

reed-nathaniel-2016-05-04.mp4

[00:00:10] My mother felt that her five siblings were living in very privileged quarters and times. And in the end she bought a camp in the Adirondacks which had no running water no electricity outhouses a wood stove to put to. Warm water for the weekly bath. A float off shore where we swam in icy cold out around the next water every day and I got a twelve foot rowboat flat bottomed with locked in doors and wore a lifejacket and I inherited a good bamboo rod with a plastic line and leaders with three wet flies on them and a box of other flies all smelled to fish for very unaware brook trout that lived in great numbers on this length Lake warmers and every morning after breakfast and duties in the house to clean oneself up clean one make one's bed all those the things that were required by my mother strict mother I was allowed to hit the books and go and I would row.

[00:01:40] And Row and row and cast and cast and cast. And some days I caught nothing.

[00:01:45] Other days I caught eight nine 10 inch fish and occasionally at 12 or 14 ish fish in the evening my father paddled me in a canoe on this beautiful lake where there was a evening Mayflower hatch with the with spinners coming down to the lake and the brook trout much larger brook trout fed on them.

[00:02:08] Of course I knew nothing. He was not a fisherman so he knew nothing. About trying to match the hatch or come up with a dry fly.

[00:02:16] Here I was stuck with three Snell flaws but the passion of being alone on a beautiful lake Big Lake and catching trout started me and then of course when I became one when I was old enough here in Florida I began to fish almost daily. Prior to the war with our caretaker Andrew Ornish who had to go check. Believe it or not the water came from the potable water came from the mainland delivered by a series of windmills that raised the water into a stamp pipe and then it flowed across the river on gravity and pumped up into the standing pipe at the house tank at the house.

[00:03:08] We fished every afternoon on the way over to check the windmills and on the way back in those days the Indian River was simply full of fish sea trout redfish lady fish pompano.

[00:03:24] I could go on.

[00:03:26] It was hardly an afternoon that we didn't catch two or three fish on the way over and two or three fish on the way back. So after he went to war in 1942 we stayed in Florida for a year. I was not allowed to use an outboard motor but I can row to my favorite pasture.

[00:03:48] My favorite grass flat where I succeeded in catching very large sea trout on a very regular basis using a plug casting outfit and a popping plug.

[00:04:02] And after the war during the war I should say excuse me during the war.

[00:04:10] I visited my Grandmother Reed in Denver Colorado. She was a renowned figure a great philanthropist. She had become an heiress of considerable wealth from my grandfather and who died on it. In 1918 leaving her a widow a long long time anyway. She wanted one member of the Joseph Reed family to be with her every summer beginning in nineteen thirty nine or forty. And luckily for me her chauffeur Lewis Wicker. Was one of the great trout fishermen of the West and I after duties five days a week Monday through

Friday morning. We were allowed to slip away and go to one of the ranches many ranches owned by great friends of hers and Louis and I would fish together.

[00:05:07] He taught me how to vastly improve my fly casting and he taught me all about flies including dry flies.

[00:05:16] And it was an education that I love 40 41 42 43 44 and even forty. Those were epic. Months. Because it meant for weekends of intensive fishing on beautiful private water with marvelous hatches and a surprisingly large fish.

[00:05:40] I failed as many times as I succeeded because I didn't know exactly entomology so they often used the wrong dry fly on the wrong hatch and was turned down by Wiley brown trout. After the war my father. Took an interest in a ranch and. Near moose Wyoming. And I met the great Bob Carmichael. And.

[00:06:08] He took me under his wing. The first thing we did we walked out on the bridge at Moose going across the Snake River and he examined my tackle box which was filled with spinners and. All kinds of oddball things that I had bought from a catalogue and one by one they were thrown into the snake river.

[00:06:30] Tears in my eyes and I became a fly fisherman and I met Roy Donnelly. I watched him tie those magnificent Roy Donnelly lights. And dark. Flies and. I became a passionate fisherman of the snake returned every year for many many years before I.

[00:06:56] Left college. After I left college before I went into the military after I came back from the military a trip to the snake was always a absolute necessity. Great part of my life the pale Donnelly variant remains one of the most beautifully tied flies in the world. And. I found a box of them both the dark and the Browns.

