

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

## **Commitment pays off**

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LARAMIE -- Ask professional fly angler Jeff Currier about the secret to fishing well, and his answer is as emphatic as a hungry trout striking a dry fly.

"You have to be committed," Currier said.

Currier was one of four expert fly anglers who shared their knowledge last weekend at the Wyoming Anglers' Symposium at the University of Wyoming.



It may be an understatement to say Currier is a committed fisherman. A manager at Jack Dennis' fly shop in Jackson, Currier became hooked on fishing as a youngster and has since landed fish in exotic locations all over the planet.

His passion really paid off in 2003 when he became the only American fly-fisherman to ever medal at the World Fly-Fishing Championships in Spain.

Currier's commitment to angling was most apparent Saturday night at the annual symposium banquet, when he took the assembled anglers back in time to what he called his "greatest fishing trip."

On April 28, 2004, Currier and his friend, former world champion fly angler Wladyslaw Trzebunia, took a break from scouting for the 2004 world championships by taking a leisurely drive along the Vah River in central Slovakia.



Currier said one of his fishing goals had always been to catch a huchen, a large salmon found in the Danube River and its tributaries and perhaps the rarest salmonid on the planet.

As he always does when driving near a river, Currier was looking for fish. His sharp eyes spied something he thought could be a huchen, so he had Trzebunia do a U-turn and return to the spot.

The fish was gone, and Trzebunia was skeptical. "He said 'It must be a log,' Currier recalled.

But Currier saw only one nearby hole a big fish could hide in and trusting his instincts, he grabbed a lightweight fly rod, waded into the middle of the river, and gave it a go.



Currier told the crowd he fished the hole three times with different setups, working it thoroughly for up to 2 hours per session.

He never got a strike, however. Frustrated after spending the better part of the day on one hole, Currier was about to give up when Trzebunia, who all this time had been watching the hole from the road above, began jumping up and down and pointing towards the river.

The huchen was out in the open, and drifting in Currier's direction.

It only took two casts to get the huge fish to strike, and after an extended fight that took him up and down the river, Currier had landed a 50-inch prize.

"You can't tell from the photo," he said with a laugh, "but I was shaking I was so excited."

Most anglers will never get the opportunity to catch a 4-foot long huchen. But with his tale, Currier had made his point -- if you want to catch fish, commit yourself to fishing.

"The casual fisherman that fishes one night every month, or a Saturday afternoon a month, will never catch the amount of fish that someone that is dedicated and fishes all day," Currier said. "... When I fish, I don't bail out because it's cloudy in the morning. I stay out -- all day."