic –at the club rooms , and then the Christmas BBQ before a two week break. The New Year has seen our first club outing to Hamurana , Socially this was very successful with 24 people attending but the cold wind meant very little fishing was completed , I believe Neal and Ailsa were the most successful fishing from their anchored boat. Many thanks to Judy D for the birthday cake and the “team of club members” it took to light the candles (there were only 7) , they eventually defeated the cold wind.

I have had a few reports of some very successful fishing trips on L.Aniwhenua, L.Tarawera and Lake Ngapouri , but the wild winds ruined a lot of outings-especially at sea.

We have created a separate trips list which is available at the club rooms to make it easier to plan for the various trips thru the year. Our first away trip is of course to Lake Otamangakau in a couple of weeks time, this has always been a very successful trip and is always well attended –don’t let the team down this year. For the river fisherman this is followed by the Mohaka and then the Tukituki so please let the trip convenors know you want to go as we have to book accommodation.

We have added a mentor (committee member) to those on the Bar Roster who are not committee members so that they are not left on their own –so everyone please check the rosters and if for some reason you cannot make it please organise with someone to cover you.

Finally a big thank you to all who filled out the questionnaire on Friday night for our English Guest Biologist –Lucy really appreciate the clubs input. Have a great 2014 and let’s see you on Friday night and on the club trips.

Cheers Larry



## **RAA Lake Otamangakau Trip**

**Dates: Friday 7<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

The annual trip to Otamangakau is almost upon us. This is a final call for any member who wishes to attend. Many members will know the lake well. For those who do not, the lake was created as part of the Tongariro power scheme in 1971 and has a reputation for big, hard fighting fish, both brown and rainbow trout. The trip is a good opportunity for members who have not fished this venue (which also has a reputation of not being easy to fish) to do so in company with more experienced members. There is some limited shore-based fishing, but it is primarily fished from a boat. (See photo in club calendar for February 2014).

Accommodation is once again at the Tongariro Holiday Park which is only 10 minutes from the lake & has a variety of cabins. Basic rooms have already been booked for those whose names I currently have. Cost is \$30 per person per night.

Basic rooms have 2 beds and hanging space, but you will need to provide your own bedding / sleeping bags. There are communal toilets, shower block and kitchen with fridges. In previous years there have been thefts which may mean limited cooking pots / pans or utensils, so be prepared and bring your own. I will be taking a chilly bin to keep food cool in my room rather than risk the communal fridges.

As happened last year the club will be providing meat for a BBQ on Saturday evening, so please bring salads, desserts, nibbles etc to share that night. Bring your own favourite tipples of course.

It is worth bearing in mind that the weather can get cold and wet up there so make sure you have a variety of clothing.

Arrival time on the Friday is up to each person attending; a number of us will aim to arrive by Friday lunchtime to begin fishing the same afternoon. If the weather is kind we will be fishing on Friday and Saturday evening into the dark.

This just leaves fishing gear, boats / kayaks / float tubes!

If you would like to come on this trip please make contact as soon as possible to give me the best chance of securing accommodation and arranging a place on a boat or other information for those that need it.

My contact details:

Tel: 07 349 0336

Mobile: 027 3055155

Email: nigel@ncwilkinsons.com

Regards; Convenor: Nigel Wilkinson



# ORR'S MOTORS & BOATS

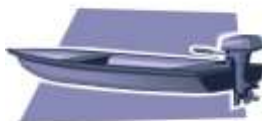
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## Ruakituri Rambles

Both kids on the other side of the world, cat in the cattery and I am whisked away for a week's romantic holiday.

I find myself in shearers' quarters at the Tuahu Station on the Ruakituri River. As shearers quarters go this set up was pretty good with those extra little touches not often found in the most basic of accommodation. Air fresheners, hand towels and soaps, teas and coffees – and all very clean. The beds were a little soft resulting in me putting my mattress directly on the floor on the last night!

The scenery was breath taking and the weather was perfect. To add to our pleasure was the huge damson tree dropping ripe, juicy damsons for our consumption. The separation of the sheep from the lambs was very vocal but didn't go on all night. Nigel has wanted to take me to this river since he first visited last year and we spent the next three days exploring up the river and casting here and there. The banks of the river were either very muddy or large boulders. We tended to keep out of the mud so spent most of the time boulder hopping – rather like a geriatric goat. We saw quite a few goats and they made it look easy! My first morning's fishing got off to a great start with four strikes before 11.30am. Unfortunately the first fish released itself pretty quickly. The second I managed to get to the surface but it then jumped off the hook. The third, leapt right out of the water, taking my fly and some line as it broke the line. The fourth, now I was cross about this one's escape – my knot came undone! That was it folks – I didn't hook another fish all week.

