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Petri Hamalainen [00:00:10] I was very young when I started first, maybe I was 6, 7 year old, and, and I start with spin fishing. But it was actually quite funny story. I started as a fly fisherman maybe 9, 10 years old, and, and there is a Finnish book name of "Lohilastuja ja kalakaskuja", written by Juhani Aho, he's Finnish classic, classic writer. And, and, and, maybe it happened like people who read first time, Bible or something that, that he or she really feel. I understand that he is fly fisherman, but I didn't know that earlier, when I read that book and, and then I started to tie flies and, little bit later I bought my first rod and reel. And of course, that was quite rare happening then, to fish during summer, because my father was not so fisherman than I then. But of course, I was working always a long time to reach waters and fly fish. First trips were there in Lapland and little Finland. There I still fish.

James Thull [00:01:32] Yeah.

Petri Hamalainen [00:01:39] Yes, yes, mainly, mainly brown trout, but, but I fish during season, seasons at summertime, I fish in rapids, mainly for trout, and sometimes also Atlantic Salmon, and for a time perch and pike, mainly pike. Earlier I'd been fishing also Sea Trout a lot, but now a days. Maybe pike fit fly, is that my full time fishing.

Petri Hamalainen [00:02:17] I was working this with Mr. [unintelligible] on it, who started this Western tribal fishing business in Russia, end of '80s. And, and I was making guest fishing for him in the early '90s and, and he was first working in [unintelligible] River, but after that they sold [unintelligible] the river system to another American man and started, stopped at a new business in Varzina River, [unintelligible], those rivers. And I was working there as a head guide in '90s from '92 to '98, '99, something like that.

Petri Hamalainen [00:03:15] Actually, I didn't enjoy a lot of that, because I'm so fisherman that it a little bit hard to just look at other people fishing. But, of course, it is a better job than some other, but it is hard work. Seven days per year, per week, and so on, whole summer through. It's not easy job. It's very hard, hard, hard job, actually. It's real work.

James Thull [00:03:44] Yeah.

Petri Hamalainen [00:03:44] And, you know, you'll have to, you'll have to spend long time as fishing guide. And finally, after a few years when you have that, you [unintelligible] have any more of that passion for your own fishing in those rivers. After that, you might be really, real fishing guide. And maybe it was, for me, maybe that those years were just coming of the, I think so that it wasn't [unintelligible] not so, not so, how do you say, perfect job for a fisherman. But, but, okay.

Petri Hamalainen [00:04:35] The water, water has changed there is lots of problems. Maybe not in, in, in like a lack of when the forest industry started in, after war, fourteen, forty, fifty, sixty, sixties there, there was very polluted spots. And nowadays we don't have those, that kind of destroyed spots maybe but, but that pollution has widened. It's now everywhere. And, and it comes at [unintelligible] forest industry is the problem, and, and, and of course, there is some dams who has, which has stopped fishing migration. We ain't have anymore, that kind of immigrating trout stocks we had earlier, and almost all of our Baltic Sea at salmon rivers are destroyed. [Unintelligible] weed comes from swamps, waters, waters are very dark nowadays, very often and it's hard to find clear waters

anymore in, in Lapland where water, rivers are streaming. To north, there are still still some nice rivers, but in Baltic Sea not anymore so many.

Petri Hamalainen [00:06:21] Some fishermen have some kind of jerk addict they, they, they, they're born to fish, and it's in genes. It's hard to be without fishing when you are born for fisherman. And that's the only thing you want to do. So there aren't any other choices. And I think that you need your, your, how do I say, about the, some amount of jerking for every year, every year that you will, you will sleep in peace. Otherwise, you will be little, little bit nervous without fishing.

Petri Hamalainen [00:07:24] Of course, the USA, for example. I also have been in England like in classic chalk streams, but that kind of rivers, they're also in the USA and to fish nature, natural species like Rainbow Trout in USA, it will be interesting. Not Brown Trout there, because it's European species, but and maybe also Steelhead. Steelhead fishing might be, might be interesting. But every case nowadays, I am so keen on fishing of species who eat really something. So, and, and, and make, make a good imitation of, of those insects and everything. What they are eating, it's what is my, my my interest. Interesting. Interest, yes.

