

doering-arjes-peer-2017-07-06.mp4

Arjes Doering [00:00:10] Well actually it's it's not a real story but you could say I was always attracted by the unknown and to explore the unknown. And it's very nicely described in one passage of Herman Hesse of the story of Narcissus and Goldmund where the fish are rocking in the dark and he watches them how they're swimming around and but he can't reach them. So that was always the kind with me in a way to try to being attracted by something which is invisible or hard to reach and to get hold of this was always very attractive. Well actually the lake where we have a small summer cottage. I go very often in this lake fishing for perch and the perch are quite deep down I found out at least the big ones. And it was quite quite hard to catch them. I mean in the first years I caught small perch and it was always, I was tempted to. There must be big perch and how to get some. And it took. A very long time to until I succeeded catch them as a fly. I mean at this time I was still fishing spinning and fishing the fly fishing. But it was the big question was how to get some was a small small small. I lost the word now

James Thull [00:02:04] like a small bait or small fry.

Arjes Doering [00:02:08] There is a streamer so. First that didn't work at all to capture as the streamer and. Then I also found out perch, perch can be very tricky sometimes and just follow your fly and look at it and look at it and then you know. It's a boat and he'd go. But finally I succeeded. So this lake reveals the secrets to a certain extent. And so this lake is very special to me.

James Thull [00:02:42] And what's the name of a lake.

Arjes Doering [00:02:44] (Unintelligible, Grosser L...?) It's in the land Brandenburg. Yeah.

James Thull [00:02:51] Wonderful.

Arjes Doering [00:02:58] I would like to go again into the tropical rainforest. I mean I have been there a couple of times in Peru but it's it's always so fascinating not just catching fish but just everything together to be in this tropical climate. It's warm. It's. I don't like the heat it. After a few days I feel comfortable with a heat and and then altogether there's a concert of the jungle which is increasing around six o'clock in the evening and 6 o'clock in the morning. And you don't notice a sound made by an insect or bird or the monkeys are screaming and it's it's wonderful to fall asleep and in the jungle and lying on the ground of the jungle and having fished for some hours in the heat for unknown fish. I mean every time you are in the jungle you see creatures which you've you haven't seen them before. Not only yourself but never seen a picture of them and so there's always something you know I would like to go back. But I think it's always good to to have something which documents historical things or which but which will be historical and in a certain time. And it's. It's very valuable. For example I noticed when I did some research on split cane rods there's very little documentation about certain aspects. And I found hardly any documentation so I would be happy if people would have documented more. A hundred years ago or even before that. So I think it's it's very valuable also to have some personal opinions documented and to see how it changes over time different attitudes to anything. I mean not nowadays and in the highly industrialized countries you're not fishing for for eating the fish or you don't have to fish. I mean you go out and and buy the fish and young persons even don't know how to do. If it gives them a complete fish we don't know what what to do with that thing, have to have them hand them a filet. So it's mainly for

recreation fishing in our areas but. So it's very interesting how it changed and why it changed.

Arjes Doering [00:05:59] No my grandfather infected me. I was 5 6 years old when he took me fishing in the Baltic of not in the boat it was a boat where we would be fishing from. Yeah. Not not the beach but from kai in German. It's the kind of wall where the boat boating. And he was at this time he still had some old cane rides not split canes but complete columns which were just cut into pieces and you could disassemble them into three pieces and some very easy equipment. And we hardly ever caught a decent amount of fish but, it was fun and very very fascinating and yeah when when he passed away I I continued it was him I was infected for life.

James Thull [00:07:03] Do you remember what kind of fish you would catch.

Arjes Doering [00:07:07] Well it was a flat fish mainly in this area.