[00:07:23] The dark and the light in a quaint corner in my fly box room. And I sent them to the.

[00:07:32] Museum a fly fishing museum because they had none.

[00:07:37] And Donnelly really was one of the greatest fly Tiers you've ever known. He had the snake river one when the snake was down.

[00:07:45] The level was down the height was down and the amount of water coming out of the dam was down. The two of us.

[00:07:54] Carried on every day and we caught some remarkably large rainbow not rainbow. Pure snake there were cutthroat the most beautiful fish in the world. He maintained that they were one of the strongest fish that he ever fought for he was a great steelhead fisherman but. A. Three four or five pound snake wherever cutthroat. Totally different from the Yellowstone cutthroat. That will hardly pull the snake river cutthroat uses the current brilliantly and is a really tough character. Anyway my love continued during my military years as I had a French godfather who had a of stretch of a perfectly beautiful chalk stream and I spent. Many weekends off duty learning how to use very small. English tied copies of the various hatches I came off as more of a spring break not unlike our spring creeks out west very delicate long leaders light layers problems with weeds but surprisingly wild brown trout and a few rainbow trout that had been.

[00:09:07] Stocked many many years before that were really wild. They had gone completely wild so it continues I came back from the service I fished here in the Indian River fished in the Keys. I fished in Central America I fished and now fish principally in the Bahamas.

[00:09:28] Where I'll be going to next Monday for bone fish I've caught 100 tarpon I don't need to catch anymore I've had full four years of big game fishing killed more than my share my giant blue tuna which I'm ashamed of killed a magnificent blue marlin lost two black marlin off one off South America off Peru and one off Australia or both. Well over a thousand pounds. And don't regret it for a minute.

[00:09:58] My days of fighting chair and a harness are all over I find absolute pure delight in being in a skiff with a competent Bahamian guide searching for the wily bony fish which requires very good casting. Good casting is a part of my life. I adore it. So I have a background that goes a long ways back and fishing.

[00:10:24] Is something that my mother and father neither one did but they encouraged me. They saw that I had the right tackle. They saw that I was in good hands. And I am the most fortunate man alive because.

[00:10:38] I have fish great rivers great lakes and it all started as a boy on a lake in the Adirondacks fishing with a leader. Probably no more than six feet long with three Snell floors. Royal coachman Palmer Jamie Bell and a black man. I think the spring creeks. In the West may be. My absolute favorite.

[00:11:12] For trout fishing. I think they require. The most skill the most casting skill the most. Important.

[00:11:23] Knowledge of animal history.

[00:11:26] The Henrys fork of the snake is a fascination for me absolute fascination. I was asked by. The owner of the railroad rich. To. Write up a plan. For its preservation. And it will be in my book forthcoming book. The story of. How. The railroad rash was made into one very very special bank to bank. One plus mile stretch of the Henry's fork. Which produces so many really great catches. As so many very very large wild trouble. I like the head of his fork a lot.

[00:12:12] It's hard the heart of the I'm older now I'm old and numbers mean nothing to me. The quality of the fishing means everything to me. That's great. That's great. I must admit however I must admit crossing Buffalo forward on the Yellowstone River was starker Leopold. Arm in arm. Barely able to get across with war almost up to the top of our waders and going gas chamber ways. We used to take a picnic one late lunch with us. And fish for those not not too wily yellow.

[00:12:49] Yellowstone cut through us Yellowstone River cutthroats and an afternoon with ten or twelve. Each.

[00:12:58] Was remarkably satisfactory. Not satisfied. We had a lot of laughs about it.

[00:13:05] It might not have been spring creek fishing but it was. It was fishing for rising trout that were not the most intelligent. Anyway it was great great fun to be together and to have hookup after hookup. Absolutely no question about it. I've known some great ones.

I've had the privilege of fishing with some great ones. And. I can't come up with everybody's names that would be wrong because I can't do it. But. In the selection of the great rivers to be retained in. National parks and national wildlife refuges in Alaska. We had a team that fished together examining. Wish one of the millions of acres of land should be retained either in refuges or parks and fishing was one of the driving forces of this group that fought so hard.

