

JOULTERS FLY FISHING

NORTH ANDROS ISLAND, BAHAMAS



TACKLE & OUTFITTING GUIDE

GPS Coordinates: 25°08'43.16"N | 78°00'15.15"W

WWW.THEFLYSHOP.COM



Trip Questionnaire: Please click on the link below. This will take you an electronic questionnaire form that we ask you to complete and submit to The Fly Shop®. Please be sure to click the “Submit” button at the end of the form. The information provided will help us -- and the outfitter best coordinate your trip.

THANK YOU!! [Click Here](#)

Getting to Joulters Fly Fishing

The most popular option in travel to Joulters Fly Fishing is flying to Nassau’s Lynden Pindling International Airport (NAS) and then taking a short, 12 minute flight into San Andros (code: SAQ) with Western Air. There are many options on many different airlines flying into Nassau. Western Air offers two daily flights between Nassau and San Andros: one at 7:00 AM and the other at 3:30 PM; the turnaround times are typically 30 - 45 minutes later.

Guests often fly in on the afternoon flight and make their departure on the morning flight. Scheduling your flights in and out of Nassau around 12 noon works well and allows sufficient time to clear customs on both sides of your trip.

You can make a reservation on their website (www.westernairbahamas.com) or by calling them in the Bahamas at (242) 377-2222. The round-trip fare on Western Air is usually around \$150 - 160 per/person and can be paid online or at their ticket counter in Nassau. Keep in mind, this is the Bahamas, and things rarely operate on time. Sometimes these flights are late, and every once in a while, they will even leave early! So be prepared to be in the waiting area a bit ahead of schedule, and be patient and prepared to wait a bit. There is a decent bar, a Duty Free shop, and a Dunkin’ Donuts for food in the waiting area.

The other option into San Andros is with a private charter on Maker's Air out of Fort Lauderdale - they offer a charter seat fare that is dependent on their current schedule. You can look them up on their website at <https://www.makersair.com>, although to book a fare it's best to give them a call for available seats and pricing at (954) 771-0330. These flights are more expensive but can off-set the cost of having to overnight in Nassau. With Maker's Air, you'll clear U.S. customs in Fort Lauderdale at their terminal upon returning back to the States.

If you are flying commercially into Nassau International Airport you will first clear immigrations, retrieve your luggage and clear customs. Once you have cleared customs, you will need to recheck yourself and luggage to San Andros (SAQ) at the nearest Western Air counter.

You must claim your luggage on your first point of entry into the Bahamas and clear immigrations and customs. Failure to claim your luggage will result in your luggage not showing up at your end destination.

Entry & Exit Requirements:

Travel by Air: All U.S. citizens are required to present a valid U.S. passport in order to enter or re-enter the United States when travelling by air. U.S. citizens do not need visas for short trips to The Bahamas for tourist/business purposes. It is important to note that although the Bahamian government only requires proof of citizenship and identity in order to enter The Bahamas, the U.S. government requires that Americans have a valid passport in order to fly home.

You will complete an immigration card upon arrival. It will be checked at your first point of entry and a copy will be given to you. Be careful not to lose this copy as it must be given to Immigration upon departure.

For charter flights only, there is a departure tax payable at the airport upon departure; the tax is \$25 for most points of departure.



Upon exiting the International Arrivals area in Nassau, you will proceed to the Domestic area of the airport to the Western Air counter for check in (you will want to reserve these flights in advance, easy to do online). You will want to arrange your international airfare into Nassau either the night before (in order to catch the 7:00 AM departure), or before 1:30 PM (in order to have time to deplane, clear customs and immigration, and check in for the 3:30 pm flight to San Andros).

As aircraft flying to San Andros (SAQ) are often small twin-engine planes, we recommend carrying a maximum of 40 pounds of luggage, soft sided if possible.

When you arrive at San Andros airport there will be porters available to help you with your gear from the plane to the curb. If we know what time your flight is arriving from Ft Lauderdale or if you are arriving by charter from Nassau give Makesha a call ([WhatsApp](#)) that day with your approximate arrival time and we will have one of our favorites (as in has a van for all your gear) taxi drivers there to meet you. Just ask the porter or any of the locals that hang out at the gate leaving the tarmac for James Smith or Alan Russell and they will take you to the lodge. Makesha or Nadia, the lodge supervisor, should be waiting for you on arrival at the lodge. If not, you have their numbers and Nadia lives only two blocks away. She will let you in to your unit and give you your keys.

(San Andros airport is 10 minutes from lodge. If you arrive at Fresh Creek, Andros Town 1 hour south, just take any taxi to San Andros airport and local taxi from there.)

