

# **Jeff Currier** *global fly fishing*

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Africa – Home Sweet Home

Dear family and friends,



**From the scorching heat of Africa to winter in Victor, Idaho**

Nearly 2 months, 20,000 cast, 2 broken rods (only), 9 exotic species, 5 new countries, 4 flat tires, 1 shattered windshield, 5 complete break downs, more than 2,000 miles of local bus travel, less than 2 busted off tigerfish and a partridge in a pear tree, the list of our new experiences and craziness goes on for about 8 pages I'm sure!

Granny and I completed 47 hours of travel from our Chachacha Backpacker headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia to Victor, ID last night at about 10pm. Feeling like spent caddis, we post-holed through about a foot of

snow in 9 degrees F to our front door. All while shivering in our summer clothes and Texas with our bright blue South African Airline flight socks. It was cold as. . . (use your imagination)!

The house, which we shut down tight, was so cold that a glaze of ice formed on one of our toilets. I cranked up the heat in nearly every room, flipped the breaker switch on our hot water heater and ran for my ice fishing suit! Granny dug out her "inferno" (a toasty goose

down sleeping bag) and went immediately to bed. I stayed up till 11 pm and unpacked our carry on bags and tossed most of what was in them into our garage to rid our bags of any "bad boy" bugs that may of free-loaded a ride from Africa. I removed a quality spider from my red backpack as we were leaving Lusaka, so the last thing I want to do is stock a few beauties into the Currier household. As far as our luggage goes, hopefully it turns up soon. We have 4 bags that disappeared somewhere between Atlanta and Jackson. How bags can make it across Africa and into the USA untouched, then disappear after customs is one of those things you wonder about.

Our last 10 days in Africa were spent mostly in Zambia. After our scary mini bus ride out of Malawi, travel ran smooth all the way back to Lusaka. We spent one night there and then bussed straight south to a town called Chirundu on the Zimbabwe border and continued downstream about 12 miles on the Zambezi River where we treated ourselves to 3 nights at a camp called Gwabi.

Gwabi is located at the mouth of the Kafuee River where it meets the Zambezi. We checked into a chalet for about \$50 a night. Then, we rented a boat with driver (nice boat) for \$10 and hour! An outstandingly great deal considering you see many prominent lodges such as "Sausage Tree" down stream less than 20 miles. They charge over \$400 a day!



**Home away from home.  
Chachacha backpacker room,  
Lusaka, Zambia**

The lower part of the Zambezi is entirely different from the upper of which we got to know so well. It was over 1km wide in some spots. We managed to hook up a few more tigerfish in 3 days of fishing here, but the best event was a 5.2 kilo tigerfish I caught in front of the camp on the Kafuee. Jay Buchner, be proud, it was one of your many flies that produced fish for me all over. It was our top fish the entire journey and literally the last one we caught. Catching a true 10lb + tiger was a lifelong dream that had not yet been fulfilled. It looked to be out of reach this trip. A storybook ending to the whole excursion!

I managed to get pretty darn sick on the last day at Gwabi as well. It seemed to me as some sort of food or water contamination deal, but it put me down so hard that I ended up in the Lusaka clinic for a blood test by request of the owners of Gwabi. They were certain that I had Malaria. Luckily, the blood test proved negative and within 48 hours I was up and running for the last day. Needles in Africa are the last thing you want, but the clinic was the one used by all the Lodges if someone breaks down so I felt pretty good about it.



**Jeff with a 5.2 kilo Tigerfish from the Kafuee River in Zambia**

It's nearly impossible to sum this trip up in a paragraph or two. From Granny's and my stand point it was a good one. All our fishing goals were met and I believe our photo documentation has been very successful. We saw lots of wildlife and fished in 5 new countries - Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Malawi. The toughest part of the trip was earning a true taste of Africa. I think we did it though, as we grunted our way

through the last month refusing to do anything true locals didn't do. That meant lots of rough bus rides, some sketchy hitch hiking and sleeping in some places you wouldn't want your mother to see you at. It killed us at times, but it gave us the inside view of Africa that will always be with us.

I hope everyone enjoyed the emails. I know they were usually written poorly at best, but that's do to no time to proof read and usually I was rushing to get the letter off before the computer broke down or I lost connection. I also should have filled a few gaps with 3 or more entries along the journey, but when your ready to kick out a good story or two, you are often days away from the nearest computer. I'm sure you will all get an ears worth of the stories you didn't hear as we cast and suck a beer or two on the next fishing trip we share together.

As for what's next for the Currier's? Nothing! We're broke as hell! Work, work and more work is about the size of it. If you don't have my books or one of my new coffee mugs, or better yet, if you ever wanted a "Currier" watercolor fish painting, now is the time. I'll give you

a heck of a deal! Get those orders in because Africa was WAY more expensive than we expected!

However, back to the question of what's next? Africa, definitely more Africa.

We barely turned a stone on this continent. I'm sure I'll run around the world as always after I stash a few months of pay checks away again as I still live out of my pocket, but an expedition with Granny will likely wait till 2007. We are looking at northern South Africa, in which we will visit about 6 new friends we met during this journey. With them we will chase the Yellow fishes followed by a month in Mozambique. Mozambique sits on the Indian Ocean, one I've yet to fish, and has about 6 saltwater species I've yet to bury a hook into. So let the planning begin!

In the meantime, watch for a photo or two over the next few months. I shot at 8.2 mega pixels for most the trip so 1st I need to do some size reducing, but when they do come be patient opening them. I assure you, you won't want to miss them.

Thanks everyone for the emails. It's always great to hear from friends when you're far from home. If you have time, ring me at the shop and see if I can't wear you down with a few more stories!

Happy Holidays!

JEFF & GRANNY