

# Anglers Journal

A FISHING LIFE

## Salts

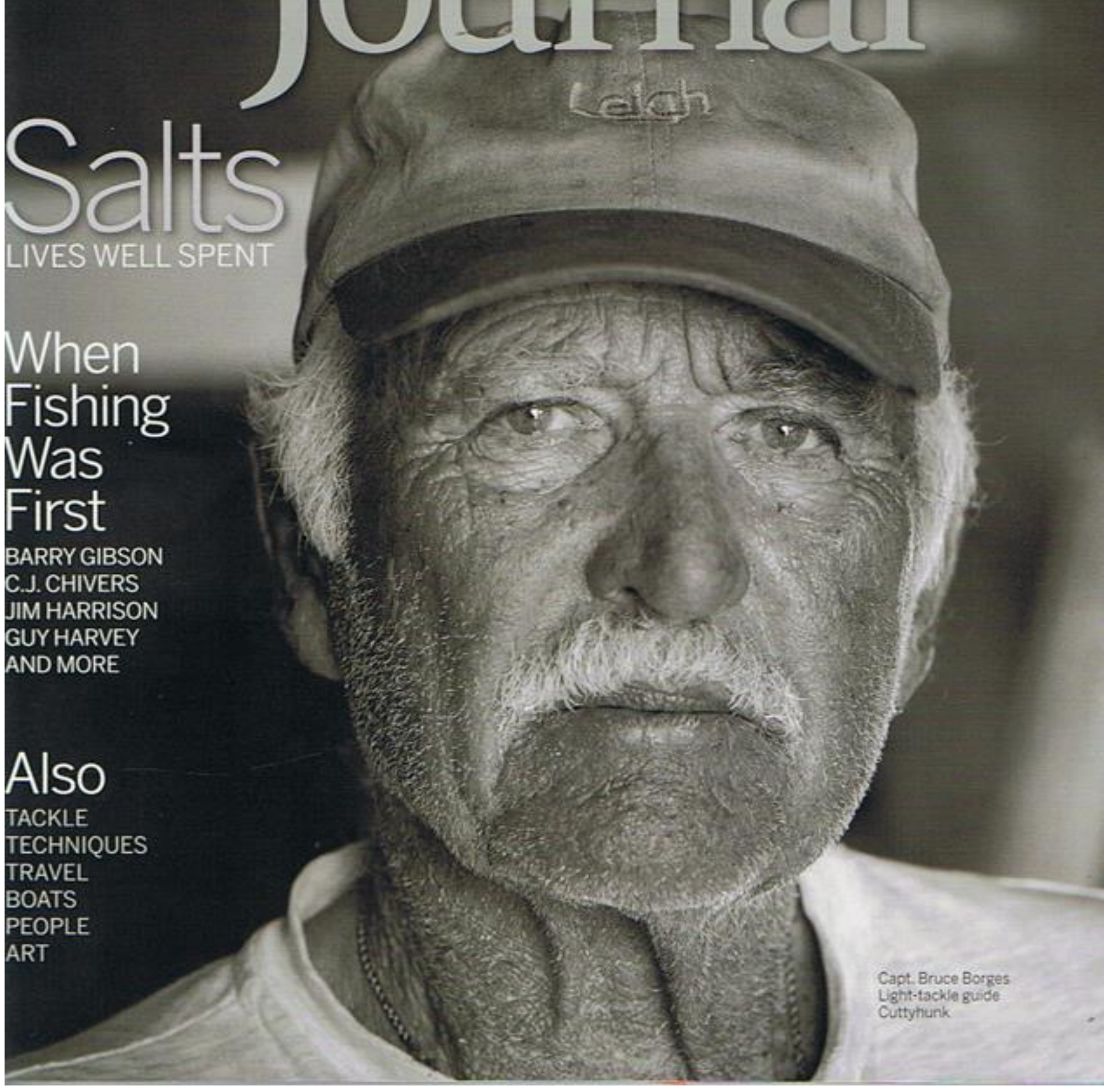
LIVES WELL SPENT

When  
Fishing  
Was  
First

BARRY GIBSON  
C.J. CHIVERS  
JIM HARRISON  
GUY HARVEY  
AND MORE

Also

TACKLE  
TECHNIQUES  
TRAVEL  
BOATS  
PEOPLE  
ART



Capt. Bruce Borges  
Light-tackle guide  
Cuttyhunk

# The Young Man & the Sea



Please know that first and foremost I am a lifelong angler who loves nothing more than spending a day on the water in pursuit of big fish. It's my passion and my profession, and I live it practically every day of the year. I am also a dedicated conservationist. I believe we must fish responsibly and ensure the health of fish stocks throughout the world.

I grew up in southwest Jamaica, where my par-

ents farmed beef cattle. They also had a small beach cottage at Belmont, and both loved fishing. My dad had a 26-foot canoe with an outboard and bamboo outriggers, and a local fisherman used to guide him. When I was home on school holidays I went fishing with my parents.

Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* was a great influence. By the time I was 12, I'd read it several times, and the featured fish — the blue marlin — became the icon of

my fishing experiences. At 15, I wrote my own version, *The Young Man and the Sea*, which was set in Jamaica using characters I fished with on a regular basis. Then at age 17, without any formal art training, I began a two-year project to illustrate Hemingway's story, as I considered other artists' attempts inaccurate. I did 60 pieces of work depicting the story in pen and ink. In 1985 they formed the basis of my first one-man art exhibition and, subsequently, my first book, *Santiago's Finest Hour*.