If taxi drivers are not there for any reason, there are always other taxi drivers there and most of them know the "Sportsman's Lodge" in Nichols Town. If not, or you have other transportation, the lodge is at the very end of Reeve St where it tees into Swamp St. at the ocean. When you come to the stop sign at the end of Reeves St you are literally aimed right at the driveway of the lodge so just go straight across the street into the driveway and the lodge is about 100 feet up the driveway on your right, an aqua blue building on the oceanfront.

Day of Departure:

Please reconfirm your flight arrangements with the lodge the night before departure. Western Air has two daily flights departing San Andros (**SAQ**) to Nassau (**NAS**), one at 7:30 AM and one at 4:45 PM. Most guests choose to take the morning flight, which matches well with midday departures home from Nassau (11:00 PM or later is recommended).

Contact Information

Should any problems occur during your travel, including significant flight delays please be sure to have the following contact information with you. Please feel free to contact The Fly Shop® or the lodge directly.

(Check-in) Nadia Jones (242) 471-7279 - Home (242) 329-2310

(Chef) Makeisha Lewis (242) 471-2726

(Taxi) James Smith (242) 801-7300

(Taxi) Alan Russel (242) 357-2876

(Guide and Partner) Elias Griffin (242) 471-5299

(Guide and Partner) Greg Roberts (242) 471-0117

Kent Rianda Cell or WhatsApp* (760) 914-1466 Office in Calif

The Fly Shop®

(800) 669-3474 | (530) 222-3555 | travel@theflyshop.com | www.theflyshop.com



Emergency Assistance:

In case of emergencies involving the death, injury, welfare, or arrest of an American citizen in The Bahamas or the Turks and Caicos Islands, please call (242) 328-3496 or (242) 311-1181x9 during business hours, and (242) 357-7004 at all other times. (Please note that the Duty Officer who answers this number will not be able to assist with visa or routine passport matters.)

Communication:

[WhatsApp](#) is the universal means of communication in the Bahamas and to/from from the United States. It is a free app for your iPhone or Android that will let you call, text, facetime, send files and photos all at no charge to anyone who also has the app.

General Travel Information

Staying in Nassau:

There are many options for your stay in Nassau, ranging from small family-owned inns situated in quieter areas to full-scale casino/resorts on Cable Beach and Paradise Island. There is an array of restaurants and clubs, day cruises and other activities. Below are some of our recommendations.

Hotels:

Orange Hill Beach Inn

West Bay Street

(242) 327-7157 | Info@orangehill.com

- Orange Hill is a quaint family-owned inn 5 minutes from the airport. It is a convenient, economical choice for our traveling anglers. It sits across the street from a nice quiet beach and has a small bar/restaurant and a refreshing outdoor pool.

Sandy Port Hotel and Resort

West Bay Street

(242) 327-4279 | info@sandyport.com

- SandyPort Hotel is part of the greater SandyPort Development. It is located 10 minutes from the airport and can be a great choice for your over-night in Nassau. You will find a variety of dining options, stores and even a health club within walking distance of your accommodations. It has a relaxing atmosphere and a very professional staff.

British Colonial Hilton

No. 1 Bay Street

(242) 322-3301

- The British Colonial is a beautiful, well-appointed, luxury hotel situated right in the heart of the action on famous Bay Street. The grounds are amazingly quiet considering where it is situated. It is everything you expect from an International Hilton property and places you within walking distance of all the shops and restaurants of downtown.

Atlantis Resort and Casino

Paradise Island

(242) 363-2000 x 65401

- The grandeur of "The Atlantis" is hard to describe. It truly is a "mega" resort in the spirit of Las Vegas. It houses one of the largest aquariums in the world, a Vegas-style casino and numerous shops and restaurants. It hums with energy and activity 24 hours a day. If you are staying elsewhere in Nassau, it is worth taking a taxi to Paradise Island and wandering through.



Restaurants in Nassau:

Indigo Cafe and Deli

West Bay St. and Skyline Drive

(242) 327-2535

- Indigo is a relaxing, stylish Cafe with a very eclectic menu of wonderfully prepared foods. Choose from local Bahamian, Asian, and European cuisine, even an impressive selection of fantastic sushi! They also have a full-service bar and espresso.

The Poop Deck West

Sandy Port on the Beach/West Bay Street

(242) 327-3325

- An island favorite, the Poop Deck features a full bar, great steak, seafood and traditional Bahamian dishes

Twin Brothers

Arowak Cay

(242) 328-5033

- Located at the Arowak Cay Fish Fry Grounds, Twin Brothers is a fun, relaxing place to enjoy great local Bahamian cuisine. It is a favorite among the locals. Enough said?

