
AnglingMatters

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first issue of AnglingMatters Newsletter.

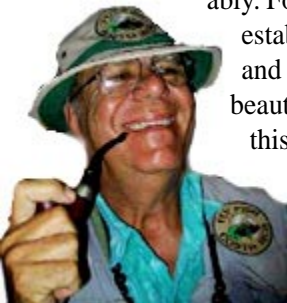
We're always looking for new fishing waters that have not been covered extensively by the various media. Guyana in northern South America offers tremendous angling possibilities and is "new" on the anglers horizon. Here one can fish for small tarpon and peacock bass on the same trip...even on the same day!

Peter Gorinsky has been fishing all his life, not only in his native Guyana but many of the great places in Latin America, United States and Canada. He knows what its about! He offers an exciting1 brand new fishing program in Guyana. Jim Chapralis (JC) interviewed Peter (PG) recently:

JC: Peter, you are now offering some very interesting fishing trips in Guyana. I know that you were born in Guyana, and for many years lived in Costa Rica. Guyana suffered through numerous political problems in recent decades. Do you feel it is relatively safe for foreigners to fish in Guyana today, or is there a high risk factor?

PG: First, I was born on December 6, 1941 at Ida Sabina in British Guiana (now Guyana)...while my family was on a fishing trip on the upper Berbice River!

Guyana has survived a number of turbulent political situations, but since 1992 there has been a return to a democratic government and conditions have stabilized considerably. Foreigners are welcomed here and there is a great effort to establish tourism as a major industry for the ecologically interested and my sportfishing programs in some of the most remote and beautiful areas of the Guyana Amazonia Hinterland. I like to refer to this area as Anglo Amazonia since we are the only English speaking country in South America and we have an entirely different attitude towards sportfishing. From the colonial days, the English influenced some of our sporting ethics. We now find that fly fishing is the most popular method of sportfishing within the entire country. Guyana is probably the only fly fishing republic in the world!



Peter Gorinsky



Georgetown, Guyana

It is definitely very safe for foreigners to travel and fish in Guyana. Yes, there is the usual urban crime found worldwide. In Guyana, crime is basically concentrated in the capital, Georgetown. The “risk factor” is minimal and our clients are accompanied throughout their stay. The visiting anglers in our fishing areas are totally safe from any criminal element.

JC: Apparently you are concentrating on the Apoteri region where you offer good pavon fishing at the confluence of the Rupunini and Essequibo Rivers. What size pavon (peacock bass) can fishermen expect?

PG: The “pavon” in Guyana is called the “lukanani” and are mainly the butterfly peacock bass species. In the Apoteri area, the average butterfly peacock is about 6 pounds with larger ones (up to about 16 pounds) found in some of the lakes and deep pools on the Essequibo River. An angler can expect to catch more than 30 butterfly peacock bass during a fishing day. And that’s via fly fishing!

JC: That’s fast fishing, Peter. I think one of the most fantastic species in the northern South America is the payara. What about the payara?



Peacock bass fishing is a main attraction

PG: Payara, or biara as they are called in Guyana, are found below the rapids and in the fast water of the Essequibo River. We also catch them in the Rupununi River at the head of pools or along rocky shores. They’ll weigh between 5 and 20 pounds and they are great sport mainly with conventional tackle. We sometimes catch them with fly-fishing gear, using large flashy white streamers, but this highly depends upon the season and water conditions.

I am exploring another area which offers tidal payara fishing, but this is on the Ireng River along the Brazilian boarder. Here we’re catching some large payara (upper 20-pound weights), but there is no lodge nearby, so one has to camp there and there are lots of black flies. But for these giant payara... it is worth the “comfort sacrifice” and inconvenience. I am heading there to try for an IGFA record for payara.

JC: You also have another wonderful exotic species: the arawana. Where are they found and how do you approach them?

PG: Arawana are found mainly along wild guava shores where they cruise below the overhanging branches awaiting falling creatures that are feeding on guavas or fresh green leaves. It is even reported that they'll take small birds and bats! Poppers, gurglers and shallow streamers are the favorites but here you need *absolute fly-casting accuracy* in order to present the fly below the structure. The arawana also feeds on swimming baitfish near the surface. Sometimes a poor cast may hang up a popper around branches along the bank. Occasionally an arawana will leap out of the water and grab the lure from the branches. Two feet above the water surface! The arawana weigh 4 to 12 pounds with bigger ones reported in the larger and more remote lakes off the Essequibo watershed.

