



PHOTO BY PAUL W. SHOOK

David Monahan and Tony Panasiti to fish the coves around Twin Island. We pulled up to the stretch of rocky beach and walked out to the point. Casting from the rocks on the incoming tide, Panasiti caught four stripers. While we were casting from the point a bluefish blitz rose over a wide stretch of water in front of us.

Connected to Hunter and Twin islands, but partially separated by a lagoon, is Orchard Beach, the only public beach in the Bronx. Created by parks commissioner Robert Moses in the 1930s, the 115-acre park draws tens of thousands of swimmers and sun-

For fly fishers who don't mind a scenic hike through the woods, the Hunter Island preserve offers a feast of secluded shore-fishing opportunities. A kayak and canoe launch area located on the Hunter Island side of the Orchard Beach parking lot opens onto a salt marsh and inlet that are also ideal for exploration.

Separated from Hunter Island by a broken and weathered rock causeway, Twin Island's 19 acres of oak and hickory forest open onto salt marshes and low-lying rock-strewn islands along the sound. Paths lead through the marshes to elevated islands and low points along the sound. High tides flood the marsh trail, calling for anglers to wear waders to get to the outer islands. The narrow inlet formed along the broken causeway between the two islands offers prime fish-holding features ideal for fly anglers to prospect on moving tides. A trail leads over the broken causeway to the inlet that backs into a small bay.

One October day I traveled by boat from nearby City Island with

bathers to its scenic, mile-long shoreline during the summer. Admittance to the property is free, but there is a fee for parking in the expansive parking lot during the summer season. In addition to the beach and adjacent nature trails on Hunter and Twin islands, the Orchard Beach facility includes a pavilion and promenade with food stores and specialty shops.

To get to Hunter and Twin islands and the Orchard Beach canoe and kayak launch area from Interstate 95 South, take Hutchison Parkway South toward the Whitestone Bridge. After about a half mile, take exit 5 toward Orchard Beach/City Island and proceed straight to the far left corner of the parking lot. Across the road from the lot, a sign marks the canoe and kayak launch; carry your kayak or canoe from the parking lot to the launch area.

Nauset Inlet, Cape Cod, MA

By Glenn Zinkus

Just south of Cape Cod National Seashore, primarily within the bounds of the Town of Orleans on lower Cape Cod, Nauset Inlet is a labyrinth of arms, fingers, and side channels, all connected to a serpentine main channel of swirling currents and fast rips. Home to abundant striped bass and the occasional bluefish, the inlet empties straight into the Atlantic, bordered by Nauset Beach to the south and Coast Guard Beach to the north. I find the mouth of Nauset Inlet one of the most interesting places to fish in all of New England. It's a thrilling and special place, with currents flowing out of the inlet on one side and pounding surf on the other. Nauset Inlet is among the rare locations that can have a strong outgoing current in the channel, but rising water around the edges when an incoming tide forces cold Atlantic water back into the inlet at the turn of the tide. Fishing here is always an adventure.

My confidence fly for Nauset Inlet is a chartreuse/white Clouser Minnow with some gold Flashabou down the center. This is what I consider to be the quintessential Nauset Inlet fly. A wide variety of baitfish serves as forage for game fish at different times of year, so Clousers in other shades are also important. Other effective flies include sand eel and silverside imitations. And don't overlook small crabs: bring Merkins and other crab imitations. Bonito Bunnies are another must.

I often fish Nauset Inlet with a clear intermediate line, and I also keep a rod rigged with a saltwater line that



PHOTO BY GLENN ZINKUS

has interchangeable tips ranging from slow-sinking intermediate tips to a high-density fast-sinking tip for fishing heavy rips and deeper areas.

Nauset Inlet is best fished with some sort of floating vessel, whether a canoe, kayak, or a classic dory. Be careful with the shifting sands; this location changes with the season. A boat opens widespread opportunities, allowing you to access numerous rips, drop-offs, and holes that are striped bass magnets. Be sure to fish the outgoing flows from the various arms and fingers in Nauset Marsh. Launch points include the Town of Orleans boat ramp on Cove Road just off Route 28, near the junction of U.S. Highway 6. Another possibility for nimble kayakers is the small beach at Priscilla Road.

Anglers on foot have a few choices. I usually walk north from the Nauset Beach parking lot; about 0.5 mile up the beach past where vehicles have no further access, signed crossing paths go from the ocean-beach side to the inlet. Once over the dunes and onto the inlet side, keep walking north, and fish the striper holes along the way. You can make the march all the way to the tip (more than 2 miles, though shifting sands can alter the route a bit), where Nauset Inlet meets the sea. To reach Nauset Inlet from Nauset Beach, take exit 12 off Highway 6 and turn right onto Massachusetts Route 6A. Follow the signs to Nauset Beach. There is a daily fee for parking during the summer.

Another approach for anglers willing to hike is from the north. Park at Coast Guard Beach along the Cape Cod National Seashore, and walk south toward the inlet. Again, this is a lengthy trek.

Percy Priest Lake, TN

By Troy Basso

J. Percy Priest Reservoir, or Priest Lake, as it is known locally, is one of those proverbial diamonds in a chunk of coal. The lake itself is nestled right smack in Nashville, Tennessee, with access points scattered across several cities and three counties. It's a



PHOTO BY TROY BASSO

big impoundment—14,200 surface acres—that, as you would expect on a huge reservoir in an urban area, hosts plenty of angling pressure, including a lot of tournament bass fishing and intense crappie fishing.

However, despite the fishery's popularity, most anglers target bass and panfish, not the reservoir's stripers or striper hybrids, and that fact is an advantage for fly fishers. Percy Priest boasts a dense population of both stripers and hybrids, and at times fly anglers can enjoy excellent prospects for both fish. The reservoir holds a substantial forage base of rapidly reproducing shad and panfish, both staples in the diets of stripers and hybrids.

The best times include March and April, when the fish are shallow and accessible to fly anglers, and fall and winter, especially December and January. During that time the shad gather in large schools, and the cold winter weather causes a shad die-off that brings big stripers shallow enough that fly casters can target feeding fish. Observation is key to success on Percy Priest: a flock of feeding gulls indicates that shad are being pushed up against the water's surface by predator fish—and usually stripers are the culprits. Another key on Percy Priest, according to veteran striper guide Mitch Tinney, (615) 828-0529, tinneysguideservice.

com, is to always be ready to fish a variety of depths at any time. The fish can, and will, go from feeding at 10 to 15 feet to a surface blitz in a matter of seconds. Therefore, anglers need to keep two rods ready at all times: one for surface fishing and one armed with a sinking-tip line for subsurface fishing. When the fish are deep, keep the surface rod rigged and ready with plenty of line already stripped from the reel and coiled on the boat deck. If you're fishing on top, keep the rod with the sinking-tip line ready in the same manner in case the fish go down. Fish finders in the boat are essential for determining where in the water column the fish are feeding.

Fly patterns should mimic threadfin shad in both shade and size. Clouser Minnows and Puglisi Baitfish are staples on Percy Priest. When the fish are feeding on top, white, gray, and chartreuse poppers are the ticket. Last season I discovered that a shad-colored Crease Fly can be deadly on this lake.

Percy Priest is huge, with about 265 miles of shoreline, so you won't explore it all in one outing; a guide certainly helps cut down the learning curve. But with easy access and plenty of hungry stripers and hybrids, the education here is well worth pursuing. For maps and information about Percy Priest, visit www.lrn.usace.army.mil/op/jpp/rec/maps.htm.