Clay Oven

Downtown

(242) 325-8639

- A wonderful, reasonably priced authentic Indian Restaurant. This is where our manager eats when he's in Nassau!

Green Parrot

Paradise Island/Hurricane Hole

(242) 322-6900

- A well-known, very popular outdoor bar and grill that sits on the Hurricane Hole Marina. This is a fun place to hang out day and night watching the boat traffic in and out of Nassau Harbor, while chatting with the crews of the many yachts that are parked in the marina.

Staying in Ft. Lauderdale:

Here are a few recommendations for lodging and entertainment for our guests who have some time in Fort Lauderdale on either side of their trip to the Bahamas.

Hotels:

Courtyard® by Marriott®

Port 400 Gulf Stream Way/Dania Beach, Florida 33004

(954) 342-8333

- The Courtyard at the Fort Lauderdale Airport is a hotel that's just a couple of miles from the airport. The rooms are nice and the hotel shares a parking lot with the IGFA Museum, Bass Pro Shops, and the Islamorada Fish Company. The Courtyard provides free shuttle service to and from the airport. Ask for the Deneki Outdoors corporate rate.

Restaurants & Attractions:

Seminole Hard Rock Casino

1 Seminole Way

Hollywood, FL 33314



(866) 502-7529

- About 15 minutes from the airport and its hotels is the large Hard Rock Casino complex on the Seminole Indian reservation. In addition to the hotel and casino, the complex includes 18 restaurants in a variety of styles, all with outdoor seating, 13 bars and clubs, and some high-end shopping. The cuisine includes something for everyone, and the people-watching is a sport unto itself!

IGFA Museum
300 Gulf Stream Way
Dania Beach, FL 33004
(954) 922-4212

- If you want to see some really big fish, stop off at the IGFA Museum and Hall of Fame. It's located very near the airport and the Wyndham.

General Information

Phone Service:

Cell phones work most places, including around the lodge. Be sure you have a plan that allows for international coverage, however, or you may end up with an unwelcome surprise when your next bill comes! Always be sure to turn your data off when traveling International, too.

Internet/Wi-Fi:

There is decent, usually reliable Wi-Fi at Joulter's Fly Fishing. This is a remote island and service can come and go...but most of the time it works great.

Electrical Outlets:

The electrical outlets are AC 110 volts (same as the U.S.) and most appliances will work fine. There is a hair dryer available at the lodge if needed.

Insects:

Mosquitoes and "doctor flies" in the Bahamas are prominent during the rainy season, from March through September. Year round, tiny biting "No See'ums" can also come out at dawn and dusk and whenever the winds are exceptionally calm. The Bahamian doctor fly is basically a large horsefly on steroids, whose bite will draw blood. (Why do they call them doctor flies? "Because when de bite, mon, it feels like a SHOT!") They prefer salt-coated skin, and love to harass anglers who are wading shallow waters and mangrove-filled areas. Wearing long pants and long sleeves while fishing, and insect repellent (with DEET) will deter these bugs. If you can find it, Avon Skin-So-Soft is the best deterrent for No-See-Ums.

The lodge does spray for insects regularly, and has Citronella Plants around the veranda, which is typically effective in deterring most annoying pests. Still, it's a good idea to bring some bug spray just in case.

Gratuities:

Gratuities at Joulter's Fly Fishing come in two forms: daily tips for guides at the end of each day, and a single tip for the lodge staff at the end of your stay. The local economy here is cash-based, so the preferred method for tipping is in cash. Tips cannot be put on a credit card, and a check won't do them any good. Please bring cash! USD Dollars and Bahamian currency are interchangeable on the island, and either works fine.

Guide Gratuities:

Guide tips vary widely but have averaged roughly \$80 - \$100 per boat per day (\$40 - \$50 per angler if two anglers share a boat). Tipping for guides can be done at the dock each day or at the end of the week. If guides are tipped at the end of the week, you will need to indicate what amount is intended for each guide and



on which day. If you intend to tip at the end of the week, be sure to let your guide know that at the end of each day. The best time to give the guide his tip is at the beach just before getting out of the boat.

Lodge Staff Gratuities:

Tips for the lodge staff are collected once at the end of your stay, and are pooled and divided among the entire lodge staff, including drivers, cooks, housekeepers, and the maintenance crew and host. Lodge staff tips vary widely but have averaged roughly \$25 - \$35 per angler per day.

Beverages & Liquor:

The lodge will be stocked with mostly food for breakfast and a few snacks and lots of non-alcoholic beverages in the fridge. If you want any additional snacks or beer/liquor, the taxi driver will be happy to swing by the local market and/or the state liquor store on the way to the lodge. US dollars are accepted one for one so you don't have to worry about money exchange but having small bills is recommended.