JC: Describe the arawana's fight briefly? Where is it caught and is it fairly reliable fishing?

PG: The arawana's fight is dramatic with lots of greyhounding leaps and twisting action. The take is explosive and the fight longer than the peacock bass. We have areas where there are good populations of arawana, and fly-fishing action can be very dependable. It's imperative to wear polarized glasses to spot them easier, and again accurate casting is essential. Best fishing time for them is in the morning and evening.

JC: Okay, you have three wonderful, exotic species. The pavon, payara and the arawana. Of the three species, which do you personally prefer and why?



Arawana! Ready to stalk its prey

PG: Because of the stalking, top water factor and often challenging casting, I prefer fly fishing for arawana.

JC: You've described some super fishing for small tarpon (6 to 20

pounds) that can be caught all day long at a new location! Wow! Most people are interested in the smaller tarpon, the ones that can be taken on lighter fly rods. Amazingly, there aren't too many places today where one can hook lots of small tarpon on a consistent basis. Then you've described another place where you can catch tarpon **and** peacock bass (*"I have just returned from a great weekend fly fishing for juvenile tarpon ... our boat of two anglers boated more than 11 tarpon between 3 and 35 pounds—also a number of long distance releases— plus a couple of dozen peacock bass of average 4 pounds..."*) I'm assuming this is at another lodge? Actually what is really fascinating about your trip is (1) it's a frontier adventure, with almost unlimited potential; and, (2) one is able to catch peacock bass and tarpon on the same trip. Am I reading this right?

PG: The "all-day" juvenile tarpon fishing is in the Mabaruma area – in northwest Guyana – and there is no peacock bass fishing there. However, there are other very interesting fish like the yarrow, hour, samara and pacu. The tarpon action is so fast that it is very unlikely that any other species will get to the fly before a tarpon does. We do go to some other areas where we fish for alternative species to change the pace and to add some variety in sport fish. The place we fish in Mabaruma is the Luri River, at Shell Beach, leading off the Waini River. It is near the Atlantic Ocean, in tidal freshwater, though the fishing is not seriously affected by this tidal action and it is usually good fishing all day long.

As far as catching the tarpon and peacock bass during the same day... we go to the Abary Lodge. Here our lodge offers very good, almost "luxurious" conditions and top-level service. We fish



Peacock bass

the early morning or late evening for the small tarpon in the Abary River, a short distance from the lodge. For the peacock bass, we fish the *Conservancy* which is at the back of the lodge. It's a 300-sq.-mile body of water made up of lakes and canals. Here the angler enjoys typical bass fishing among lily pads and log structure. The peacock bass here are never large, averaging 3 to 4 pounds with bigger fish up to 7 pounds a possibility. This is a lot of fun...topwater poppers, gurglers and bright Clouser streamers are very effective.

We like to combine the trip for juvenile tarpon in Mabaruma and then the peacock bass & others in Apoteri.



High vaulting tarpon

JC: Where is the Abary Lodge (Lukanani Lodge)?

PG: The Lukanani Lodge is on the Abary River ... an hour's drive along the coast from Georgetown. Then there is a boat ride up the Abary River for an hour along some very beautiful coastal mangrove and flat land areas. Lots of wetland birds and wildlife. This is on the east coast of Guyana.

JC: Are your fishing trips for fly fishers only, or do you also offer them to spinning and plug-casting anglers?

PG: Fly-fishing trips are preferred because of the ease of catch-and-release plus the fact that it is our established method of fishing in Guyana. However, we are not at all restricted to just fly fishing and gladly offer conventional fishing trips. As a matter of fact, we are always prepared to hold special fly-casting lessons for non-fly fishers and we get them involved in fly fishing, if they are willing to try it. Normally this happens after the clients note the increased success factor and enjoyment that fly fishers experience here. As we discussed earlier, Guyana leans toward fly fishing because of the English influence during the colonial days. Plug-casting and spinning gear is not presently available at our lodges and clients will have to bring their own gear and terminal tackle. It must also be noted that we do have a 40-pound luggage restriction per person for our inland flights, and conventional tackle--heavier lures, reels, rods--can take up a lot of this quota.

