



The ultimate in 'hosted' angling adventures throughout the Amazon.

UK Agent and Promotional Management for Amazon-Angler.com

Contact: Facebook @amazon-adventure.co.uk, Web: www.amazon-adventure.co.uk & richard@amazon-adventure.co.uk

JOINING US AT OUR JAGUAR EXPLORER CAMP? LET'S TALK TACKLE – LURE FISHING

Without doubt, making your selection of primary tackle (rods & reels) and terminal tackle for your trip can be challenging. Trying to cater for unknown water and weather conditions often leads to packing way too much tackle, and where weight limits apply on many of the light planes, getting it right first time is vital as there are no tackle shops once you get local.

This publication will help guide you with some of the basics, and will provide suggestions on suitable and appropriate tackle, although please remember, this is not an exact science, and what worked well on the last trip, may not be as effective or productive on your trip.

This publication is aimed at the UK angler, although most of the guidance is transferable to other countries. Where we have referenced manufacturers / suppliers, these must not be taken as a recommendation, they are examples only. We have no affiliation with any specific supplier unless otherwise stated.

So, let's get started....

RODS & REELS

These are truly personal items of tackle, and we all have that 'one' rod which we want to bring. but consider our recommendation when putting your kit together.

1 x Medium (M) c.10-40g and **1 x Medium to Heavy (M/H) c.30-80g**, 6'6"-7'6" bait casting or spinning rods. As for action, we like fast, but a good intermediate will also be good and allow you to punch your lure just where you want it, whilst maintaining some good play on the fight (See pics 1-3).



By the way, we just love 'travel rods' these 4-5-piece rods are just so easy to carry, internationally and on the local flights.

Match these up with appropriate reels. For fixed spool reels, we suggest 3000-4000 series for the (M) rod and 4000-5000 series for the (M/H). For baitcasters, sizing similar to the Shimano Curado 150/151 series should work for both rods. (See Pics 5-7).

Line these up with 30lb braid on the (M) setup and 50lb on the (M/H) setup. We love 'Power Pro' for braid (See Pic 8), but with so much choice out there – it's what you feel comfortable with. Generally for the braid, stick with moss green or brown.

1 x Medium to Medium/Light (M or M/L) 5 -30g, 6'6"-7'6" baitcasting or spinning rod for the lighter work which will give your arms and wrists a rest and will allow you to easily use jigs and smaller minnow baits. Couple this with a 2500 series reel with 20lb braid for the perfect light tackle setup.

For the reels/braid, make sure you have at least 125yds on the spool.

REMINDER: When spooling up with braid, make sure you have either a mono backing, or the braid is fully secured to the spool core. We have seen loose 'spool stacks' on many occasions which is problematic to fix out on the boats.

For the fly fishermen, **7-8 wt fly rods** should be matched with good, smooth drag system reels and loaded with a tropical, fast-sinking 200-250 grain line or a tropical intermediate or tropical floating fly line, all with at least 100m of 30lb backing. (See Pic 4). We advise a good pair of stripping gloves unless you want another lifeline burnt into your palm!!



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Pic 5.



Pic 6.



Pic 7.

Reels we love:

Pic 5. Shimano Stradic, Pic 6. PENN Fierce III & Pic 7. Shimano Curado DC. There are so many good reels on the market, but these have proven themselves over and over. Daiwa also have some great reels out there but the final selection is up to you.

Leaders and wire traces:

In most of the angling landscapes, there will be abrasive features, as well as toothy critters to test your main line. When fishing over rocks, we suggest using a 10-15' fluorocarbon on monofilament leader (See Pic 9.). Tie this to your braid using an FG knot or similar. At the business end, drop a good quality snap-swivel to enable quick lure changeover. Where rocks are not an issue, think about using a good quality wire trace, the 'Last meter' range from **Savage Gear** is perfect for this, (See Pic 10).



Pic 8.



Pic 9.



Pic 10.