Arjes Doering [00:07:18] I think by research by science we get more insights into how ecosystems work how fish are living and I mean fish have have character say the trout is not a trout. It's a clever Charlie you have stupid trout and bold trout. I think that's probably valid for any species of fish so it's much more complicated than we thought. Maybe 20 years ago. But it's also giving us more or better opportunities to manage fish stocks. But it's the hard things to apply it because people like to stick with their opinions or their habits. We have done it's always like that so usually it's very hard to to shift habits and do it differently. So I think that is a possible gain and the loss. Yeah I think angling has become a kind of sport. I never call it quits board fishing because sport is always connected with competition for me that it's not a competitive thing but it became so popular over the last decades and you see many anglers who regard this as a kind of sport and and fish some don't regard the fish as a highly evolved vertebrate. You have to deal. It's not just a toy it's it's a really highly evolved animal. And many anglers see it as some. Yeah it's a toy and something to play with. I think as far as pollution is concerned or in the areas where I work it has improved over the last decades. If you look at a river map of Germany and which indicates a current state of pollution that you have many red areas well it was very bad and over 30 40 years it has improved incredibly. But of course climate change is a threat. And it will change some things dramatically. And as always in ecology you turn one knob and things change in three spots. Where I never expected things to change. So it's you can't make a forecast but. But there are still countries where a lot of pollution is is going on and the economics over forests are forests and the environment is always second. So I think there's still a lot to be done and I'm not sure it will be done.

Arjes Doering [00:10:52] I mean mainly regarding the winter here in Berlin when I was a kid we always went out in wintertime with a sled going downhill or skating on the frozen lakes. And this has become quite quite rare. I mean we had temperatures down to minus 20 degrees in the night. It was quite usual. And now we have frost minus degrees for some for a week or two and we can go skating and then it starts melting all again.

Arjes Doering [00:11:25] So it's very the weather is somehow unpredictable.

Arjes Doering [00:11:37] I would advise him to find somebody to guide him to advise him. Who knows about fishing and give him some good hints or his he doesn't have to do everything on his own or her own and not being so unsuccessful like me for for me before you catch the fish you want. So, but, In a way if you have to do it yourself you or you have more patience you have to develop more patience.

Arjes Doering [00:12:19] I think for me it has to be somebody who is also interested in nature. Besides having patience and resilience and who likes to experiment. Trying out new things how to catch fish. But a good partner. Yes it's a lot of interest in nature and looking off to insects and and the flowers and everything which is surroundings efficient not only on the fish. I don't like to fish like some persons. Well I know for all day long I have been exhausted in the evening just by because they are fishing so hard so many other things. Which makes it worthwhile for me to go fishing. Yeah yeah of course it's it's nice if you catch a fish it gives you some arousal. But some days. Are also just nice being out.

Arjes Doering [00:13:39] Well for me that's changed a lot because until the wall came down I didn't know that it's a nice low land or. Several lower land brown trout stream one hour away from central Berlin. It was completely unknown to me as I grew up and in West Berlin. So and I experiences as I am a member of this FARIO club.

Arjes Doering [00:14:09] It was a nice example how East and West came together and can cooperate on a nice basis coming from a quite different culture and the um. What is special about Germany. You asked. I think that the examination you have to pass an examination before you are allowed to buy off the fishing license and I think that it makes sense. As you are dealing as I said before was a highly evolved vertebrate animal which has all senses. You should know how to deal with it how to kill it if you want to eat it and how to release it if you, don't want to eat it. But being being careful about this creature. Taking care of it if you are having some responsibility for it and then at least having gone through a course Well you heard about some details and learned something which many people many people don't know anything about fish and they want to go fishing. So I think it's a good thing to have this test. Well when you've passed these fishing tests its for life forever. It's only the actual licence for the water, by the way when you fish which is valid for a day or a year or whatever you you're buying once to, it's like the driving licence forever.

Arjes Doering [00:15:59] Yes. It depends very much on on the (speaking German) that you're going to fish but in Bramberg it's relatively easy to fish for, for tourists to get their then you license.

Arjes Doering [00:16:21] I think if you want to do something about it you should get organized in a club for example and and and then you should have some some experts with you about river restoration. It's it can be very easy. I mean you throwing bags of stones into the river which have been pulled out decades ago and to recreate some of some spawning beds which is an easy task but you should have somebody with some knowledge about it and then you can do quite a lot of things to restore a population. If you look at the rivers which have been heavily polluted and which state there are now things come back quite quite quickly and some things and some species. But it's it's possible to do a lot about fish populations.

