

## **babb-walter-2015-07-20.mp4**

[00:00:10] Well fishing meant to me. Just the mountians.

[00:00:14] It was necessary to fish not just enjoy being in the mountains. It was just the whole experience. We would we would camp for. Stay at the fellows camp but it was going out and fishing and then maybe going out the woods in the spring and hunting Gramps which is a war we treasure in the southern Appalachia. And coming back that evening maybe Monday brought up the school full of trout.

[00:00:41] fried potatoes. It was whole experience. In April meant Turkey hunting

[00:00:50] Trout fishing. Sometimes I do both the same day. Trout fish. Turkey hunting in the morning trout fish in the afternoon. So fishing to me meant being in the mountains. I still even though we have great tailwater fishing. Mountian fishing more than I do any other kind of fishing.

[00:01:19] Say about four or five years. Try to learn it on your own.

[00:01:23] Somebody that I was fishing with one time I never fished with before.

[00:01:28] This has been 15 20 years ago he said. You're making it look easy today and so you should watch me for 15 or 20 years that track you would have said that it is not easy. That.

[00:01:41] You had to get started somewhere not like a good school in the area that you want to be efficient. The most I mean I think you could take school in Wyoming or Montana and come back here and be lost because this nation is so much different.

[00:01:59] Or vice versa.

[00:02:02] We are. a school here. Would translate pretty good to Wyoming and Montana but some of the best Western fishermen are.

[00:02:10] I know we're from western North Carolina in East Tennessee. You can't fish here you catch fish and we're being.

[00:02:22] Yeah. You have to have to be an accurate caster.

[00:02:26] I think that's key to it. You have to. You have to be able to read the water

[00:02:32] You have to know how to position yourself take advantage. We've been reading that water and you have to be an accurate caster know how to get a good grip whether you're fishing with the dry fly or whether you're fishing with a nymph

[00:02:44] Lot of time. I would take that you have you fish to wet flies Because I think that might be easier. When I say new fish coming without an indicator into your own maybe make it a little bit easier. But I think you can catch fish on wet flies maybe as early as you need a.

[00:03:15] Yeah there's a lot of difference in the mountians up here

[00:03:18] You're fishing in a lot of pocket or in small pockets and a lot of them hold fish. All it takes is just some slow turns just a little bit for the rainbows.

[00:03:30] They get in there. Is that the current. Watch that current all day reading the water is different for browns. brook trout and rainbow. and reading the water for cutthroat is different. There's four different species fish that likes four different kinds of water. Rainbow trout. are fast water fish and the brown trout like to get out of the current. Even though I have called fish in the Beaver Kill river. So I guess they aclimate like whatever.

[00:04:00] Kind of water they're faced with.

[00:04:02] In my experience here especially the brown trout are a slower water fish where brook trout kind of like in between current and slow water. But if it's a high gradient strain or there's a.

[00:04:16] Faster flow and plunge pools you know they'll be they'll be there to.

[00:04:20] Lwhat I've seen of cutthroat trout. They seem to be a slower water fish. And a slow rising fish. First time I fished cutthroat trout in the Yellowstone Stone River I struck to fast. Because I used to having to strike real fast here. Youre not quick on the trigger here you won't catch fish.

[00:04:56] Not really. I like to catch them all I like Brown Trout because they're harder to catch and. They live longer here they give 10 15 years in these streams. And.

[00:05:08] They get bigger.

[00:05:10] You have to fish for them too. Their eyes are different than the other trouts they don't like sunlight. Really.

[00:05:19] You have to get fish for different species I like rainbow trout. I don't think there is anything prettier that a rainbow trout. Very eager. To go back in the back country and catch a whole bunch or where they are fished to alot they. Are not as easy to catch. I like the brooke trout They're pretty and they are the tastiest. If I eat trout its brook Trout that's what I kind of like about Wyoming They were trash fish you could keep a bunch of them if you wanted. Here it's. They have never been really threatened but they are not as many as they used to be.

[00:06:18] There is a place for that. Because the Smokey's they have been common sense about it. They have not tried to clean out every Rainbow and Brown. I don't think brook trout and inhabited everyone of these streams because they were to warm.

[00:06:43] The strains that they have to. Brook Trout and were basically high elevation streams. That had a fair population of rainbows. But I think there was room for the brook trout.

[00:07:01] I'm glad they did. We have. Tons of rainbows. Tennessee. They are well established it was logging that took the brook trout. Not the rainbow.

