

berndt-randy-2017-02-12.mp4

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Randy Berndt [00:00:10] I guide in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, my company is called the UP Fly Angler. I started the business in 2013. After having worked a number of years as a special education teacher. And so I did some, my graduate work at Montana State and kind of honed my fly fishing skills and then came back here and started my business.

Randy Berndt [00:00:43] That's... I get it all the time, when I tell clients that I also teach in the winters and they say 'you can tell.'

Randy Berndt [00:00:59] Casting I think is the [unintelligible] but actual guiding it's always easier to guide a woman, because they have a tendency to listen to what's functional. So when I have a husband and wife team, what I typically find is, is the wife out fishes the husband. Which doesn't sit too well with the husband, usually. But it's because the wife is more willing to follow the techniques and probably either haven't developed the bad habits? But is, or is more willing to overcome them. Or change them.

Randy Berndt [00:01:35] It's wilderness fishing. We see very few people on the stream in an average year. A year, if I spend a 100 days on the water, we might see people three or four days, see other anglers. And that's always been the draw, it's I say the last undiscovered area of the country for fly fishing.

Randy Berndt [00:02:08] We fish Rainbow, and Brown Trout, as well. Depends where you're at in the river system as to what you're going to catch. So most water falls will block the upstream migration of the Browns and Rainbows. And once you hit a waterfall, above that are all the Brook Trout.

Randy Berndt [00:02:30] I just want to catch fish. You know, there are those purists out there and Michigan has lot of them. Who will, if there's not a hatch and you can't catch fish on dry flies, they go home. Typically we fish streamers and in the morning and then in the afternoon we go to dry fish. [huge amount of background noise]

Randy Berndt [00:02:41] Out of necessity, not out of desire. It's more of a chore for me. But if a tie fishes well for me that I can't buy commercially, you know it's not available or it's too expensive to buy. [huge amount of background noise]

Randy Berndt [00:03:14] People always say that.

James Thull [00:03:15] You don't care either way.

Randy Berndt [00:03:15] But I don't care either way, I just want to catch fish.

James Thull [00:03:25] Sure Sure.

Randy Berndt [00:03:25] Absolutely. It's what I think what most people live for, is getting that native fish and making a nice presentation and fooling that fish. That being said, we have a lot of dumb fish in the UP because they don't see the flies. We don't get the pressure so they're pretty receptive.

Randy Berndt [00:03:50] Where are they doing the work? They do some stocking and that's important in fishery that's not much of a helpful put and take. They put a lot of Steelhead in, but they don't return them. So I think that they are spending a lot of money that isn't warranted that's probably what they're not doing well. I think the protection of the Great Lakes would be where everybody could improve. Something like the invasive species coming in which disrupts the food chain.

James Thull [00:04:16] Sure.

Randy Berndt [00:04:22] Not so much in my part of the UP, I'm in the western UP, which is pretty remote. And so I don't see any extreme improvements being done. I don't see any stream clean ups, not that there's a lot of trash. But I think we kind of have forgotten a portion of the, of Michigan.

Randy Berndt [00:04:42] [huge amount of background noise] Climate change obviously is one of them, I think everybody's fighting that. In our area it's more of a mining threat. As minerals become more valuable and the technology improves to recover them we see lot more threats of mining.

Randy Berndt [00:05:14] I think that's what you've mentioned, obviously it's warmer. Who would even think that in early February you'd be sitting in a place where it's 40 degrees outside and normal skies. Very little snow on the ground. Up in the upper peninsula the last couple years we've had [unintelligible] snowfall which impacts our water later in the year, so. Between the water that we want, I have learned through out when I haven't had to shut down my fishing much, but we have had to adjust. If we have to fish earlier in the day, end the day earlier. Start earlier, end the day earlier, to make sure we aren't fishing in water that's too warm.

James Thull [00:05:48] Sure.

Randy Berndt [00:05:57] I guess I'd go to Montana.

James Thull [00:06:08] Montana?

Randy Berndt [00:06:08] I would. I spent some time up there through the eyes really like a sign of why I've got it right here right here then of course. (Unintelligible).

Randy Berndt [00:06:24] I think for me its the whole evolution about how people turn into fly anglers. Everybody starts with the bait. Then everybody wants to catch one fish. [unintelligible] my clients who haven't fished, they'll say 'we want to catch a bunch of fish,' I guess my last group this year, guys came up 'I want to catch a bunch of fish.' They'd never cast in fly fishing. I said 'let's start with catching one fish', which they did and then by the end of the trip, after three days they were fishing very well. So it's, the essence of fishing to me is catching some fish, but then finally getting to the point where you're just enjoying going fishing.

Randy Berndt [00:06:24] My dad. Yeah, he started me out with the bait. He never evolved into fly [unintelligible].

Randy Berndt [00:06:24] I think the more people we can turn into catch and release anglers, the better off we're going to be. I've met a lot of people who take a lot of fish. And I wish I could convince them it's important to release the fish.