

Casting Onward: Fishing Adventures in Search of America's Native Gamefish

Steve Ramirez

Bob White, Illustrator

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Casting Onward is Steve Ramirez's insightful, entertaining account of his fly fishing trips to scenic waterways across the US. It includes advice from expert anglers and an impassioned plea for conservation.

After he left behind a long career in public service, Ramirez decided that the "most responsible thing" he could do now was to go fishing. His accounts of twenty-plus expeditions capture his searches for prized and threatened native fish, including the Guadalupe bass near Texas's hill country, the striped bass of Cape Cod, the northern pike of the St. Croix River, and the cutthroat trout of the Colorado River. He details the native plants and animals of each region, alongside fishing techniques and artful illustrations of the various flies he used. Both the fish and the local anglers are called "kindred spirits." And Ramirez is a self-deprecating, humble guide: "I fish the same way I play guitar, casually... I'm a take-it-easy fly fisherman."

There are colorful reflections of stops along the way, including descriptions of a haunted Art Deco hotel in funky Western Silver City, New Mexico, and of the flashing lights and bling of Reno, Nevada. And intertwined with these amusing travelogue sections is an urgent message about the moral imperative of protecting native species and waterways from the threats of habitat loss, contamination, and invasive species. Observing, catching, and releasing beautiful, unique fish brings Ramirez wisdom and a kind of enlightenment:

[Fishing is] not for the faint of heart. It's not some animated virtual world with singing bluebirds and dancing starfish. Angling...requires you to pay attention, live in the moment, and become part of the ecosystem.

Captivating and persuasive, *Casting Onward* will delight experienced anglers and newcomers to the sport alike with its engaging depictions of the beauty of unspoiled streams and of the meditative act of fishing.

KRISTEN RABE (May / June 2022)

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