



The Fine Art of Fly-Fishing: Bill Oyster's Bamboo Rods

Bill Oyster has discovered the secret to a satisfying personal and working life, a secret for which many people spend their whole lives looking. Bill is a master hand crafter of custom bamboo fly-fishing rods, mostly for fly-fishing enthusiasts. His real secret is the philosophy around which he designs his life: Bill believes in a simplistic lifestyle around which his business is established; he does not believe his personal life should revolve around a job he does not like. He and his wife, Shannen, with their two-year-old son, Cutter, spend the majority of their days at home working together to create a successful business enterprise with fly-fishing rods and accessories.

Bill Oyster specializes in the art of fly-fishing: from perfecting the casting technique, to the beautiful artistry engraved on custom-made bamboo rods. Each custom made piece takes approximately 16 months to complete due to the special care and personal

engraving Bill adds to each of his pieces. Every handcrafted fly rod is personally guaranteed by Bill. "I'm in the business of developing happy customers. I want to keep things positive," explains Bill. He began creating his custom made bamboo rods over ten years ago, in his own home. As a child, Bill loved spending entire days pond-fishing in Wyoming and in South Georgia, the magical lands of his childhood. For several years, he had forsaken his love of fishing for other important endeavors. After life settled down, Bill tried fly-fishing for a change of pace. After the first initial fly-fishing trip, Bill was hooked. Fly-fishing allowed the opportunity to explore the nuances and complexities of fishing and introduced a technique and mastery that bait fishing does not allow. Fly-fishing is a great hobby for people wanting a more intense, more involved fishing experience. "You get out of fly-fishing what you put into it. The more effort and technique you put into it, the more rewarding it



Bill Suggests:

Trout Bum: Fly-Fishing as a Way of Life by John Gierach.

If you are interested in a fly-fishing class, try the classes offered through The Fish Hawk (www.thefishhawk.com) or Unicoi Outfitters (www.unicoioutfitters.com).



becomes," comments Bill. For people newly interested in fly-fishing, Bill recommends buying a cheap kit initially, to ensure your enjoyment of the sport before too much time and money is invested.

The fly-fishing experience can vary depending on the type of fly-fishing you try: fresh water or salt water. Fresh water fly-fishing is a peaceful experience, usually in mountain streams or ponds where trout are common. Salt water fishing, on the other hand, is more like hunting: a whole day could be spent waiting without the pleasure of a catch. However, if a fish is caught during salt water fishing, the fish will definitely give you a run for your money. The satisfaction of catching the "big game" fish more than compensates for the fewer fish caught.

Bill's hobby turned professional when he began creating bamboo rods as a hobby. Instead of buying a bamboo rod, he decided to try his hand at the formation of his own. His handmade rods were so popular that he has

continued with it full-time for the past ten years. In addition to crafting the bamboo rods, Bill also offers classes to teach others the craft of fly rod crafting. Bill accepts four students per class and, over the course of one week, teaches the art and craft of bamboo rods. The classes are intense, beginning at 9 a.m. each morning, but well worth the effort. Despite the rigorous week, each student leaves the class with the invaluable knowledge of rod crafting, as well as their own personally handcrafted rod. On the seventh day, the class takes a fly-fishing trip together, using their newly crafted fly-fishing rods. "People don't really have the chance to make things with their hands anymore. It's nice to make a living creating tangible, useful objects," remarked Bill.

Bill also travels to trade shows to impart his knowledge and expertise. When you visit Bill at his home or a trade show, look for Bill's little Pomeranian sidekick, Yogi. For more information on Bill Oyster and his bamboo rods, please visit his web site at www.oysterbamboo.com.