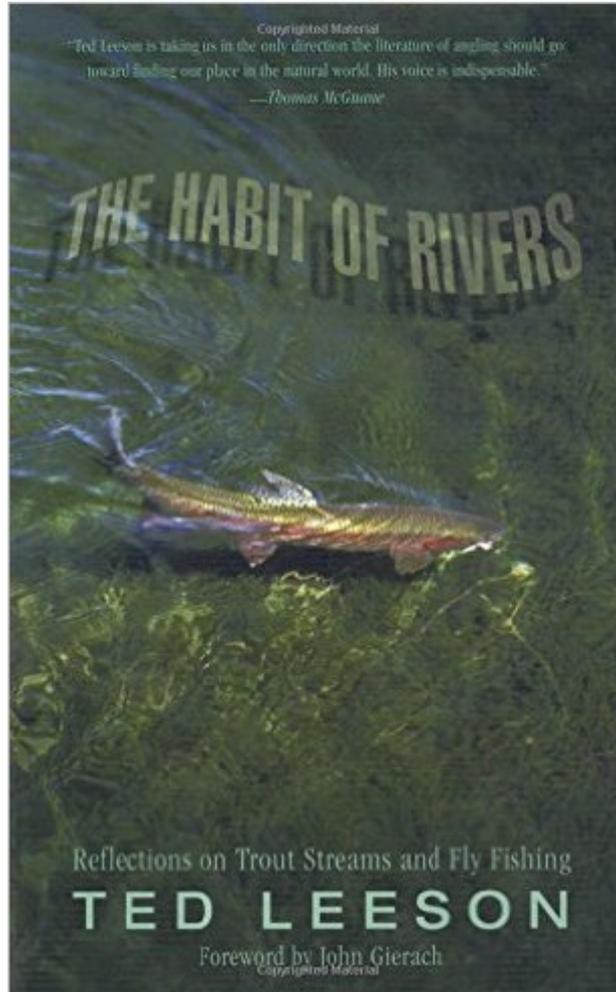


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# Habit Of Rivers: Reflections On Trout Streams And Fly Fishing



## Synopsis

Originally published in 1994, this book was a fly-fishing phenomenon in the way Howell Raines's Fly Fishing Through the Mid-Life Crisis was. Taking his fishing hobby to near metaphysical levels, Ted Leeson tells about his passions: rivers, trout, and fly fishing. With wry humor and rare insight, he explores questions that engage most fishermen: What is it about rivers that draws us so irresistibly, and why does fly fishing seem such an aptly suited response? Above all, *The Habit of Rivers* is about ways of seeing the wonderfully textured world that emanates from a river.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

With the poetic delivery of Maclean, and the naturalist vision of Thoreau, Ted Leeson paints a beautiful, and sometimes comical, mosaic of fly fishing the Northwest. As I read this book I am reminded that the most noble and rewarding aspect of my sport is not the mere catching of fish, but it is the beautiful & mystical arena in which we are privileged to practice it.

I received this book from my son. He knows me as well as anyone. He knows I'm struggling with my "fishing experience" and looking for direction. I don't need to catch the biggest fish or experience the newest destinations. I need to fish. I need to fly fish. Ted Leeson helped tell me why. This book spoke to my soul. It corrected my direction. I have read many fishing books, some technical some just good stories. The first time, and I'll read it again, I read this book I realized early on that I needed to read it slowly, introspectively. I was in this book. Mr. Leeson spoke to me. He answered my direction question when he said, "In the end, to fish well is to cultivate an arrangement of time

and place, of circumstance and perspective. We arrange ourselves into the arrangement, and if the collusion is careful and lucky, we reap a kind of enclosed moment of some sharply felt beauty and significance." The Habit of Rivers is a special book and I recommend it to any fly fisher looking for direction or confirmation.

As Ted Leeson writes in the introduction, "...this book is an attempt to discover points of fixity and pattern in our involvement with rivers and landscapes, with trout and fly fishing, as a way of plumbing their peculiar sustaining power". If this strikes you as so much hooey, you might as well stop right there on page 4 and cut your losses. There's a lot more of this kind of cerebral musing throughout The Habit of Rivers. If on the other hand, cerebral musing is what overtakes you as you fish, or if you don't fish but you do tend to muse cerebrally just for the heck of it, then this book's for you, for sure. Here's a sampler of what's in store... \* The river is a flux, the salmon a counterflux. To fish the run is to share this paradoxical trajectory, moving at once forward to a conclusion and backward toward sources. \* The universe may, as science tells us, be composed of subatomic building blocks, but I suspect that irony is the mortar that holds them together. For no apparent reason, fate springs a handstand, inverting circumstance, momentarily turning the world into its opposite. In nature, the reversal produces vaguely disturbing anomalies. \* The very boundedness of the meadow and the tangibility of its limits curls your awareness inward, creating a small enclosed world inside of which boundaries disappear. If your awareness doesn't easily curl inward to recognize this as a book about fishing, pick up something by Lefty Kreh. As for me, I reveled in the vaguely disturbing anomalies, and highly recommend it to both fishermen and non fishermen alike.

Mr. Leeson's tales of experiences in the northwest seems to explore many other facets of fly fishing other than the fishing experiences and catching of fish. The book explores other perceptions of the author while he goes about his activity of fishing. For a person who would like to read about the fishing adventures of a fisherman while also noting those other aspects which one thinks about while fishing, this book will tend to do that - the seasons, the environment, philosophical thoughts etc. Not so much a story but recollections of experiences and thoughts while going fishing.

Just discovered Leeson and he's a gem. Like the best fishing books (IMHO), this book isn't a how-to or a Fantastic Tales of fish counts; it's an adventure for the spirit and the mind. Leeson draws upon humor, humility, literature, science, and his own skinned knees to give us insight into ourselves and the world around us. Fishing at its best. Inventing Montana is superb, as well. I hope there are more

of his books coming soon! (Gierach's intro--another top-tier writer--is spot on.)

Took this book on a cruise...It started out well enough. Talking about fishing and rivers - for a couple of chapters. Yammering about where he grew up and moving to Oregon... Each chapter seemed to get a little less interesting... A chapter on flat bottomed boats used in Washington or Oregon or someplace. I hung on through that, not bad reading but I don't have one of those boats, I don't live in Oregon. Talking about scratches on his boat, or floating down stream in his boat... Found myself thinking "I've been reading about this guy's boat for a while"... why am I reading this??? I think it was the next chapter on flies seemed to really be more about other books on flies or something. It referring to "the books everyone has read or says they have read" but hasn't ... but I haven't no idea what the guy was talking about. After a few lost chapters I picked up "a river runs through it" and thoroughly enjoyed it. This book is sort like books about the taxes. If you have a BEYOND a normal interest in taxes you might be interested. If you've read every other book about fishing in the Northwest... you might pick this up. But for me it was bleh. God was looking out for me when I found it at the Library. There is almost no point in owning this book - unless one of your kitchen table legs is about an inch short.

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