

fisher-brady-2018-08-20.mp4

Brady Fisher [00:00:10] At a young age I had some uncles and a great-uncle and some aunts, and they were all really into fishing and hunting, a lot.

Jim Thull [00:00:21] And that was at, here in Montana?

Brady Fisher [00:00:22] I was born and raised in Missoula.

Jim Thull [00:00:24] OK.

Brady Fisher [00:00:24] And I got family from Sheridan, Cody, Wyoming, all through Montana, western Montana. So I kind of started at a young age. Hanging out, camping. Figuring out the fly fishing thing at a young age, was, it was fun, my, my uncles weren't real true purests to begin with. They weren't the real dry fly, they liked to nymph from the beginning, so I just kind of got turned on to the nymph fishing at a young age, and started tying flies when I was seven years old. Kind of as a little hobby, and really enjoyed it, ended up buying my first motorcycle when I was eight. I had a neighbor couple miles down the road, that had a motorcycle I wanted really bad and he knew I tied flies. So he offered me a whole Suzuki motorcycle in '60, '68 or something like that. Wanted a hundred Royal Wulff flies tied. And at that time it took me about 20 minutes to make one. So it was a, was a pretty fair trade for him, as far as I'm concerned, but it was a great opportunity and just kind of always enjoyed tying from the very beginning.

Brady Fisher [00:01:42] I certainly do. It was, I grew up at the very head end of Miller Creek, down in Missoula. And it meandered its way down to dumping into the Bitterroot, and I used to tie my flies and experiment on the creek, and wander my way down the creek down to the Bitterroot, it was like six or seven miles from the house down to the Bitterroot side, so I'd fish it all the way down, fish the Bitterroot and then come dark, you'd have to run as hard as you could all the way up the creek to get home, so you didn't get in trouble. But, yeah, I do remember my first, first flies. They were a little rustic but they, they seemed to do the trick, it's all presentation anyway.

Jim Thull [00:02:27] Browns, or what? Do you remember what it was?

Brady Fisher [00:02:29] Oh, it was all Cutthroats and Browns down there. And some Rainbows. But Miller Creek was a lot of Cutthroats. I always appreciated chasing Cutthroats or Brookies more than just about anything.

Brady Fisher [00:02:44] I just appreciate the, the natives. Like I said, there's just, to me there's nothing like a Cutthroat. They're just, you know, they're, they're beautiful they're wild, they're just, I don't know. They've always just done it for me. I'm always just chasing Cutthroats, that's my true passion.

Brady Fisher [00:03:07] Oh. That was some years back, over in the South Fork. Hungry Horse way in South Fork, Flathead Drainage, there's, I've got some special little lakes up there that I've been tormenting for years. And it was a late Fall day and I went up to, I like to fish late Fall. When all my buddies are hunting, I'm going fishing. And I didn't have anybody go with me that day, and so I broke trail into this lake. It's up at the very head into Forest Creek. And so I broke fresh trail all the way in there, and fished, and I, I mean the snow was sideways, the wind was blowing, it was cold, it was miserable. And I caught one nice fish that was like, right around, a little over thirteen pounds, which is a big Cutthroat.

And, at that point, I was on the other side of the lake, and the wind was blowing me into the canyon. And, I was just trying to get out of there. I was kicking as hard as I could. I still had my rod out and my nymph, and I was kicking as hard as I could. All of a sudden, my rod goes down. I'm like, 'oh that feels like a snag,' then yank on it, and typical Cutthroat. Down it goes, I was like, "Oh god, that's a nice one too". But at that point, I'm just trying to kick against the wind to get out of there. I was tired so I was trying to muscle him in, finally I got him up to my tube and it looked at him and went, "Ooh, that's a big one", you know. Zoom away, he went again, it took me a long time to get him in. But, it turned out to be, over sixteen pounds by the time I got it to a legal scale. It was sixteen pounds, six ounces, or something like that. That's after getting out, hiking out, and taking three hours to get out of the water and get to a scale. So he probably weighed a little more than that. But it was a great experience. I thought I about got ate by a grizzly bear coming out of there because I had, my float tube was just full of fish, slime, and everything. I had it on my back, and a grizzly bear had cut my track like six times coming up the trail while I was in there, so as I was coming out I was like. 'Oh, this isn't good,' you know. So I come down the trail, and I hear this blow up in the trees. And I was just like, turn my back with my tube, like, 'oh no, it's over,' and it turned out to be a big, giant bull moose come blowing by me, I was like, 'Oh, thank God,' you know. I thought for sure I was going to get munched on. But yeah, that was, it was a real historic day for me. I mean it's, I ended up getting the fish. They didn't have a mould, to do the fish, so they sent it to Texas, to some place that, that miked it every direction and they patented the fish for the mold, because for its size it's so deep, that they had to make their own mould for it. So it's, it's patented.

