



## Amazon Xtreme Fishing Adventures, LLC

*"Amazon Peacock Bass Fishing – An Adventure of a Lifetime!"*

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## FLY FISHING TACKLE

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(Due to personalized selections, this is Not Provided)



The aggressive jungle species are well suited to fly fishing and many world records are waiting to be set. Two 9- or 10- weight fly rod are recommended, reels should have a smooth drag, hold at least 110 yards of backing, and be spooled with weight forward bass taper floating lines. We suggest 6-8 feet of monofilament 20-40 lb. tapered leader/tippet material.

### Patterns

Streamers fished on sinking lines seem to be most productive for catching larger-sized fish including **peacock bass**. Popular streamers include 4 to 5 & 6-inch (5/0) bi-colored, heavily-dressed buck-tails in red/yellow, olive/white, black/white, and orange/black. Big Deceivers, Bunnies, Saltwater Zonkers, Clousers Minnows, and other flashy baitfish imitations all take fish. All patterns should have generous amounts of matching Flash-a-bou or Crystal Flash. Big saltwater poppers are exciting to fish, but can be extremely exhausting to cast and retrieve for prolonged periods. Gaines saltwater popper in red/yellow and pearl/olive hold up well and are hard to beat in terms of their 'action' in water. 'Sliders' are productive in clear-water situations. Popovich's 'Silicone Mullet' in olive and white is hard to beat.

### Fly Rods

They should be fast action models, because they load sinking lines more efficiently, and they generally have more 'backbone' than softer models. Bring at least three fly rods, because they often under the 'jungle stress'. Reels don't need to hold a lot of backing because peacocks don't make long runs, but a smooth strong drag is still essential. It is recommended that you have a 'heavy' fly rod & reel combination: A stiff/fast-action, 9-foot, nine or ten-weight rod (Sage 990-3RPLX) + Scientific Anglers 'System 2- 89'reel.

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And recommended 'med-heavy' fly rod & reel combination (for smaller fish): A stiff/fast-action, 9-foot, seven-weight rod (Sage 790 - 3RPLX) + Scientific Anglers 'System 2-78' reel.

### **Sinking Lines**

They are undoubtedly much more effective than floating lines. A Teeny '300 T-Series/Sink Tip' (this line can be fished on anything from a seven to ten weight rod) is our number one choice, followed by a Scientific 'Uniform Sink V' full sinker. Also, bring a floating line for poppers and sliders. A line with drastic weight-forward taper (like Scientific Anglers 'Mastery Saltwater Tarpon') matched to your rod weight will handle the wind-resistant poppers most effectively. A Small Cotton Minnow Seine is a must in order to keep your fly line from tangling in the boat's seats, floorboards, rods etc.

**Peacocks** are not the least bit leader shy. Most fly anglers use a straight shot (approximately six feet) of 40-50-pound monofilament leader material. Anything lighter will be snapped off like sewing thread when that fifteen pounder runs you into a tree or rock pile. You will go through a lot of leader material, because of the peacock's extremely abrasive teeth. We recommend buying a 1/2-pound spool of Ande 'Tournament' monofilament. If you're trying for a IGFA record, you'll have to follow their leader specifications, visit IGFA regulations and current records.

More below;

# PREPARATION

The key to success when fly fishing For Peacock Bass

## Peacock Bass on a Fly Rod:

So, you have watched several TV shows and read what you could find on the subject – how difficult can it be? Just because you are traveling to a truly remote location in the Amazon jungle, don't be fooled into thinking that you will be able to cast in any direction and have a 20 pound peacock explode on your fly. If you want to have a rewarding experience then there are a few things you need to know before you go out casting a fly for these truly fantastic fish.

The peacock bass is an aggressive predator but it does take skill to fool the large ones. The fight of fish larger than 15 pounds is an experience difficult to express – suffice to say my hands have numerous friction burns after each day's efforts! The fight is not of a long duration, anywhere up to 5 to 6 minutes, but the power this fish expends must be experienced first-hand. Although living in fresh water, the fish that a peacock bass is closest to in looks and fight is the grouper.

The first and most important thing to consider when planning a trip for Peacock Bass is that you will be in a foreign Country and access to tackle and equipment will be greatly limited. This is when proper planning comes in..

Rick Pope, President of Temple Fork Rods, tells the story of hooking up with a good Peacock in open water over a spawning bed and after several minutes of give and take, mostly take that is, the fish spooled him and the line popped off the reel, thru the guides and headed downriver. His guide quickly started the boat and ran about 50 yards, saw the line lying on the water, managed to pick it up, fed the line back thru the guides, tied it back on the spool of the reel and eventually landed the fish, a very nice 15 lb Peacock! Rick said in all of his fishing experiences, this was the first time that had ever happened to him.

UN like a Plug fisherman, most anglers who choose to use a Fly rod vary greatly in their choice of equipment. Below is a list of items needed to insure that once you have arrived in Brazil you will have all your bases covered for a quality trip.

