

*Name your three favourite flies used in this pursuit.* Mustard Caddis; Cactus Woolly Bugger; Flashback May.

*Do you tie these yourself and if not, where do you purchase them?* I tie all my own flies.

*What additional equipment do you deem essential in pursuit of your chosen species?* Stripping basket (it keeps the line where it should be plus it saves the line), polarised sunglasses (you cannot go without them), waders (I pursue smallscale at the coldest time of year), fly vest (I don't like the vest/backpack combos).

*Name your favourite place/venue where you most regularly pursue your chosen species?* Southeast Mpumalanga and northern KZN on the Pongolo and Assegai Rivers.

*Do you have a mentor?* No, I am completely self-taught, but have much respect for the late Jack Blackman. We spent a lot of quality fishing time together and I always found him to be a gentleman fly fisher. Nowadays you find a lot of good anglers out there, but not all of them are gentlemen.

*What do you believe to be the secret of your success?* Concentration and a fishing sixth sense.

*What is your downfall?* I suppose you could say that I'm arrogant because I'm a know-it-all fly angler – at least I'm admitting to it.

*What do you consider to be the highlight of your fishing career thus far?* When one of my sons caught his first yellow on fly was really special to me. Overall I see my highlights as when a client catches a fish and I can see that he has truly appreciated and enjoyed the experience with me.

*If you could provide a fellow angler with one hint that has helped you be more successful as an angler, what would that be?* The best advice I can give is to read up as much as possible on the specific species you wish to target before going out and just casting to them and hoping for the best. Also, concentrate on the species you target, and listen to and learn from the experts.

### **– GRAEME FIELD –**

*What is your favourite species of fish and why?* If I could choose only one species it would be sight-casting to giant trevally in shallow water for their sheer aggressiveness, power, size and character. One type of fish I like is a BIG fish.

*What tackle do you use in pursuit of this species?* A Sage Xi2 12-wt rod, Abel Super 12 reel, Orvis Wonderline or Sci-Anglers Tarpon WF12F line, straight 80lb leader from fly line to fly, braided loops on both ends of the fly line, and a Duncan Loop to attach the fly to the tippet.

*Name your three favourite flies used in this pursuit.* 4/0 Stripping Crab; 6/0 Flashy Profile (white/olive, white/chartreuse, white/grey); Sea Habit.

*Do you tie these yourself and if not, where do you purchase them?* I tie all my own flies.

*What additional equipment do you deem essential in pursuit of your chosen species?* Polarised sunglasses, Kevlar glove, BogaGrip, Leatherman pliers, camera.

*Name your favourite place/venue where you most regularly pursue your chosen species?* The Seychelles – Alphonse, Farquhar and Cosmoledo Islands.

*Do you have a mentor?* The one person I have to thank for teaching me the ropes and unselfishly sharing his time, knowledge and passion for the environment with me is an old work colleague of my Dad's, a guy by the name of Alan Hulley who now lives in New Zealand. He made a huge and positive impression on me as a young boy. I also have a lot of respect for Andy Coetzee and Wayne Haseleau – they are great fly fishermen. Growing up I learnt a huge amount from Andy's writing and I learnt a ton from Wayne in the two years that we lived next door to each other on Alphonse Island.

*What do you believe to be the secret of your success?* Analysing, thinking and a thirst for knowledge and improvement. Spending time on the water is invaluable, but it must be proactive time, not mindless flogging of water. Fishing smarter not harder, and understanding your environment is the key to success. Ask questions and listen carefully to the handful of people who know what they are talking about. An adventurous free

spirit has also taken me places I would never have dreamed of visiting.

*What is your downfall?* *Ha!* Mmmmm... downfall? Me? Don't be silly! No seriously, I don't know really, I am quite happy with the progression of my fly fishing and have achieved more than I ever thought I would. I do, however, hate not catching fish and can get quite bummed out when I have a blank day. I probably set too high standards for myself with fishing and more particularly with guiding.

*What do you consider to be the highlight of your fishing career thus far?* The sheer rush of my first sailfish on fly, a particularly difficult 22lb permit at St Jo's, and a monstrous barracuda at Alphonse Island. Highlights have also been some of the places I've been fortunate to visit such as Alaska, the Seychelles, Mexico and various Caribbean islands.

