

# Atlantic Salmon Fishing in Labrador

## by Jens Lund Adamsen

Ever heard about the Flowers River? Neither had I

But with today's internet every fishing destination is only a few clicks on the mouse away.

Up in the northern woodland of Labrador is a little secret called the Flowers River the northern most scheduled salmon fishing on the Canadian Atlantic coast.

After a series of mails with the owner of the Flowers River Lodge Jim Burton a trip was arranged and a rod on the opening week of the 2006 season was booked.

Jim has been the owner of the lodge since 1998 where he took over from his father.

Jim is also a pilot and has his own plane which is very convenient as the lodge is very remote and only accessible by float plane.

The river is running through real wilderness in fantastic scenery. It is a clear water river quite shallow and with only moderate current. Actually the river is so clean that you can drink the water without problems. The river is up to 120 yards wide in some places.

Up here the season is short. The salmon enter the river early July. This year unfortunately a little later than normal.

The temperature of the water was moving around 12 degrees Celsius and seemed perfect for fishing The river was more than a foot over average which unfortunately made salmon go straight through the pools as there were no obstacles to stop them.

The early run consist of nice "Springer's" beautiful fish around 7 to 13 pounds with some up to 25 pounds. A few 30 pounds + have been caught. In fact the fishing could be compared with the fishing on the river Dee in Scotland in April and early May.

The main run consists of a mix of salmon and grilse, followed by a massive number of char. The char which the river actually is famous for reaches 10 pounds +.

A part from these two species there is also sea run brook trout in the river.

The river is for the most part easily fished from the shore. Wading is easy where necessary. There are 24 named pools on the part of the 20 miles of river that is fished.

All the pools are reached by boat. The slender and beautiful Gander river boat is used and the guides handle them well even though a rock and a sand bar are hit occasionally. To get to the upper part of the pools a bit of hiking is demanded. A quite hot experience to walk through the wood in waders.



Here is a warning if you are allergic to mosquitoes, flies or horse flies (or rather their sting and bite) this is not a place for you. To keep these small devils away we used lots of different repellent both creme and spray and still got bitten now and again.

That it is a true wilderness. The presents of black bear, wolves and eagles is a sure indicator, we saw them all. The small cabin at the Top Pool had been opened through the walls twice this season by a hungry bear. This is no problem the guides are armed at all times.

The fishing is 100 % Catch & Release. All salmon are landed by hand in the water and quickly released. They do not use landing nets which I personally do not understand It could had made the landing and releasing a lot quicker. The rules for the fishing is quite strict only floating lines with neutral leaders and single barb less hooks are allowed.

The guides are at a 1:2 ratio and works fine.

We were well fed during the stay. Marjorie and Richard Hopkins ran the kitchen. Lunch packets can be arranged if you which to fish all day as well as you can have your dinner late if you like. Water, milk and juice are for free. If you want beverages alcohol or soft drinks you have to bring your self or order it before you come and then pay when you arrive - there is no bar.

### **The flies for the river:**

#### **Wet flies**

**The absolute favourite is Blue Charm second comes Black Bear Green Butt**

#### **Dry flies**

**Orange Bomber and White Wulff**

**With these four flies you should be all dressed up.**

Concerning "The Blue Charm". It has very little to do with the original pattern from the middle of the nineteenth century originated by Mr. Brown. The fly which was made famous by A.H.E. Woods on the Cairnton beat on the Dee. In fact I think that Mr. Brown would rotate in his grave if he saw what the Canadians call Blue Charm. But anyway Blue Charm works in a vararity of versions. One thing that is charteristic for the Canadian hair wing pattern is that the body is somewhat short compared the original pattern and the wing very short and always made of hair (mostly moose) the most popular pattern is dark winged and white winged as alternative dressing.

### **The dressings:**

#### **Dark winged Blue Charm**

**Tag: Oval silver and yellow silk (optional)**

**Tail: GP crest**

**Butt: Black ostrich (optional)**

**Body: Black wool or floss**

**Rib: Oval silver**

**Wing: Dark moose hair**

**Throat: Blue cock fibres**

#### **White winged Blue Charm**

**Same as above**

**Wing: white moose hair short not longer than to the butt.**

The salmon fishing on the two sides of the Atlantic has developed differently, at least up north in Labrador in comparison to Scandinavia. I soon became the guy from another planet.

Let me give some examples.

They did not use double handed rods, which by the way they called "Spey rods". They had never seen shooting heads and did not use tapered leaders. Only squirrel and moose hair were used for wings. Soft hair from Artic fox and temple dog had never been seen in hair wings.

Tube flies was another unknown chapter. Such popular long winged flies as Collie Dog and Sunray Shadow again were completely new to them.

Cone head tube flies which have taken over as the most productive flies in Scandinavia was never heard of or seen and when it came to fishing they were properly not legal as they were considered weighted flies (not balanced)!

This just to say that you can always learn something new about our wonderful passion: "Atlantic salmon Fishing"

Let me end this with an old saying: "When in Rome do as the Romans", and so I also did and caught this beautiful salmon on a Blue Charm size 8.

Regards

Jens Lund Adamsen

For information on Flowers River: <http://www.flowersriver.com/>