

DAVID JOY
illustrations by MICHAEL POLOMIK

Growing Gills

A Fly Fisherman's Journey

"If any human could grow gills, it would be David Joy. His lifelong connection to fish is vividly realized in this book, in large part because of his poetic language and sensibility. Growing Gills is a book anyone interested in our connection to the natural world will relish."

—Ron Rash, author of *Serena*

"Attention fishing widows: if you've struggled in vain to understand man's obsession with fishing, you must read David Joy's memoir, Growing Gills: A Fly Fisherman's Journey. In prose clean and clear as a mountain stream, Joy explores his own abiding love of fish and, by extension, the natural world that is their habitat. His passion is contagious. Even if you've never seen a trout in your life, by the end of this beautifully written book you can't help feeling a connection. You may even be tempted to take up a rod yourself."

—Pamela Duncan, author of *Plant Life*

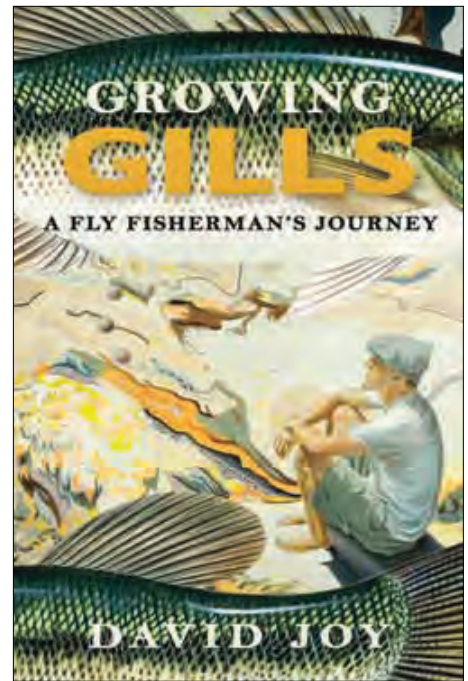
In *Growing Gills: A Fly Fisherman's Journey*, David Joy uses his obsession with fly fishing as a way to delve into himself. Through his deep connection to the natural world, Joy reveals why he is inherently defined by fish and water. The youngest in a family of fishermen, Joy has been exposed to the passion of casting lines since an early age. Yet as he grows older, he finds that the influence and necessity of the piscine world take on a new role in his life.

Growing Gills articulates the philosophical implications of time spent on the Atlantic seashore, at Piedmont lakes, and in Appalachian streams. Joy explores family and friends, environmentalism and respect for wild places, prize catches and the "ones that got away," the beauty of native trout, the greed of developers, the worn cork of rods, and the art of fly tying. Ultimately, by revealing the reasons for his obsession, he is able to understand the man he has become—truly a fish out of water.

Equally a book about fishing and a story of life, *Growing Gills: A Fly Fisherman's Journey* is the tale of one man's venture into the wild to find understanding.

Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, **DAVID JOY** quickly demonstrated a fascination with fishing and writing. He earned a degree in literature and a master's in professional writing from Western Carolina University and is currently a columnist and staff writer for the Cashiers *Crossroads Chronicle*. His articles, essays, and stories have appeared in numerous magazines and journals, including *Legacy* and *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Parts of *Growing Gills* previously appeared in *Wilderness House Literary Review* and *Smoky Mountain Living*. Joy lives in Cullowhee, North Carolina.

MICHAEL POLOMIK is a native of San Jose, California, who studied studio art at the University of North Carolina–Wilmington and Western Carolina University. In addition to painting, Polomik teaches art and leads workshops across North Carolina. His work has been selected for several juried and private collections.



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- Multi-city signings at universities, book festivals, and regional bookstores
- Author events at nationally recognized fly-fishing schools



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