

# WHO WE ARE

## Our Talent & Expertise

### OUR PEOPLE

The diversity of the team and the broad variety of experience between them makes FlyCastaway one of the most exciting and professional fly-fishing teams in the market today. All members of the team are internationally experienced, professional fly-fishing guides who have made countless contributions to fly fishing books, magazines and television shows, both locally and abroad, with their cutting edge techniques.

## Gerhard Laubscher

Financial Director & Guide



Gerhard has been fly fishing since the age of 13. After finishing school in 1994, he guided and managed a small fly tackle shop in Dullstroom before heading off to the University of Pretoria where he studied information science, psychology and publishing. After graduating, Gerhard decided to pursue his passion for the fishing industry. His saltwater fishing and guiding has taken him to just about every atoll and archipelago in the Indian Ocean and he has extensively fished both the east and west coasts of Africa, making him one of the few who have fished in just about every country in Southern Africa. His focus on Southern Africa's indigenous freshwater species, like Tigerfish and Yellowfish, has also made him a forerunner in these fields. He was instrumental in the development of the patterns and techniques for Largemouth Yellowfish. On the saltwater side, Gerhard was also instrumental in leading exploratory trips to west Africa looking for monster size Tarpon and has, to date, landed a fair few of these brutes - a feat never before accomplished. He is an accomplished fly tier and has designed numerous freshwater and saltwater fly patterns that are used all over the world today.

Over the years, conservation of our natural resources has become one of his primary objectives and he was particularly influential in raising funds for and creating several conservation and research programs studying a variety of Africa's indigenous species. His attention to detail and in-depth knowledge of Africa and her fish species ensures that FlyCastaway will remain on the cutting edge.

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### Where it all started



Gerhard was exposed to the wonders of the great outdoors at a young age and,

through the guidance of his father, learned the value of conservation. He learned that each ecosystem had its own unique charm and fascinating secrets, delighting young and old alike. It was inevitable that a lifetime pursuit of the great outdoors was waiting for him, although water always held the greatest attraction for him - along with the almost mythical creatures that inhabit it. Today fly fishing is his medium of choice, the eyes through which he looks at nature, with fish and water becoming his subjects.

## My Passion



*"Every day I spend on the water I learn something new, whether it is a small mountain stream high up in a remote section of the Drakensberg, the tropical rain forest of West Africa, or a sand flat on a desolate coral atoll somewhere in the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean. Fly fishing takes me to the most beautiful places in the world, and through the years has exposed me to some of the most fascinating environments known to man. It is this passion for these ecosystems and the conservation of them that I would like to expose the world to."*

## Ryan Hammond

Operations Director & Guide



Ryan has 17 years of fly fishing experience, having fished and guided in some of the most remote destinations in Africa and the Indian Ocean. After receiving his Bachelors in Journalism, he decided to take up guiding full time, a path which eventually led to him joining the FlyCastaway team in 2006. Ryan is a passionate fly tier and enjoys nothing more than developing fly patterns for all species of fish we target. He is also an ardent conservationist and feels deeply privileged to have fished and guided in some of the most unspoilt ecosystems which remain on the planet.

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## Where it all started



Ryan has been fishing for as long as he can remember. Thankfully his father instilled in him from an early age his passion for the outdoors, most notably his love for all types of fishing. The first opportunity he had to handle a fly rod was over 17 years ago and one has seemingly been with him ever since.

## My Passion



*"On completing my studies, I realized that fly fishing was no longer an intense hobby; it was going to form a way of life for me. Guiding was the obvious path through which to launch a career in the industry. I have since then been fortunate enough to guide clients onto an array of fresh and saltwater species, here in South Africa as well as Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Madagascar and the remote outer atolls of the Indian Ocean such as Cosmoledo, Assumption, Astove, Providence, Farquhar and St Brandon's. The sheer quality and diversity of fisheries such as Cosmoledo, Astove, Providence and St Brandon's is something I feel very privileged to share with other anglers. These atolls offer all of us a rare insight into how an unspoilt ecosystem plays out its daily dramas.*



*This wonderful passion has led me to experience many exciting and memorable moments. Whether it's setting the hook on trophy sized Tigerfish in the majestic setting of the Zambezi River or stalking the tailing Indo-Pacific Permit of St Brandon's with an eager client, the intense desire to fish and guide on as many venues as humanly possible continues to grow. In my opinion, it is only through experiencing a broad range of fishing environments and techniques can one continue to improve as an guide and angler.*

*I look forward to sharing this passion with other like minded anglers for many years to come. Hope to see you on the water!"*

## **Keith Rose-Innes**

Director and Guide



Keith's fishing and guiding portfolio is extensive, with 15 years guiding and over 25 years of fishing experience across the globe. He is one of the founding members of FlyCastaway and has been at the forefront of establishing the remote atolls of the Seychelles and Mauritius firmly in the world fly fishing calendar.