[00:14:12] To get the Alaska lands bill passed. We save one hundred and fifty four million acres of land in Alaska permanently in national parks and national wildlife refuges. It'll be a lot it'll be a lot longer in my book about the stories of the men who. Were fishermen. Conservationists. Passionate. Passionate. Land interests have land management interests who changed the world in the 1970s with the passage of the foundation of all of our environmental laws. The Clean Water Act the Fisheries Act the Endangered Species Act. It goes on and on. 70 with the passage with a creation of EPA 69 the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act which gave outside groups the right and the privilege that right to sue the federal government. Over bad decision making that would damage habitat. Among the most important environmental. Progress.

[00:15:18] Periods in our history. Wilson has said the passage of the Endangered Species Act was the most important. Conservation Act passed in the nineteen hundreds. I'm very proud of my part in that. And.

[00:15:35] I'm very proud of my part in the Clean Water Act. My only regret is that we weren't able to add agricultural runoff pollution which is now the number one polluter than in the American rivers lakes. And.

[00:15:51] Desperately needs to be brought under control.

[00:15:59] They do. This is the absolute. Requirement. Of all fishermen. To become.

[00:16:08] Ardent conservationists. We've got to protect the water and the species.

[00:16:14] The water quantity the water quality of which our fish depend upon. Right now Florida Bay is suffering again through a colossal algal bloom. The Indian River upper Indian River is suffering from a huge algal bloom. A million fish have died already. It's from leaking septic tanks that are pouring nitrogen into a closed system. We know what it is. We have to join together to preserve what we have the very best of what we have. The various organizations the fishing organizations and the general conservation organizations all about Natural Resources Defense Council all of us are committed Environmental Defense. We're all committed to a quality of life issues and quality of life issues includes fisheries. And. All fishing organizations. Must be involved in the critical land use issues conservation issues finance issues and must be scientifically accurate at all times. Joined a recognized group contribute to it and in many cases work on stream restoration projects it's great fun.

[00:17:41] Very satisfactory very satisfying.

[00:17:46] China limited and many other organizations throughout the West and Far West all have wonderful working relationships with anglers who come together not only to fish but to work on issues in extreme issues which are vitally important.

[00:18:10] International fly fishermen are doing a wonderful job. You put me on the spot because. There I belong to so many organizations that I hate to start in. I have a course a

long affinity with Trout Unlimited. I've been a director of the Atlantic Salmon Federation for many many years and continue to take a tremendous interest in the plight of the Atlantic Salmon I'm a keen salmon fisherman. I have been privileged to fish some of the greatest rivers abroad Norway Iceland Quebec New Brunswick Labrador. I will be fishing in early June in Quebec again. And I can't wait.

[00:19:01] I look forward to worked on tackle yesterday.

[00:19:08] These are organizations that deserve our financial support and most importantly they need membership.

[00:19:15] They need membership because they show the politicians that membership counts votes count. They need to be able to speak in front of county commissioners and city commissioners and the governor's offices. Hearings letting their voices be heard loud and clearly always scientifically accurate.

[00:19:38] Nothing hurts the the message more than anything and an inaccurate scientific statement. But where I think the issue. Of clean water. Fisheries habitat.

[00:19:51] Is becoming ever more clear to all kinds of organizations would be besides shot unlimited fascination. There are so many other organizations deeply involved in the issues of clean water habitat and fisheries.

[00:20:08] It's just remarkable how relatively small band of anglers began this program and now it's grown and grown and grown to where we probably have a million anglers who really care and are knowledgeable about the issues that confront our fisheries.

[00:20:29] We have to be heard. We have to be willing to spend money for our organizations so they can effectively lobby so they can effectively hire the very best staff.

[00:20:42] I'm a founding member of the Everglades Foundation. We have a. Fantastic staff.

[00:20:48] That are deeply involved in fisheries issues because of water conditions. The water is insufficient water is flowing through the Everglades. We have problems with pollution upstream in the Everglades and we have a dying Florida Bay from a lack of water hyper salinity. We've lost for the moment the great hurt shoals of bone fish that need attracted thousands of anglers a year and kept hundreds of guys in business.

[00:21:19] We're going to bring them back but it cannot be brought back without vast improvement in the habitat.

[00:21:32] Well we're gonna see remarkable changes in our Earth.

