

Wading Boots

By Ian Cox



My wading boots packed up the other day, just over 4 years after I bought them. I was fishing with Andrew Savs at the time, who like me, has a questioning mind. It was not surprising, therefore, that our conversation swiftly turned to the relative merits of wading boots and their durability.

Our views differed markedly in that Savs had had bad experiences with his Chota's while I was delighted with mine. That we differed is not that surprising as likes and dislikes regarding footwear is an intensely personal subject.

However we agreed that none of our boots had lasted very long. Indeed our assessment of longevity was remarkably similar –not more than 60 days fishing. What is more Andrew had anecdotal evidence that a similar situation applied to other brands of wading boots.

So I put the question out on Trout Talk. The response was unprecedented. At time of writing there had been around 100 comments. The durability of wading boots is clearly a subject that concerns trout anglers in South Africa.

I found the range of responses very interesting. Some had only good stories and as far as brands went some angler's good news stories were contradicted by other angler's nightmares. The overwhelming consensus however is that wading boots do not last and that ordinary boots or work boots that are used as wading boots are a lot cheaper and last a lot longer than specialist wading boots.



Indeed a great many very experienced, even famous anglers do not use wading boots.

I was in the Complete Angler this morning which boasts a wide range of very beguiling wading boots at very attractive prices. They are for example selling Chota STL wading boots at nearly R1000.00 rand below the recommended retail price, albeit while old stocks last. The stealth range of boots is also on sale at what are very attractive prices. But while the deals are good I had to ask myself are these boots worth what in essence works out to be R60.00 or more a trip when so many anglers do as well if not better with much cheaper alternatives?

I stiffened my resolve, shut my ears to the siren call of "buy me" that floated up from the footwear section and did not buy. I will be popping into a local safety boot supplier to buy a pair of non slip soled safety boots. I am told I can expect to pay less than a quarter of the price of specialist wading boots.

What this space for further reports on how this turns out.
