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Richard Parks [00:00:12] I've been trying to think about that and it's still hard to put into words. In some respects, what fishing means to me as much as anything else, is not necessarily captured by a fish or a place, as much as by the kind of events you can run into while engaged in, in the in the exercise outside. And probably one of the standout memories for me, is the day I had a young couple down in the sheep eater canyon in the Gardiner river that away about seven 8 miles. And neither one had had any experience fly fishing so we were dealing with really basic basic training. And I had gotten the fella started, he caught some fish, I set him to work on a stretch of river downstream and I was upstream in a likely hot spot with, trying to get his wife into some fish. When I heard him say, "Duck!" I looked to see what he was talking about. And up the river was flying, very low very hard, a small duck. I think it was a harlequin. But moving fast. It wasn't in the instantly clear as to whether he meant duck because it was a duck that just flew by, or duck because it was a duck that nearly hit his hat on the way by. But we're looking at that when the duck does a wing over right across from us and dives under a stump half in and half out of the water on the other side of the river just as a bald eagle come stooping out of the sky missed the duck, did a face plant on the bank, got up, shook himself off. And while there was no actual fish involved in this story it's one of those experiences that we have out there. That is just different. Not something that's likely to happen. Walking done main street.

Richard Parks [00:03:05] We may have to keep track of all the subsidiary questions in that as we along here. Got to go back and revisit it. Yes, clearly some flies are a lot more difficult to tie than others. Some flies are very stripped down and will only have a few materials and, and be of not an extraordinarily small or extraordinarily large size hook to deal with so that they they tie quickly straightforwardly. The more different kinds of material are involved in a fly, more different operations there are the more complicated it gets the longer it takes to tie. And in some and generally also, the more impressive it will look at the end of the day, assuming you've tied it properly. Or just an impressive mess if you haven't. But so that's you know and so there's fly patterns that are one way or the other somewhere in between. So where else are we on the question so that's there.

James Thull [00:04:24] And then are there, what are some of the more beautiful flies that you think are.

Richard Parks [00:04:31] Flies that are tied for "beauty" mostly involve more materials. I think probably we don't really use them around here, but some of the classic atlantic salmon streamer flies have a lot of exotic feathers in many cases you can't legally really replicate the original pattern anymore because they involve feathers off of songbirds and, or other protected species that are not not generally available. They're beautiful to contemplate. How well they work, sometimes, is open to debate. And, yeah, though that's sort of one kind of beauty. But fly tying isn't art. It's not a, it's not strictly speaking, a mechanical operation, even though when you're doing it commercially, you're, you're replicating the same process over and over again. People want, some people think flies are machine tied, there's simply no way of doing that. Because ,there's constant variation in the materials, the exact way everything lays together. You want to produce a uniform product out of non uniform stuff. And so that means constant application of judgment, and attention to detail. In a way that I tell people I think it'd probably be about the same order of cost magnitude, to produce a machine to do what a competent fly tier does routinely, as mounting a manned expedition to Mars. Or at least the moon. We know how much that one cost. And because you'd have to invent a whole new computer controlled process, it's

micro manipulators, [laughs] et cetera. which might end up having lots of other uses, it would be pretty expensive to do what a fly tyer could sit down and do in five to 15 minutes. And then the question of a universal fly. The answer to that depends on how big your universe is. If you really mean a universal fly that one could simultaneously expect to catch a 180 pound tarpon on one end, and a six-inch Mountain Brook Trout on the other end, the answer has clearly gotta be: no. Because the fly you would use for the tarpon would probably be bigger than the fish you were fishing for, what for. With the other end of the operation.

James Thull [00:07:46] What about for this area?

Richard Parks [00:07:47] But for around here. If I was told I could have one fly, I'd say I want two. I would want a coachman Trude about a size 12, and a bead head Prince nymph about a size 16. Between the two of them, I'm going to catch as many of the fish that are available to almost anybody in most of those circumstances that we would run into. Not, not every application for instance. Not likely to work real well on a Spring creek in the midst of the summer pale mornings dun hatch. When the fish are really rigidly focused on, during the day, various stages of that bug's life. The emerging nymph, the adult dun, and then subsequently after that the returning spinner. Three different flies for the same insect at different stages of the day. And that's practically the only thing going on for those fish. So they know all about that, and they don't give a damn about anything else. But in a more general application, those flies that I named are probably as good a place to start as any.