Personal Gear

Joulter's Fly Fishing is your personal vacation retreat during your time on Andros! Comfortable, casual wear is accepted and encouraged. Flip-flops, sandals, shorts, T-shirts...casual is king. Expect mid-80's during the days, and high 60's to low '70's in the evening and early mornings. We recommend long-sleeved shirts and long pants while on the flats (these will help fend off Doctor Flies as well as sunburns!). Liberally apply a waterproof sunblock UVA/UVB of at least 30 SPF+ rating to all exposed skin including your ears and lips. Re-apply occasionally through the day and consider a wide-brimmed hat or Buff. After applying sunscreen, scrub your hands with a scoop of sand and water as bonefish can smell lotion on your fly and will quickly turn away.

Although casual tropical attire will generally work great during your time on the water, there are three fishing specific items that are critical for each angler to bring:

Rain Jacket:

Even on sunny days we suggest including a light weight and breathable rain jacket in your boat bag. Boat spray can occur at any time and a cloudburst can form when least expected. Rain pants are not a bad idea to.

Sunglasses:

Polarized sunglasses with amber or copper lenses are the most popular, and having an extra pair in your boat bag is always the smart thing to do.

Flats Boots:

Since the flats that we wade vary greatly in their bottom surface (hard sand, soft sand, grass, coral) we do not recommend wading sandals; closed toe boots are greatly preferred. Most of the flats are hard white sand, so neoprene-type booties will work here, as well as the stouter wading sneakers/boots.

We are often asked about what socks work best, and strongly recommend the Simms lightweight neoprene socks. They are comfortable and can easily be rinsed and dried for re-use (unlike cotton socks which get real nasty real fast in the saltwater and often need thrown away after minimal use).

Wading Pants:

Lightweight pants are strongly recommended for both sun and insect protection.

Chest, Back, or Fanny Pack:

You may be wading for hours and the boat will be just a spec on the horizon. Be sure to bring a wading pack to carry your flies, leaders, tippet, clippers, a water bottle, camera, etc.

**Tools:**

Pliers, hemostats, knot tying tool, nippers, hook sharpener, easy hook release.

Bonefish Tackle

The big draw – and primary focus – of Andros is the sight fishing for bonefish. The Bahamas offers some of the best bonefishing in the world. Bonefish on Andros range in size from 2 - 15 pounds. On the average, bonefish will be in the 3 - 5 pound range. Smaller bonefish (1 - 2 pounds) tend to swim together in large schools, a natural defense against sharks, barracudas and other predators. Large bonefish travel alone or in pairs. We have found that most times when fishing to big schools of moving bonefish, the largest fish tend to be in the back of the pack. Bonefish are active feeders and a variety of flies and fishing strategies are effective in taking them. One of the nice things about bonefishing is that the proper equipment needed to catch them successfully is also one of the most common fly rod weight and size. The following suggestions and recommendations should help in assembling your bonefish tackle.

Fly Rods:

We strongly suggest 9', 4 piece travel rods in 7, 8 and 9 weights. In general, an 8 weight is considered the “go-to” bonefish rod. We prefer fast tapered rods that generate high line speed. Rods that have been especially designed for the rigors of saltwater fly-fishing are the best choice. In that category, we like Scott, Sage, Winston, and The Fly Shop’s Signature fly rods. Traveling with a spare rod is always good idea.

Fly Reels:

Fly reels specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing are important. Features to look for are smooth drags, plenty of backing capacity, and a sturdy, machined, aluminum, one-piece anodized frame. Large arbor reels are a great choice and retrieve line and backing very quickly. Manufacturers to consider include the Abel, Hardy, Galvan, and Hatch.

Fly Lines:

A weight forward floating line **designed for the tropics** is extremely important. We find these days that the Scientific Anglers line tend to cast the best out of the box, and last the longest, so we strongly recommend their brands for the flats. Their high-end Amplitude Bonefish or Amplitude Redfish lines are outstanding (though pricey), while the Mastery Bonefish or Redfish Warm lines are our favorite lines overall for value, quality, and durability.

These lines are specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing and have a special braided monofilament core that provides the proper stiffness to allow excellent shooting while resisting tangles, even in tropical heat. They are extremely accurate lines, and the running portion is a large diameter and floats on top of the water, making it a pleasure for wade fishing. Traveling with a back-up fly line is a smart thing to do. It weighs almost nothing, takes up little space in your luggage, and won't spoil before your next trip.

