

Review of “FlyFisher Digital Magazine” by Jason M

I had just discovered FlyFisher magazine when their last independent issue came out. Being more of a flick and hope, or needing to visit an area to check out the local bug colours, I was looking forward to part two of the Kozi dun article in the last issue (other than watching the kozidun website). So I ducked into my local tackle shop, found out it's now part of Freshwater Fishing, and that I'd missed the middle edition.

I first got into digital magazines almost ten years ago, and still have many of those still on my electronic devices. With a bookcase or two full of magazines, I was keen to try out the new electronic Australian fishing magazines, although there is benefit for a hardcopy on those short flights where you barely get a chance to turn on you portable electronic devices. So, in the space of a week, I purchased the March/April FWF/FlyFisher, and the previous edition of FlyFisher in digital format.

Digital Viewer

I have some magazines in Zinio, some in PDF, and probably one or two on an obsolete iTunes account. I recently discovered Google Newsstand, but it doesn't run on my Window 8 tablet. I started off going to AFN, which directed me to Google Play to download the specific application (FWF and FlyFisher are different apps) from iMagazineCloner. Don't be frightened by the name, this is the company linked to PocketMags, and who AFN publishing link to.

From here you can buy digital editions with you Google Play account, but I recommend going direct to PocketMags, setting up a user account, and either buying it through them, or then logging into the app and buying with Google afterwards, as this links it straight to your PocketMags account, rather than spending a couple of days trying to register your purchase into your account in order to download your magazine to multiple platforms.

The My Magazines in the PocketMags website also enables you to load a viewer from the web, which is more powerful (the newest and more functional is Silverlight, but Flash player will print a current page too). Silverlight enables up to 500% zoom, and can print a page (eg map of a stream), whereas the other apps don't (unlike my original Zinio mags where you could print as many pages as you liked). The regular app on Google only seems to have a single zoom, to 200%.

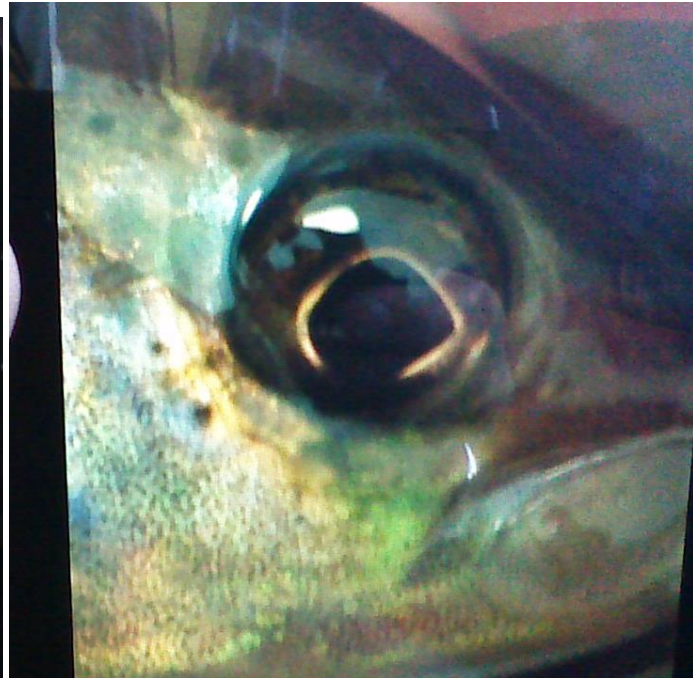
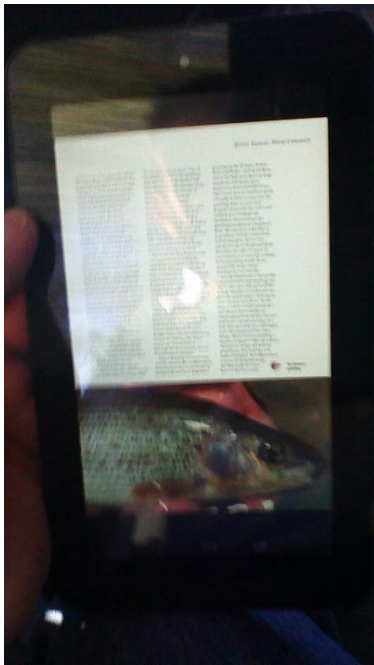
The Content

So for approximately \$3.69 you buy FlyFisher, for \$8.99 you get Freshwater Fishing, or for \$9.99 you can buy both in hardcopy. I only bought FlyFisher, but with it you get more articles than the hardcopy, and links to AFN videos such as fishing in Patagonia, wading safety, and tying an elk hair caddis.