Richard Parks [00:09:20] Oh boy.... In terms of skill. There. Again there's different levels of judgment would need to be applied to the question. There are people who have been really innovative about the application of materials and fly design. Not necessarily that all skilled in an application. And, my, my model fly tier was my father. He taught himself how to tie flies during World War 2 when you couldn't buy flies. Out of a book. Ray Bergmans Trout. With nothing to go on except a material list and a picture of the finished fly. Fortunately, I was not put to that I had actually could stand there and see how they went together. And so for me that's always a benchmark. I haven't actually watched a lot of other tiers tie. Because I've mostly been here, instead of cruising around doing that. But there are people that have done some, pretty pretty incredible work. In Montana, I think you'd be out of your mind if you didn't contemplate George Grant. Taking basic concepts originated by Pots and running, running away with them. The, there's some pretty, pretty well known and important contemporary fly tier,s like John Barr. Some of them are no longer with us. Andre Pooleance. Some of them others are. Whitlock as a for instance. Is quite a you know quite a list of people that have influenced how flies are presented. And there are. Probably fly tiers out there tying, essentially, only for their own edification or use, or for a very small not commercially. They are doing wonderful work that we may know about in five or 10 years. The explosion of synthetic materials has really changed the landscape. And so there's a lot of innovative work being done. The guy who usually sits in this chair, wWalter Besee, my head guide, is producing very innovative fly patterns. And some of them have been picked up and spread around a bit. And working in as much as anything with the blend of Synthetics and, and natural materials. So there's, it's a pretty big universe to try to get an answer of it.

James Thull [00:13:36] Yeah. It's fair. It's impressive feat with you dad there. That's a good story.

Richard Parks [00:13:40] Well his most important tool was a razor blade. He only had a certain number of hooks. And he'd tie a dozen samples of what he thought the fly was supposed to look, and then he'd compare those with the fly pattern in a picture in the book. And he'd take the razor blade to the eleven worst ones. And tie a dozen fly straight. And now he'd have 13 flies and he'd look at that, he picked the best one out of that, and take the razor blade to the other dozen. And do it until he thought it looked pretty close.

Richard Parks [00:14:28] There's a number of different values that I can see in that. One is the simple historical record. And my academic background is actually in history. It's a, particularly for an area like Montana, where the sport is kind of a touchstone. Not just in the lives of the individual practitioners but it's sort of fundamental. One of the fundamental economic bases of the region. Having a good perspective on the collective history of all that is useful to help people, keep people oriented about what's important. And to keep track of changes that might be going on. Particularly with the populations and the behavior of both the people and the coury. So that's, that's one level of it. There are people who don't, I don't think, understand that. At the most extreme end, those ISIS idiots blowing up monuments in Syria and Iraq who don't understand the importance of your, your cultural underpinnings, or are actively hostile to them. On the one hand. So that said that that's way out there on the other end of things. But I, I think. There are a lot larger number of people that may not understand the importance of collecting pot shards. Or fly patterns. Or understanding the narratives of how we got to here from there. But the lack of the, lack of that knowledge leads you to huge mistakes in places that you didn't need to get.

Richard Parks [00:17:40] Again that's an answer that has to be qualified by time and intent. I think probably if I'm forced to pick one. What I would pick is October on the Firehole. It's an absolutely unique venue. Maybe snow on your ears and steam heated feet. Rising fish. You know it's, it's just a, an absolutely incredible spot. And engage in that activity.

Richard Parks [00:18:41] There is a number of things. To start with; it's an unusually undeveloped but still accessible, large collection of waterways with different seasonal opportunities depending on where you are during the what's seasonally appropriate. The Firehole I mentioned for instance is OK in June, great in October. Pretty pitiful the rest of time because it's just plain too warm. And in spite of the fact that last year 4 million people showed up in Yellowstone, if you're willing to walk a mile or two, and climb over a log and under, around a rock or two; it's still totally possible to fish in Yellowstone by yourself. Partly because it's such a huge area. And it's the headwaters. So it has not been mined, irrigated, road builded, et etcetera, to death. The way a lot of waters that would be wonderful otherwise have been. Been hammered. Into near oblivion by demand.