Other Essentials:

If you don't want to use factory wire traces, think about bringing your own multi-stand wire and crimping your own. Carry a good range of replacement hooks, most lures will come with 1X wire hooks, so these will need replacing with 4X prior to use. **BKK, Owner & Gamakatsu** have some great products on the market so put the time and effort in ahead of your trip. To match the uprated hooks, also change out the split rings, again these can be found in 4X. When it comes to snap-swivels, we love the 'coast-lock' type, they can be a little difficult to open/use, but that a good thing, you do not want to lose your fish of a lifetime because of poor quality end tackle!!!

Let's talk lures:

Without doubt, this is the most difficult of decisions – what to stow in your terminal tackle pack!! Conditions on the River Essequibo are always unpredictable and what went well and was productive last season may not work when you are there. So much depends on water levels, which unfortunately are out of our control, but bringing a good selection of lures which you can work throughout the water column must influence the basis of your selection. But don't go too big, many of the larger lures just don't seem to work that well. Here's a few suggestions.

PROP-BAITS, 5-6 x small (See Pic 11.) like the 3-4" Rapala Skitter-prop, 4.25" K Lures Props and 4" High roller Riprollers than can be ripped across the surface. Great lures for Peacocks, Payara, Bicuda etc. Note: larger prop-baits 5"-7" whilst really effective in Colombia and Brazil, tend not to work as well in for the Peacock Bass in Guyana, so don't go too large with these. As for colour, Fire-tiger or similar is one of our favourites, especially with the orange belly, but we have caught on many different patterns and colour uniforms. Note: the 'whopper Plopper' (Fig 11 middle) proved really effective with the Arowana on the last trip – so worth bringing a couple 9cm-10cm.



Pic 11.

POPPERS, 3-4 x small and medium Poppers (See Pic 12.) which if worked properly will catch a good number of big fish. They should pop, spit and gurgle and spray water in front. The best lures we have found is the Skitter Pop or the Chug Bug skimmed along the surface or quickly popped. Here's a trick to add further interest, tie a small fly (See Pic 13.) with a size 2 or 3 hook off the tail of the popper with around 12" of mono, this acts as a 'teaser' and you will be surprised how many more hits you get – especially from Bicuda.



Pic 12.

Pic 13.



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SPOOKS & STICKBAITS, 4-5 x medium spooks and other small-medium cigar-shaped stick baits (See Pic 14.) that can be used with a 'walk-the-dog', side to side, swishing action that 'sways' the lure like a snake across the water. This is a more subtle, quieter lure used when Peacocks and Bicuda are being less aggressive, and especially for aggressive Payara in the late afternoons. We have seen these used to great effect, and if you can master the technique, they can be very productive.



Pic 14.

MINNOWS & CRANK BAITS, 6-8 x small-medium minnow baits and crank baits (See Pics 15 & 16.) will always work well in most situations. Our choices are shallow running 3"-5" Rapala X Raps, X Rap Sub Walk, Rattle Traps, Yozuri Crystal minnows and Tobimarus.



Pic 15.



Pic 16.



Pic 17.

And let's not forget Rapala's deep X Raps and CD Magnum range, CD11-CD14 (See Pic 17) are perfectly sized. These will all catch the hard-fighting predators of the River Essequibo.



Pic 18.

It's also worth including a few deeper working lures in your kit bag, and we just love the range that comes from 6th Sense in the US, (See Pic 18, for a few of them). However, there are plenty of other suppliers within the UK if you do not want to order from overseas.



Rapala



YO-ZURI



SPINNERS, 6-8 & SPINNER BAITS, 1-2 There are so many of these on the market and its always worth having a few in your kit bag. **Mepps**, have a great range, sizes 3-5, **SpinMad** produce some exceptional 'tailed' spinners and of course there are the **ABU Garcia** 'Atom' spoons. Spinner baits are also widely available within the UK. Select your weights accordingly (See Pic 19).



Pic 19.



Pic 21.



Pic 20.

