



The lure of a long-distance release

Fly fishing is a beautiful sport

Professionals make fly fishing look so easy. Casting gracefully, as if in slow motion. Standing in a stream of blue water under an open sky. I wanted to be there.

Playing with arts and crafts in the water

Fly fishing gets its name from the lures used and involves serious arts and crafts. The flies are made of artificial materials such as fur, feathers, and string in all kinds of colors. They're referred to as "flies" because they're made to imitate small insects that a fish may want to eat.

With names like 'Woolly Bugger,' 'Pheasant Tail Nymph,' and 'Elk Hair Caddis,' I thought how great. No more live worms or stinky shrimp. This is the bait I used growing up with a rod and wheel. My favorite lure quickly became a 'Pink Wiggly Worm' because I like the color.

Casting is a complex art form

The overhead cast is the traditional fly rod cast most people associate with fly fishing. This is the one that when done well is so fluid and looks effortless. I pictured myself out on a beautiful morning in a clear running stream. In one swoosh, I would throw the overhead cast and catch a Trout.

What I did not imagine is how many overhanging limbs there are near a stream. I often spend more time getting my line untangled than actual fishing. So, I quickly learned how to do sidearm casting particularly when there are trees overhead.

Your fishing attire is part of the experience

Getting in the water is part of the fishing experience. This is quite different from my early memories of fishing with my dad. No special attire required. No boots, fly fishing waders, or polarized sunglasses.

Most often, I wore an old pair of tennis shoes, a t-shirt, and shorts. The shoes often got muddy along the shore or wet in the rowboat where I cast my first line with a spinning wheel. Fishing seemed simpler back then.

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A desire for long distance releases

When it comes to any type of fishing, I enjoy long-distance releases. This is a fancy way of saying, 'I caught the fish, but he got away.' I understand this may be controversial statement. But for me, not having to touch a scaly slimy fish is a win.

Even better is using a barbless hook. I read it is better for the fish and easier to get the fish unhooked. I had hopes of shaking the fish off the line and avoiding that ever-lingering fishy smell on my hands. My hopes did not materialize.

But then, I found out about fishing gloves.

Where have you been all my life?

I don't remember my dad wearing gloves when we went fishing. He used his bare hands, no matter how cold outside. None of his friends did either.

Today gloves for fishing are promoted to people who want to protect their skin. This seems like a missed marketing opportunity. There must be people like me who struggle to naturally unhook a fish without cringing.

When I go fly fishing now, I always carry gloves. I have two pair for warmer and colder months. It has changed my outlook on fishing. Oh, if only a perceptive marketer of fishing attire had surveyed me long ago, I am sure I would have taken up fly fishing sooner.