[00:21:36] We can't project and predict the consequences of warming on our cold water fisheries. Trout salmon. Pacific job. Salmon steelhead. It's impossible at this time to predict what changes are going to occur. Again it's the strength of the organizations that are gonna make the difference in guiding helping to guide government into wise decision making. I mean you cannot over a net steelhead run and expect expected to survive especially when the weather is changing and it's warming. The province of British Columbia really needs to understand the vast financial importance at the steelhead salmon fishery means to far greater than short term clear cut forestry they must understand that

the netting at the mouths of the rivers at the height of the run of the high quality fish that attract fishermen from around the world is wrong. It's ridiculous. You have got to understand escaped but not modest escape at maximum escape. So that you rebuild those stocks. He's taking time and the negatives produced by the nonbelievers are significant. The overwhelming science is that global warming is a fact. Flying back from Iceland two years ago I always said on the.

[00:23:29] Right hand side of a plane. And as we passed that was a beautiful beautiful afternoon and the pilot the. Call from the cockpit to the.

[00:23:46] True to the passengers saying we're passing by our glacier field for the next 30 minutes you'll have a clear vision.

[00:23:54] Everybody on the left hand side of the plane crawl over your partner on your right hand side and see what's going on. The carving on these glaciers which I've been flying this route.

[00:24:06] For air Iceland for 30 years I have never seen the amount of carving that's going on. This very moment.

[00:24:15] It is absolutely astonishing to my Jimmy and my co-pilot. We can hardly take our eyes off it. We're on automatic pilot so we're free to look. But. This is an indication that you all must be aware that we are in a period of global warming. And there was sort of a long silence inside the plane. Where I think even a non-believer staring. At the camera and think the rate of carving on the flight on these long long glaciers was so astonishing that it was hard to believe it was a real eye opener for everybody.

[00:24:58] Diversity is very important.

[00:25:01] We need more black and Latino anglers. We need younger anglers. I'm happy to say that L.L. Bean has a great program for young anglers to have a casting area on Long where they have instructors free free instruction. It's amazing on a day at being the number of 8 9 10 11 12 year olds who are taking instruction.

[00:25:28] Maine is fortunate to have L.L. Bean and Bean is lucky to have so many people there every day. I think you'll find that the fishing schools and the guys service are teaching more youngsters how to fly fish now than ever. But diversity is a problem.

[00:25:50] I see far too few fly fishermen among minority members of America and we've got to encourage them.

[00:26:02] I have some black friends who are superb fly casters and who enjoy fishing in the Keys as much as anyone but the numbers are small. We are becoming an urban country and it is difficult to get urban people to learn new tricks. One of the new tricks is to give up the spinning Rod and take up fly fishing. But even if you take up the spinning run. And enjoy catching fish you're part of the great community of anglers.

[00:26:40] No sense of humor. No one. A good share. Number two.

[00:26:48] The love of the river. Love of the God love of the ambiance. We're so lucky to be fishing in love of the fish. Love of the tackle fascination with the tackle endless

fascination with the tackle to flies. Different lines the whole scope of angling brings people together.

[00:27:17] With an intensity that's hard to believe. A band of brothers in many cases a band of brothers and sisters. As I fish with a great many women who are just as art and design. I get that question I had that question when I was working in the governor's office in Florida.

[00:27:40] The two governors who actually I work for five governors and saw a lot of young people interviewed a lot of young people for different positions in Florida government and Florida Fish and Game and and for the Department of Environmental Protection and in Washington for the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service.

[00:28:01] My single admonition or piece of advice call it either one be educated. If you're going to be a member of a technical group what you want a technical life with an agency you must have a master's degree. I'm sorry to tell you that I know it's time and money but a master's degree is essential if you're going to get a promising job with one of the state or federal agencies. There are just so few slots available at the Master's Degree is almost that most. If you're not going on to a professional job well then there's no reason not to be scientifically up to date. Be an active member of a group and. One of them and I know almost every locale in America there is a fishing.

[00:29:01] Group of some sort. That's protecting a river or rivers whether it's in Connecticut or Wyoming or in Washington. There's a group to join a group to be part of a group to make up an effort to help.