Along with the rest of the FlyCastaway team, his exploration of remote places has opened up numerous world renowned destinations. His first hand experience at 15 different atolls in the Seychelles and the islands in and around Madagascar and Mauritius ensures that he knows the waters of the Indian Ocean better than most. He spent five years guiding on the Ponoï River in Russia for Atlantic Salmon, four of which were as the Head Guide.



His experiences in Angola, Belgium, Clipperton Island, Cuba, England, France,

Germany, Ireland, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Norway, Sao Tome, Scotland, Siberia, South Africa, St Brandon's, Tanzania, USA, Zambia and Zimbabwe make him an integral member of FlyCastaway. He is a highly energetic individual whose in-depth fishing knowledge makes his guiding an experience not easily forgotten.

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## Where it all started



At the age of 5 Keith cast his first fly whilst standing next to his grandfather, Harry Stewart, who had been tying flies and fly fishing since the age of 15. This was only the beginning of 70 years fishing experience that his family was to pass on to him. By the age of 7 he began to share in his father's passion for offshore fishing, fishing extensively (both locally and throughout Africa) by his side. At the age of 17, he obtained his South African colours and captained the team which kick-started his desire to be a fishing guide. At the age of 20, after qualifying in Advertising, he left for the UK and worked at Farlows of Pall Mall for two years, the oldest fly fishing store in Europe, while travelling and fly fishing all over the world.

## My Passion



*"The thrill of a new trip can't be beaten, the excitement and expectations of what will happen; the hope for something extra-ordinary, to see explosive takes from fish that have never seen the fly before, and to push the limits of fish, fisherman and fishing tackle. Whether it's line striking on the equator or Spey-casting in the Arctic circle, there is nothing more satisfying than sharing in the excitement of a client who has had their expectations fulfilled."*

## Dirk Ackerman

Chairman



An ardent conservationist, Dirk is not only our trusted advisor but also the chairman of the Endangered Wildlife Trust, an organisation who campaigns for the protection of our indigenous fish species, catchments areas, wetlands and waterways.



Dirk has been privileged to angle for a huge variety of species ranging from Bonefish to Mahseer. He has fished at venues including New Zealand's North and South Island, Australia, Tasmania, Florida, Colorado, Maine, Canada, various sections of the Zambezi River, India, Mexico, many of the outer atolls of the Seychelles, Kenya, Bom Bom Island, Malawi, the Maldives, Bassas da India, the Amazon, Argentina, Chile, Germany...the list simply goes on.

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## Where it all started



Dirk was introduced to fly fishing by his grandfather, a naturalist who instilled the values of environmental protection at an early age. Fishing has become a way of life for him and he has managed to successfully engineer his favourite pastime into his business activities.

## My Passion

*"My passion for the fishing tourism industry is aimed at broadening the base of environmentally sensitive fisherman by creating access to the world's most pristine and productive fishing locations."*

## Tim Babich

### Guide



Fishing has been Tim's lifelong passion, it all starting when his father exposed him to fly fishing at a very tender age. Subsequently, Tim has achieved numerous fly fishing qualification including REFFIS (UK) and THETA (South Africa) before joining the FlyCastaway team in 2006. Apart from his extensive all round angling experience in South Africa, Tim has fished in Kenya, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Seychelles, Mauritius, Zambia, Namibia and the United Kingdom. He gets immense satisfaction by sharing his knowledge and passion for fishing with guests.

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## Where it all started



Tim has been fishing since the age of 5; being fortunate enough to be born into an

angling family where fishing was an everyday occurrence. He has spent every possible minute of his life since then trying to better himself in all aspects of angling, whether it is light tackle boat, bank angling, rock and surf and fly fishing. He has achieved provincial colours for the following facets in Angling: Light Tackle Boat Juniors, Light Tackle Boat Seniors and Skippers for the Ladies Team, Freshwater Seniors Bank Angling, Fly Fishing Seniors A-Team and, more recently, his South African Fly Fishing colours.



He has explored a vast array of fishing venues in an attempt better himself as an angler. Most people have not been privileged as he has been to encounter such a diverse range of fisheries in destinations including Kenya, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, the United Kingdom, Mozambique, Namibia, Poland as well as a large percentage of South Africa's coastlines, rivers and lakes. In saying this, the most impressive fisheries he has encountered are without doubt the remote outer atolls of the Indian Ocean. St Brandon's, Providence, Cosmoledo, Astove, Farquhar and Assumption are in his opinion some of the finest saltwater flats destinations on the planet and a 'must do' for any avid fly angler!