As punishment for tying lousy knots Nigel took me to sections of the river where accessibility was challenging. (or had he upped my life insurance before we left?) I managed to fall in the river twice but challenges create problems to solve. I found I could cast quite satisfactorily with my right hand as well as my left and I prefer Nigel's Scott Rod to the Sage Rod. He finally tries to dispose of me by making me walk a narrow slippery ledge around a deep fast moving river section. Clinging to the grass tussocks I manage to extricate myself from the river and live another day.

We leave the Ruakituri and head for more luxury accommodation in Napier. (A hot shower, Spa bath, a comfy bed and a view out over the ocean.) We spend the next couple of days exploring rivers – still no fish for me. On our final day we explored the River Esk. Talk about saving the best to last. This is a beautiful river. We drove as far up the river as you could and then walked. The River was clear, easy wading. The further we got from the access point we began to see fish. They were easily spooked. My favourite was the fish cruising a large pool, shared with an eel. Just fantastic, to be able to watch them in their environment.

Of all the Rivers we explored this week the River Esk gets my top marks. I will be back.

We didn't even get to a winery!

Charlotte Wilkinson



## The Fragile Systems Everywhere

Every year since 1998 Tanya and I have joined our dear friends in Australia for the Melbourne based Northern Fly Fishing Club's annual Melbourne Cup long weekend sojourn to the North Eastern river systems of Victoria. Every year since 1998 We, along with other regulars arrive on the Thursday before the Melbourne Cup and fish the Ovens, Kiewa and King river systems and every year we catch fish, lots of fish, not big fish at around 500g average, but on 6 foot, 2 & 3 weight gear it is a lot of fun in streams not much wider than a car and not much deeper than your knees (my knees not Tanya's).

To renew acquaintances with friends made over many years and enjoy the Victorian high country is one of my and Tanya's real pleasures in life and something we look forward to every year.

October 31<sup>st</sup> this year saw us leave home at around 3:30am for the 3 hour drive to Auckland Airport to arrive in Melbourne mid morning. Placed in a holding pattern for 30 minutes by Australian Air Traffic Control saw us arrive late (I am sure those Aussies often do this to NZ flights just to get some warped revenge for the World and Bledisloe Cups).



Arriving at the Freeburgh Caravan Park in the high country at approximately 6pm our usual inspection of the Ovens River saw it running clear and at a great level. It all looked perfect for a great weekend. The weather forecast was perfect with clear days and low 20's predicted.

Assembling the 3 weight 7' was done with the usual feelings of expectation and excitement and having loaded the line with the usual flash back size 16 brown nymph on a 12 foot, 1.8kg tippet I was in a good place.

Friday morning dawned fine and clear (no guarantees when you're in alpine country and Australian weather forecasters like their NZ counter parts tend to say that it will be fine if it doesn't rain). A short but scenic 14km drive to the nearby origin of the Ovens River at Harrierville and we were there at one of our favourite stretches of water! After an hour or so we had not seen, spooked or even gone close to hooking up. Odd !!!! Very, very, very odd. We fished on until lunch and still nothing. A long 14km drive back to base and we met up with Dave Dodd. Dave is a professional guide and qualified instructor employed by Millbrook Lakes (a trout fishing retreat not far from Ballarat run by Phil Weigal. Phil is an Australian trout fishing legend). Dave explained that the Harrierville bush fires that had burned in early 2013 had devastated the rivers. The first big rains following the fires had washed so much silt and ash into the system that the food chain had suffocated. Fire retardant chemicals had also played their part in killing virtually every fish in the Ovens and local rivers.





The afternoon endorsed the revelations by Dave and saw many of the other fisho's arrive to be informed of the sad state of affairs. Amongst the regulars that attend this weekend are several professional guides, a past world champion in Darryl Wallace and the noted Mr Rob Flower (author of "Australian Trout and what they eat"). A publication that I recommend to you as the Australian and New Zealand trout food chains are virtually identical. Approximately 30 seasoned and well qualified fishers fished the weekend in many rivers and alas I think the sum total of fish caught for the weekend was about 3. How fragile these fisheries are. It will take several years even with restocking to restore the fishery to anything like its previous magnificent state. Fortunately Tanya and I had the foresight to purchase bottles of Jonnie Walker and Remy Brandy on the way in. Despite the disastrous fishing we had a wonderful week with friends and fellow fisho's and Jonnie. I admit to having a very fragile system after too much red wine and JW. We will be back again next year but not so much for the fishing.