It's best that anglers bring their own fly-fishing gear, too, but we have outfits available on loan. We also have special flies for sale at \$5 per fly. For anglers who want to tie their own, we have fly-tying vises available, but some of the material will probably be limited at times.

JC: Can you provide a short list of recommended fly tackle?

PG: Well, for most fishing I'd recommend rugged 9-ft. 6- to 9-wt. fly rods, high quality, durable reels, matching weight-forward floating lines and leaders that taper from 40 pounds to 15-pound tippets. Sometimes I have found that a sink-tip line works well, and that some fly fishers find it easier to cast a streamer with this type of line and, say, a 7 wt. rod. In terms of fly line brands, I like to use the Rio Windcutter, Wulff Bass line and the Cortland Tropical Slick Shooter. As far as fly-rod brands? There is a lot of casting here, and I personally prefer using a Scott Heli-Ply 6 wt. or 7 wt. rod. I



Another exotic: the picuda

have no stress on my arm after a day's casting...but everyone has his own preferences.

Flies? Mainly Deceivers, Whistlers and Clouser streamers in bright colors with lots of Flashabou. The fish like real gaudy flies in orange, yellow and red combinations. For the clearer waters, I suggest white with red head (standard), chartreuse and also pink/white flies. At present they are going mainly for the pink flies. Hook sizes should be #4 for the peacock bass and larger fish. For arawana, I use a #2 hook on my streamers or poppers.

On the juvenile tarpon I like to use a white/pink Whistler type streamer tied on #3 or # 2 circle hook.

Because of the piranha activity in some areas, I prefer using synthetic material and even epoxy flies. There are other fish that attack our flies and they do some real damage to the dressing during the fight. Synthetics also tend to hold their bright color longer in our tropical conditions, but generally the fly life is short.

JC: What about conventional spinning and plug-casting tackle?

PG: Any typical largemouth bass tackle is good choice for fishing in Guyana. Rugged, durable equipment is a very important factor. I have seen too many tears in the past with spinning reels coming apart or becoming useless in our remote areas. Just too many screws and parts to come loose, or line rollers jammed or drags burnt. Plug casters suffer less hardship and are usually very successful on our fish. I do like taking off the treble hooks and replacing them with single hooks on the lures.

JC: Would you recommend this trip for couples or women? I realize that this isn't a very comfortable trip...but if a woman wanted to do it--like Kay Brodney did it on so many exploratory trips, years ago--is this okay?

PG: Most certainly! ...Our trips are really very comfortable and much more so now than when Kay and I did our trips nearly 35 years ago. We welcome women anglers and can assure them that every consideration will be made on their behalf.

JC: I realize that this remote fishing...but are there any medical facilities nearby...or



Apoteri Lodge and its tranquility

would one have to go to Georgetown in case of a serious accident? And would a cell phone work?

PG: One would have to go to Georgetown in case of a serious accident. We have radio contact with

Georgetown and can have a plane in Apoteri within three hours. The flight from Apoteri to Georgetown is one hour. Cell phones do not work in that remote area ... not yet anyway.

JC: What are the best seasons? Or when do you expect to run your trips?

PG: Our best season for the Apoteri area is from September to March, which is the dry season. For the juvenile tarpon in the Abary I'd suggest July to October. For the "all-day" fishing in Mabaruma? Anytime. It is really year round and all day long. No real season or time ... there are just that many fish. I would like to think we could combine our juvenile tarpon fishing in Mabaruma with our Apoteri fishing. It can be done. We are running our trips now and will hope to have a trip in November 2002 and March 2003 also.



The toothy payara!

JC: Can you briefly discuss the comfort level at Apoteri Lodge?

PG: We have two toilets and two showers in Apoteri Lodge. Both have running water, but no hot water. If a hot water is needed, then a mid-day shower will offer the real hot water ("naturally heated," of course). But, I personally welcome the cool shower after the heat of the fishing day. The washrooms/toilets are separate from the main building, but only a short distance away. The dining area is within the main lodge with family style dining on a main central table. Our meals are typical local fare.