As the years passed, I was able to supplement my meager salary as a Ph.D. student with occasional sales of my art at fishing tournaments in Jamaica. Then several people assisted me in having my first art shows in the Bahamas and Florida, and in 1986 I signed my first agreement with an apparel manufacturer to design T-shirts. Today, Guy Harvey is a well-established national brand, with some 20 licensees selling everything from apparel to golf bags to home furnishings. This all leads me back to the cause behind my art: ensuring that future generations enjoy and benefit from a naturally balanced ocean ecosystem where fish and other marine life flourish.

A collaboration with Noya Southeastern University's Oceanographic Center created the Guy Harvey Research Institute in 1999 with a mission to provide the scientific information necessary to understand, conserve and effectively manage the world's fish and their ecosystems. In 2008, I started the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to funding leading scientists as they develop new strategies for sensible fisheries management and educators who will create novel instructional programs to stimulate future scientists and new stewards of the marine environment. A percent-

*The author's passion for the sea was nurtured from an early age by his parents.*



An ocean conservation activist, the author is well-known for his paintings of marine life.

age of sales from all Guy Harvey merchandise goes toward funding these endeavors.

GHOFF grants are used to fund important new scientific discoveries on everything from the migratory and reproductive patterns of various pelagic species to breakthroughs in DNA analysis to conservation initiatives that preserve and protect many endangered species of shark, grouper, marlin, bluefin tuna and sea turtle. We raised an amazing \$500,000 in a few weeks through our "Save Our Gulf" campaign following the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill. As a result, summit meetings were held in St. Petersburg Beach, where scientists, fishery experts and government officials shared their research on short- and long-term damage to fish stocks.

In an effort to broaden the message of responsible fishing, the GHOFF has supported, collaborated and partnered with many organizations over the past four years, including the Shark Free Marina Initiative. Sharks are in serious trouble in the United States and around the world. However, I am not advocating a ban on all shark fishing. My position has always been for all anglers to take a responsible, conservation-minded approach to sharks. Before you legally harvest a shark, simply consider what

you are doing and why you are doing it.

The shark-free/friendly concept was initiated to educate and make people aware of the severe pressures being put on shark populations around the globe. In the past several years, we have seen many shark tournaments — particularly in Florida — go to an all-release format, which makes for responsible fishing, since most of the shark species caught in tournaments are traditionally not good table fare.

In contrast, the iconic mako shark is considered fair game in the northeast United States, as are tuna and swordfish above federal size limits. Catch-and-release shark tournaments in this area, with high minimum qualifying weights, are well organized and have shark conservation measures at heart, as do the partial-release billfish tournaments in the Mid-Atlantic, which I have supported for more than two decades.

In addition, there are areas with a local abundance of species in the United States and around the world where anglers can legally harvest these species in a sustainable way, even though elsewhere that species may be considered rare or overexploited. I am all about sustainability in sportfishing and commercial fishing, as well as in spearfishing and diving. However, there are many anglers who are not concerned about

sustainability and that is cause for concern.

Another issue I have difficulty accepting is proposed marine protected areas based on nothing other than the whims of people who want to get rid of sportfishing. Closed to sportfishing, these areas typically do not go through scientific analysis to tell us about the inventory of species or the estimated biomass from which a regulated harvest could be managed.

However, specific time and area closures for certain species at certain times of year do work well. It is ludicrous to allow the harvest of any animal when it is reproducing, so closure of reef fish (snapper and grouper) aggregations during their respective spawning times is a good management practice, as we have seen in the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands.

A growing awareness of ocean conservation is encouraging, as responsible citizens and governments are recognizing the need to protect our ocean's assets. I attended the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, hosted by Sir Richard Branson on Necker Island in the British Virgin Islands. The CCI, working with The Nature Conservancy, started in 2008 with a secretariat based in Grenada.

For too long now the wider Caribbean has experienced degradation of marine and coastal environments at the hand of an expanding human population. The combined effects of commercial overfishing using indiscriminate fishing practices, unchecked coastal development, poor agricultural practices, pollution and deforestation, combined with climate change, have brought organizations and individuals together in a common cause seeking solutions.

The Caribbean Challenge calls for special protected zones along at least 20 percent of the region's coasts by 2020 in hopes of protecting its biodiversity and its crucial tourism market, estimated at 25 million visitors per annum. The region's scattered islands have 10 percent of the world's coral reefs and some 1,400 species of fish.

There are many issues facing recreational anglers, and many of us have conflicting opinions on how to apply solutions that best benefit the fisheries. Not everyone is going to agree with me on every issue. However, please don't underestimate my dedication and commitment to the sportfishing community. Along with AFTCO, my clothing line partner, I put back approximately 10 percent of all royalties generated by my art into fishery research and educational programs around the world.

I want to remind my fan base that I love fishing and love to cook and eat the fish I catch. I do fish responsibly, releasing all billfish and undersized wahoo, tuna or dolphin. But a nice bull dolphin, yellowfin or blackfin is going in the cooler.

Tight lines and good fishing. 🐟