**Woody2**

I have just become a member and related this story to a few of the club members at the meeting on Friday and they suggested I write it for the newsletter.

### **My first fish in New Zealand**

We moved to Rotorua from England at the end of August and for the first month I was quite busy settling in so I did not get the chance to fish. Anyway all my fishing kit was in a container on a ship making its way slowly to New Zealand. When the new season dawned temptation got the better of me and I bought a rod and reel deal from a tackle shop in town, a few flies, a license and a pair of waders. That evening I went out fishing on lake Tarawera brimming with expectation. The evening was calm and I was enjoying being able to fly fish again. About twenty minutes after I started fishing there was a swirl in the water just short of my grey ghost fly but I did not feel anything. With the sudden rush of adrenaline I retrieved the fly and cast again just beyond the swirl. I was straight into a fish, it took a fair bit of line and I was soon playing it off the reel. I was thinking that things could not get much better than this but then realised that may be I should have bought a landing net as well that morning. I knew there was an area of sandy beach behind me so I should be able to beach the fish. I gradually walked backwards the 40 or so metres to the shore as the fish became played out. I beached the fish and grasped it. Yes, my first New Zealand rainbow trout. I turned to walk up the shore and to my absolute surprise I was met by a standing ovation from a group who had been eating outside and had watched me catch the fish. I felt like I should take a bow. It was a great introduction to fly fishing in New Zealand.

Tim Crawshaw

## HOW TO FILL YOUR FLY BOX QUICKLY

Recently, I had the misfortune to lose both my dry and my wet fly, fly boxes while fishing the Ngongotaha. Despite retracing my previous days trekking the search proved fruitless so goodbye to around \$500 worth of flies which were all guaranteed to catch fish not less than 6lb and including my \$100 and \$50 fly boxes.

Holding back the tears, I was forced to start the laborious task of re tying a new suite of flies. I admit that most of the dry flies that were lost were Australian patterns and in the main way too small for NZ waters so maybe it was a sign from the gods.

Needless to say, the offending jacket with the sloppy pockets was immediately banished and the Rotorua Anglers Patch was removed and the transfer of all of the usual Fly jacket nick-knacks was effected the same day that I discovered the loss.

My local fishing hole is at the mouth of the Waiteti and the Fly of the moment is a slightly weighted Hare and Copper in a size 12 (with a twist). To the vice then! A Black Magic F12 hook loaded into the vice and an initial issue of 4 spectacular Flies later I was keen to venture to the stream to test their effectiveness.

Enter Mr David Hieatt ! My friend and fishing buddy. Dave popped in on the very afternoon that I had finished the 4 Hare and Copper Flies demanding that I accompany him for a fish. Despite my protestations Tanya as usual, also demanded that I go with Dave. Ergo, we arrived at the Waiteti around 4:30pm. Being the most benevolent soul that I know, I, while gearing up at the car gave Dave 2 of the precious Hare and Coppers. We started fishing and within a short time I hooked and landed a beautiful Rainbow hen of at least 2kg. Yes, you guessed it, the fish took my brand new Hare and Copper. A cast back into the same spot saw another fish grab the Hare and Copper . I of course then said to Dave that it was indeed the H&C that was the Fly of the moment. Then, it happened, the cheeky bugger then asked me if I had any more? !!!!!

Speaking slowly and very clearly I explained in very simple language that I had already given him half of my very limited supply back at the car. You have to make allowances for those with a touch of Old-timers disease so talk slowly to them and appreciate that their memories ain't what they used to be. It may have been that my mate Dave had forgotten in the 45 minutes of elapsed time that I had already given him HALF of my precious supply.

To wit, he replied, **“Oh I didn't have anything to put them in so I left them in my car and DO YOU HAVE ANY MORE ?”**.

I was shattered, and with a shaking hand passed over my only reserve H&C. I cast again and hooked a magnificent Brown that when it leaped I estimated at in excess of 3kg. Yes, on my H&C. Unfortunately the fish spat the hook so was lost. Now picture this:- Dave now has 3 of my 4 H&C's and I have 1. I ask myself 'what's wrong with this picture'.