[00:29:18] The world is yours go out and embrace it. Don't sit back and complain. Go out and help.

[00:29:26] That's my that's my message to everyone whether you want to be in federal or state service or whether you are going into business. Have a wife and children nevertheless find time to be involved with one of the groups that's protecting a watershed somewhere in the United States.

[00:29:53] Yes. And the power of the pen.

[00:29:56] There's nothing like a good letter writing to members of Congress. There's nothing like. Congressional races where a candidate has to stand up before his constituents and answer questions. This is the moment of moment to ask the key questions on water quality fishing.

[00:30:16] Whether they have any keen interest in America's environmental problems. This is the moment this isn't public. They have to answer.

[00:30:28] In the House this every two years so you have a fantastic opportunity to have less of an opportunity during the Senate campaign because they're elected for six. But nevertheless they have town meetings across the country without stop. Admittedly in many cases trying to raise more money but nip that step. Time that the public must stand up and ask the key questions that are the questions that are hard for a politician to answer voluntarily and then be kept to that answer when they go back into the. Quagmire of Washington.

[00:31:13] Learn how to cast first. I have a grandson who cast as well as I do if not better. My son is a brilliant caster. One son pays very little attention to it. The other is a master caster. Two grandsons one grandson is a pro it's actually guiding this summer in Utah and the other is.

[00:31:38] Loves everything to do with fishing. It is not passionate but what he loves is the quiet joy of waiting.

[00:31:45] The joy of casting occasionally catching a fish and Beyonce is something important in his life and it's important that all our lives as we fish. Do we really recognize what's around us the birds the insects the countryside that's all part. Of a complete anger. Is. Your part of the world. That's what's so satisfying about being a competent angler is that you're part of the natural world.

[00:32:17] Inescapably you're a part of it. You came from it and you are a part of it still.

[00:32:28] I started catching blue girls and bull heads in our Lincoln in Crash and down here Snapper Snapper Snapper is off the cut off the dock.

[00:32:40] Yes. Numbers were important.

[00:32:44] But it didn't take long.

[00:32:47] Oh I'll take that back. I would say by the time I was 20.

[00:32:54] Numbers began to have less interest to me.

[00:33:00] I caught a lot of Tarpon in my twenties. And those were numbers that was numbers.

[00:33:07] And so I was I would say that the evolution took time but it certainly has. Certainly by the time I was in my thirties it he had evolved from quantity to quality to expertise to love of tackle love of ambiance love of who I fished with. Who. I had great relationships with various guys over there many many years that I've fished and I've had great fishing companions companions. Literally our life companions and their life companions a bond of brothers. And sisters we we have an unusually good time together.

[00:34:02] Yes it's a constant battle. Every morning I get up. I ask for guidance and for the opportunity to have strength to accept the opportunities that are available to me every day to make a difference. We are becoming a very urbanised people and.

[00:34:21] It's hard for them to understand some of the issues that confront quality angle whether it's for small mouth or large mouth bass or whether it's for a spring creeks or whether it's for the great steelhead rivers or the Atlantic salmon rivers of the Great Lakes issues. Those are issues that urban people have a hard time understanding unless you bring it down to the basic qualities of. National parks national wildlife refuges outstanding waters. More television time spent on showing people where and when and how they can take advantage of this incredible country.

[00:35:10] This incredible country. The recent series on the national park system is an example. We're up to 200 200 million plus people are visiting the parks every year more and more of them are learning how to fish our great streams. I'm not giving up for a

moment on the American people demanding safety for our best waterways our best watersheds our best rivers and lakes estuaries. The threat is there constantly. We we we're lacking leadership in many areas in this state right now. And. The issue of water quality is going to be a very very important one in our next election and in the election of the members of the legislature and certainly in the governor's race. We need to move faster further in Florida. As we do in a number of other states. For instance. The great success story of the five states and EPA coming together to begin a rapid improvement in the water quality in Chesapeake Bay is an example. After all these years of resisting forming a compact they did it because the bay is dying one of the greatest resources in North America. The spawning ground of millions of striped bass that coming together. To find solutions to agricultural runoff industrial waste and unfortunately still some sewage treatment plants that have not been brought up to speed are going to do it. They mean it. They're gonna do it.