Leaders:

We typically fish 9' - 12' tapered saltwater leaders made from clear monofilament or fluorocarbon, with 12 - 20 lb. test are the most popular choices. 12 lb. leaders are common, but there are situations where you want to go heavier, 16lb. to 20lb, making the release quick and easy. Scientific Angler Absolute Bonefish leaders are good choice. Go knotless with your leaders for a couple different reasons. First, bonefish have incredible vision and a knotted leader may become a disadvantage. Second, knots tend to pick-up tiny pieces of debris and vegetation. You should bring along some tippet material, clear monofilament and fluorocarbon in spools of 12, 15 and 20 lb. test. Fluorocarbon leaders and tippet are a great choice as they are nearly invisible in water, perfect for spooky fish in very gin-clear water. That said, fluorocarbon is quite a bit more expensive, and for budget-conscious anglers, regular mono leaders do work fine.



Bonefish Flies:

Day in and day out, year after year the standard “Gotcha” has proven to be a “go to” fly. If it were the only fly you brought you would do just fine. It was invented on Andros Island, and remains a staple there. The infamous “Crazy Charlie” was also created by Andros guides, and you’d be hard pressed to find a guide that wouldn’t gladly tie one of these classic patterns on any day.

The important factor in your fly selection is to have flies of varied sizes and weights to meet the specific situation. Since most of the flats of the Joulters are quite shallow, flies in this part of Andros tend towards #4 or #6. But it’s still a good idea to have a few #2s as well, for deeper flats or trips to the West Side.

Bring the usual suspects; Gotchas, Charlies, Puffs, spawning shrimp, etc, in white, pink, pearl, brown, and tan in sizes #2, #4, and #6. Most flies should have small to medium bead chains, but it’s also good to have a few weightless patterns, as well as a few heavier lead-eye flies.

Bonefish Flies:

- Gotchas - #2, 4 & 6... An absolute must have fly pattern!
- Crazy Charlie - #6; tan, pink, brown, pearl
- Mini Puff - #4 & 6; pink & tan
- E.P. Spawning Shrimp - #4; bead chain and lead eyes, tan and translucent
- Miheves Flats Fly - #6
- Beck’s Sili-Legs - #6; tan
- Bully Special - #4 & 6
- Ververka Mantis Shrimp - #2
- Kwan - #4

The main focus is on bonefish, but there are some opportunities for other species as well, and you may want to be prepared for encounters with these other great game fish, too.

Tarpon Tackle

Although tarpon are not what most fly fishers are chasing in the Bahamas, they are available. Tarpon in the Bahamas are most often seen in and around creeks or around freshwater springs and blue holes. Most tarpon in the Bahamas range in size between 30 - 60 pounds.

Fly Rods:

Fast action 9’, 4 piece travel rods in 9, 10, & 11 weights are standard for tarpon. For most of the fish you’ll encounter on Andros, a 10 weight is perfect. We like Scott, Sage, and Winston.

Fly Reels:

A heavy-duty saltwater reel is a must here. Look for a reel with a smooth drag, plenty of backing capacity (minimum 200 yards of 30-lb. backing), and a sturdy one-piece, machined, aluminum anodized frame. Manufacturers to consider include the Abel, Nautilus, Galvan, and Hatch.

Leaders:

Leaders for tarpon can be simple, or complex. The knots used in building class tippet tarpon leaders take some practice to learn, and it can be very rewarding to acquire those skills. We often build a simple tarpon leader with 8 foot of 40# fluorocarbon followed by 2 feet of 60#, 80#, or 100# bite tippet.



If you would like to tie your own tarpon leaders, some good reference books are Lefty Kreh's "Fly Fishing in Saltwater" and "Practical Fishing Knots by Lefty Kreh and Mark Sosin." We like to use clear, stiff monofilament or fluorocarbon when constructing our class leaders.

Fly Lines:

Ninety percent of tarpon fishing is done with a weight forward floating line and Scientific Anglers Tropical Titan Taper is our favorite as it quickly and easily loads larger tarpon streamers in the wind.

Tarpon Flies:

In general, tarpon flies for the Bahamas should be tied on 1/0 through 3/0 size hooks. Slight variations in shape and color can be all that is needed to entice tarpon into striking. Flies to consider are:

- Tarpon Rabbit Toad - #1/0; purple/black, tan, chartreuse
- Cockroach - #1/0 & 4/0
- Black Death - #3/0
- Tarpon Toad - #2/0; yellow, chartreuse, red/black
- Puglisi Style Streamers - black/purple, mullet, etc.
- Boca Grande - #3/0; green or chartreuse
- Bigeye Tarpon - #1/0; orange/grizzly, sand devil, yellow

Permit Tackle

Permit can occasionally be spotted along the edges and channels of the bonefish flats, especially in the deeper flats near Lowe Sound and on the West Side. Permit in the Bahamas range in size from 3 - 40 pounds. Most often you will sight permit in deeper water (4 to 6 feet), along the edge flats or at the top of a high tide change. They call permit the fish of 10,000 casts, and casting to one of these sickled tailed ghosts is about as exciting as it gets. We recommend taking a 9 or 10 weight rod, and having it rigged and in the boat.