Moral of this story is if you want to fill your Fly box quickly, Come fishing with muggins i.e. ME !

Woody 2



## Schedule of Events February

- 3rd -Fly tying —Cicada
- 5th -Committee meeting
- 6th -Waitangi day holiday
- 7/8/9th -Otomangakau weekend trip
- 20th -Magazine cut off
- 21st -Barbeque at clubrooms
- 28th-2nd March—Mohaka Weekend Trip
- Friday nights—club nights 5-7pm.

### **Fly tying night Monday 3rd February 7 pm.**

Don't go to the Big O without some of these in your box. After two poor Cicada seasons it might be the big hatch this summer. Come and see Phil demonstrate these magic flies. They are also great in the lakes, streams and rivers around here!!!!



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## A DAY OUT WITH RA.

It was a dark and stormy night. Actually it really was a dark and stormy night . RA and myself were staying in some very agreeable accommodation - a renovated shearers quarters on the banks of the Ruakituri river.

We had already spent two and a half days on the Ruakituri and had some good fishing, even though we ended up fishing in the rain for most of the previous day. It continued to rain that night and in the morning, inevitably the river was up and running quite dirty. It didn't look as though things were going to improve in the immediate future, so the decision was made to pack up and depart.

"Why don't you stay at my place tonight and we'll put the boat in and fish Lake Tarawera tomorrow" said RA. I didn't need to be asked twice.

A couple of previous trips on Lake Tarawera with RA had produced some nice fish of excellent eating and smoking quality, so I thought this was a very good plan. I was also keen to fine tune the slow retrieve glo bug technique, with which I had been acquainted on the previous trips. While I did manage to hook a number of fish I was having trouble trying to curb my natural instinct to strike the instant I felt the slightest take during the retrieve. RA had gone to some lengths to point out the error of my ways in this area, so I was keen to put this advice into practice. Britta cooked us a very nice meal and after a bit of a strategic planning meeting it was off to bed ready for an early start in the morning.

After an uneventful launching at Te Wairoa, it was off to secret spot number one. RA positioned the boat and I dropped the front anchor. We motored quietly back towards the edge of the drop off. RA cut the motor and prepared to throw over the back anchor. Then disaster. No back anchor !! Forgotten to put it in before we left. Nothing for it but back to Te Wairoa, tie the boat up at the wharf and back to RA's place for the missing back anchor. The trip back to the wharf was full of self recrimination over the forgotten anchor, but not a major problem. We had all day and the weather was good.

We tied the boat up and RA was off back home. I thought I might as well have a cast off the end of the wharf while I was waiting. It was while slowly retrieving the second cast that I thought I felt a small tap. Then another - a bit like a snapper bite, then a gentle tightening. I struck and was into a good fish. After a solid fight I drew it up on the beach right beside where the boats launch. With the fish safely stored in the fish bin on the boat, which RA had thoughtfully lined with some frozen slicker pads, I kept fishing, but no more action off the wharf. Shortly after, RA returned with the forgotten anchor. As I wound up RA enquired if I had caught any fish while he was away. "No, very quiet" I lied. Then we were off again, back to secret spot number one.

This time we anchored with out incident, cast out the glo bugs and waited for them to sink before starting the slow retrieve. I had a good take on my first cast. No gentle tapping this time - a good solid take which I struck and was straight into my second fish of the day. This fish peeled off a fair bit of line, but after a while I got it up beside the boat and with a deft manoeuvre, RA had it in the landing net. This fish proved to be a mirror image of the first and ideal for smoking. This will be interesting I thought as RA reached for the fish bin and began to unfasten the lid. There was the first fish laying on the ice pads. "Where the hell did that come from ?" said RA. "Don't know. You must have left it behind after your last trip." I could see his mind working. "You caught that fish off the wharf ?" said RA, his tone rather accusatory. It was time to come clean. "Yes I did." There is always an element of competition when fishing with RA. "It's always good to get the first one in the fish bin."

We fished in several more secret spots and I caught several more fish. It was one of those days when you can't do anything wrong, although I was a bit lucky to land one that I let get wrapped around the back anchor rope, but RA managed to get that untangled. In fact I ended up catching my limit of eight fish, although not all were kept. RA managed to catch a few himself, but was not quite as consistent as he had been on previous trips.

As we headed back from the lake, we conducted the inevitable post - mortem on the day and agreed that it had been a good trip despite the forgotten anchor.

Thanks for taking me out RA and for the tutelage. Look forward to the next time.