[00:07:16] The Rainbow. made it maybe hard for them to reclaim some of their streams but logging is what took most of the brook trout.

[00:07:30] Maine. All over it was logging . But when the streams recover you know there is the rainbow

[00:07:52] Well this smokies basically has haven't changed a lot since I've been fishing You know they were a very regulated they can't log or hunt

[00:08:07] Fishing regulations have changed over the years. And. Basically Matt Kulp or Steve Moore will tell you the same thing. fishing pressure didn't have much impact on fish population here in just the. Floods or droughts. probably 90 percent of tourists will never catch a fish. So what I've seen change here over the years I think is When I first started you hardly ever saw anyone fishing. If you went during the week. Not many on the weekend and now there's a lot of people fishing. But they don't seem to catch fish any better. They're not as good as some of the ones that were fishing when I was younger. Just about everybody you saw so they knew what he was doing. And then. Today is not necessarily the case because you've got a lot of new fishermen out. There. They're getting better along with some they have gotten really good in just a few years. The change for me is. Basically. The number of fishermen. And the tackles gotten better.. I like somebody like fish or somebody that fishes at the same speed I do.

[00:09:35] I can fish with anybody. Somebody fishes slower than I do. I kind of have to know that.

[00:09:42] If we go in the back country we divide water. If he's going to go along. Take 4-5 hours on the way. So I need to know how much water leaving him in.

[00:09:58] Kind of is important but not really important. Like I say I can fish with anyone.

[00:10:08] Now I would be considered a slow fish. The more ground you cover the more fish you will catch. Two or three casts and you might want to move on. Just somebody you know that you can kind of get along with. That does the same thing you do.

[00:10:49] I think there our Trout Unlimited chapter works really well with the park service. A lot of the projects that. They do up there with.

[00:11:02] Our chapter helps with. Including electroshocking, removing logs, remove rainbow trout, brook trout restoration. Down the Cherokee National Forest Helped restore streams.

[00:11:50] Now conversely that's not a good thing here. People never keep fish. Too many fish. In these streams. This is area than the west or New England. Too many fish and not enough food here. I would say th biggest problem has been climate change. Droughts are more frequent and longer. I don't know. I think different parts of the country will have different problems.

[00:13:57] I am a firm believer that the jet stream changes everything.

[00:14:34] I don't know how much climate change has got to do with the jet stream but I think the jet stream is what drives droughts and floods.

[00:14:47] Diversity. In one day I can go there and go fish a brook trout stream and then catch rainbows and brown trout.

[00:15:09] And you have so many different tributaries.

[00:15:14] There was a friend of mine from Vermont came down here a few years ago and he was struck by how close together all the water sheds are.

[00:15:40] Our tributaries are just closer together.

[00:15:56] I can catch 6 or 8 in a day over 20 inches.

[00:16:12] Well most of us here started out as bait fishers.

[00:16:16] My first trout that I caught was on an old bamboo fly rod as crooked as a dogs eye.

[00:16:23] It was a hand-me-down from my dad. And the way he taught me to tr fisouth was with a little size 10 hook, split shot and read the water

[00:16:35] And it basically was what he taught me later to do nymph fishing and you said just toss up there at the head of that run and if the leader hesitates.

[00:16:46] Give him a chance to mouth it and strike. The only difference when he started to fly fishing was don't hesitate.

[00:17:00] I have a friend. Well one of his friends.

[00:17:03] He was an older fella fellow at the time he had a disease which was a circulation problem. He couldn't get on his feet much. So instead of not trout fishing anymore he was an expert dry fly fisherman.

[00:17:20] He started fish with an ultra lights spinning rod and a small spinner and he was deadly with that he could drop it in a tea cup.

[00:17:44] I learned I learned that technique from him

[00:18:01] Most good trout fishermen I know they're proficient in the spinning rod as well as the fly rod.

[00:18:10] They just know when to use each. Here's some high water techniques that some of the locals use around here. Catch Big Trout.

[00:18:26] One of my favorite fishing companions he pioneered tail water fishing here and also fishing in Coldwater lakes for trout. Eddie. Originated a nymph called the georgia stance. Probably still one of the best nymphs ever. Anywhere. He took it all of the country and fished it. But the interesting thing about Eddie was was fishing. He had gotten to the point he had emphysema and couldn't wade streams anymore and he originated the catch a trout in a lake on a dry fly. And that was that was an interesting. He was realy god at dry fly fishing.

[00:19:30] He was one of my favorite companion fishing and he's passed away now.