

Meet Roger Fowler

THE FINE ART OF A FLY FISHING ENTHUSIAST



BONEFISH

I have never entered an art show so I guess the awards I've received are my customers accepting the completed sculptures. I don't take deposits and ship on approval. I've had three sculptures returned in 18 years.

--Roger Fowler

Roger Fowler is the kind of guy that after you've talked to him for 15 minutes you're sure you've known him for months and if you like art and love fly fishing, it's more like years.

FLM

Where did you grow up - go to college?

RF

"I grew up in Memphis, Texas - about 80 miles southeast of Amarillo in the Texas Panhandle and I went to the University of Texas."

FLM

How did you get into fly-fishing?

RF

"Fishing has always been part of my life. My grandfather and dad enjoyed sharing the out-of-doors with my brother and me. Our family spent sum-

mer vacations on the Taylor River in Colorado fly-fishing for trout. Trout fishing was an obsession with my dad and he passed it on to me."

FLM

What got you into art?

RF

"After I got married, I took a job that required a lot of travel. In my spare time, I always sought-out art galleries. My art interest was primarily focused on trout and fly-fishing sculptures. What became apparent to me was that very little of it appealed to me. None, in fact, of the sculptures capably reflected light in a realistic manner. Finally, convinced I could do it much better, I decided to attempt to make a trout that was realistic. I only worked with bronze then, but that was 20 years ago."

Roger Fowler on a work break lands a chubby striped bass in the tailwater/spillway of the Arkansas River near Tulsa, Oklahoma.





FLM

How did you get past trout and get into saltwater species?

RF

"When my fly-fishing interests migrated from trout to saltwater species, my art interests went along the same path. When I began to do saltwater fish, I focused on bonefish and switched from bronze to polished stainless steel. That medium better matches a bonefish's appearance in a natural environment.

FLM

What kind of fishing do you enjoy now?

RF

My rods range from 2- to 12-weight so I guess my answer would be everything from bluegills to tarpon.

We (wife Cath) live in Oklahoma in the fall, winter and spring and are close to several major tailwaters that are full of

striped bass. These guys are my favorite target right now. It requires wading in currents of up to 20,000 cubic feet per second (spillway). Then, you have to make at least a 100-foot cast to get close to the fish. It's all sight casting - you don't cast until you see fish chasing shad. There's no time for false casting, it's kind of like a quick draw contest with a fly rod. I use a 10-weight rod with a 12-weight shooting head with a 100-feet of running line coiled in a stripping basket. When you see a striper, you only have time for one backcast to get a 6-inch shad pattern close enough for them to see it.

FLM

I see from the picture you sent that the stripers are pretty plump. How big do they get?

RF

Last spring the largest striper caught was 33-pounds.



Metal sculpturing requires powerful hands. Roger works the stainless to perfection.



Cath, Roger's wife, friend and business partner poses with the *Sailfish* sculpture that is now an installation at the bar in the Sailfish Club in West Palm Beach, Florida.



RAINBOW TROUT



BROWN TROUT



BROOK TROUT



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BLUEGILL