Richard Parks [00:20:24] Clearly the population of fish in the park today, is not the one that existed in 1872 when the park was created. And if we applied today's standards to the scene found in 1872, things would be quite different. I sometimes find myself debating with the fisheries management policy in the park, because of that. In 1872 about 40% of the rivers in the park had no fish in them at all. By 1890, that was radically different. The first 10 years of the park's existence, there wasn't a lot going on. Partly because, yeah we created a park, but we didn't create any kind of management structure for it. It was being run totally ad hoc year by year out of the hip pocket of the Secretary of the Interior, and whatever he could get Congress to appropriate and authorize. And it was flat pitiful, as far as a budget went. In some respects things haven't changed that much, in that Congress is still completely unwilling to fund the Park Service, in proportion to its responsibilities. But that's. The initial civilian administration in the park was so busy trying to keep people from

running away with the park. Robbing the visitors. At, you know, just trying to invent the whole idea of a park, which no one had. And that they didn't have either resources or time to contemplate tinkering with the fishery. Once the management was transferred to the army, things changed pretty radically. Because the army officers who and then became de facto superintendent of Yellowstone, by virtue only of having been a senior officer of one of the units assigned to the park the units assigned to the park as Garrison. Were pretty much standard issue army officers of the day. Which meant they were rooting tooting sporting fellers. And they were offended by the idea that there was water without fishing. And they just sort of ordered up fish and dropped them in hither, tither and yon, without any biological basis for them at all. Near as I can tell, Captain Beutel thought that headwater streams are brooks, therefore you put Brook Trout in them. You know I think that's as far as is the biologic analysis ran. So a lot of headwater streams that were in some cases, many cases, most cases barren. Got brook trout dumped in. There were things that were tried that didn't work out. Ten thousand bass were planted in the Gibbon river. I think on the basis of, I see some lily pads therefore this must be a bass river. My father actually had to have a conversation with why it wasn't a bass river with a guy in the mid 1950s. Using the same kind of logic. No one ever saw those bass again. Something like 40,000 white fish were transplanted from the lower Yellowstone into Yellowstone Lake. No one's ever seen them again either. Don't know why. That one I thought would have been more, might have stuck, but it didn't. It wasn't all negative. Lewis and Shoshanna Lake had no fish in them, had brown trout and lake trout from Lake Superior introduced to them. Turns out that that accident meant that, when it came time to try to restore Lake trout to the upper Great Lakes, population that had been decimated by human activity, and other invasive species like the lamprey eel. Lewis Lake was a place where they could get some actually appropriate stock to to start restructuring that. So that's a good reason for not being totally fixated on natives. If you get totally fixated on natives, you might want to go in and remove perfectly viable and sensible fish populations from 40% of the water in the park. If I could get a time machine, and go back and start talking to those guys. Look at that, you show up the day after they got their orders to Yellowstone, and talk to them about native species, native species. So that the upper Gardener, for instance, now populated by brook trout about this long, for the most part. Might instead be populated with cutthroat borrowed from over in Slip Creek. They were that long. A lot fewer of them, harder to catch. But. On the other hand.... There's this, you know, there's that old saw about horses and barns. And we now have situations where there's established populations that, I don't care what you do with the rules. And even to some degree what you try to do with chemicals. You could probably ruin some things, but I don't think you could restore them. Prime example that I worry about a lot with the Park Service's policies right now is the Gardener River. Where the population on the park's founding was mountain whitefish and cutthroat trout. And no fish at all above Osprey Falls. That's seven miles up river. Brook trout got dumped in the top. Some rainbow got dropped in between waterfall sets in the middle. And brown trout got introduced by accident. On sort of, not by intent, in the lower part of the Gardner. On top of that native cutthroat white fish population. Yeah brown trout got in the gardener because one of the military superintendents had ordered up brown trout he intended to put in the Firehole River, which he eventually succeeded at. But they come in on a train now a wagon has done that, we're talking sometime late 1880s here. So the end of tracks is four miles down the river, Firehole's a long ways away. So the fish come in as fry basically, packed in milk cans full of ice. They get on a little horse drawn wagon. And head up into the park. And the wagon breaks between here and Mammoth. That guy driving the wagon, looks at his cans full of melting ice and little fish in this bright summer sun. And the Gardner River, and says, OK I got a choice. I can be cleaning out really stinky cans from dead fish that got boiled in the sun, or I can throw them in this river right now. And he did. The descendants of those fish are still returning to the Gardener.