Jim Thull [00:05:57] That's pretty cool.

Brady Fisher [00:05:58] It is kind of cool.

Jim Thull [00:05:59] Yeah. That's excellent.

Brady Fisher [00:06:01] Well, and it was great for my kids, you know. I, I usually don't kill any fish, and I usually just measure from the dome and, usually the hide on most fish, they just get so nasty over the years that I figured this one's worth doing a replica. So it'll last forever and looked nice, yeah.

Brady Fisher [00:06:26] I do. I've been taught from my family, years ago, that if you want to chase big fish you got to go down to them. And if you want to consistently catch big fish, and, so yeah I'm a, I'm a pretty devout nymph. I have some specific patterns I like to tie that, you know, I've got one of mine that I tie, Brady's Seal of Approval, that I tie with real seal fur. That is just, I tie it two colors and three sizes. If, if they're not takin' that, generally they're not taking anything, kind of thing. And I had my great-uncle taught me when I, we first were getting in belly boats. I mean back when they had the inner tube belly boats, we'd stomp into these mountain lakes and he'd always tell me, "Brady if you think you're going too slow, slow down." And that is just stuck in my head, and I tell you what, it makes all the difference in the world. You know? Being so much more patient on that delivery because you got to think about it. You know, those bugs don't scurry around that fast. Think you're going too slow, slow down. And it works.

Brady Fisher [00:07:39] Well, you know, there's all your same, you know, guys that everybody else knows, you know. I've met Sylvester Nemes years ago, and the soft water hackles man, they're vicious, I mean just the, the movement and the way, the way he designs, and the way he puts his stuff together. Color and, and the action of his stuff, is just so hard to beat. You know, fish are just such opportunists. Whether they're hungry or

not, if they see it and it wiggles just right, yeah, they like it. And you know, all your typical you know, you know, Matthews and the Bess and the Dennisons, and Dennis Richards, he has some really nice stuff. He ties some great stuff. I, I appreciate Richards. He's kind of on my level as far as how he likes to approach things.

Brady Fisher [00:08:39] Well, generally, what I like to do... I mean, I've, I've been on a lot of rivers, anymore, I don't like the crowds. I don't like, I like my elbow room, I like my peace of mind when I go out. My deal is, my fishing's my therapy. Bottom line. You know? A lot of people like, "Well what are you doing today, it's Sunday?" It's like, "Well, I'm going to the church of the fish gods." My thing is, is instead of going to church and thinking of the Lord? You know, my old saying is, instead of being in church and thinking about fishing, I'd rather be fishing and thinking about the Lord, you know? Because I just, there's something about being out there, I can be out there in a float tube for 10 hours straight. Just lose track of everything in my mind. Everything just goes away. And I can be out there for 10 hours and think I've been out there for 20 minutes, you know. And that's, that's the greatest release. I mean it's no stress. It's just my me time.

Brady Fisher [00:09:48] It's, basically, it's the people. I've got a lake that I've been going to down in the, down Swan Ridge, down towards Comanden, it's the lake I called Number 37. I used to just number all my lakes so I don't give away my special spots. Everybody that knew me, "where'd you go?" "oh, I was at thirty seven." But there's a lake down there called Clearwater Lake, and it has big Cutthroat, big Brook Trout. And I've been going there since, I've been going there for 38, 39 years? When I used to go there, it was just a little game trail going in there. And it was just awesome. Now, you go in there and it's five foot wide and 18 inch deep trail, it's just been beat down all year round. They go in there in the wintertime, and just ice fish and just kill so many fish. Now people come in there in the Fall, sit on top of the beds, you know, and take these you know six, seven pound Brookies out of there. And they just sit there, it's like you know, you're sitting in three foot of water, sitting there dinking these fish on the head. It's like, you're not just killing one fish, you know? You're killing a multitude of fish, and they just have no conscience, you know. And it just, that drives me crazy. Just, the abusive part of it. You know, nothing sacred anymore it seems. And yeah, all the rivers have changed. You know, the levels and it's, it's kind of odd how the rivers are changing so rapidly from year to year. I mean, a lot of times we get these runoffs for instance, this year, our runoffs were so huge, where complete areas of rivers have completely changed. It's like, you know, this river used to go over here and it's, it's gone that way for 25 years. And now they have totally new channels, everything's cut and, you know, which makes a big difference for the bugs, and makes a difference for everything, you know? So yeah, the rivers change a lot which I understand that aspect of it you know, Mother Nature is going to change things, but everything else is, you know, making a big difference on it also.