JC: I know your maximum per trip is six. Is there a minimum? Do you use other local guides or are you the only guide?

PG: The minimum is four anglers. We use local guides and I'm available when I'm there. All guides speak English and are well trained in fly fishing and conventional tackle angling practices. Our guides are also well versed in the local flora and fauna since we also run ecotours to this area in Apoteri.

JC: You mention "fish all day" on your itinerary? Do you come in for lunch? Siesta? Or are you fishing too far away from the lodge to do so?

PG: We normally come in for lunch – unless our parties want to remain out and have a shore lunch and a hammock snooze. Our mornings begin at 5:00 AM, and we are usually back at the lodge in Apoteri at 11:30 AM and then go out again at 2:00 PM until 5:00 PM. If clients want to extend their fishing even further, we can use local

tackle (handline) to fish for the giant catfish at night. It's a lot of fun and a fantastic adventure, especially when there is moonlight!

JC: Peter, you have a pike-like fish. Is that a bicuda?

PG: Yes, this is a bicuda or picuda. We call it tropical pike and they are very good on a fly rod. We catch lots of them in the Rupununi River, especially along the sand banks and shallow fast water. One can also spot them in current and backwater eddies.

JC: Let's talk briefly about the weather and average temperature, and is there a major insect problem?

PG: The average daytime temperature is 85 deg. F. The nights are cool and breezy. There is no insect problem on the Apoteri hill, but during the day there might be some small black flies that are bothersome to clients. A light long-sleeved shirt, trousers and some insect repellent cream or spray will take care of them.

There can be some short rain showers during the day, but this is more refreshing than a problem. A light weight raincoat or poncho is also a useful garment. The main thing is to have an adequate supply of 40+ sun block for protection.

JC: Besides a valid passport, are there any special documents needed...inoculations to enter Guyana?

PG: One does not need a visa from the USA, Canada, Germany and a number of other countries. Regarding inoculations? We are located in areas that are free from the usual tropical health problems. In the evenings, a good insect repellent and the right clothes will take care of the few mosquitoes that sneak into the lodge. We have proper screens and nets. Some people take the anti-malaria pills, but I prefer not to take these pills since they cause nausea and can seriously affect one's welfare during a trip. Some people do not have a problem with anti-malaria pills, but others do.

JC: I assume the best route is via Miami. What flights or airlines do you recommend?

PG: There are direct flights from Miami to Georgetown, Guyana via BWIA. Or one can fly via American Airlines to Trinidad or Barbados and then by BWIA or LIAT to Guyana. Most of the flights arrive in Guyana in the late evening. We meet all of our clients upon arrival at the Georgetown airport and take them to the hotel.

JC: Well, Peter, you certainly have a very interesting sports fishery... just when everyone thought that there were no new waters. What I think is particularly amazing is the fast small tarpon fishing, plus fishing for the butterfly peacock bass, arawana and so many other species.

PG: We do offer not only unusual fishing but also with fantastic natural beauty. We think it's a good fishing trip—not luxurious, by any means—but excellent fishing and also a variety of species and waters.

Here's some information on prices, what's included and a typical itinerary for one Peter Gorinsky's trips.

APOTERI - Guyana - South America

What's included:

- Airport transfers & hotel in Georgetown
- Local beverages
- Accommodations and meals at lodge
- Jon boats equiped with 25 HP motor
- Gasoline and English-speaking guide
- Charter plane to and from Apoteri
- Visit to Kaieteur Falls

What is not included:

- Imported alcoholic beverages
- Meals in Georgetown
- Gratuities
- Fishing tackle and personal purchases

Price: US\$2,550 per angler, All-inclusive with 6 anglers maximum

Typical itinerary for Apoteri lodge

- 22 Tue: Arrive in Georgetown. Stay at Cara Inn.
- 23 Wed: Early morning departure from Ogle
Airport to Apoteri.
Afternoon fishing
- 24 Thu: Fishing--all day
- 25 Fri: Fishing--all day
- 26 Sat: Fishing--all day
- 27 Sun: Fishing--all day
- 28 Mon: Depart Apoteri via Kaieteur Falls to
Georgetown
- 29 Tue: Early morning departure from
Guyana.