Every October. Every fall in general longer span than that, October certainly the peak of it. From as much as 30 miles north of here on the Yellowstone River. The Gardener has no structural barrier to the migration of fish up and down, until you get to Osprey Falls. That's a pretty significant barrier, 100 feet high. So the lower Gardener has a totally mixed bag of fish. Probably the heaviest population fragments are brown trout and rainbow trout. But there's some cuts, because there's rainbows and cuts in the same water, you have some cutbow. You still have some white fish. You have some Brookies leaked down from up above usually a little brook trout population is stronger the farther up river you go. But we even get a few leakers down into the Yellowstone here which is definitely not what one would think of as prototype brook trout habitat. And to try to change that balance in any significant way now. I think is saying I think you could probably destroy the fishery, but I don't think you could recreate it as a cutthroat/White Fish Fishery. But the fixation on natives. Could lead to what I think a pretty pretty perverse result. So there's there's things to be debated on both sides of that. And. On the other hand, it should be totally obvious that the vandal or vandals that put lake trout in Yellowstone Lake. If we could line them up against a wall and shoot them, proactively, so they didn't do that. Probably be a good thing. But the population, the problem with cutthroat and Yellowstone Lake and Lake Trout. Is only partly because of lake trout. It's also, clearly in my mind, partly due to the arrival of another exotic; that whirling disease parasite. Which attack the cutthroat population at the other end. By almost zeroing out reproduction for several years. While lake trout are going to do a considerable amount of damage, lake trout have not succeeded in removing cutthroat from Heart Lake, where lake trout were introduced on top of a cutthroat population, more than 100 years ago. Without any management action. But nothing had attacked the capacity specifically of the cut throat to reproduce in that drainage. So there's like any biological system. There are no single causes, single answers. There's just an almost infinite supply of sight in time specific conditions. And unwillingness to, well, put insistence on trying to apply a particular rule universally, is always going to miss the target.

Richard Parks [00:34:08] I answer the latter question first, the best flies are produced by the dedicated amateur producing flies only for his own use. Any fly you buy in a store, including mine, necessarily has some level of generalization and compromise, and design in order to make it reproducible. In mass. And applicable across a variety of specific habitats. Which doesn't make them bad flies, but it may not be the best fly for the particular application. As far as basic equipment recommendations go; it doesn't have a lot to do with gender. Basically I'd say it has nothing to do with gender. It does have some to do with age. In the sense that. A 10, 11, 12 year old beginning angler, simply doesn't have the physical presence to handle a nine foot six weight rod very effectively. In most cases it's just too much gear. So we're likely to go with a shorter rod, with a lighter line weight. At least for the first year or so, til he gathers some experience and grows a little. But. Until you get out on the extreme margins again, talking about salt water gear for instance, or something. Like that, that phase doesn't last long. Because it's equipment is simply not that hard to manage. You do however run into the question of, are the specifications in the equipment appropriate for the target. And, if I have my fishing was going to be conducted primarily on small streams. For either modest sized fish or larger fish, but fish that are contemplating eating themselves, that their available food sources are mostly fairly small flies. I'm going to be using a much lighter rod than I would if I, if the target where large, routinely larger fish, in heavier water eating bigger stuff. So you need to scale the gear appropriate to the application. Which is why almost anybody who gets serious about fly fishing will end up with more than one rod. My own battery is 8 1/2 with three weight, a nine foot five weight, and a nine foot seven weight. And with those three rods I can do everything from size 20 flies, to size two streamers and any water from a creek four feet

