

goldring-paul-2018-04-24.mp4

Paul Goldring [00:00:10] My dad yeah, took me when I was a little fella down to catch tilapia in the... Plantation dam, that was where I used to live in Malawi.

Paul Goldring [00:00:20] That's where I started fishing.

James Thull [00:00:30] Yeah?

Paul Goldring [00:00:30] Yeah. Yeah. Did it spark the love? No, it was the outdoor places and just being outside and stuff. Fishing's an excuse to just go out visit places and do things. You know?

Paul Goldring [00:00:49] The business is Wild Frontiers. We are a safari company, so we have mainly lodges. Fishing is, is a small part of what we do and and uhhh, yeah. It is, 'cause it's quite hard the fishing here, it's quite technical. It's, uh, quite unforgiving but very, uh, stimulating if you like. Uh, and, when we first came and started fishing, it was quite easy, because it was unfished. The Nile River, Murchison Falls. There was um, a lot of insecurity in the north of the country. And so people didn't go there, basically. So it had a long period um, of time to uh, uh, for fishery to develop basically. And so when we turned up, you could throw the Sunday Times in and the fish would bite it. You didn't have to have too much technique. Uh, so, yeah, that, that's basically how I started, and then now we have um, boats and just business progressing as, as, as, you went along and fishing was part of it, something that we could offer people to do.

James Thull [00:02:00] How long, how long has the company been around and how did you guys get started?

Paul Goldring [00:02:08] Twenty twenty three years. I came to look at a Mountain Gorilla, basically um, and stayed. Simple as that.

Paul Goldring [00:02:18] Pretty much. Still a bit of education in England. As uh, Agricultural College, Farm School, but I was a bad farmer. So, uh, uh, do something a bit more interesting, which was tourism. So I started guiding, down in Botswana and Zimbabwe. And Libya, Zambia, and then yeah. Came up here, carried on. Guiding.

Paul Goldring [00:02:55] Uh, it's, it's, it's a mixed bag but, yeah. Um, mainly Europe, US, and uh, Australia, Australia. Yup. Now we have had people from uh, Chile and, and ,and places like that. But you know, not not very regular.

James Thull [00:03:16] Primarily Nile Perch, is that what they're after?

James Thull [00:03:19] Yup, Nile Perch as you know (unintelligible). Yeah. Yeah. It can go for 100 kilos. So, um, people are coming to see to see that.

James Thull [00:03:31] Nice. And is it mainly do you guys troll? Do you fly fish? What's the method of go and from?

Paul Goldring [00:03:36] I'm not a fly fishing person um, but yeah, we, we, we, we troll on the lake um, cast lures at the gorge at Murchison Falls and then we live bait up at Murchison Falls.

Paul Goldring [00:03:48] Yes, there is. There are changes, um, and it's, uh, it's a bit, it's a bit negative, I'd say, uh, not overall. I mean, the fish is still there but, uh, with the increase in anglers, and what have you. Uh, I did once took an American magazine group fishing. And they wanted to do a big article, and all that stuff. And they go all over the world. Peacock Bass and, blah blah blah. And I asked them is there one place you go now that's as good as when you first went? And, um, they said, no. I said, well then don't write the article. Basically, because we're a bit selfish, keep fishing for ourselves. So yeah, there is, there's a bit, of a, it, it's its, also involved with the custodians of the park and, and, and, and then that certainly gets a bit, you know, can be a bit political, so.

Paul Goldring [00:05:06] Yes, of course, I mean, if it, if it, pays it stays. So, uh, but then that takes on the management of, of, uh, the responsibility of the custodians, the managers that are there. And, and, and, sometimes those skills aren't really available on the African continent, let's put it like that. Yeah. And, uh, what you and I want is not necessarily the same as what the Ugandans might want. In terms of having the river. Or a fishery. Or a place where we can go and have such wild fun.

Paul Goldring [00:05:50] Uh, no. Uh, Nile Perch that, there's fossilized records, apparently. Um, of, of, of Nile Perch but, uh, up until 1950 there weren't records of, of Nile Perch. There was only, um, uh, lots of a species of Hepper Crabs and other Chiclids and, um, basically they're-- Nile Perch--is introduced, uh, as a, to promote a larger catch. And it wasn't. There's various stories, they say it was a game warden from Murchison Falls that carried them up in a bathtub and brought them, but they were introduced from various parts by the Colonial administration to create a fishery. Basically, the more hostile sized fish, you know? So, it was a disaster in, uh, introduced species terms because it is, they say that, uh, more. Get this right. More species left the planet in that period when the Nile Perch were introduced than when the dinosaurs lived. Or something like that.

James Thull [00:07:02] I have heard that Lake Victoria was the most diverse population of cichlids on the planet.

Paul Goldring [00:07:07] There you go.

James Thull [00:07:07] At one point. At one point.

Paul Goldring [00:07:07] Yeah well there's still, well there's still some around, in, in, in the peripheries, you know? Um, so Lake Navugabu, for example, and places like that.

Paul Goldring [00:07:27] Population, there you go, you hit it bag on the head. Anthropogenic. Everything that happens here, every disaster everything is a result of too many people. And nobody addresses that issue. Is this a political program?

James Thull [00:07:42] No, no, not at all. Not at all. We just talk about things like especially with with trout and salmonids. They're so sensitive to water temperature that oftentimes people'll say climate change is one of their biggest concerns, because a few degrees temperature can mean a huge difference. Um, clean water. So pollution, especially from like agricultural runoff. Things like that can make a huge difference for for the health of a river.

