

AMAZON-ANGLER.COM

Quarterly Newsletter

Issue: Spring 2020



Latest News from the Amazon



A message from Steve

Well, Spring was certainly eventful, and I don't think any one of us could have predicted how rapidly the COVID-19 health issue would escalate. During this period, we had two trips, one in Colombia and the other in Guyana both ending as the global travel restrictions started to come into force. For us, the emphasis was in ensuring that our clients could get home and it was a fractious and worrying time for all, but, finally, everyone made it.

For me, Colombia is one of my favourite locations, and with a passion for big Peacock Bass, the Rio Tuparro continues to deliver. Over the two trips in Feb/Mar, we had anglers from across the globe and most, if not all, took Peacocks to 20lb, including a 24lb specimen for me. On the Rio Orinoco, fishing was also productive with both the Payara and Sardinata taken in good numbers.

The Jaguar Camp in Guyana also performed well (see Article 5), and whilst catches were good, including with the Arapaima, the big 'Cats' didn't make an appearance. We will be having some further thoughts on fishing locations for the next trips starting in Oct.

Well that's all from me, but to all our clients, past, present and future, stay safe and stay well throughout this challenging period.

In the Spring period we had three trips running and in general, the fishing was above average. There are two aspects though that have really come to prominence during this period.

Firstly, the IGFA 'all tackle' record for Sardinata, which currently stands at 9lb 0oz from the Rio Negro, Colombia in 2008. This is interesting, as fish weights far in excess of this were recorded from the Rio Orinoco in Feb Mar, including this beauty of mine [pic 1] above at c.11lb. We firmly believe that the current IGFA record can be easily beaten and we would encourage any of our clients travelling with us to Colombia, to bear this in mind, and if they want to claim a new record, make sure they are IGFA compliant.

Secondly, and going back to the Essequibo in Guyana. On several occasions, we have caught Peacock Bass, for which we were unable to confirm the species of, see [Pic 2]. So, finally this has been identified formally as a new species, '*Cichla cataractae*' with credit going to Donald Taphorn, for getting the 'Cichla' genus increased from 15 to 16 species - **Congratulations** from all here at the Amazon-Angler Team for this fabulous achievement.

What this does demonstrate is that of the 3,000 known species within the Amazon, at any time you can catch the unexpected, and as with Donald's capture, a brand-new species!!

This Issue

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Upcoming Trips

As we come to the end of March, the rainy season commences, and unless you have ever witnessed this, it's hard to imagine just how rapidly the water rises and the landscape changes.

So, our trip schedule really starts kicking in again in Sept/Oct, although there are some trips available in July/Aug, although this is dependent upon where we sit with COVID-19.

- **Bolivia** - Arapaima Paradise Lodge
July /August for giant Arapaima and huge Cats
- **Brazil** - Rio Roosevelt
June - Oct, great multi-species fishing
- **Brazil** - Ecolodge da Barra
June - Oct, best fly-fishing / lure destination for Peacock Bass and Payara in Brazil.
- **Brazil** - Rio Abacaxi
Sept - Oct, terrific Pinima Peacock Bass and Catfish *sp.*

The real kick-off will be in September, as we see the seasonal start of our trips to Argentina (la Zona), Guyana (Jaguar Camp) and the incredible Brazil (Cabaçeiros).

Obviously, these depend upon the end to our current health crisis and you can pick up monthly trip updates from across all our social media.

  USA toll free: 1 800 262 0370  1 305 600 5779  UK: 0203 239 7671  EUROPE: +44 203 239

 www.amazon-angler.com & info@amazon-angler.com

 @steve townson amazon-angler & @amazon-angler.com  WhatsApp: +351 917 812 328



News from the UK

Richard at:  @amazon-connect.co.uk &
www.amazon-angler.co.uk



Wow, these have been really turbulent times and I felt for our clients down in the Amazon, waiting to find out how they were going to get back home, Great that it all worked out though.

So, what have I been up to, well, early February I was with Steve in Colombia, on the Rio Orinoco and Rio Tuparro.

This was a simply fantastic trip, and you know, I have always been a 'catfish' angler, not really that 'turned on' by Peacock Bass / Payara etc, but that has definitely changed and I think until you have had one of these fish bust up on your prop / surface bait or jig, then you are really missing out - I'm definitely hooked, and plan to return in early 2021.

As we go forward. My next trip is not until October, when I will be 'hosting' the second of our 2020 Jaguar Camps, picking up from Steve as he finishes the first trip of the season. Looks like we have a great group for that, including some well-seasoned Amazon anglers.

In the meantime, I will be keeping up the social media profile, supporting Amazon-Angler.com and putting extra effort into keeping the tackle hire side of the business going. So, if you are in the UK and would like to come to the Amazon with us, give us a call, we can help with all the rods, reels and bespoke tackle packs for your trio, if needed.

News from the US & Canada

Mark at:  @amazon river monsters (ARM)



For me at ARM, March and the Spring season saw me hosting the first Jaguar Camp of 2020. I had a superb group with me from across the globe and with varying experience of fishing within the Amazon. In general, the fishing was pretty good, with plenty of fish, including some impressive Arapaima.

Must admit that it would have been nice to have seen some larger catfish come out, but hey, this is angling!! The Essequibo River is one of the most impressive I have come across, from nearly 1km wide to less than 4m wide with sand bars, rock gardens and raging rapids. It offers the angler just so many opportunities, but it's always difficult to predict a) what the water conditions will be like, and b) what end tackle the fish are favouring. I think it's important that clients try and bring as much tackle as possible (weight conscious) to adapt to the conditions. Also, we need to remember 'where we are'. The camp is set deep into the jungle, there are no 'nearby tackle outlets' or 'I'll pop to the local convenience store' - we have to adapt and deal with the environment.

Plenty of more trips coming up for the 2020/2021 seasons, and looking forward to Bolivia in 2021 when me, Steve & Rich get to take on the Arapaima. Any queries from the US or Canada, drop me a line.

The Environment Conservation & Sustainability



ARAPAIMA WATCH

And why we feel so strongly about fish welfare and the policy of 'Catch & Release'.

Many of you will have seen the photo (left) and felt a sense of sadness in seeing such a specimen being taken for food.

Wild Arapaima are one of the species for which our clients travel thousands of miles to the Amazon to catch and whilst they provide incredible sport, their recent history has proven controversial. Their true numbers are unknown, and they are currently classed as 'data deficient' on the IUCN database as accurate surveys are almost impossible. In recent years there have been positive moves in both Brazil and Colombia in terms of legislation and in culturing policies to support sustainable fishing, but these laws are often disregarded or are too difficult to enforce. In Guyana, where we fish for Arapaima, permissions are generally granted through the tribal 'elders' on the strict understanding that 'Catch & Release' will be followed rigidly. It is a misconception that with size, comes strength, and in fact Arapaima are particularly fragile, a large and vital blood vessel runs along its spine which can easily rupture if mis-handled leading to fish loss. Adequate time must also be provided to allow for a full recovery prior to release. We at Amazon-Angler place fish welfare at the top of our list, particularly with Arapaima, and have strict rules on fishing methods and post-catch fish management.

Recent Catches



Rio Orinoco & Rio Tuparro, Colombia, Feb/ Mar 2020

Jaguar Camp / Guyana / Mar 2020