## My Passion



*"I achieved my REFFIS (Register of Experienced Fly Fishing Instructors) qualification in 2004. From that day onwards it has been a non-stop guiding experience. Guiding in South African freshwater has been a great advantage to me as I have spent countless hours attempting to perfect fishing for our local Yellowfish species. In saying this, the last five seasons I have spent in Seychelles and St Brandon's have been without question the most exciting fishing I have witnessed.*

*I have learnt a lot over the past 19 years and still find myself learning something new everyday. My main goals in fishing are to better myself every day with new techniques, share my vast knowledge of fishing with the people that I will guide, as well as to instil the need to conserve the magnificent creatures we fish for."*

## Jako Lucas

### Guide



Jako grew up fishing and represented his province and country at an early age in various aspects of the sport. After finishing school Jako completed his B.Com in Marketing from the University of Johannesburg, during which time he fished many of South Africa's premier freshwater and saltwater destinations. Jako then moved to the United Kingdom and worked for

Farlows of Pall Mall, where he continued fishing many UK fisheries - including the prestigious River Test. He has also worked for Sportfish at their various fishing shows, including The CLA Game Fair.



In 2007 Jako joined the FlyCastaway team and has been guiding full time ever since. His guiding resume now includes the notorious outer atolls of the Indian Ocean, namely Cosmoledo, Providence, Astove, Assumption, Farquhar and most recently St Brandon's. Jako has spent a large amount of time guiding for Tigerfish on the Zambezi River as well as for South Africa's indigenous Largemouth and Smallmouth Yellowfish on the Vaal River which is his local water. He has also guided three full seasons in Norway for the infamous Atlantic salmon... a fish which has seriously captured his attention. Jako's light hearted nature and in-depth understanding of fish behaviour has made him a real asset to the FlyCastaway team.

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## Where it all started



Waves crashing on the sandy beaches along the South African coastline and fishing alongside his father at the age of 4 are his first memories of this fantastic world. Since that time, fishing and guiding have become a way of life for him and there is certainly no turning back.

## My Passion



*"Guiding has brought a whole new dimension to the way I look at fly fishing. Apart from catching a fish myself, there is no greater satisfaction than seeing a client's face light up when he eventually cradles the fish he has dreamt of landing. I have collected many great memories from time spent on the water, but my most memorable was landing 12 adult Indo-Pacific Permit for clients during the course of my first St Brandon's season. In saying that, the 22lb monster Permit on Cosmoledo at the end of 2008 remains equally fresh in my memory."*

## Corin Smith

### Guide



Corin has a broad range of fly fishing experience in both fresh and saltwater. He

has fished many locations around the world, including: the Florida Keys, Scotland, England, Wales, France, Spain, USA, Canada, Cuba, Australia, New Caledonia, Xmas Island, Seychelles, Angola, South Africa and others. He is a passionate fly caster be it overhead or Spey, single or double hand, and is a keen instructor with published articles. He is also a field researcher for a number of rod, line and apparel manufacturers.

He has always fished with a fly, mainly because it's what his father and previous generations did and it's the only tackle he had. But to him, fly fishing is so much more than simply the act of catching the fish. You are exposed to technical aspects of casting, product development, ecology, biology, geology, entomology, anthropology and so much more. It takes you places you'd never normally go, lets you communicate with people and connects you with different cultures even when language is a barrier. The learning never ends and new challenges and frontiers are always on the horizon.

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## Where it all started



Corin is often asked by people "When and why did you start fishing?" He maintains he honestly doesn't know, it's just something he can always remember doing. He was born and raised on a small sheep farm in the Highlands of Scotland and has spent his life surrounded and fascinated by nature. Fishing has always had a special and enduring allure because of the hidden nature of the quarry. There's an unending mystery about fishing. Even now, 30 years on he will always approach a bit of water dreaming about what monsters might lie beneath.

## My Passion

*"My current passion is for the large pelagics and refining techniques for finding and catching them on fly in their natural environment, free swimming and behaving normally."*

## James Topham

### Guide



James has been part of the team since early 2010, and has quickly built up an impressive repertoire having done full seasons on the lower Zambezi River, St Brandon's and Farquhar. James started fly fishing whilst attending Maritzburg College, and was fortunate enough to have plenty of friends who had access to the renowned streams and still waters of the Natal Midlands. Between the Midlands and his parents' place in South Africa's Lowveld, James soon had a wide variety of freshwater and saltwater fly fishing experience under his belt. After school he studied copywriting at Red & Yellow in Cape Town and again was exposed to a whole new fishing

environment. He worked on a commercial Tuna ski boat during his studies and spent the rest of his time prospecting as many of the fisheries that the Western Cape could offer.