1. Rods
2. Lines and Reels
3. Leader material
4. Flies
5. Repair kit
6. Boga Grip



## FLY RODS



Fly rods used for Peacock Bass are usually in the 8 – 10 wt class, 8 ½ to 9 ½ ft long with a powerful butt and a tip stiff enough to throw a 4 – 6 inch fly tied on a 4/0 salt water style hook. 2 – 8 lb fish will make up the majority of the fish you will catch on a fly rod and an 8 wt. rod has plenty of power to roll over the big flies you may want to throw and will handle fish up to say 12 lbs. A nine wt. is a better all-around rod so if you hook up with a Peacock in the mid to high teens it will be strong enough to keep him out of the brush. If you anticipate getting the opportunity of some monster Peacocks in the high teens or the 20 lb class, you will want to have a 10 wt in your arsenal. Fish in the teens and 20's will astound you with their power and brute strength. Modern 3 and 4 piece rods are plenty strong and durable and are much easier to transport into the backcountry of the Amazon. I would recommend a 9wt rod for anglers that are used to throwing a 5 or 6 wt for trout as suddenly jumping up to a 10wt can wear you out if you are not used to it. For fly fishermen accustomed to throwing a heavy rod I would recommend the use of a 10 wt. When fishing for Peacock Bass you will often bring your rods home in more pieces that you left with, so be sure to bring several fly rods with you so that you will have at least one to use the last day of your trip!

## FLY REELS and LINES



These fish are as powerful as any freshwater and many saltwater fish. A good heavy large arbor reel is a necessity to play the Peacock game and come away successful! I have seen these fish bend the spools of some rather expensive reels that were lightly constructed of intricately machined aluminum. Bring a reel you would use for Permit, Big Redfish or King Salmon when you are rigging up for Peacock Bass. The reel need not hold three or four

hundred ft. of backing as Peacock Bass do not usually make long scorching runs unless you are in open water over a spawning bed, but rather short very powerful runs trying to get back to the cover they feel safe in. 150 yds of 50 lb backing is normally sufficient. A good smooth drag is a necessity when you are fighting fish 10 lbs or better off the reel.

The majority the time you will fishing a floating or sinking tip fly line unless you wish to fish a deep point in the main river. Most of the rivers you will be fishing in Brazil's Amazon will be richly tannin and Peacock Bass are basically shallow water ambush style feeders so most of the waters you will be fishing in will be 2 – 8 ft deep. The exception to the rule is fishing in the mid to late afternoons on a day with little cloud cover and high skies. These conditions will heat up the shallow water near the shore several degrees and the larger fish tend to move into the middle of the lagoons where the water is a little cooler when the sun is high overhead. This is another instance of where you may want to go to your sinking line. You have traveled 4,000 miles to fish in the middle of Amazon, bring all your weapons to do battle! Saltwater style fly lines tend to be "harder" and stiffer than freshwater line and tend help roll over big flies better in the hot conditions of the Amazon

## LEADER MATERIAL



Peacock Bass are like fishing for a Rottweiler that hasn't eaten in a week, not much is going to scare him away from a meal! Believe me, these fish are not leader shy! 6 to 7 feet of heavy leader is what you want to use as you have to worry about abrasion if these fish get back into the brush or wrap you around a stump or log. Peacock Bass which have no more teeth than a Black Bass, feel like 30 grit sandpaper so you don't have to worry about steel leaders. This is a good venue for braided or furred leaders, or a straight up chunk of 35 – 50 lb mono or fluorocarbon. Check the terminal end of your leader occasionally as Piranha will swipe at your fly and nick the leader.

Depending on the time of year High water or Low will direct your decision as to what pound Mono you will fish with.

**HIGH WATER:** A piece of 50 to 60 lb. mono 3 to 4 feet long straight from my butt section to the fly. The use of lighter line during high water conditions will insure the loss of just about all the big fish you hook.

**LOW WATER:** It's at this time of year late December to the close of season mid. March when if you choose you can fish with much lighter lines 16lb. or 20lb. and go after the big fish. The conditions are usually such at this time that you are on an even playing field with these truly powerful fish.

### SUN GLASSES and HATS

Bring two of each- POLORID glasses are a must matched up with a hat that has a large Brim and ear and neck coverage will go a long way to improve your comfort and vision.

## FISH GRIP OR BOGA GRIP

Although each boat has one aboard bringing your own allows you to land your own fish especially if you are wading or fishing shore lines. When the guide is busy helping your partner. It's also a second verification on your fish's weight.

## REPAIR KIT

This is vital for any trip and takes up very little space.

1. Glass cleaner
2. Pliers
3. Small knife
4. Scissors
5. Reel oil
6. Knot tying tool
7. Roll of electrical tape
8. Crazy glue
9. Eye glass repair set
10. Line cleaner



# Tying Peacock Bass Flies

Flies When it comes to flies, peacock bass are not very selective. They are extremely aggressive and territorial. Baitfish patterns in bright colors (chartreuses, fire tigers) and natural colors (olives, greys, whites – think bluegill or shiner) work incredibly well.