across, to the Yellowstone River. But I wouldn't generally speaking take my three weight to the Yellowstone. Or my seven weight the to Slough Creek. Tackle manufacturers, you know, actually the big names in the business: Orvis, Sage, Winston and most of the bigger better known manufacturers, actually produce the best stuff. There's custom stuff out there with pretty high price tags. For the most part. They're working off of blanks made by one of the others. Because they don't have. It. It costs a bunch to get the equipment to produce a good blank. And the rest of it is essentially cosmetics. And pretty much the same thing applies to reels and lines, stuff like that. And it's, I think it's a disservice to imply that. There's some one outfit got a lock on all this because, when push comes to shove, the user is personal. The intersection between his personal style, and how he handles gear. And a particular piece of equipment, is way more important than whose label is on it. And so I have no problem at all letting people wave things around and decide whether it actually fits them comfortably, reliably, to do what they wanted to do.

Richard Parks [00:40:21] One quality is, a willingness to share. Not in the sense of fishing the same spot. But a willingness to divide the available, the water you're fishing. Because at bottom, fishing is a solitary perversion. It is not a team activity, or much less a mass sport active, spectator sport. It's. So, having somebody who is willing to say, "OK I'll fish this side. You fish that side. I'll fish the first hundred yards. You fish the next hundred yards. Then we'll swap that we'll go. We'll leapfrog." Good to have somebody to sit down and say, "Eh, okay. It's lunchtime. What are you seeing? You having the same experience I'm having?" That kind of communication; tremendously useful. But having a guy who's always gotta be first, out in front of you charging through the water. Not a good fishing partner. Having compatible objectives. At least when you get in the car. Start of the day. Some mutual agreement as to, our target for the day. There's nothing that's quite as frustrating to either party, as having one person who wants to catch really big fish ,and another person who wants to catch a large number of fish. Because the two are not particularly compatible, by and large.

Richard Parks [00:42:48] The most important piece of advice is: do it. Do it again. Do it again. Try to remember what worked, and what didn't work. Don't do the things that didn't work. Do the things that did work again, and observe. Observe. Observe. What's going on around you. Five minutes worth of observation beats the hell out of two or three hours worth of random fly changing. Because it'll give you some sense of what it is that might, the fish might be trying to tell you, about the conditions and how to abuse their confidence enough to get them on the hook.

Richard Parks [00:43:52] There's, I think anybody who overlooks the capacity of human tinkering with the environment, and in particular at the gross scale, climate change. At the smaller scale, paving channelization, pollution. As a way of eliminating or seriously damaging habitat is just kidding himself. There is a myriad of threats. And I would say some of them are sort of like point sources. And some of them are pretty global. The potential for climate change to radically alter life for salmonids, what are basically cold water fish is, scary to contemplate. And the ability of accidental or oblivious activities. Things like mine waste, acid mine drainage. Just ripping all the vegetation off of something. Changing the temperature regime. All kinds of things that people have done, continue to do, either because the market structure doesn't force them to contemplate the consequences of those actions, or regulations don't reach to them, or they just damn don't care. Or they don't value their resources, the impact on the resource. And personally, there, there's a lot of stuff out there that people have to pay attention to, or we won't have it. Opportunities are a little harder to define. Simply because, the, uh, know when you, when it comes to habitat protection, we're st- we're inherently gonna be tinkering around

the edges of trying to minimize damage, more than we are going to be trying to make things better. And the fact that we like seven billion people going on ten or twelve are going to make any of those answers easier to achieve.

