

# BUILDING A MEMORY



BY JOSHUA SWANAGON

**A**nyone who uses knives on a day-to-day basis knows that over time, if a knife lasts long enough, that knife becomes part of your story. You build a bond with it that includes memories that will not soon be forgotten. However, every once in a great while, you get the opportunity to have a memory turned into a knife, and that is something very special indeed.

Back in 2014, I had the opportunity to go on a trip to the Amazon jungle, in the southernmost tip of Colombia, with Bushcraft Global—run by a good friend of mine, Joe Flowers. Also on this trip were some other good friends, including Dan Eastland of Dogwood Custom Knives. While there, we backpacked roughly nine miles deep into the jungle, where we lived in hammocks and learned, from indigenous guides, the ways and craftsmanship of people who spend their entire lives in the jungle and have never experienced the luxuries you and I so easily take for granted.

As we hiked around the jungle, learning about the local flora and fauna, we were introduced to bloodwood, a beautiful wood with a deep rose color. It was such a stunning wood that we harvested some for different projects we were working on. When it came time to leave the jungle, Dan decided that he really wanted some of the wood for

The Dogwood Custom Knives "Wasp" made personally for Joshua by Dan Eastland, from the bloodwood discussed in the story.

Photo by Joshua Swanagon

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handle scales, and we harvested a couple large chunks of it (probably about 10 pounds—it is a very dense, heavy wood), taking turns carrying it out.

Fast forward to this year's SHOT Show, where I met up with Dan while sharing a room with him and a few other friends. Before the show, he told me via text that he had something he would give me in Vegas. When I arrived, I was surprised to receive a beautiful spear point knife, with scandi grind, made of CPM 154, with scales made from the bloodwood harvested on our trip. There is something very special about having a knife that you build memories with, but there really is nothing like having a knife built from a memory.

Stay sharp and keep it real. **KI**

*Joshua Swanagon*