Arjes Doering [00:17:31] Um yeah. In a way it's conserving the environment. This is something political in a way because environment affects everybody. And what the industry is doing what is affecting the environment very much so you have to do something about it. If you're concerned.

Arjes Doering [00:18:05] Um. Well that's uh. That would require some some longer discussion but I think as as I'm in favor of the European Union I think that it's in general it's a good thing and it's some. It's not you it's already some. Some years ago as they were

made the water Framework Directive. So. In theory no member state is allowed to make to do anything which makes the water quality worse. If you do something in the water body you always have to remain at the same state or you have to improve the quality of the water. So I know it's a difficult task for for some states and. An also in Germany. You have to we have picked some waters where we're trying to improve the quality of the rivers. But I think that's that's one way how it can can work.

Arjes Doering [00:19:24] But I would think. The number of refugees is increasing more and more. For it it would be a good way to to integrate them. One possibility I mean somebody who is interested in fishing. If he if he would. Propagate this. Type of recreation it's an easier way to integrate other other cultures. I'm not saying fishing in general should be propagated because there are already so many person that sometimes I think too many persons involved in a highly highly populated country like Germany and some areas are very crowded by anglers. But um but you could use angling as such. In certain situations to to overcome certain certain boundaries and to getting together.

[00:20:32] What I would say is there are anglers and anglers. I would say in general but that, as in any group, you have some subgroups that you like and some which you you dislike so. But there are many which you which are in the same kind of fun. Yeah. How do you like the nature. How do you like fishing. You find many. Many angles. Where you. Meet nice people but because you are only. Yes that's true. You need to make friends and that you wouldn't have met otherwise if you wouldn't have fishing in common.

James Thull [00:21:27] I was just wondering like in Peru for instance. Yeah. Do your guides there get have that. It's very that common sense of excitement when there's a tug on the end of a line.

Arjes Doering [00:21:38] Ah yes. And especially because for this sea of fly I mean fly fishing is almost unknown in Peru. And if you show them the bait says it won't work. It doesn't smell it doesn't taste anything. But then when you've caught it first First the eyes are getting really big. And and yes it seems they have the same excitement when the fishes is hook as is, I do. That that's common. Yes.

Arjes Doering [00:22:16] Um yeah I have a book here of Pieter Bruegel the older one. He made some very nice drawings where you can find them if you have to look closely to find anglers in his drawings. Somehow he captured the spirit a few hundred years ago. People enjoyed fishing already. At that time so I I like his small drawings. We have to search for something but you find something if you look closely. You have books. Yeah. Still I like the book which I got when I was some nearly 12 or so. You probably won't have it in your. Collection methods. It's a German book and maybe some German anglers recall it and this this photo was very inspiring when I was reading this book because I had such a float from my and my grandfather and I was using it and I know first fishing was was a worm but it was fascinating to sit there and then suddenly the thing moved and then you could feel something at the end of the line. So. And yet another author. John Gierach which is very famous for not only in your country very famous but if you read the first book I thought it's a bit boring nothing is happening. But I kept on reading and the more I read I enjoyed it and I thought no it's it's not boring. If you don't have to take the time to go fishing you have to read one of his books it's almost like fishing.

James Thull [00:24:21] Great. You know it's thats great when I see a James Prosek print behind you. Is that right?

Arjes Doering [00:24:27] He he made this excellent book about trout of the world. So. But I also enjoyed very much his book about about eel. I mean as a fly fisherman. You don't know much about eel in general but I've seen in the photo where eel was taken was a streamer. And as I did a lot of research on eel I can recommend to every angler this book about eel if you're not really interested eel but, it's a great story about you in the world. It's a very special fish species and very unusual compared to other species.

Arjes Doering [00:25:18] It's only online. Yeah but customers come come to my my home and look at some articles I feel like so that's that's possible too but I don't have regular opening time so no. 99 percent is bought online.

James Thull [00:25:38] And then what's the name of it.