Fly Rods:

We suggest 9', 4 piece travel rods in 9 or 10 weights. We like fast tapered fly rods that generate high line speed. Rods that have been especially designed for the rigors of saltwater fly-fishing are the best choice. We like Scott, Sage, and Winston.

Fly Reels:

Fly reels specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing are important. Features to look for in reels are smooth drags, plenty of backing capacity, and a sturdy, machined, aluminum, one-piece anodized frame. Large arbor reels are a great choice and take up line and backing very quickly. Manufactures to consider include the Abel, Hardy, Galvan, and Hatch.

Fly Lines:

The Scientific Anglers Mastery Redfish Warm has been our favorite permit line for years. The newer Amplitude lines are even better (though they do come with a hefty price tag). It casts permit crab and shrimp flies with ease, and it's very accurate.

Leaders:

Fluorocarbon leaders are your best choice for permit as they are virtually invisible in water, and abrasion resistant. Scientific Anglers Absolute Big Game Fluorocarbon Leaders 9 - 12' leaders 16 - 20 lb. test is standard.

Permit flies:

There are a lot of permit crabs being pushed these days, but we have found only a few that consistently take fish. Here they are:



- Bauer's Fur Crab - #4 and 6; olive &/or tan
- Raghead Crab - #2; olive or tan
- Danger Muffin Crab - #2, 4; golden brown, ghost tan
- Enrico's Spawning Shrimp - #2; tan
- Squimp - #2; tan

Barracuda, Jacks, & Snapper

Barracuda in the Bahamas get big, and they are very aggressive. They attack a fly at an unbelievable rate of speed, and often skyrocket into the air when hooked. When hooked, few fish can match a 'cudas initial run for speed and sheer violence...hold on!

Jacks are very fast, pull like a freight train, and will destroy both surface poppers and streamers. Watching them blow up on your popper while you strip it as fast as you can is a sight to remember. Endurance is their strong point, and no jack gives up without a fight that you will remember.

Fly Rods:

Flies for these fish are often large streamers and poppers, so 9', 4 piece travel rod in a 9 or 10 weight are good choices. We like fast tapered fly rods, that generate good line speed. Fly rods that have been especially designed for the rigors of saltwater fly-fishing are the best choice.

Fly Reels:

Fly reels specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing are important. The same reels you would use for tarpon or permit will work great for these other species.

Leaders:

Leaders for barracuda and jacks/snappers can be simple. We often build a leader with 8 foot of 40# fluorocarbon for jacks and snappers, and add a bite tippet of 40 lb. Rio Powerflex Wire Bite Tippet for barracuda.

Flies for Barracuda:

- Cuda Killer - #4/0; green/white
- Pearly Popper - #2/0; green
- Tandem Cuda Fly - #2/0; green

Flies for Jacks/Snappers:

- Pearly Poppers - #2/0; blue/white
- In-Shore Popper - #3/0; chartreuse, white, orange/yellow
- Lefty Krey's Deceive - #3/0; chartreuse, blue
- GT Brush Fly - #6/0; tan, black

Bonefish Behavior

Bonefish are the target species in the Bahamas, and have three basic modes of behavior.

Feeding:

Bonefish feed on the bottom, and through the water column. While feeding on very shallow flats their wavering tails are often visible out of the water. In deeper water their tails are not visible but the fish can still be seen. While bonefish are feeding, the condition of the surface of the water affects their feeling of security. Bonefish are more nervous in calm water. Conditions determine how best to present the fly. On most days



there is a slight chop or ripple on the surface and the fly must be presented three to five feet in front of them. On very still days the fly should be cast further from the fish and stripped back into his area of awareness.

Mudding:

During the warmer months very large schools of bonefish will often back off the shoreline into about 5 to 10 feet of cooler water. As they grub for food they stir up the bottom creating a visible cloud of mud, referred to as “milk”. This cloud of mud moves as the bonefish move and makes these bones feel quite secure because they are not visible to predators. Often the angler can catch one fish after another without spooking the school. It is generally not a common practice to fish muds because the desired challenge of sight fishing is eliminated. However, guides will fish muds with you at your request, and this can be good for beginners to feel the first lightning-fast tug of a bonefish.

