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Walter Babb [00:00:10] Well, fishing meant to me, just the mountains. It wasn't necessary to fish, and I just enjoy being in the mountains. It was just the whole experience. We would, we would camp, or stay at the fella's cabin. But it was going out and fishing, and then maybe going out in the woods in the spring and hunting ramps, which is a wild leek that's treasured in the Southern Appalachians. And coming back that evening, maybe my dad fryin' up a skillet full of trout. Fried potatoes and ramps. It was just the whole experience there. And then in April, meant turkey hunting, trout fishing. Sometimes, I'd do both the same day. Trout fish... Turkey hunt in the morning, trout fish in the afternoon and evening. So fishing, to me, meant being in the mountains. And I still, even though we have great tailwater fishing here. I still enjoy the mountains more than I do any other kind of fish.

Walter Babb [00:01:11] Take a school. You'll save about four or five years trying to learn it on your own. Somebody that I was fishing with one time, I'd never fished with before. This has been 15, 20 years ago. He said, "You're making it look easy today." And I say, "You shoulda watched me the first 15 or 20 years that I tried. You wouldn't have said that." It is not easy, but you have to, you have to get started somewhere, and I think a good school, in the area that you're going to be fishing the most. I think you could take a school in Wyoming or Montana, and come back here, and then you'd be lost because this fishing's so much different. Or vice-versa. If you took a school here, well I don't know, a school here, would translate pretty good to Wyoming and Montana. 'Cause some of the best Western fishermen I know are from western North Carolina and East Tennessee. You catch a fish here, you catch fish anywhere I've been.

Walter Babb [00:02:22] Yeah! You have to have, you have to be an accurate caster. I think that's key to it. You have to, and you have to be able to read water. You have to know how to position yourself, to take advantage of reading that water, and you have to be an accurate caster, know how to get a good drift. Whether you're fishing with a dry fly, or whether you're fishing with a nymph. A lot of times I would take a new fisherman out with, and fish, have them fish two wet flies because I think that's maybe easier to learn than nymph fishing or, when I say nymph fishing, I mean without an indicator, you can put an indicator on, maybe it'd make it a little bit easier. But I think you could catch a fish on wet flies maybe as early as you could, with any other method.

Walter Babb [00:03:15] Yeah, there's a lot of difference to the mountains up here. You, you're fishing a lot of pocket water, and small pockets, and a lot of 'em hold fish. All it takes is just something to slow the current, just a little bit, for these Rainbows. They, they get in the edges of that current, watch that current all day. Reading water for Brown Trout and Brook Trout's different. And reading water for Cutthroat Trout is different. There's four species of fish that likes four different kinds of water. Rainbow Trout are pretty much fast water fish. And then Brown Trout like to get out of the current, even though I have caught fish in the Beaver Kill River, in the Catskills, right out in the current, that were Brown Trout. So I guess they aclimate to whatever kind of water they're faced with. But in my experience, here especially, that the Brown Trout are slower water fish. Brook Trout are kind of like in between, I've caught them in slower water. But if it's a high gradient stream, or there's a faster flow and a lot of plunge pools, you know, they'll be they'll be there too. They can adapt pretty good. From what I've seen of Cutthroat Trout, they seem to be a slower water fish.

James Thull [00:04:30] Yeah, I'd agree.

Walter Babb [00:04:30] A slower rising fish, they, uh. First time I fished for Cutthroat Trout in the Yellowstone River, I struck too fast, because I was used to having to strike real fast, here. If you didn't, if you weren't quick on the trigger here you didn't catch very many Rainbow Trout, they were fast.

Walter Babb [00:04:56] Not really. I like to catch them all. I like Brown Trout because they're harder to catch. They live longer here, they live 10-15 years in these streams. And they get bigger. You have to fish for them differently, their eyes are different than the other trouts, they don't like sunlight as readily and you have to, you have to fish for them different than you do the other species. I like Rainbow Trout because I don't think there's anything really prettier than a little Rainbow Trout that's a wild trout. They're eager. And you can go back in the backcountry and catch a whole bunch of them. Or you can catch some in where it's fished, or their fished too, a lot and they're not as easy to catch. I like the Brook Trout 'cause they're pretty, and they are the tastiest. If I eat trout, usually, it's, it's Brook Trout. That's what I kind of liked about Wyoming. They were trash fish in Wyoming, you could keep a whole bunch of' em if you wanted to. Here, it kind of, kind of hurts to keep 'em once in a while, although there's a lot of them here, it's, they haven't, they've never been really threatened, but they're not as numerous at they used to be.