GWD.

**FISH OF THE MONTH FOR NOVEMBER** was Han Hofstee with a rainbow weighing 2.4 kg. from L Aniwhenua.

**FISH OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER** was Gavin Dawson with a rainbow from L Rotorua with a condition factor of 59.07

Gavin and Han both win a \$10 voucher sponsored by Hamills

Don't forget to weigh in your fish!

Weighmasters are listed on page 3. or you can weigh your fish on registered scales with a witness.

Scales can be checked and registered at the Clubrooms on Friday nights.

You can even weigh and release your fish.

Trophymaster Neal Hawes



### Sponsors of 'Trout of the Month'

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# Tiger Fish

After our exciting stay at Gache Gache Lodge which is on the side of Lake Kariba (Africa largest man made Dam/Lake) we drove off to a small town which is beside the harbour for all the house boats where those that can afford it, or who are left in Zimbabwe?, spend some time holidaying on Lake Kariba This is situated not far from the dam and from here it's water's flow into the Great Zambezi River. The lake itself has a huge catchment area with the lake being 226 KM long and up to 40KM wide giving a 5400 SQ km lake which has only one outlet. The Zambezi commences in Zambia, flows through Angola along the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe, then into Mozambique, finally emptying into the Indian ocean after flowing 2570 KM

On the Zimbabwe side it flows along adjacent to a 2500 sq K M of reserve known as the famous Mana Pools reserve and has a number of upmarket lodges on both sides of the river. These lodges are accessed by a dirt road on the Zimbabwe side and we went down about 150 km camping at different points, some legally, some not. Even wild camping is not free (\$40 US per person per night ), Mana Pools camp is reputed to be one area where you can witness most animals, even in your camp. Well I can vouch for that. At our first camp the sites were about an acre each, and each one had an open concrete fire place where you can light your fire and cook your meal. In this case my son Tony, a chef who has been tutoring staff at various lodges in, Namibia ,Zimbabwe and South Africa has converted to a real Afrikaner and does his cooking using that famous cast iron pot called a popjai pot, and of course the braai Guy had shot a Nyala antelope in South Africa which is equivalent to the size of a really large red stag. Tony had installed a fridge and a freezer in his 4x4 so we had fresh meat for Africa. Well our dinner was over and for once we were sitting beside a glowing fire in the dark and adjacent to our bakki and absolutely silent appreciating the stillness when fifteen feet in front of us appeared a bloody bull elephant in the light from the fire, just walking by. We were weren't prepared for this, this huge animal was completely silent in his approach we could not believe it. I froze as he just walked on by, Guy said "no we are not dancing tonight thanks mate". We had no sooner got over that when a Hyena was silhouetted walking stealthily among the trees, obviously looking for something to eat, no they are not a cuddly cat! Carrying on further down along side the river we crossed over a 100 meter dry river bed and Guy, my other son, said stop here Tony, I will jump down off the bridge which was not high and this will produce a great photo. Tony stopped and said before you jump mate have a bloody look as I have just seen two lions lying under where we are .??





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Well we got some photos OK in a manner which was safe but a lesson look before you leap??

On the way down the river we witnessed elephants, buffalo, all types of deer ,lions, hyenas, and those ugly brutes baboons. Plus giant Nile crocodiles, hippos and a myriad of birds and such like. It was the winter and the dry season and I thought it looked pretty much devoid of food as the Waikato in the drought.

The animals didn't look in too bad a condition but it was still little way to go before the wet season.

One day in particular held some experiences for us worth telling. We were experiencing a real smell with some wind drifts, on investigating we spotted a crocodile swimming on the top of the water in a small side stream 50 odd meters from our camp, and it was obviously going somewhere, even with the current.

There about 500 meters away, we noticed some splashes on a bend in the stream and putting on our glasses we saw what appeared a dead animal in the river grounded on a sand bank in the middle of a bend being attacked by crocodiles .

So off we go with our PH Professional hunter) whom we hired for the trip as he had a three shot '.500 rifle and knew how to use it , (taking a rifle from here is almost impossible ) We had to traverse by some elephants and their calves on the way but we finally got there and sat down on the edge of the stream and watched, *yes!* 25 crocodiles, devouring this huge dead Hippo. They were about 30 meters out, some of them appeared quite large but there were no offer's from anyone to measure them??!