Arjes Doering [00:25:39] (Speaking German) translating to jumping trout. And yeah actually that the idea started with with Mel Krieger's books the essence of fly casting. When when a friend asked me if I could help him translating the book and then it was finally translated This was the first article first and only one in the shop. And it was a new experience for me. Yeah. Being being a scientist. I had no experience how to commercialize things. And then it was a nice thing to translate this book. And but then I spent almost the same amount of time to to sell it to bring it to the shops to get some people interested. And it's hard. It's um it's very special especially in German speaking countries. There was no good book just about the casting technique and and that proved to be true with more than 4000 copies sold now in Germany Switzerland and Austria. So it was worth while, the effort. And yeah. And then I started. To look for other interesting things which which are not available. Usually I was always looking for special things. I was I didn't have a desire to to run a usual shop for four flies and rods and lines but um I met a person on the rod building gathering in Italy who makes silk lines so now I have clients from handmade settlements from Italy and stuff like that which is some. Not easily available but I find very interesting and which makes them fly fishing more for fun. Also not only Mel's book I have quite a few books now and also films which I think good films which I consider good either their. You learn a lot from watching these films about casting or to catch certain species or their good entertainment. A few very good fly fishing films.

Arjes Doering [00:28:22] There was a great experience. I mean. He always said that once a book is finished. I will make a tour with you. And for two years we made. Offered schools and clinics in Switzerland and Germany. And it was such a great experience. He was such a vivid guy. I remember standing in the heat of Zurich in Switzerland. It was 30 degrees Celsius. And I was already I had a sore throat from translating it and Mel said in the afternoon. Okay let's finish the cross. Now my translator is worn out and. But he was still seemed to be fit.

Arjes Doering [00:29:09] it was casting clinic it again and doing casting clinics with Roberto Pragliola which is some very well known in Italy he developed the TRT technique, tecnica di lancio totale, the technique of the total cast of the casting technique which comprises everything says aye. I know Roberto for quite quite a while and he developed the technique. You have much better where you take much more care about line control and you can can cast it away. For example that's a fly standing for us not to need lots of line but the fly touches in a gentle way of water first so you can cast under the Bushes and catch the big charge which is normally not not reachable with the traditional casting technique. And. I find it fascinating that. Somebody had thought about it and you found out something which is. Leading you to completely different effects than the other technique which we which we know. So I'm happy that I can make courses together with him and his.

Academy has found a TRT Academy and we are offering courses in Europe some some years ago he gave me a big heavy book about a TRT casting technique and he said this is part one. Wanted a few pounds Harry and he has almost finished part two about all the different TRT casts.

Arjes Doering [00:31:15] While I am not a professor but I have done my I have a.

James Thull [00:31:20] Fisheries biologist is it.

Arjes Doering [00:31:21] Yes fisheries biologist and I studied fish ecology in England and the University in East Anglia. I think some day I had the idea to combine mine My up my hobby my passion was with my profession. So. I started studying fish and I work with different freshwater species and did a lot of research about fish ageing. I wanted to determine the age of fish.

James Thull [00:31:58] And you work for the city of Berlin or for the nation. Who do you.

Arjes Doering [00:32:03] Yeah. There a different working places. When I was working for it. I was also working for the. City of Berlin. Fish wise I was also. From the city of Berlin contracted to do some expertise on some water bodies here in Berlin and so last year I worked at Homeboys University in Berlin. Doing research about recreational fishing and how this affects them. Yeah the water bodies of fish species and the anglers. So. But I was mainly concerned. In a project where we did some research about them. With perch in a small lake which we tagged. And we got radio signals from the fish all year round. So every every few seconds so we know about the behavior of the perch even under the ice which was. So far unknown. And quite exciting.

Arjes Doering [00:33:20] But what. I worked a few years for the Swedish Institute in Drottningholm which is a city next to Stockholm. For a European research project on fish aging and. I liked as cooperation between different different institutes and especially the hospitality in Sweden. There was a. Great place to work. Very nice colleagues and. And to gain some insights into the age more insight into the age of Fishes.