Walter Babb [00:06:18] This place for that, because the smoke is in the smoke is unknown and they've been concerns about it. They have decided that they're going to go put a barrier up here at the park boundary and claim that every rainbow brown out of every string, because it's not practical. For one thing, I don't think brook trout and half with every inch of the strange because they were two more. The lower elevations drank for too long, were starving, and the strains that they have reestablish brook trout and were basically made elevation streams that had a fair population of rainbows, but I think there was room for the brook trout. I'm glad they did. We have tons of rainbows and we're eating from the mounds of East Tennessee. They're well established in the logging. What? Got to work, trip? I'm. Not the rainbow. The rainbow mating may be hard for them to reclaim some of their strange, but I've always wanted to do most of the brook trout mileage in Great Smoky Mountains. And in in May. And then you were doing the pinch band in New York. It was lovely. But when the strange recovered, you know, there the rainbow were. Because of that and cared about love and right here and.

Walter Babb [00:07:43] Dumped them off their traditional.

Walter Babb [00:07:52] Well the Smokies basically has haven't changed a lot since I've been fishin. I guess, you know, they.

Walter Babb [00:08:01] Regulated, they keep all the key and.

Walter Babb [00:08:06] Fishing regulations have changed over the years and basically map even more to the same thing. The fishing pressure doesn't have much impact on the fish population.

Walter Babb [00:08:18] Here, just floods and droughts and both vision for the 90.

Walter Babb [00:08:23] Probably 90% just over an aggregate fee. So what I've seen change here. But the thing.

Walter Babb [00:08:30] Is, is the mangroves. When I first started, you hardly ever saw anybody fishing.

Walter Babb [00:08:37] 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 and see better, but not as good.

Walter Babb [00:08:48] I can catch fish as good as the some of the ones that were fishing when I was just better. But you saw them do what he was doing. And then.

Walter Babb [00:09:00] Today is not necessarily the case, because you got a lot of new fishermen out there getting better, and a lot of some of them I can think of got breeding.

Walter Babb [00:09:08] In just a few years. But.

Walter Babb [00:09:14] The change for me is.

Walter Babb [00:09:16] Basically the number of fish, and that was done very well.

Walter Babb [00:09:29] I like somebody, I like fish or somebody that fishes at the same speed that I fish, fish, anybody, somebody that fishes much slower.

Walter Babb [00:09:38] Than I do. I kind of have to know that, because if we go in the back and we divide water.

Walter Babb [00:09:45] If he's going to take over for our species.

Walter Babb [00:09:49] I have found Here on the weekend. So I'm happy to know how much longer leave him. That kind of is important, but not really important.

Walter Babb [00:10:01] I can say I conservation value that age is taking.

Walter Babb [00:10:05] Care of that. I would be considering small fish. I love hearing the.

Walter Babb [00:10:13] More efficient care of the coefficient of package. Sure. 2 or 3 fish to three.

Walter Babb [00:10:17] Cars to do a. My mom gave it to me.

Walter Babb [00:10:27] Just somebody, you know that.

Walter Babb [00:10:29] You can kind of get along with. And you also say thank you for the fact that I have a friend or two that doesn't enjoy rams and fish in. They they go home. Dude. Anyway. I think Eritrea donated the chapter. I was speaking for Irish.

Walter Babb [00:10:52] It works really good for the Park Service. They a lot of the projects that they do up there with we our chapter.

Walter Babb [00:11:02] Copy and yeah. Can you get around with that diversity but.

Walter Babb [00:11:08] Help us to account for my micro shopping and remove rainbow.

Walter Babb [00:11:13] Trout. Removal of brook trout restoration.

Walter Babb [00:11:19] Down the Cherokee National.

Walter Babb [00:11:20] Forest. Trout chapters are available to stream improvement. Thank you. Oh wow. Was in there. Oh. Diversions like up there restored. Thanks for being with me.

Walter Babb [00:11:35] I think trout on for a positive.

Walter Babb [00:11:37] Effect on the trail. Fisheries over the country may be making people aware.

Walter Babb [00:11:44] They don't have to keep.

Walter Babb [00:11:45] A bunch of fish every time we give them.

Walter Babb [00:11:50] Now, conversely, that's not a good thing here. People in America keep the issue of too many fish and they strike out of food. So this is a different area of western New England and pale foxes. This is the big picture difference in this betting where I've been speaking about the whole southern Appalachian fishery, that you just pretty much got me a.

Walter Babb [00:12:14] For strange to many fish. I would.

Walter Babb [00:12:19] Say the biggest challenge.

Walter Babb [00:12:21] Is. Is probably the climate change.

