



“It’s a pretty day, and Tom is decked out with his trout-fishing vest. But he tries not to let the lure of the stream get in the way of his painting.” Phil Hudgins

**Accomplished Artist and
Outdoorsman**



Stream Blazer

Tom Landreth

1932-2007

Tallulah River, Rabun Fork and Chattooga River, Rabun Gap, Georgia

Tucked into a place called Wolfport Valley, just off US 441 in the northeastern most corner of Georgia, is a

hamlet called Rabun Gap. It's there on wild Orchid Lane, that Tom Landreth put paint to paper for 20 years.

A native Georgian, Landreth recorded his impressions of the world of southern trout and southern fly fishing in many of his watercolors. "Honey Hole" is set on the Tallulah River, "Evening Hatch" on the Chattooga and "Trout Waters" on Rabun Fork, for instance.

The 69-year-old Landreth had plenty of memories from which to draw for his paintings. He did not take up fly fishing when the movie 'River Runs through It' came out, he had been at it for 40 years more or less.

"I remember reading an article about fly fishing Hazel Creek (in the Great Smoke Mountains National Park) in some publication 40 years ago. I was living in Charlotte. I bought a fly rod set up for \$27 or \$28, hiked in and fly fished for the first time," said Landreth.

Being a sales rep for 3M Company for 26 years cut into his trout and fly fishing, especially during that stint in Louisiana. That's where he started dabbling in drawing again, many years after the sketching classes he had at the old High Museum in Atlanta following Georgia Tech. In 1981, after 26 years of corporate life

with 3M, Landreth chucked it all and settled in at Rabun Gap to paint for a living. He had a separate studio, two-thirds of which was devoted to his painting. The other one-third was devoted to displaying and selling his art; and tying flies and building flyrods.

His favorite rod for local fishing was an 8 1/2-foot, 4-weight that a friend built for him. “It has a medium to slow action, which I like (for dry flies). If I know I’m going to nymph I’ll get a faster rod.”

Landreth described himself as something of a traditionalist when it comes to fishing “I like the Elk Hair Caddis, the Deer Hair Caddis and the Light Cahill. I really tend to use the same old standard flies all the time, like the Female Adams.”

“My least favorite is a woolly bugger and lots of lead, but I do it when I have to.”

Reference:

John Doty. *TroutSouth: Scenes of Southern Trout: Georgia Artist Records Experiences With Watercolors in Rabun Gap Studio.*



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