James Thull [00:47:18] In Montana and regionally, I think our biggest gain has been getting away from the hatchery system. There is value in natives or at least wild fish. They are more resilient populations, they're more interesting from a sporting aspect. And actually cost less money to maintain. The, that's been I would say, the biggest gain. Some of the rest of it is, holding the line. I think it's safe to say, that in 1953, when we moved to Gardner, and my father opened the shop, there was very little water in Montana and that wasn't available to the public. And, partly because, all of the park and in general a third of Montana is that is public land where the public has access. And a lot of that was an important water. And the places where you didn't have access weren't, mostly, that all useful, important. The arrival of forces that want to restrict public access to public resources is something that's happened mostly with the expansion of population and the large number, larger number, that comes along with that, the percentage of the population involved in fishing is fairly constant or slightly shrinking, but the number of bodies that you apply the percentage to, has been ever increasing. And that puts a lot of pressure on things. The, the application of the public trust doctrine in Montana, to the waters, has been absolutely critical in maintaining availability of the resource in its accessibility. We see that in the consequences of not doing that in states where you have taken a different legal tact. And it's not really a pretty picture for the public. That is, however, something that the public needs to be aware of, that the public trust doctrine, it also involve some public responsibility on their part. They have to know it's important for people to behave responsibly while you're at it. Or it could change. So. We have seen changes, in terms of, for instance; through the 50s, it was in a park, in particular, and outside the park. We still had people put out there was planting, there were generous limits. They generally did not protect fish on a species basis. There were not... There weren't any bait restrictions. And there were a lot of fishing, fish populations, that were being pressured hard. By basically by overfishing, or an associated resource waste. We're changing the rules to protect native fish, to, in promoting catch and release in general. In, in the park. Methodology restriction. Getting rid of bait fishing. Initially had a huge impact positive impact on fish populations in the park. Only counterbalanced more recently by the invasive species problem with lake trout, and whirling disease in the upper Yellowstone system. However, in Montana, outside the park, here on the Yellowstone it has not been.... As universally acceptable. There's been pushback. And on the part of people who I'm pretty sure think of themselves as sportsmen, but don't always act that way. And I think the, while the numbers of trout available in the Yellowstone River are pretty good. And, and holding in there, the availability of the angler, a somewhat larger fish in the 18 to mid 20 inch range, size, size range, has shrunk. Because of some respects quite selective kill, just, I think of, maybe change the genetics down the road. .

Richard Parks [00:54:16] I think that TU is doing better than FFF. And from the sports specific angle, TU, both on a national scale, and locally. And this is where it gets blurry somewhere in between. TU and FFF. It's at the local level. Where there is but there they're doing the best at it. But they're not the only player. And if a sportsman thinks that he can write an annual check to TU, and then go home and vote for a Congressperson who will, essentially, either in the name of deregulation or whatever, allow the industrial polluter free access to his water is kidding himself. So there is a level of individual responsibility. People are going to have to stop voting for the people who are at hammering their, you know, supporting the destruction of their habitat. And if they don't, we'll get to where we're headed.

James Thull [00:55:54] Yeah, that's true.

Richard Parks [00:55:55] But then at the local level you'll have, an assemblage of people, they might be TU members of the TU chapter, they might be FFF members of the local FFF Chapter. It might be a chapter that actually holds dual membership. And they decided that, 'by, God, that X Y Z creek is our project. And we're going to get the dead car bodies out of there. We're gonna fix some of the extreme side repairing habitat degradation." And it can do pretty wonderful work. And, you know so not that not to denigrate the activities on the ground of individuals and small groups, it's all part of the whole ecosystem, so to speak. And other organizations that are not necessarily focused on fishing. But nevertheless are focused on policy questions like water quality maintenance, et cetera, are also doing that work. Even though there may not be a fish in sight.

Richard Parks [00:57:09] Well there's no question about that, thats my father. He built me a fly rod when I was six. I wasn't any good with it, till I was about ten, simply because I didn't have a physical size to manage it.

James Thull [00:57:20] Sure.

Richard Parks [00:57:22] And. But, I was about 15 probably, the last time I actually went fishing with a spinning rod. Yeah. There's, but. There's no question whatsoever that he was my inspiration, my role model, my primary instructor.

James Thull [00:57:47] Was it the fishing that brought your dad out here?

Richard Parks [00:57:49] Yep, yeah. We moved here to open the shop. That's sort of a story too, in that, after he tied himself how to tie flies, at the end of the war, he suddenly found himself in a lot of new fishing buddies. All of whom were perpetually out of flies. And he got tired of it. So he went into the custom fly tying business. Saying, "Okay guys you want some flies. Here's a price list." We were doing that long before we moved. But he was way more interested in the trade, than what he was doing for a living at the time.