[00:37:02] You really have asked a tough political question of me. Of course. Everyone supports the preservation of the indigenous. Wild trout through our national parks system. I remember ordering the end of rainbow stocking in the Smokies and. Another.

[00:37:30] Eastern national park out of my mind at the moment so that the book the indigenous book track could make a comeback.

[00:37:41] Yes. I must admit I had a problem with Lamar. I admit it having fished the Lamar River and Yellowstone National Park for many years I had a hard time thinking that I was going to throw a rainbow trout into the bushes. I think after the initial shock. Of the declaration by the. Superintendent that this was going to be made to a. Wild. Indigenous cut throat. Fishery.

[00:38:14] I had some serious problems because I I love that river fish. Many hours on it Charlie Loveless who was the head of the Fish and Wildlife Service research branch starker Leopold. Many others. It's a magnificent river that the trout are really quite wise because their fish were quite hard. The thought of discarding a healthy fish was very difficult for me to swallow. Still is but the basic premise of restoring Lamar and other rivers to the native trout. Is. Is a wise. Tough. Decision. And I.

[00:39:05] I don't. I haven't killed a fish in years.

[00:39:09] If I do fish that Lamar again I will bring home whatever rainbow trout I catch and I'd have it serves for somebodies breakfast. How's that. Should it be done with a sense of humor. But lonely may kill me for telling us. But Dad I think the time has come to give up on the Lamar. Even though. I agree with you there are points of entry into the Lamar that may allow both browns and rainbows to get into the river but I'm going to support the superintendent and in his effort to restore the river to a while cutthroat trout river. Have.

[00:39:57] A great affinity for salmon fishing obviously.

[00:40:01] I have an enormous affinity for fishing for browns and rainbows in wild rentals and rainbows in rivers like the Henry's flock or spring creeks. I write I find the spring creeks starker used to say to me Nathaniel.

[00:40:18] The spring Kate creeks are the PHC of trout fishing. There's a lot to that statement. But I also. Went down the Green River last year of up at the top where it was bouncy bouncy bouncy water and. I started with a nine foot later which obviously wouldn't

work on the cats were very very short a shortened later and shortened my cast and floated a canvas big cats fly as I had the most marvellous a long mourning I've ever laid eyes on.

[00:40:57] I hadn't done that type of fishing in years seriously and years and years at the end of the day I at the end of the morning long morning.

[00:41:05] I don't know how many fish I landed. Quite a few. They were very strong. They used the current very very very very handily.

[00:41:15] I must admit I thought it was an absolutely wonderful day.

[00:41:24] I just sent you another book. Very important book. That's very rare.

[00:41:30] I'll be leaving you a lot more books in years to come. The lily library adjunct. To the Montana State University is one of the most important collections.

[00:41:49] Of angling in the world.

[00:41:54] This is an old art. It goes back into the ancient times. Man has been fascinated by catching fish by all kinds of methods. This repository. Not only honors but a great magnificent westerner but it honors the art and passion of anger.

[00:42:21] It is a great source of information for future scholars. It is a great source. Of enjoyment for the students as well who want to pull a book and read. I find myself rereading and reading new Olympic new angling literature nightly. And. I would hope as a country grows and there's more interest in the art of angling all kinds of angling that the library will be used more and more but it is one of the greatest repository of literature angling literature in the world. And it should be supported by everybody who's involved with the angling profession or in the industry or as individuals who have. A fine collection of angling books. They should end up. At the lily library.

[00:43:21] I'm just finishing a book by massive Max Hastings the English writer so beautiful beautifully describing some of his his fishing and his great interest in Scotland and elsewhere. He writes in prose is so beautiful describing scenes. Which as an outdoorsman I understand so perfectly because I've had the same feeling. When I've been in Iceland or Quebec or Pacific Northwest or in Wyoming or in Montana.

[00:43:53] Where I'm feel like I'm in Eden. I hope it is as wonderful. As some of the places that I've enjoyed being. It's been a great pleasure to give this interview. And I can only hope that it adds to your collection and expresses to you my devotion. Not only to Bud but forgive my dog but to the library. Bravo to all and you will have my assistance to the last great breath because I really believe in the program. Thank you very much for the opportunity to be interviewed.