Bring about 3 to 5 dozen streamers flies and 1 dozen surface poppers.  
Just remember flies don't take up much room, so its better to be on the side of too many.  
Small flies although easy to cast rarely produce the larger Peacocks.

Flies should vary:

3 dozen 3 to 5 in long with 4/0 to 5/0 hooks  
1 dozen 4 to 6 ½ inches with 4/0 to 5/0 hooks  
1 dozen surface poppers

Peacock Bass will readily hit flies, both top water and subsurface, but most Peacocks are caught subsurface as that is where they consume over 90% of their prey. I have found that big Deceivers are the most effective style of fly to use day in and day out in all water conditions. These flies can be fished at different depths utilizing different types of fly lines and have also proven to be very effective when trolling on bait casting and spinning equipment. Below are some of the fly patterns found to be effective for Peacock Bass as well as materials and techniques used in tying these big 4 – 6 inch Deceivers.

## Patterns

The areas I have fished for the last 20 years on the black waters of the upper Rio Negro and its tributaries, basically from downstream of Barcelos to Manaus and the tributaries up to Roraima, to 50 miles upstream of Ste Isabelle, is the freshwater tropical fish capital of the world. It is estimated that over 50 million Tropical fish are exported from Barcelos (a town of about 27,000 located about 300 miles upriver from Manaus) each year. Peacock Bass will eat most every type of fish they can catch, including juveniles of their own species, fresh water Sardines, Oscars, Piranha, baitfish & a myriad of colorful tropical fish. The colors of prominence in drawing a Peacock's attention in the dark brown tannin colored waters are red, yellow and white. Big eyes on the flies really seem to increase the number of strikes you will get & the native fishing guides all seem to favor red eyes. Below are some of the patterns.



## Hooks

Hooks must be big and strong as it is necessary to get the hook implanted behind the big roll of a lip the larger Peacock Bass sport, thus we recommend Gamakatsu's 4/0 to 5/0 Saltwater hooks for all Flies. We use a medium to short shank hooks and use Gamakatsu's SC15-2H saltwater series hooks. They won't let you down!

## Thread

Use a Flat Waxed Nylon for tying these large Deceivers as it is strong and durable and does not build up the head too big when tying a number of layers of material on the fly. Use Zap A Gap super glue about every other layer of material you add to the fly to make the flies durable.

## Body Material

Peacock Bass are hard fighters and will quickly tear up a fly made of feathers and delicate body materials. The best materials we have found is Fish hair that has been "frizzed" with a hot air gun to kink up the material which makes for a much fuller fly body. The most durable material found is extruded Nylon sold under the name of "Salt Water Yak Hair." This extruded Nylon is big time coarse, tough and is what can be used for flies intended for trolling. Adding strands of Flash -A-Bo and/or a layer of "sparkly" material such as Steve Farrar's "Flash Blend" will give the fly a little glitter and life. The problem is if the Piranha find this flash appealing, they will trim the fly back to the hook in short order.

## Eyes

Adding eyes to the fly will usually increase the number of strikes several fold. Like Holographic eyes as they tend to catch a little of the color of the material they are glued onto. The native guides on the river you will be fishing with will always pick a fly with a red eye over one with a clear eye.

## Fly Size

The "big fish big fly" idea was prominent when we started fly fishing for Peacock in the late 90's when we were tying flies 4" to 5" and 6" inches long trying to appeal to the Big Peacocks and keep the little ones from striking. After years of fishing and seeing what works best and easier to work with. The preferred fly size is from 4" to 5", maybe 6 inches. You are not going to keep the voracious 2 - 4 lb'ers from striking the larger flies and the Big Peacocks will hit a 4 or 5 inch fly just as quick as they will a 8 or 9 inch fly & you will enjoy your day much more working that smaller fly.





# Fly Tying Instructions

For those of you that do tie and love the thrill of catching fish with one of your own creations, below are instructions of how I tie these big Deceivers.

## Juvenile Peacock Fly Pattern



- 1) Tie a small clump of orange Fish Hair under the hook. Add a film of head cement to the threads.



- 2) Tie a clump of white Fish Hair on the top of the hook.



- 3) Tie about 10 strands of Flash-A-Bo on top of hook.



- 4) Tie a clump of pale olive Flash Blend on top of hook.



- 5) Tie a clump of green Fish Hair on top of hook



- 6) Tie a clump of dark olive Fish Hair forward from the hook eye.



- 6) Pull the clump back, wrapping tightly in front and finish head of fly.



- 8) Glue eyes on the fly head with 5 min. Epoxy and allow to dry. Then add a thin layer of 5 min Epoxy to finish off head for strength. When fly has dried, add stripes on side of fly with a felt marker.





Tie the flies on with a loop knot that will enhance the movement of the fly in the water. Retrieve the Flies in short fast jerks, allowing the fly to hesitate and sink every 3 or 4 strips & hang on!!!

Other bright patterns combinations all with some glitter or shine to them.

- a) Red, White, Yellow
- b) Red, Orange, White
- c) Chartreuse, White, Red or Orange
- d) White and Red
- e) White and Gray