### **Where it all started**



His father's stories of fly fishing clear untouched Lesotho streams (which he was later to visit) and fishing at his side in the gullies with red bait and farm dams with a small spinning rod are his first vivid memories of where it all started. His first fish was a small mullet from Zandvlei estuary which he caught when he was probably 4 or 5. He took it home in an ice cream tub, played with it in the sink for hours, and when his poor mom woke him up in the morning, she was horrified to see that it had spent the night with him. Since then there has been no turning back!

### **My Passion**



*"The greatest appeal with regards to guiding is the fact that you never stop learning. You learn from each destination you fish, your fellow guides and, of course, from your clients. It's my thirst of knowledge, my love of fishing and the satisfaction gained from seeing a happy client with the fish of their dreams that keeps me striving to improve."*

## **Brad Hyman**

### **Guide**



Brad is one of the most likeable and keen young guides we have come across. Having grown up around some of South Africa's greatest marine waters, he has spent countless hours fishing and guiding in an extremely broad range of saltwater environments. In 2008 he represented the E.P U/21 team and in 2009 and 2010 the E.P B team as well as guiding for the Free State championships in 2009 and 2010. He joined the FlyCastaway Team in late 2010 and has already completed his first season on Farquhar, where he handled himself admirably!

### **Where it all started**



Fishing has been part of my life as far back as I can remember. The sound of waves rolling in and reels screaming off are the sounds which filled my childhood. Like many fishermen, fishing was introduced to me by my father, something I'm especially grateful for.

## My passion



Fishing is not a hobby for me, it is a passion and my life. While completing my Bachelors in Education, fishing dictated my life. Any spare time I had was spent on the water. The decision to spend a day at university or head off to the river was a tough one. Needless to say, when the opportunity to guide on the remote atolls of the Indian Ocean came up, I jumped at the chance! How many people are passionate about what they do for living and how many actually get the opportunity? This is my dream and as long as I continue to enhance other peoples fishing experiences, it will remain my greatest passion!

## Alfred Chiwaya

### Head Fly Tier



Since joining us in 2009, Alfred has quickly become a popular member of the FlyCastaway team. He is our Head Fly Tier and has allowed us to consistently offer clients undoubtedly some of the most cutting edge fly patterns available on the market. His attention to detail and the pride he takes in his work is a real credit to him. Rest assured... if Alfred has tied one of your flies, then it's guaranteed to entice a fish or two.

### Where it all started



Born and raised in Harare, Zimbabwe, Alfred has been tying flies for over 22 years. He was trained by some of Zimbabwe's most experienced fly tiers and began tying commercially with G&G Fishing Flies in 1988 - a decision which has since seen his work grow into an art form which he takes great pride in. He began tying traditional wet and dry flies, later moving onto Salmon flies and tubes, and, more recently, moving into the wonderfully vibrant world of saltwater flies. Since joining FlyCastaway in 2009, he has continued to develop his range and has really enjoyed being part of a team which develops so many cutting edge freshwater and saltwater patterns.

### My Passion

*"Many, if not most, commercial fly tiers never get the opportunity to understand or see the value of their work. Since joining FlyCastaway, I have really enjoyed the constant attention to detail and the hands on attitude when it comes to improving or developing the flies we use. Seeing the impressive fish that are caught on flies that I have tied gives me an immense sense of satisfaction. Added to this, I enjoy nothing more than sharing the skills I have learnt over the past 22 years and*

*I hope that I continue to increase my skill level and range for years to come!"*

## **Bismarck Moyo**

Tackle Manager and Fly Tier



Bismarck, or 'Biz' as he is affectionately known, has been a member of the FlyCastaway team since 2008. Biz fulfils a range of vital roles here at our offices in Johannesburg, including managing the servicing and maintenance of all our tackle and is the second member of our commercial fly tying team. Along with Alfred, Biz ensures the flies we supply our clients are of a standard which undoubtedly belong on the upper echelon of the market. Biz is a highly energetic and positive individual and a real asset to the FlyCastaway team.

### **Where it all started**



Biz was born in the small village of Nanda near the Gwayi River at Tsholotsho in Zimbabwe. Since joining FlyCastaway, he has become engrossed with the concept of successfully landing large fish on fly. This has led to him taking a serious interest in fly tying. His first tie was the #6 Pillow Talk for the infamous Bonefish of St Brandon's. Since that fateful day, he has tied flies for a whole host of different species, including Tigerfish, GT's, Indo-Pacific Permit, Triggerfish and many more.

### **My Passion**

*"Since picking up my first bobbin and thread I have really enjoyed the challenge of tying flies. Added to this, producing flies which consistently outwit trophy fish is as rewarding an experience as you are likely to find. I hope to continue tying top quality flies for many years to come!"*