

HOOKED ON FISHING

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #264 —

There's a whole lot of Alaska southwest of Anchorage, as you fly over the Kenai Peninsula and King Salmon, passing by Kodiak Island – on the way down toward Cold Bay and the Aleutian chain. The Japanese tepidly invaded the Aleutian chain of islands early in WWII; it was their closest access to the United States. But, American and Canadian air and ground forces ended the invasion quickly.

Lava Creek Lodge is a pretty new and remote fishing lodge, located just over 100 miles southwest of King Salmon – about a two-hour charter flight from Anchorage. It hosts King Salmon anglers in June/July; the Silvers and Pink salmon come upriver in August/September. Daughter Sara and I made this trip together; she was the one that handled all the details –

of course.

We were there for the second week of the four-week Silver Salmon season. There was a cancellation, because of the coronavirus, and call from The Fly

Shop. Was she interested? She called me; yes we were! The only concern was that we had to take and pass a coronavirus test within 72 hours of our arrival in Anchorage. Thankfully it was a saliva test, rather than the nose swab type!

Camp was basic, but comfortable, located on a chute of the Cinder River. Each day we boated down the Cinder and fished for Silvers and Pinks in the deeper pools near its



Silver Salmon (Koho) were the targeted species of this trip, but we also caught pinks (humpback) and one day fished a creek that was just packed with dolly varden.

mouth in Bristol Bay. One day, we hopped in the Super Cub and flew a few minutes to Lava Creek (where the camp gets its name). All day long we waded and fished for dolly varden, stopping only for lunch; then we flew back to camp in the afternoon – nice, big dollies.

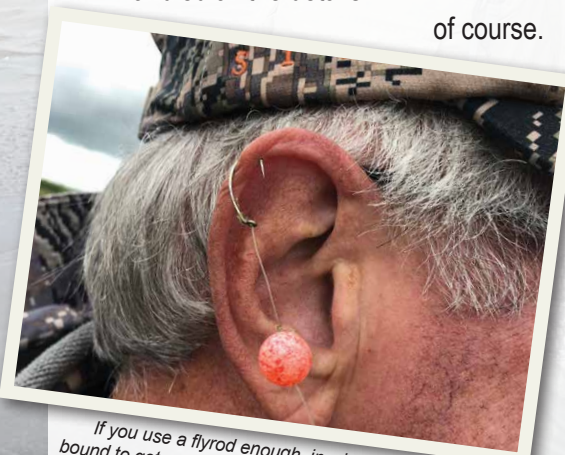
In Alaska, weather is always a concern, though possibly not an impact on a fishing trip. It was

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Wednesday evening when host Phil Byrd talked to us after dinner about high winds coming in from the southwest on Sunday. We were scheduled to fly out on Sunday, on the same plane that brought in next week's guests. When the wind gets to 50 mph, flying in Alaska comes to a standstill. Our choices were 1) take our chances that the weather forecaster was wrong, and be willing to stay if he/she was right – or 2) fly out early. Neither of us could stay the extra time, so we flew out early. Great, shortened trip!

USA
Midway

Larry Potterfield
Lava Creek Lodge
Pilot Point, Alaska
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If you use a flyrod enough, in windy conditions, you are bound to get a hook in your clothing – and maybe your ear.



Phil Byrd's 1957 Piper Super Cub, converted to a 4-seater many years ago. It ferried us from Pilot Point to camp and to another river for dolly varden.