Traveling:

Traveling bonefish are intent on changing location, but are very aware of their surroundings and not necessarily interested in feeding. When casting to traveling bonefish place your offering well ahead of the fish and let it settle. Your guide will tell you when the fish is in range and when to strip.

Bonefishing Techniques

On the flats, your guide will be standing on the poling platform and poling the boat while scanning for fish. You will be standing on the front deck of the boat with your rod in one hand and your fly in the other.

When you are not fishing from the boat, you will be wading the flats. When wading, walk slowly and stop often to look for fish. If you see the fish moving in a specific direction, move quietly into position so you will be able to present the fly in front of the fish. You usually have more time than you think to make a precise presentation.

Bonefish are almost always moving, and movement is often the first sign of fish. Scan the water slowly from side to side, within the range that you can cast. The guide will be looking further out, responsible for finding fish at a distance and moving into a good casting position. Look for the flash of an exposed tail, nervous water, a wave or wake on top of the water, or the shadow of a cruising fish. When casting to a fish that is moving towards you, land the fly in front of the fish, let it sink while the fish moves towards it, and begin stripping when the fish is close to the fly.

Typically, the guide will see the fish before you, and will put the boat in position for your cast. You will hear him direct you to the fish by saying something like “10 o’clock, 40 feet, going left”. Point your rod where you think he is directing you, and he will often help by saying, “more left” or “more right”, and tell you when to cast.

If you do not see the fish, do not cast until your guide asks you to. He will put the boat in position for the cast, tell you how far to cast and in which direction, and when to cast. Follow his directions in when to begin stripping your fly.

After you cast, let the fly sink to the bottom and make your first strips long and slow to get the fish's attention. Now you are going to “read the fish” by observing its behavior. If it moves quickly to your fly and stops, it probably ate your fly. Make a long strip to set the hook. If there is no resistance, stop, let the fly sink, and begin stripping again. If you do feel resistance, **pull on your line to set the hook without lifting your rod**, and prepare to “clear your line” as the fish runs. The first run often takes all the line quickly off the deck, and it is important that you guide the line off the deck and onto the reel. Your drag has been pre-set, so hold your rod tip high and enjoy the run! Occasionally the fish will turn and run towards you. If you can’t strip fast enough to keep a tight line, push your rod tip into the water and the drag of the fish pulling the line through the water will keep tension on the hook. Bonefish have tough mouths and having sharp hooks is important.



Check your hook point regularly by pulling it across your thumb nail. If it digs into your nail, it's sharp. If it drags across your nail without sticking, it's time to sharpen the point. Be certain to pinch down the barbs on your hooks. This makes it easier to release fish with minimal handling, and also minimizes the risk of injury to yourself and others.

Planning & Preparing for Your Trip:

The best thing you can do to get ready after booking your trip is to practice your casting. **Accuracy of cast** is far more important than distance. Speed of re-casting is also very important as saltwater fish tend to move across the flats. If you have an accurate 40' cast and can pick that fly up and recast, example from 12:00 to 2:00 to get in front of a moving school of fish, this is far better and will hook more fish, than a wild 60' cast.

Your guides are there not only to get you into fish, but to help make your fishing trip go as smoothly as possible. They are well versed in both fly and spin fishing and know that area of Central Belize well. Some guides tend to be a bit shy than others, and don't want to be presumptuous, so if you need something, let them know. If you need help with your casting, the guides are experienced in fly fishing tackle. The guides will make fly recommendations and help to rig rods.

When fishing, you are on the bow of the skiff and the guide is normally on the platform at the aft. Guides use the "clock" system, and foot measurements to help you locate fish. If standing facing forward on the skiff, the bow is 12:00, hard right is 3:00 and hard left is 9:00. For foot measurements, your fly rod is approximately 9' and a spinning rod is anywhere from 6' to 9'. Your guide should go over this before fishing so you are both referring to the same thing – if he forgets, please remind him.

And finally, guides are people and not all have the same personalities. All of our guides know fishing and the areas to fish in Central Belize and all of our guides will work hard to get you into fish. They like when you catch fish as much as you do, if not more so. Sometimes the weather or the fish themselves are not cooperative and this is not the guide's fault. They will be working harder to find fish in bad weather conditions.

Wading:

If you would like to wade, please let us know ahead of time, so that we can schedule you with a guide who wades. There is no wading while fishing Tarpon. If fishing for Bonefish & Permit, about 20% of our flats are wade-able. Please note, that the wade-able flats are usually the first to blow out in windy conditions.