It started to get toward dusk and PH says we better get back as we have to traverse past those elephants, which had by this time had come very close to the streams edge. Well mother didn't seem to see the need to back off to allow us to get past, and it took the PH some time to convince her she had to! We finally made it, only to be confronted by three bulls and a younger female between us and our tent. Again I was pleased we had our PH. We got past them when the female made what the PH said was a mock charge !! well she had me fooled, she looked bloody serious to me, how ever she finally moved and we got back to our tent.

Back to the Tiger fish, well we had tried from the shore at different places, and had caught some brim but no luck with the Tigers, so we decided to throw the cat another canary and booked our selves into a super lodge on the river bank, which specialised in the Tiger fishing with the appropriate boats . So off up the river at first light. Now the river appears to be up to a mile wide at various points and is similar to the say the Waitaki as a braided river except the islands are earth, with high grass, not shingle. There are many side streams in some areas and there is quite a flow of water. Our boat was a twin hull, about 25 ft and quite stable , hey, I feel safer in this as we pass by hippos and crocodiles and begin casting as if fishing for salmon or trout.

We are fishing using pieces of fish for bait, but retrieving them Not long in and we have contact, the guide told us approx. 60 to 70% throw the hook and it looked as if he was right. We also had our share of snags which broke the line as our guide was not in the habit of wetting the nylon before tightening the knot on the hook, so we upgraded his thinking . But in one thing he was ahead of us Kiwi's, he produced a chilly bin with full bottles of Gin, Whisky, Rum, cans of beer, ice and coke ,what more could you say, it was only eight o'clock in the morning . We hooked up and I was lucky enough to land a 10 pounder, and yes they do fight very much like our kingfish, but have teeth like a barracuda. Even worse though, as they say their teeth are contaminated with a poison which if they take some skin off you that you will have much trouble in healing. We came home, had lunch and went out again in the late afternoon where our own P H guide caught a fish , as well as most of us losing some. Fortunately Guy, who had not managed to catch a Tiger since a small one on Lake Kariba, was on his last cast, when bang he was on. I was thinking hell, 70% of them get off, this is the last cast of the day and our last day, as we are off home tomorrow, but finally luck was on his side as the fish had really swallowed the bait, and ten minutes later he landed a another 10 lb fish

Just a point on a PH, (professional hunter), I would not go on a free camping safari with out one, ours was brilliant and had 12 years experience (incidentally it is a full three year course to become licensed), which covers all aspects of fauna, animal and bird life and their history, plus they had to carry out shooting wild game, witnessed by a senior PH. He also said when an animal comes into your camp they know you are there and are not generally a problem, but when you move into their camp it can be different??

Poaching is a terrible problem, Guy and his guide took down 40 snares in one morning on a large game farm in northern South Africa. On our way back from the Zambezi river there were fires burning along a thirty mile stretch against the escarpment. According to our PH and his contact these were lit by poachers burning the dry matter, so that when the rains came they would be more successful. Of course there is no real support for the poor bloody people who are charged with the control of poachers there. They have one old 4x4 amongst all the staff looking after this huge area, as all the fleet of new vehicles were held by the many staff of head office in Harare. A familiar story, do you think it happens here?

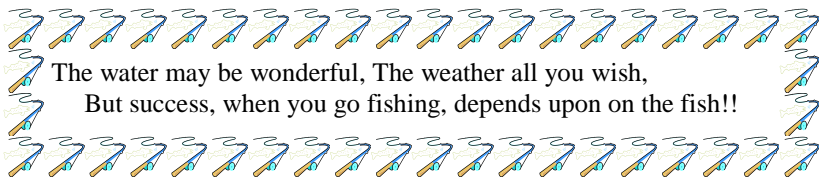
The final episode was when we arrived back at Harare, a friend found us a great taxidermist, who had made up fibreglass mounts of actual Tiger fish. Beautifully made in various weights, we were lucky he had two copies of 10 lb fish which we bought for AS 150" each, a great deal ?? We had quite a few discussions getting them past all the bloody minded custom people in Dubai, South Africa and in Melbourne, who didn't know what fibreglass was, resulting in xray after xray, but now they are on the wall as mementos.

Finally we had some great discussions with lodge owners, hunters, and a variety of interesting people who gave us their stories of where and how Zimbabwe, South Africa and Mozambique are in the position they are now in. Summing up one respected commentator said, "What will Save Africa is the CHINESE?? But that is another story.

Bill Matches

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A good day on the Wanganui River





Lake Tarawera Rod and Reflections, taken by Mel Payne