

EXPOSURE

Montana Backcountry/By Josh Bergan



Researching state fish surveys will give you some direction. This remote creek has produced browns to 28 inches in such surveys.



A black bear paw print along the upper Dearborn River in the Scapegoat Wilderness Area. In the Montana backcountry, where both blackies and grizzlies roam, stay alert and carry bear spray.



Take to the hills when the rivers get warm. This Yellowstone cutt was landed in the Gallatin Range, where you'll find many more.



The storied Smith River is genuine Montana backcountry. A little rain cannot stop campers on a four-day float, and usually improves the streamer bite.



This Yellowstone cutthroat trout was taken on a white streamer during a spawning run in a creek recently opened at that time to encourage harvest of this nonnative species.



An April snowfall may hardly be the worst weather you'll encounter. Prepare for extreme cold, icy roads, mountain lightning, extreme heat, and everything in between.



In the so-called Land of 10,000 Haystacks, anglers come for big browns, rainbows, and fluvial arctic grayling. The Anaconda Range looms in the distance.



Middle Montana's trout water: prepare for a skunk, but hope for a toad. And if you find good fishing, keep it on the down low.



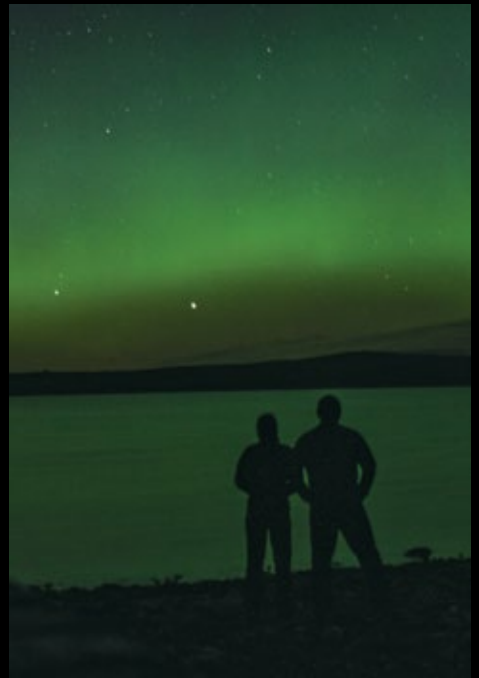
They're in there! This muscle-bound 25-incher was caught on a last cast in the upper Missouri River drainage. "Just one more cast" is a winning mantra.



If you love something, set it free.



The stories of bull trout chasing hooked-up cutthroat are true west of the Continental Divide. Such surprises occur regularly in the Blackfoot drainage.



The rewards of exploration at Bean Lake; we almost missed the show and were saved only by a late-night bathroom break.

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