Arjes Doering [00:34:06] I like. I love. The aspect that you can create any rod you you imagine. I mean you making a new design for right. And after one or two weeks if you have some time to work continuously you have it completely new rod. And then you can test it and enjoy it. And if you don't like it or something doesn't work then you change it and do it the next rod to this which is impossible with carbon fiber. So doing it my myself. This is the main point. And then they can experiment with it. I mean at the moment I'm only doing scientific research with bamboo because I found many questions. And answered. There is no documentation about tonkin which is used not for 99 percent for rod making but so far I think it was an accident that some rod maker. Got some tonkin in a sense hundred fifty years ago. But that 2000 1200 species of bamboo in the world and the other ones which have internals. With more than a metre wide and talking has a maximum of 50 centimeters. So you have to take makes a lot of work to get rid of the nodes. And. With the other species you could possibly build the rod three piece or us out any nodes. If it's a mechanical properties are similar to tonkin but that's one thing I am still having to test that's on my list.

Arjes Doering [00:36:04] What I would like to do different aspect different aspects to improve the rods from the chemical point of view. And trying to explore different bamboo species if they are suitable or maybe even better than Tonkin. Nobody knows yet.

James Thull [00:36:26] What is when some of the challenges so far in doing that. Is it finding acceptable bamboo or is it being able to locate what have been some of the challenges in say building a right that has the metre long nodes.

Arjes Doering [00:36:39] Well at the moment of the challenge was to to find this bamboo species and to get some samples. Two years ago I was in Vietnam and China collecting bamboo. And that you see so many species you can't take them or all at once. But I have some friends now there and I will get more samples from Vietnam in a few weeks. It will be quite quite exciting to see what. What is this bamboo. Like. Yeah the different challenges. I mean I'm also looking for different locations of Tonkin tonking coming nowadays the rod makers are getting Tonkin from one province in China. From Guangdong. Have been getting this is a move variety for. Maybe already a hundred fifty years ago it came from that era. But nobody knows and no records. But with the location where it came from is that only the first one who described it scientifically was McClure. But he was there or he published it in 1932. His piece paper. Tonkin was already here in Europe and in the States quite a long time before that.

Arjes Doering [00:38:03] But if it came from that era or if there are other locations were tonkin was going I we found out so far. If I found Tonkin in Vietnam. Which is. A bit different from. The Chinese variety. And I'm still searching for the key. We'll keep searching for the best bamboo for making split canes.

Arjes Doering [00:38:34] Well. There are quite a few know. With. Whom I'm. In contact and. I respect very much Glenn Brackett who is very. Open minded and he shares. All his knowledge. He invited me and finally. Last year I was there to visit him and his factory and this was not only a great experience but but but I learned a lot. But also from. I could visit Tom Morton And we had a lot of exchange and he is also one of the guys. Who knows what he's doing. I mean he has been doing it for for so many years and now I heard. He said sadly passed away. So I was very lucky. We could have some discussion. And. I'm just trying to find the name. There was some. The name it's Wayne Maca. He was also part of the Winston team together with Glenn Brackett and Tom Morgan. And I also visited him and. He is one of the very few persons who. Who takes him to the limits. I mean he he showed me a rod which was hollow built. And usually. If you ask a hobby or art makers they say you have to build walls. You can't make it completely hollow rod. You have to have something which supports a hollow rod inside. And he gave me a rod and said tried to cast it and was excellent. And then he said Okay take it apart. And Wood takes it to parts. And he brought a steel wire. And pushed it into the tip of the rod and went down to whole tip until. The last two. Inches. So the whole thing was completely hollow. And. Such a thin rod incredible thin rod and it didn't collapse nothing. So. He is doing rod making to a, he's looking for new ways to making rods in different ways. So. Many rod makers. I met I mean they're doing one or two rods a year. It's a nice hobby. That's fine. But. I'm also looking. Like I did it was efficient. Something is hidden and you have to explore it and bring it to the surface and maybe find something new. Maybe we will fail but I think there's still some. Potential in bamboo to. Try something different.

