

Received a "care package" today from Billy Gerke of ForEverLast Hunting and Fishing Products. I have long touted the Ray Guards made by this company as something all wading coastal anglers should use for protection against the pesky barbs of sting rays. I prefer the Ray Guards, worn in conjunction with zip-up neoprene boots. Others would find more peace of mind using products offered by ForEverLast which provide even more substantial protection against all sting ray hits.

One truth remains inexorable: one supremely good reason exists for wearing sting ray protection, while NO good reason exists for entering the water for a wading session without some kind of protection. People who insist on wading without protection from rays do so for a simple reason; the risk of stepping on one and getting hit is low. It's like driving a car. We drive without wrecking thousands of times; consequently, we tend to lose the immediate sense of the danger inherent to what we're doing. Suffice it to say, one hit from a sting ray is one too many. The consequences can include hospital stays, loss of a limb, even death. I sincerely appreciate Billy and his company taking care of me by sending me the Ray Guards, and would encourage all those reading this to take a long look at their sting ray protection products.

I found some other stuff in the box too. I have a longstanding policy of not promoting products simply because someone provides them to me for free. I want people in the fishing community to know I stand behind something because I perceive it to be of high quality, of genuinely necessary utility. I am a tackle technician, picky to a fault. Some of the products in this box impress me greatly.

I love the G2 Pro Pliers. With bodies constructed of Titanium/Aluminum Alloy, they have Aluminum Alloy jaws and action, and importantly, carry a replaceable Tungsten/Carbide steel blade, useful for cutting braided line. Fitted with a lanyard which keeps them attached to the pouch which holds them on a wading belt, these pliers appear perfect for the kind of duty I put such tools through.

I also love the look and design of their Snatch 'Em tool. It's a device for use in handling fish by grabbing their lips. Constructed of non-corrosive Anodized Aluminum, it requires just one hand for full usage, and includes a scale, much like the significantly more-expensive Boga Grip. I've used Boga Grips for years, and know they have accurate scales. I'll be using my Snatch 'Em tool in the near future, so I can compare results with the two devices. One thing I prefer about the ForEverLast tool is it comes with a lanyard and float. I like to carry my lip-grabbing tool on the front of my shirt, and would never use one without a float, since fumbling it proves all too easy.

Another product I discovered in the box and see multiple good uses for is the Net Bag. I don't fish tournaments anymore, but I can see how tournament anglers would love this spacious, floating bag for use in holding fish caught wading while transporting them back to the live well in the boat. I can also see how someone wanting a few pictures might use the Bag briefly, while waiting for a partner to come with the camera. I would never advocate placing multiple big fish in the Bag for the purpose of taking a picture of them, nor for holding a fish for more than a few minutes, if one intends to release the fish later.

The Net Bag provides a great way to carry and store stuff like waders and wading belts and

tackle bags. It's another sterling product from a solid company that clearly understands exactly what kind of stuff coastal anglers want and need.