Walter Babb [00:12:29] I don't know that for a fact. I've seen it. We had terrible droughts here in the 30s, at the end of the 50s.

Walter Babb [00:12:37] And then the drought.

Walter Babb [00:12:42] That teenagers especially, we had 17 or 18.

Walter Babb [00:12:45] They grow or er take care of was very. Water really low.

Walter Babb [00:12:53] The next year the respiratory out.

Walter Babb [00:12:55] They ever figure out a couple of years they would put you in? Yeah, I don't know.

Walter Babb [00:13:03] I think different parts of the country.

Walter Babb [00:13:05] Are gonna have different problems.

Walter Babb [00:13:12] Maybe the biggest one. Like I said, though, I don't know for that. For a fact. Sure. Yeah. I don't know that anybody actually knows it for a fact. We we've been in the heat waves here, like I say, the 30s, the 80s. The 50s and 2007, 2002. And not every year. Just kind of depends. I'm a firm believer that the jet stream This is the driving force behind him. But is he way better? Right? Yes. If you go to high pressure city on the south east, the jet stream is going to ride everything up over there. Everything north of that car is going to have a ton of rain. Sooner or later that's going to happen. California. I know

we're in a drought now, but there's going to be something happening to change that jet stream. They're going to wish they never heard of rain. Just like Texas did this year. Yeah, they were in this horrific drought for 2 or 3 years. And somebody must pray for rain because, like, got way, way more than they ever need. Yeah, they got dumped up in a field all the rest of the year. I don't know how much climate change has got to do with the jet stream, but I think the jet stream of long drives, droughts and blue. The diversity in one day I can go up there and go fish a little brook trout stream. If I wanna walk a long ways and then stop halfway back down and catch a whole bunch of rainbows and get in my car and and where I know there's a 25 inch bracket. So that's one thing that I've got a lot of added. And you have so many different tributaries. It was a friend of mine from Vermont, came down here a few years ago, and he was struck by how close together all the watersheds were. He said, In Vermont, you don't have that. You've just got a you got a big stream, got a few tributaries, and you may have to live a long ways. We've had another big stream in the future. Curious to hear you don't have to drive a few miles to find a good sized drink. And lots of tributaries in those tributaries. They appeared to us just about out of the whole village, and it's. It's just a diversification that you can if it's a good rainy day, I can go up there and have a no more, maybe 10 or 15 big retro. I'll try to catch my catch, but I have a for him. It gives you 6 or 8 a.m. and a day on a good day.

Walter Babb [00:16:03] Oh my goodness.

Walter Babb [00:16:12] Well, most of us here started out as a fisherman. My first draft that I got was on an old H and bamboo flower. It was crooked. Oh, it was a hand-me-down from my dad and the way he taught me to trout fish, which was a little bit of satin hook, split sharp and read more. And it basically was what he taught me later in the fish. And he said, just toss it over the heat of that run and just follow it. Yeah, they're that leader hesitates. Give it a chance to masturbate, he said. And all the difference. When he started to fly fishing was don't let up. Hesitate. But leader hesitate said to me. I have a friend. One of his friends. He was an older fella at the time, and he had a bird disease, which was a circulation problem. His. He couldn't get more than his feet wet. So instead of not trout fishing anymore. He was an expert, I thought fisherman. He started fisherman and ultralight spinning rod and a map spinner with travel tips cut off and a streamer fly hooked on with a split ring. He was deadly that he could drop it to take, but he could drop it, drop off at the peak. And you had me. You had trout. She started trout fishing while the old one was going out and. I learned. I learned that technique for me. I'm still using some, but he didn't keep variation. But. You can be a trout with the fly rod. Probably easier than you can in your method. If you want to keep a bunch of try out the most good trout fisherman I know here that they're proficient in the spinning rod as well as the fly rod. I just know the difference. When do you want? Sure, there's some high water techniques. That's a little confused. Spinner up here. Catch big trout. One of my favorite fishing compatibility, cuz Eddie George was a trout fishing live in in East Tennessee. And he pioneered tail water fishing here and also fishing in cold water lakes for trout and. Eddie originated a name called The Jewish Names. Probably still one of the best names ever. Anywhere. He took it all over the country. But the interesting thing about Eddie, which was Fish and Chilhowee, like he had gotten to the point he had emphysema and couldn't wait to have 24. And he originated a way to catch Trout and Jill. How do you like him? For how long? Atria. And that was that was an interesting time or any time I worked with him. He was really good at that kind of fish, you know, talking 2425 extract to get your monograph. That was he was one of my favorite fishing companions. He passed away now. But he he was an interesting guy and a great fish on the best I ever fished with.