*If you could provide a fellow angler with one hint that has helped you be more successful as an angler, what would that*



Graeme Field



Dean Riphagen

*be?* Rule of thumb: dirty water = big bulky fly; clean water = sparse, flashy and imitative fly; cold water = cold-coloured fly; warm water = warm-coloured fly.

**– DEAN RIPHAGEN –**

*What is your favourite species of fish and why?* My no. 1 choice is trout, but in the salt I also like fishing to GTs.

*What tackle do you use in pursuit of this species?* For stillwater trout fishing there is only one rod as far as I'm concerned and that's a Sage 9'0", 5-wt TCR. It's an ultra-fast rod that can really handle the wind and it can subdue large fish in short order. I fish an Abel Super 5 with my TCRs and depending on the applications, use Scientific Anglers Stillwater line (intermediate) or Scientific Anglers GPX line (floating). For stream fishing I use only one rod which does it all for me. This is a Sage 8'6", 4-wt XP. This rod has subsequently been discontinued and replaced by Sage Z-Axis rods which are just as good. The action's about the same but the rod is a little lighter. I fish an Abel Super 4 on this outfit with Scientific Anglers XPS line (floating).

*Name your three favourite flies used in this pursuit.* Stillwaters: Aggravator; DDD; Flashback Nymph. Streams: Zak; Czech Nymph; Flashback Nymph.

*Do you tie these yourself and if not, where do you purchase them?* I started tying flies before I started fishing, so I've always used flies I've tied myself. I would have no confidence fishing a fly purchased from a retail outlet, no matter how well tied it is.

*What additional equipment do you deem essential in pursuit of your chosen species?* Streams: Good wading boots and a good vest are essential. There's no race when it comes to wading boots – Simms makes the best wading apparel money can buy. For stream fishing I believe that nothing beats Patagonia's Pack Vest. Stillwaters: A good pontoon boat or float tube is absolutely essential. It will allow you to explore areas that bank-bound anglers cannot. Outcast boats are the industry standard pontoon boats and float tubes, and I'm presently fishing from their Prowler. Good breathable waders are also essential – in cold water you can layer up underneath them and in warm weather you just need to wear polypropylene underwear under them.

*Name your favourite place/venue where you most regularly pursue your chosen species?* Streams: the Witte and Jan du

Toits rivers in the Western Cape and the Bushmans River in KZN. Stillwaters: Mount Arthur in the Swartberg region.

*Do you have a mentor?* The person who took me under his wing when I had just started out was a Natalian by the name of Robin Fick. He was a real master with a fly rod and I couldn't have asked for a better teacher. I also fished a bit with Tom Sutcliffe when I was a youngster and he was a giant among trout fishermen in Natal. I have huge respect for him, not only as an angler but for the true gentleman he is.

*What do you believe to be the secret of your success?* What success? Never think that you know it all. If you're fishing with a bunch of novices and they're catching fish and you aren't, never be too big to ask them what pattern they're using, what line, retrieve etc. You learn new things everyday in this pastime.

*What is your downfall?* I don't get out often enough as work takes up a great deal of my time. I keep telling myself that I must fish more often but it's not that easy.

*What do you consider to be the highlight of your fishing career thus far?* Spending a month fishing in New Zealand with my business partner Tom Lewin in 2001 and with Sven Retzlaff in 2004. Great fishing trips are not about the fishing – they're about the company you keep on them.

*If you could provide a fellow angler with one hint that has helped you be more successful as an angler, what would that be?* When things are slow, take a breather, rethink what you're doing, then get back on the water and start fishing again. Successful fishing to me is all about confidence. If the fish are beating you up and your confidence in your abilities is at a low ebb, stop, relax and regroup. Your confidence will return and the fish might then begin to cooperate.

**– ANDY COETZEE –**

*What is your favourite species of fish and why?* Giant trevally. They take no prisoners, fight dirty and, caught in the surf zone, are worthy of great respect. In my opinion, GT caught on fly and released on our KZN coast are the ultimate test of skill, passion, dedication and luck.

*What tackle do you use in pursuit of this species?* I prefer a #12 Gloomis GLX with a Super 12 Abel attached, with 50lb braided backing and either an intermediate WF or floating line for our surf zone.