Paul Goldring [00:08:07] Yeah, there's not one problem here that can't be reflected back to-.

James Thull [00:08:12] Population.

Paul Goldring [00:08:12] Our population growth, basically. Population growth that, to some would be, you know, out of control. And Uganda, that's hard to talk about politics, 'cause it's quite sensitive issue. And with such a high number of, you know, most, most of the people... So in 1997 there was 17 million or something in Uganda, we're now over 40 million. At the turn of century previous, it was, it was estimated there was less than a million. So, so that sort of massive growth of people. It's very difficult to be positive. Because everything points to disaster, basically, if you got that many people, taking up water, land, blah blah blah. And places like what we're talking about, fisheries and stuff, can only get, hammered basically.

Paul Goldring [00:09:08] Yeah. The lake, especially. Uganda is a third world country and there, with that population growth, there aren't jobs for everybody, education, you know, you know all the stories about third world economies. And so a readily available source can be to go and harvest fish off the lake. So people do. And there was a big export of, of perch from Uganda. Lake Victoria, and exported. People say that the cheapest fish they can buy in Australia is Nile Perch. I've seen Nile Perch in a supermarket in Lyon, in France. In Dubai, same thing. And we have a population here that can't feed themselves, and they're exporting Nile Perch? It's ridiculous.

Paul Goldring [00:10:10] It was great fun. Yeah, I know. He's very, very, very, nice guy. Very different to what's on the TV program. Because that's for TV. And we had a lot of fun. He's very good angler, so we really enjoyed ourselves.

Paul Goldring [00:10:23] It's, it's exciting. It's, it's fun. It's. You know, I get to go out in the woods and play. With big animals; elephants, lions, and hippos and stuff like that. And, you know, that's just great fun. Yeah. And I don't know how long it'll be around for, but without all the doom and gloom stuff which we have now, it's just, it's just great fun.

Paul Goldring [00:10:59] Funny enough, Goliath Tiger Fish in the Congo. Been twice and skunked both times, but it doesn't matter. Fishing is an excuse to go there, and uh. No, it was a great trip. Two great trips. Really, really good fun. Just to see different place, any excuses to fishing.

Paul Goldring [00:11:28] Absolutely. Oh yeah, oh yeah. It's just an excuse, to go and do something. And, you know, the preparation and getting your tackle together, and chewing the fat with your mates about lures and all that stuff. Which is the good one, which is the bad one, that's all part of it, that's all part of the fun.

Paul Goldring [00:11:50] Well it's a National Park, at Murchison Falls, so. Yes. We've fig- created a system, whereby we weighed, accurately, the fish. And then took measurements of the length of the fish, and the girth. And then combined it to come up with the weight so people wouldn't constantly lift them up. 80 kilo fish, you know? And three guys running around on the bank, hot rocks and all that sort of stuff, trying to preserve that, we've created system with nets that slide underneath. I mean, obviously, we stand out everywhere else. You know, we, we've managed to introduce it here. And get people to lift the fish out of the net, and then they take this measurement, so they're not hanging them out too. Oh yeah absolutely, preserve the fish. And in the National Park everything goes back in. The lake is not always. Yeah. We take for the pot there and enjoy it.

Paul Goldring [00:12:55] Absolutely. Even, even in the National Parks, you know, the guys are saying, "Come and bring back a fish," because the idea of, of, of sport angling, and, and doing it for the love of just being out and whatever, is, is quite strange for an Indigenous person. Not all, of course. But under, or less educated people. You know, that around some rivers stuff there, that's their livelihood you know? And a fish, can, can, that we catch and put back, can be worth a lot of money. In many ways. Not just food, but selling them and then what have you. That, that happens a lot. And so guys are quite surprised when we're putting fish back and releasing fish. Absolutely.

Paul Goldring [00:14:00] There's too many. We have, we have, yeah, I've experienced a lot of, you know, the usual pranks of guys falling asleep and. We had fish eagles come and take their bait, so, you know, they're, they're they're, they're sitting there, and their lines going up, up into the sky, and they're looking down the river. Reel screaming. And the guy falling asleep, and putting a, putting a, a bucket on the end of the line. And then the bloke fights a bucket, because there's a big, you know, there's a big current. And so he's sitting there fighting a bucket for, and then, obviously not putting on too much pressure, and ridiculous things like that. But. We did have a group on Ssesse Islands, so long ago. And they, there, the fish had been killed. And they took the head of the fish, and I put it down the toilet. Of the guys in this group. And the old fellow went to bed. And the power had gone out, so he didn't know. He obviously passed by the latrine before he went to bed, in as much shock and horror because there was this big head of a fish sticking up out of the lavatory. It was quite, quite amusing, but. Now we have too many stories. Look, if we could sit here for the next six hours and tell fishing stories.

Paul Goldring [00:15:21] Gee, that. Yeah, no. Just keep, keep, keep fishing, I suppose. Because, yeah, I don't know. I think it's really important for, for the youngsters to get out and go, and learn what's there. Especially these days, where everybody's batting around on-

James Thull [00:15:48] Being on their phones and.

Paul Goldring [00:15:49] Oh, that rubbish. It's, having kids myself, you know. They all angle, and they all go out and catch fish. And they're not, not, not, not super passionate, but they love it. You know, in terms of having an experience. And so, yeah. Yeah. Just keep fishing.