Petri Hamalainen [00:08:30] Yes. Yes, I remember that. It was 1973, in Lapland, and fish was Grayling. Grayling, daytime, it was blue dun classic, classic blue dun with duck, duck wings, wings. And then I got another Grayling, nighttime and it was caught by royal coachman. Those, both flies were tied by me.

James Thull [00:09:03] Wonderful, wonderful.

Petri Hamalainen [00:09:04] Classic fly fishing.

Petri Hamalainen [00:09:16] There, there, there might be many, but they come from classic old English fly tiers because I think that...

James Thull [00:09:28] This was one of the book, the "How to Dress Salmon Flies" by Price, it looks like.

Petri Hamalainen [00:09:38] Yes, yes.

James Thull [00:09:39] Kinda one of the books that influenced you in fly tying?

Petri Hamalainen [00:09:42] Yeah, that's, that's true. Because there really was, challenges enough for beginning, beginning fly tier to make, make classic salmon fly without wires, just make it in your hands, and that kind of things. And it was real high school for for a fly tier, I think so. But also in the '70s, when I started, we had those vineyard Blue and Red Book and those were also very famous, but also Finnish books. We had at that time. Also, there is, there are also Finnish people who, for example, [unintelligible], well, I think he is. He was very, very good example to me, to make to imitations and that kind of things. But many, many.

James Thull [00:10:46] That's great.

Petri Hamalainen [00:10:46] But it's hard to create something own. There are so much, so much information everywhere, that sometimes people think they have created some own by themselves. But of course, it has come from, influence, comes from everywhere.

Petri Hamalainen [00:11:12] Of course, climate change is, it's a, it's a big thing but that is not what I am worried about, my, I have a sea, it's all so, there's so much during such a short time, the first, for example, when I started sea fishing end of '70s and I, whole '80s, I was, I was hunting Sea Trout in the Finnish Gulf, and waters were quite clear. And now, nowadays, Baltic Sea is maybe most polluted sea in the world. And that is something which concerns me a lot. And, and because everything has happened so, during so short time, that, that kind of things are, they really are terrible. Like climate change is, it's, it's somewhere, they're there and you don't know what, what's happening. So it's so hard to understand that, that thing yet.

James Thull [00:12:24] Where do you, do they know where the pollution is coming from?

Petri Hamalainen [00:12:28] Yeah. It comes from, comes from Finnish agriculture. They're, they are, we have it all flat shoreline there. There are lot's of lots of rivers, and which collect all that things comes from agriculture and there are.

James Thull [00:12:59] The agricultural runoff, fertilizers, things like that?

Petri Hamalainen [00:13:03] Yes. Yes. Yes.

Petri Hamalainen [00:13:13] Of course, we have nowadays net shops. When, when I started, in Finland, we had lots of these kind of this kind of special shop, shops for sport fishermen and fly fishermen, and nowadays we have that net, net shops. And also, in Finland we have double trouble because we have, we have also, this kind of cheap warehouses, who are selling everything, but also fishing equipment, which is only, only, I think it's only Finnish problem, and so we have this, we have had this kind of shops like this, maybe 40, 50 or so in Helsinki during that time, I have been here, I know that we have only two of these shops. So I really have seen a big change. And these kind of things are quite rare nowadays.

Petri Hamalainen [00:14:24] Maybe I don't have, I've been fishing so much I think so, that it's it's hard to, hard to pick some, some some up there, but. Maybe, maybe those first, first big fish lost have had big influence to me, that I just wanted to continue harder and harder, and learn more proper fisherman. And I think that you have to have some, some, some... You have to see that big salmon is, is already on the shore and flies just just jumps from the jaws, and you'll see it and when when 20 kilo salmon goes back to the sea, and that kind of things, and, and I think that flyfisherman have to have that kind of, that kind of, of happenings earlier and that push you to make harder, I think so. And of course, if you are, if you've been fishing tens and tens of years and you have caught thousands of trouts and salmons, that kind of things, it's uh, it's very hard to pick some.

James Thull [00:15:54] Sure. I think often, it's the ones that get away that stick in our memory.

Petri Hamalainen [00:15:59] Yeah, yeah. Of course I have, I have very lousy memory actually, all around, but I can remember all those fishes. I still have those in my brains somewhere.