Arjes Doering [00:41:35] Yes that's an interesting question because when I. Asked the rod makers where do you get your your material from and. Where most of them. Have still a lot of counts at home. And many of them until last year and got it from Andy Royer of course who was the only. Bamboo broker worldwide especially for for rodmakers. So and he imported it also to Europe if requested. But we have nobody in Europe especially for good quality Tonkin. And as Andy has passed away now this source is not available for

Europe anymore. And. It would be. possible to import from the states. But this is a transport costs are so high. So I thought. Well as I have been in China and and I know the family who is doing it for more than 20 years they know what quality the rod makers want. So I am cooperating with. David Serafin who. Is importing. To the States and Canada. And. We are cooperating. And. The first container arrived a few weeks ago in Berlin from China. It's very good. Tonkin quality. And. I'm happy now that I can offer. As to rod makers. Within Europe. Yeah. We are taking great care about water quality. It's double check it's 10 selected by. Date from. China and. I'm checking again what is arriving here in Berlin come as. Looked at and. And I give it a quality mark cane before I send it to my my customers and. I'm happy. That. Already. A few have. Noticed that Tonkin is now available in Europe.

James Thull [00:43:51] Is it so is it sent directly to China to here or is it sent from China to the states to here.

Arjes Doering [00:43:57] No no. In order to to keep the transport prices low it's sent directly from China to the port of Hamburg and from Hamburg it's trucked to to Berlin.

Arjes Doering [00:44:14] Well from from the outside you look for straightness. It should be straight as possible. I mean there's no cotton was really a straight it has no. Line but you have quite. Crooked canes and curve canes. So. We. Are selecting that. As. Straight as possible. And. You look. for for the colour. It should be straw yellow shouldn't be green. I mean all the canes which are harvested there are at least three years old. And it's and it's it's mature it's. It has a lot of strengths. After three years. The fibers when they're growing they are hollow. But after a few years they are filled inside and just gives a lot of strength. And at this point was reached after three years and then. When I was in China I noticed. You have some canes maybe five to 10 percent which are greenish but they're also 3 years old. It's just a. Different coloration. But. Rod makers don't don't like it. So we tried to find the other ones but. The most important. Quality point I mean apart from holes from insects which are discarded and they don't shouldn't have any slash marks usually every every farmer is putting his slash mark on each column so they know which when they are harvested. Which farmer harvested the canes. And to this family they are bringing in unmarked canes so that they're really clean. And. I think the most important is. The weight. This. Is an indication for what the density of the fibers and the higher the density is the more strength. The cane has some elasticity is better. But it's you can make a faster from it from a heavy cane. To. Predict. In an easy way. And. Of course if if the cane very the damage is very large it will be heavier but cane off the same diameter was a heavier weight is a better cane. This has also improved as for some experiments. And made in. Cooperation with the University of. Hamburg. The center of wood science. He did some scientific tests and. If you look at the weight per cubic centimeter that the breaking strength is definitely higher for for the higher weight. So this is a. I think this is. One very important. Quality feature. That you can you can feel it for the very heavy calms you feel it by lifting them. And some of them I I'm weighing to. See if it seems very heavy and then like and can check very easily if it has a good. Good. Quality you can could. You also look at the. Section where its cut. You can see the fibers density but. That's. Very. That should be just an additional check. I mean you have to have some weight and as a scientist I rely on figures and opinions are not very reproducible. So far I have customers. Well funny. For me it was surprising to most customers from Finland. So far I have one colleague I knew from the rod makers gathering me in Europe which we have won once a year. And he distributed this information and now I have quite a few customers from Finland. From Norway from Sweden. Denmark. Austria. Switzerland. France. But I know quite a few rod makers and also in Poland and other European countries but I think that they don't know

yet that Tonkin is available in Europe not for for rod maker so I'm. I'm expecting to add to that this information will spread and I'm also eager to hear from my my new customers what they think about the quality of the strength of. So.

Arjes Doering [00:49:00] I'm preparing some scientific publication about my results and. I hope it will be published this year. Anyway I will notify all my clients if they want to have more information. About Tonkin. Because. So far there's. As hardly any information in Tonkin. I did some research on plants for scientific papers. There are hundreds of papers about other tonkin about other bamboo species which are used for flooring or where the fibers extracted. Are already making. parts for cars. But Tonkin. For some strange reason it's not. It's not just been discovered by science. Which is interesting in a way to to work on a. Field which is not, has not been searched very much. So. And. I think. Some things. Have. Can be discovered about. Tonkin and I'm happy to distribute my information for anybody who wants more information about Tonkin.