

4 | BEST FLY WEIGHT FISH-SKULL

These bead heads are truly innovative. New from Flymen Fishing Company, Fish-Skulls slip on after the fly is tied, avoiding the unsightly finishes that often result from cones and traditional bead heads. A simple drop of glue and a thread head keep it in place. Since most of the Fish-Skull's weight is below its centre line, it can be used on hook-up or hook-down patterns. Available in seven colours and four sizes, with stick-on 3-D eyes. Flymen Fishing Company, (704) 846-2634; www.flymenfishingcompany.com

5 | BEST HOOK INNOVATION LOOP 'N LOCK SYSTEM

If tying knots gives you fits, Gateway has the answer with its Loop 'N Lock fly-fishing system. The secret: open-eye hooks. Tie a double-sliding loop knot in your tippet, slip the loop into the open eye, slide the knot tight and begin fishing. To change flies, just slide the loop open. Gateway also makes a clevis-type adapter that turns any hook into a Gateway-style hook. Gateway Hook Company, (942) 385-7433; www.gatewayhooks.com

6 | BEST ACCESSORIES REEL CREEL, CAMOVER, REEL-BANDZ, BOTTLE BANDZ

Known for its Spudz glass-cleaning system, Alpine now offers protection for your expensive fishing gear. Made from neoprene and covered by bright, fish-patterned fabric, the line includes the Reel Creel (pictured) to protect the reel while it's on a rod, the CamOver cover for a digital camera, ReelBandz to prevent tangled fly lines and BottleBandz to keep floatant at your fingertips. Alpine Innovations, (801) 766-4994; www.alpineproducts.com

7 | BEST APPAREL BONE FLATS SHIRT & PANTS

After bringing us the great X-Treme Adventure Pants for wilderness conditions, RailRiders is back with tropical wear. The Bone Flats line is ultralight, but still tough and durable, with UPF 30-plus fabric and cooling mesh panels. The pockets are designed for fly fishing, and the clothing takes up hardly any space in your suitcase. Sizes range from small to double-extra large, in a host of light pastel colours. RailRiders, (617) 484-5910; www.railriders.com

8 | BEST WADERS SONIC-PRO PANT WADER

Redington's easy-to-pack Sonic-Pro Pant Wader is perfect for stream, still-water or travelling anglers, offering a cooler alternative to traditional chest waders; the adjustable waistband even allows for suspender removal. Features include double-taped sonic-welded (no-sew) seams, multiple layers of coated wader fabric, built-in gravel guards, a mesh carrying bag and ergonomically shaped, high-density neoprene booties. Also available are Zip Front and Standard chest versions. Redington, 1-800-253-2538; www.sonicprowaders.com

9 | BEST FLY ROD VSL

Winston has long built top-quality fly rods that cast beautifully. In response to tough economic times, the company has introduced the less-expensive VSL ("very smooth and light") line. These four-piece, fast-action rods deliver very smooth power and are a delight to cast. Offering the fabled Winston quality at bargain prices, they're available for line weights 3 to 10. R.L. Winston Rod Co., (406) 684-5674; www.winstonrods.com

10 | BEST WADING BOOTS CHROME

Korkers' new Chrome boots are built like tanks, yet they're light and comfortable thanks to triple-stitched waterproof materials, midsole channels that quickly drain water and the exclusive Boa speed-lacing system. Best of all are the six interchangeable OmniTrax soles featuring various materials, including felt, "sticky" rubber, studs and the new Svelte. A redesigned system holds the easy-to-change soles securely in place. Korkers, 1-800-524-8899; www.korkers.com

11 | BEST VEST MARABOU

Although streamlined, Fishpond's Marabou vest still sports 13 storage pockets and a large back pouch. A mesh backing helps to keep you cool, while fleece-lined hand-warmer pockets are at the ready for chilly days. And with adjustable shoulder and waist straps, it can fit right over both T-shirts and bulky fleeces. Available in lightweight Barnwood breathable fabric or traditional Silt waxed cotton canvas. (pictured) Fishpond, (970) 468-7883; www.fishpondusa.com