James Thull [00:58:25] Did he, do you know, did he consider other places besides Montana?

Richard Parks [00:58:28] Yeah. Yeah. He was in correspondence with some folks in California. We made it a summer vacation trip to Colorado. It was, essentially, looking at potential places. We'd been to Yellowstone twice. Not with that specific intention but because it was a place to fish. Great place to go. And, prior to opening the shop, actually Dan Bailey was a critical factor. Bailey was moving into the wholesale end of the business. wanted there to be more shops that would be customers of its wholesale end of things. And invited my father out, the winter of '52. To go scout locations. They spent seven, eight, 10 days, driving around various locations in Montana. Looking for the nexus between water, available shop space, how many people were already doing it. So West Yellowstone was out, there were already shops in West. Gardner did not have a fly shop. But you know it wasn't the only town he looked into. So, yeah there was some effort put into thinking it out.

Richard Parks [01:00:03] I don't have a favorite. Other than the one that's on my line now. It's.... Different fish have somewhat different characteristics. Different circumstances produce different behaviors. It's a sport that, inherently, is things are always changing. And

part of it is Challenge, just the challenge of being successful at it. Which, in some respects, is not. The cynic would say, boy we set an awfully low bar here, trying to outsmart a critter with a brain the size and computational capacity of a lima bean. But, and sometimes it's not, not the fish we're trying to defeat, as much as the challenge of where that fish is precisely located, and what he's precisely doing now.

Richard Parks [01:01:40] You know, I would not describe myself as a researcher or author particularly. Wally here would describe himself as an author. I've written a book and a half. And, why I wanted to do it was, there are basically two reasons. One of them is, pretty common reason about why people do a lot of things; I was asked. In both cases. I, my first book I co-authored with a friend in California. And, essentially, he fished with me for a number of years. We talked about stuff. he said, "We ought to write a book." OK. About what? "Fly patterns. That's good, and you know it's something I think we can we can sell." And so we did. And yup we could. It's out of print now but we sold twenty thousand copies of the book so. It was the first fairly specialized publication, that's pretty good. And my other book, the one I'm solely responsible for, Fishing Yellowstone Park. The original publisher said, "We're doing a series of books. We've got a couple out. We want some more. We want to do one specifically on Yellowstone." Guy who called me had been a newspaper reporter for the Livingston Enterprise before he went to work. For them as a as an editor. As I, he thought I could probably write the book, he asked me if I could. "Yeah. Yeah I think I could probably do that." And we've gone through three editions that collectively are now up around 17, 18 thousand in sales on that, and it continues to sell several hundred volumes every year. I need to talk to the current publisher about revising it again, because some things have changed since the last time we did that.

James Thull [01:04:41] Who is the current publisher?

Richard Parks [01:04:44] I don't even remember their names. Some outfit in Georgia. They bought, Little [unintelligible]. Who bought it outfit they bought the original. publisher.

James Thull [01:04:56] I should know, but I didn't know whether it's one of one you know like Stackpole or.

Richard Parks [01:05:01] No it's not Stackpole. Stackpole Is sort of the other big publisher of outdoor books. And. The, Rolling and Little Feet is the current, current publisher.

Richard Parks [01:05:33] You know, so Ray Bergman wrote that seminal book, Trout, that my father worked out of. And, that is an important author that. He's not no longer practicing because he's been deceased for a while. But the people that are currently writing; John Geirach does good stuff. A, Wally my head guide here is, he writes and he would like to make a living as an author. I think sometimes it isn't going to happen right away. Not very many people can actually make a living writing. You know, saying that, Tom Clancy's, J.K. Rawlings of the world are pretty thin on the ground when push comes to show. I love Charlie Waterman stuff. And the. Oh it's, oddly enough I haven't read terribly widely, widely in the field. Mostly because I've been too darn busy to.

James Thull [01:07:13] It happens.

Richard Parks [01:07:14] Yeah. And so there's a lot of stuff I haven't read. He had his peculiarities, but I liked a lot of what Datus Proper wrote. I love a lot of Paul Schullary's stuff.