Suggested Reference Books:

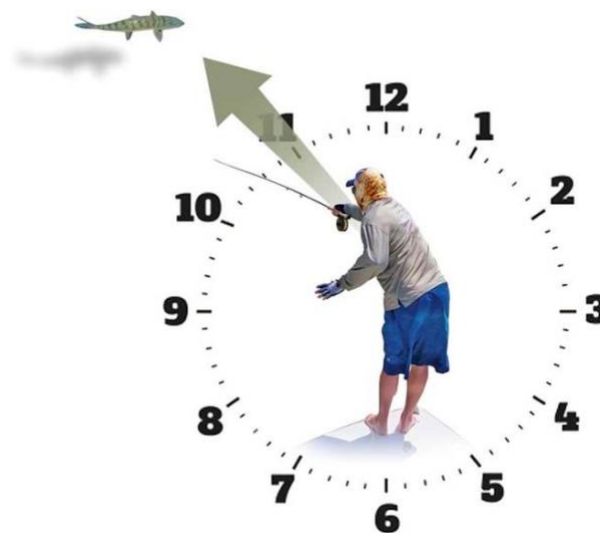
- Practical Fishing Knots II by Mark Sosin & Lefty Kreh
- Fly Fishing in Saltwater by Lefty Kreh
- Fishing the Flats by Sosin & Kreh
- Fly Fishing for Bonefish by Dick Brown
- Saltwater Fly Fishing by Jeff Currier
- Fly Fishing for Bonefish by Chico Fernandez

YOU & YOUR GUIDE ARE A TEAM

Please take the initiative and get to know your guide. Establish a rapport with him. Let them know what species you want to fish, how you want to fish and your abilities and fishing experience.

Let the guide check your equipment, knots, leaders, tippet material, flies, rod and reel, etc.

On the flats, your guide will oftentimes spot fish before you do. When this happens, your guide will refer to the numbers on a clock to give you the fish's general direction. For example, the bow (front) on the boat would represent 12:00 O'clock. Exactly perpendicular to the boat off of your right shoulder (starboard) would be 3:00 O'clock; perpendicular to the boat off your left shoulder (port) would be 9:00 O'clock, etc. In addition to the direction, the guide will also refer to a distance measured in feet. For example: "Okay, two fish coming at 1:00 O'clock --- 50 feet".



Still on the casting platform, strip out some fly line and throw a short cast as the guide watches. Next, throw a medium cast. Lastly, throw a long cast. Ask the guide how far you just cast. Make sure you are both on the same page in judging distance. Make sure his 50ft is not your 30ft. You and the guide now know each other's styles and abilities.

If your guide spots a fish and you do not see it, **DO NOT** cast until you see that fish. Point your rod in front of you as if a pointer on a chalkboard and have your guide direct your rod to where he sees the fish. Your guide might say, "2 o'clock, more right, keep going, keep going **STOP!**" this is where you should concentrate your vision and again **DO NOT** cast until you see the fish.

Setting the hook in saltwater fishing is very different from what most of us have learned in freshwater. You want to learn and practice the "Strip" strike or set. This is done **NOT** by lifting the rod tip as in trout fishing, but by keeping your rod pointed at the fish and pulling on the line, or stripping. In this way, the hook is either buried in the fish with the static line driving the hook, or at least the fly will remain in front of the fish for another chance. Lifting the rod tip will likely pull the hook out of the mouth of the fish without a hookup and spook the fish from the area. Each species of fish has subtle variations of the strip set to maximize your hookup rate with each eat. Your guide will help adjust your sets on the water, but come prepared to use this technique.



Joulter's Fly Fishing Clothing & Equipment Checklist

- Hats
- Polarized sunglasses and a backup pair
- Neck gaiter
- Long sleeve fishing shirts
- Evening wear shirts
- Raingear (light-weight for thunder showers or wet boat rides)
- Wading pants
- Sun gloves
- Shorts and swimsuit
- Wading socks (we recommend the Simms light neoprene socks)
- Wading shoes or booties
- Sandals or flip flops
- Belt
- Sunscreen
- SPF Lip balm
- Insect repellent (DEET as the active ingredient is best)
- Line dressing & cleaner
- Lens cleaner
- Forceps, pliers, hook file, line clipper
- Reel lube / oil
- Zip-lock® bags and garbage bags
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Athletic tape or finger guards
- Toiletries
- Camera & battery charger and storage cards
- Small binoculars
- Wading pack and boat bag
- Airline tickets
- Notebook & pen
- Passport
- Book / magazines
- Cash and credit cards
- Emergency contact numbers
- Prescription glasses
- Pre-trip information
- Aspirin, prescription drugs
- 2 copies of passport (packed separately in Zip-Lok baggies)