

| BY CHARLES GAINES, PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM MONTGOMERY

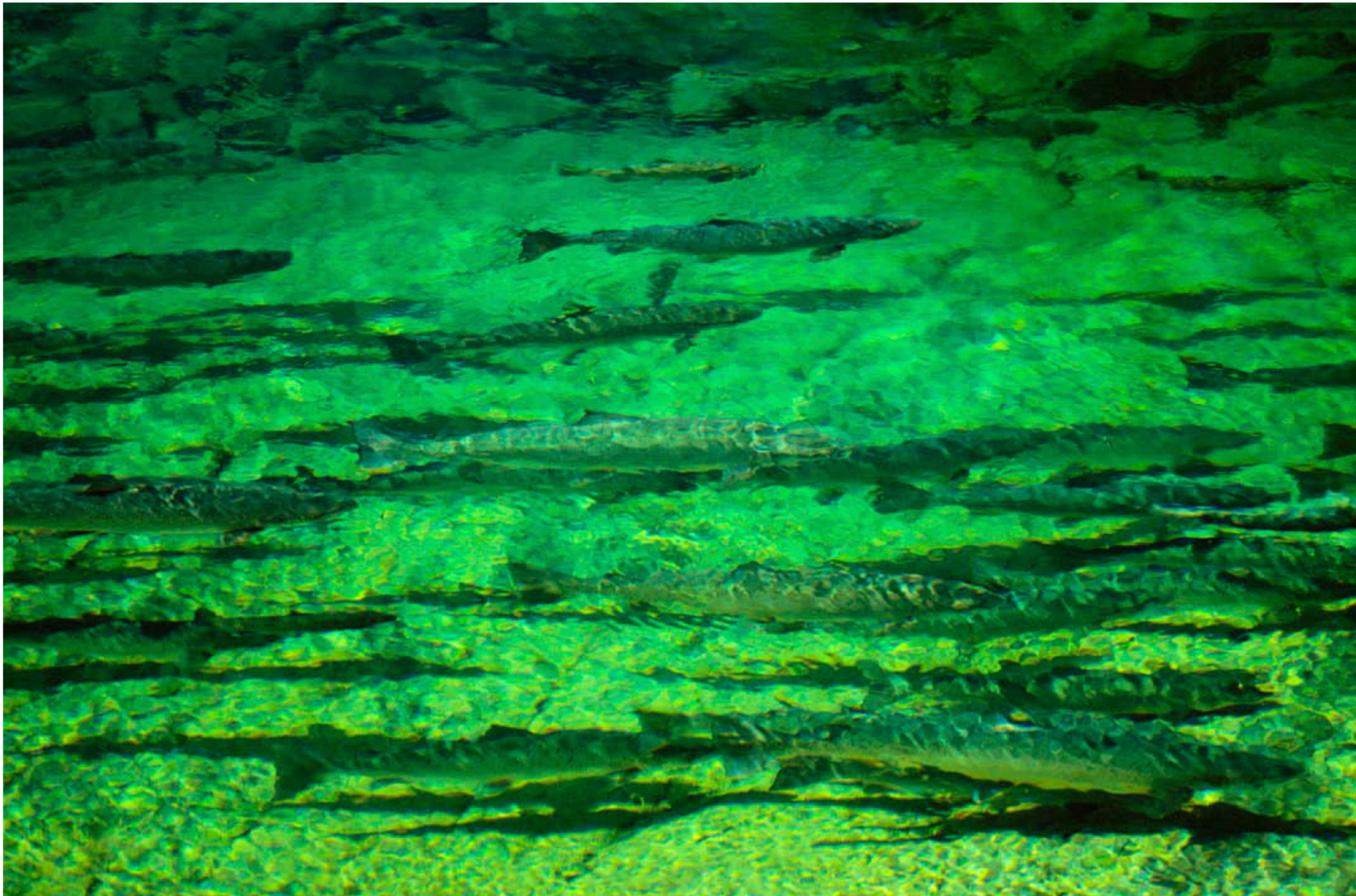
Enough Dry Fly Promise to Make Your Head Spin

In a wild, hard place, 40 minutes of dirt road from the Village of Gaspé, the Rivière St-Jean holds its skirt and runs through stern woods of cedar, spruce and poplar that crowd to its banks, and its daintiness and gaiety there are astonishing.

More so are its colours—an air-clear palette of greens, from emerald through bright olive to jade. It

is like fishing inside a Neruda poem, or a Fabergé egg. In the deep, waist-curved pools the salmon lie random as thoughts: takers near the head rips; the others, who knows? Studying Neruda.

At the long, technical Maitland Pool with dignified Edmund as a guide, the water shot with enough light and dry fly promise to make your



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head spin, the grilse are bright and hot as chrome in the sun, flashing like flipped dimes when they rise under the big Stimulator.

At Little Indian with Wade in the rain I release a 10-lb. jack that showers me with water still numbingly cold from the Chic Choc Mountains. The rain too is cold and it is late so we go back where we are graced to stay here, le Pavillon du St-Jean—where there is a fire going whenever it should be, where the bar is open, where Marcel's food would be sublime even if this were downtown Montreal.

There is a kingfisher skimming the water when we turn to leave, a grouse drumming near the road, and a thousand salmon waiting like diary promises in the green, girlish pools of the St-Jean. 🐟