JIGS & FLIES, 5-10 x Stevie Stinger or similar bucktail jigs (See Pic 20.)with extended tails. They are cast and stripped back to the boat, not jigged on the bottom, and they can also be trolled on the way back out of a long lagoon. Great lures for Peacocks, Payara, Bicudas etc. They can however also work well for Payara and Coby/Pescada when jigged off the bottom.

For the Fly Angler,

There are many species that can be targeted with flies including Peacock Bass, Payara, Wolf Fish and Bicuda. Also, smaller flies will catch Pacu and Couti and loads of other small scaled species. Fly patterns for most Amazon predators are generally either tied in 3-6" long-profile streamer flies with lots

of flash, with and without weighted eyes, or popper-type surface flies that provide plenty of noise and action (See Pic 21). Bigger 6-8" streamer flies will catch Arapaima also (just ensure your rod and reel are matched for these species). Usually, a fast strip is used on streamer flies and a series of gentle, constant 'spits' for surface flies. Don't waste too much time on elaborate fly patterns as Piranhas will demolish them, so keep it simple!



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Other bits and pieces if you have the weight allowance:



Pic 22.



Pic 23.



Pic 24.

JIG HEADS (See Pic 22), available in a wide range of shapes, colours, and weights, these can be an extra trick up your sleeve for presenting strips of cut meat off the bottom, producing takes from Payara and Catfish alike.

ARTIFICIAL BAITS (See Pic 23), when natural seeds and fruits are hard to come by and Pacu are on the prowl, hair rigging a dried boilie or artificial bait is a superb alternative and could be very productive. Don't forget to bring baiting needles, short and long, the latter being ideal for hair rigging cut bait for the Catfish.

HOOKS & WEIGHTS (See Pic 24), a small selection of small 'singles' should be in your hook case. Look at sizes 2, 1, 1/0, 2/0 and maybe up to 4/0 so you are prepared for all eventualities. Having a few small leads is also quite handy, for a multitude of applications, these small barrels 5g – 20g are ideal.

REMINDER: A number of 'lighter' work techniques are transferable to those used for the bigger species i.e., Catfish & Arapaima. Whilst not covered here, go to our website, and download our Tackle Talk Catfish & Arapaima publication, or message us for a copy.

Fish Management:

This is really **IMPORTANT**, there are only a few occasions where we would expect to see a fish hanging off a pair of Boga Grips, i.e., for weighing purposes. Many of the species can be 'chinned' or held safely without stressing them out on their jaw/mouth. Please respect this and ask your guide about handling if you're unsure and practice the best of fish welfare at all times. That being said you will need some tools with you (See Pic 25), long reach pliers, cutters, Boga Grips (or similar) and don't forget to have split-ring pliers with you. And whatever tools you have make sure you have a lanyard attached, we have seen so many Boga's lost to the depth over the years, and in the UK, at £150+ you don't want that.



Pic 25.

A word about luggage and life on the boats:



Pic 26.

'A tidy boat is a safe & well-run boat'. Make sure you have a good boat bag. This should be adequate to take your tackle cases, fish management tools, your technology, and any items you need for day-to-day welfare. We just love the range from **Savage Gear**, and in particular their Rucksack / Tackle Centre (See Pic 26), although there are many other options available. We tend to use these as 'carry on' for the international flight, and then 'flip them' to boat bags once at camp. They provide the best in terminal tackle storage for standard sizes cases, plus masses of additional room for all your daily requirements and being in one bag only, helps keep the boat tidy.

A FINAL NOTE FROM THE AMAZON-ANGLER.COM TEAM. Your fishing experience may be influenced by just so many factors, time of the season, water levels, water temperatures, moon phases etc, and the suggestions we have made in this publication are just that, suggestions, based on what we have seen work on previous trips. Whilst we can guarantee you will catch fish, we cannot guarantee that you will catch specific species, or your target species at weights we publicise.

But we do guarantee, that our host and guides will do their utmost to meet your expectations.