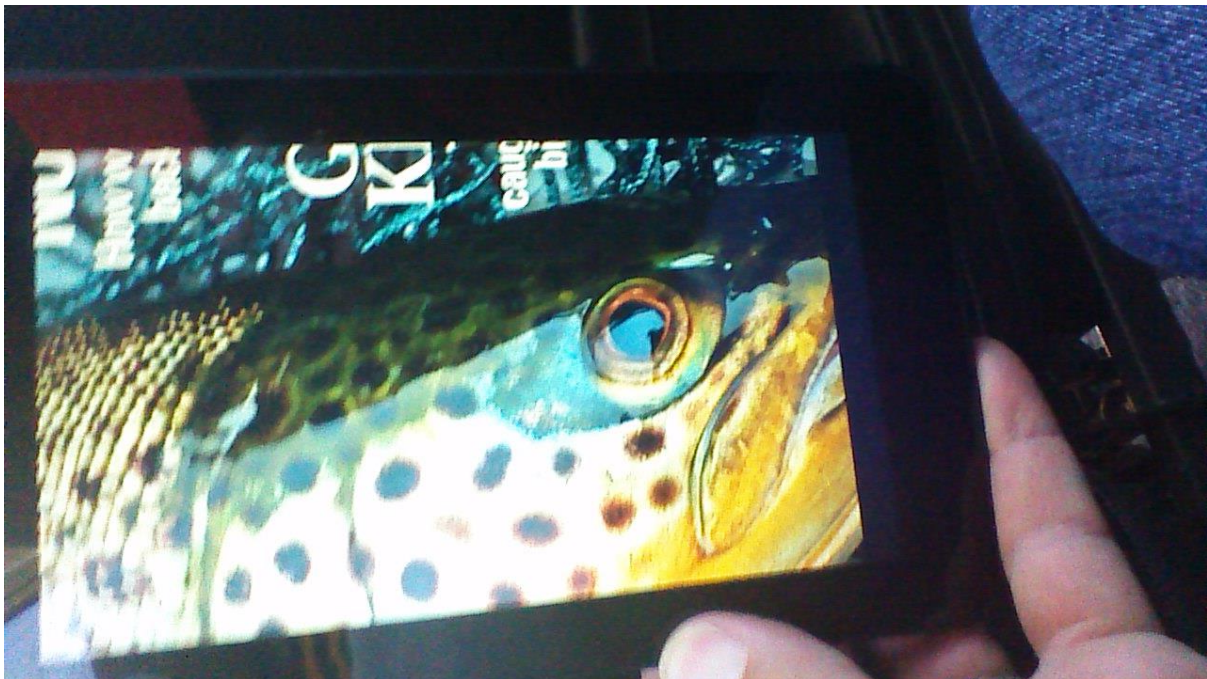
One of the articles I'd previously read already in Fly Life, but that's probably because the eMag is still developing the content. The editor advised me that he's still trying to get part two of the Kozi dun bug watch article I was after. Unfortunately the fly casting 101 doesn't have any videos. The magazine provides the links, so if you want to watch the content offline, you would need some other program to save the streaming video (pun almost intended).

With respect to the zoom, the images are quite good, but like many magazines early on, reflects the paper-based printing. Zooming in on a salmon at full zoom shows what are probable printing blobs (almost hexagons) in the eye. One thing I really like about digital fishing mags (besides the portability and less wall space) is the ability to see a great scenic shot, zoom in and see the flyline or leader, and also see the high definition images of the fish in all its glory.

Obviously the content depends on the provider, and some shots might be more handycam, like my low resolution images. But some overseas magazines seem to have gone much further for the digital version. As such, some scanned magazines are like watching your old VHS movies converted to Blu Ray, whereas as a new movie shows much more detail. FlyFisher is pretty good, but compared to the UK Trout and Salmon, not as high a resolution yet.



This is a shaky shot on the bus of Trout and Salmon December 2013. This page on grayling has been zoomed in on the right, and the outline of the photographer shows in the fish's (fish eye lens?), and on his chin you see not only the outline, but also the fly rod in his hand. For me, this is a benchmark, showing not only the colours of the fish, but also its fine speckles and colour of each scale.



The cover shot on Trout and Salmon, zoomed in. The wobbly photo I took doesn't capture the luminous colour of each scale, but again you can see the photographer. Such detail is hard to get from hardcopy magazines.

So what don't you get? You might get bonus content, but not the fly fishing related articles in the equivalent issue of Freshwater Fishing. For instance, if I only bought the March/April edition of FlyFisher, I wouldn't have the article on fishing at Geehi. So if I wanted that, I would still need to buy FWF. Perhaps such articles could be recycled into the extended digital FlyFisher, either into the same edition, or the next edition. If I read the same Nick Taransky Japanese rod maker article in two magazines, it would be worth extracting the FWF fly fishing articles into FlyFisher's digital content.

Other than the limited printing (nicer to have the article in the fly vest to review on the water), loss of the FWF articles, and in the anticipation of growing quality to meet demand, the FlyFisher magazine digital version is quite good, and I'm sure it will get even better. Don't forget to create an account first, making it easier to use multiple platforms.

Anyway, it's time for a bus stop in Marulan, and then reading my eMags.