Brady Fisher [00:12:05] All that stuff concerns me, because, unfortunately, I do not think my kids will ever have the same experience that I've had, that it's just, there's not a chance, it has changed so rapidly. There's, I just don't think there's any chance they can experience what I've experienced. And, you know, one of my greatest things has been, I really like to go to mountain lakes. I've, it's been my passion since I was a teenager. From the Mission Mountain ranges all the way up through all of this country, over to the Libby area. I mean all this north, northwest Montana. It's hitting all these mountain lakes, and it just seems like more and more are getting so much more pressure, that it used to be so pristine. You'd go and, you know, me and my buddies would take off for 10 days and hit 30 lakes, you know, in 10 days in backpacks and our float tubes, and just not see anybody and, you know, that was just incredible. Now, you just can't seem to go anywhere without

everybody beating down the trail, and not really caring much you know? For the sanctity, the solitude of the lakes you know, the mountain, high mountain country, and all that stuff. It's getting pretty polluted anymore with people.

Brady Fisher [00:13:26] Yeah. You know. Unfortunately. It just seems like the leverage against the people that have so much pride in, in you know their native waters, and all that stuff. It seems like the big corporate guy is going to step on you, no matter what. I mean they just find a way. You know, you know, unfortunately, here in Kalispell they're trying to put in a new water bottling plant. Which is going to take this incredible amount of water out of the aquifer and, they, you know, this Nestle corporation is using this small guy, that's been a farmer up there for years, and they're just saying, "hey, you know, we're gonna give you this money and we're just gonna say you're putting this little small water development," but you know, it's the big man giving him a bunch of money and, you know, when he's almost selling out to his native land and that's, that doesn't sit very well with me. I just, I have such a problem with that. It comes down to that dollar. You know.

Brady Fisher [00:14:35] Yeah. There is, there's no doubt in my mind it's, once again it's all money. Boils down to money. They don't care. It's just that almighty dollar, and I, dollars don't mean nothing to me. The dollar doesn't mean anything to me, I'm, I'm a pretty happy guy with just my family, and my dog, and a fly rod. Simple. It's not the dollar, man.

Brady Fisher [00:15:08] Well I've had, I've known Mr. Verne Gallup for twenty five, twenty six years. And I have the utmost admiration and respect for him, for who he is as an individual. I mean he's a, he's a collector, he has a fly fishing library that's the most incredible library in the world. And he's the kind of person that just wants to share it more than anything. He's the most unselfish individual I've ever met. And we've got out over the years and, had some pretty good, I get him in the float tubes in these mountain lakes, and he wasn't real aware of a lot of the lakes around here, and hadn't done much mountain lake fishing. So over the years, me and a couple buddies of mine have packed his stuff into these mountain lakes, him and Sylvester Nemes, and a bunch of really good people, and, have some.... Mr. Gallup seems like he's a pretty reserved fella for the most part, but you get him out, and I tell you what, he's an absolute character, just an absolute riot. There's more personality and humor there than you could possibly imagine. He seems pretty reserved, but boy, when you get him out? Boy that's when he's in his environment he's so much fun. A lot of fun with him, lot of good times. He's taught me a lot. You know he's, he's a wise man. You know, I thought that I had some family, or I had gained a little bit of knowledge over, you know, 50 years of doing it. Because I research, and I'd, my research is you don't know unless you go, and the only way you know, you know people can, you look at a book and tell you, 'oh yeah, this lake's got this,' but you don't know unless you go. And that's always been my knowledge I've kept such incredible journals over the years, for my kids it's almost not fair, you know, I've done all the work for them, you know? Instead of them going out beating the brush and that's the only way you learn. But Mr. Gallup, boy he's taught me, he's taught me some pretty good tricks, over the years.

Brady Fisher [00:17:11] Well. There's some stuff... You know, I thought about those Peacock Bass a little bit.

Jim Thull [00:17:19] Down in South America?

Brady Fisher [00:17:22] Absolutely. You know, there's some waters in Russia that I'd like to explore. You know, you mentioned you may be going to Australia, New Zealand soon,

and there's some waters there I would really like to go after. I mean there's, there's stuff. You know, I would love to kick around Alaska a little more, and explore some of that stuff. There's waters you know. It's, it's an addiction you know? Wherever there's water that's where I wanna go. You know?