

Creel Notes from the



P.O. Box 639, Mercer Island, WA 98040



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NEWS RELEASE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
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Commission adopts two-year moratorium on wild steelhead retention statewide

OLYMPIA - The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission today adopted new sportfishing rules for the 2004-05 season that include a two-year moratorium on retaining any wild steelhead caught in state waters.

The moratorium, adopted on a 5-3 vote, will require anglers to release any steelhead caught from April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2006 that is not marked as a hatchery fish by a missing adipose fin and a healed scar.

Drawing from a list of 463 proposed changes - 336 of them submitted by the public - the commission also adopted new handling requirements for releasing salmon and steelhead that cannot be retained, additional protection for Columbia River sturgeon and fixed starting dates for recreational crab fishing.

Commissioners also declined to take action on several proposals, including one to ban treble hooks in saltwater fisheries and another to prohibit the use of motorized vessels on the Satsop and Wynoochee Rivers.

Commissioner **R.P. Van Gytenbeek** of Seattle initiated the discussion about requiring the release of wild steelhead by calling for a permanent ban on wild steelhead retention. When that motion failed, the commission considered and rejected the idea of a six-year moratorium before scaling it back to two years.

"In this case, I think a half a loaf is better than no loaf

at all," Van Gytenbeek said. "A lot of people in this state are concerned about the decline of our wild steelhead stocks and I think a moratorium gets us started down the right path."

Commission Chair Will Roehl of Bellingham did not share that view, noting that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is currently working on a new comprehensive plan for steelhead management, tailored to specific stocks.

"I can't support banning retention of wild steelhead on rivers where stocks are healthy and returns are strong," Roehl said. "I don't think this broad-brush action is warranted, but that appears to be the will of commission."

When releasing steelhead or salmon that cannot be retained under state law, anglers will have to follow new handling procedures approved today by the commission. Measures adopted by the commission prohibit completely removing salmon or steelhead caught in lakes or streams from the water or pulling them into a boat in Puget Sound prior to release.

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Streamwatch at Eyes In The Woods

By Jay Hunter

I'm Jay Hunter, the Fish Director for Eyes In The Woods (EIW), fish@eyesinthewoods.org. We have a new program called Streamwatch that we are now implementing in cooperation with the Wash. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). This new program allows clubs to become more involved in watching out for their favorite waters by taking a C.O.R.T. (Crime Observation and Reporting Training) class from a WDFW Officer. Streamwatch allows clubs to "adopt" a water, coordinate sign placement and work with WDFW and EIW to eliminate the bad practices that drive us batty; like killing fish in a Catch and Release water or using bait in a Fly Fishing Only water.

This program does not burden a club with work. A short training class (ALL WDFW officers are trained to give this specific training) and sign coordination/placement are the main activities. This is followed by you doing your normal angling activities, BUT YOU ARE NOW AN OFFICIAL WDFW TRAINED WITNESS in the non-confrontational method of obtaining information.

Please go to our website eyesinthewoods.org for more information or contact me at fish@eyesinthewoods.org. I'm a retired WDFW fish biologist and see this program as having a very positive impact on our water resources. Lakes, streams, watersheds, bays, etc. are all appropriate for this program.

Thank you for reviewing this information.

Conservation Committee Meetings

The WFFC Conservation Committee meets at 7:00, on Thursday of the week following the monthly club meeting (unless announced otherwise). The meeting is held at the Ram Restaurant in University Village. The meetings are open to any and all members who would like to get more deeply involved the club's conservation efforts.

2004 Program Schedule by Keith Robbins, Program Chair

March 16 - Billy Pate, "Fishing Around the World for Billfish and Tarpon"

April 20 - Curt Kraemer, "Steelhead: Past, Present and Future"

May 18 - Brian O'Keefe, "Whatever the Hell He Wants to Talk About"

June 15 - Brian Dell, "NW Audubon Aquatic Birds"

July 20 - Tim Borski, "Florida Keys, "The Other Games"

August 17 - Brian Winter, "The Elwha Dam Project"

September 2 - Denny Rickards, "Stillwater Tactics"

October 19 - David Montgomery, "Author: The King of Fish"

November 16 - Steve Raymond, "The WFFC Heritage"

December 21 - Christmas Party and Auction

Creel Notes

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Club Aims and Purposes

The purpose of this club shall be:

1. To improve and increase the sport of Fly Fishing in the State of Washington.
2. To work to the outlawing the use of salmon eggs in any form during the regular trout season.
3. To promote and work for the betterment of trout streams and lakes.
4. To encourage and advocate the conservation and increase of trout in state waters.
5. To promote a campaign of education against pollution in streams, lakes or Sound waters of the State of Washington.
6. To encourage and assist boys — particularly of high school age—to become fly fishermen and true sportsmen.

President's Riffle *By Jim McRoberts*

Well we had a great Holiday Party to end the year 2003 and start off 2004 with an enthusiastic awards banquet. **Bill Neal** and **Richard Embry** kept me totally in the dark about the "Tommy" Award. No one was more surprised than I to hear whom the recipient was! I will do my best to continue to promote the "Aims and Purposes" of the club in our community.

The "Empty Creel" Award was given to **Ron Dion** for his exceptional dedication and contributions to club welfare. Congratulations Ron! During the December meeting **Frank Vulliet** received the "Half-Assed" Award from Preston Singletary, our new poet laureate.

We have a wonderful opportunity to raise our level of anticipation for the upcoming spring fishing, after "ice-out." I am referring to the Fly-Fishing show at Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue on February 20, 21 & 22. One of our newer members, **Randall Bryett**, will be making presentations about fly-fishing in Australia. **Mike Wearne** can still use helpers at the booth we agreed to man for WSCFFF.

March 1st is the opening of some of our best Columbia Basin lakes, *Lenice*, *Lenore* and *Nunnally*. **Mark DeWitt** has an outing planned for March 20-21 for *somewhere* over there. Now is the time to clean reels, dress those lines and maybe tie on a new leader. Need a few more flies? Ask **Dick Brening** about attending a fly tying round table to polish your skills. Maybe you will want to enter the Boyd Aigner Fly-Tying Competition coming up next month. We will hear more on this subject from **Bill Neal**.

This month we will vote on the budget for 2004.

We are half way through this legislative session. Here is an update:

Streamflow Protection: Successful negotiations to harmonize **HB 2393** and **HB 2396** led to a single bill (**HB 2396**) passing out of

the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee on February 3rd. The bill would restore and protect stream flows adequate for fish habitat, water quality, recreation, and other instream uses.

Sustainable State Forests: SHB 2753

passed out of the Natural Resources Committee earlier this morning a bill to study certification of state forests and require the Department of Natural Resources to report regarding forest certification opportunities before adopting a new 10-year logging target for state forests. Legislative leadership includes strong support by Reps Linville and Cooper.

A short list of some bills of concern:

SB 6415 would make it virtually impossible for the state to control polluted stormwater – the largest source of pollution entering Washington waters.

SB 6734 provides too many benefits to water users that may negate the goals of putting adequate water in our streams (being heard today and anticipated to pass out of committee)

Please contact your legislators to let them know your opinion. If you are uncertain who your legislators are, you can use this website to find out. <http://www.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx>



REPORTS

Skagit River, January 22 *By Leland Miyawaki*

Brian Lencho and I joined John Farrar on his boat, "Bella," for a day on the Skagit chasing steelhead. For the day, we caught 11 dollies – I don't care, I still prefer the name dolly rather than bull. Brian landed one dolly and missed a few more. John also landed a dolly, missed a few more and landed his "first of the year" hatchery steelhead of about 6-8 pounds. I managed to land 9 dollies and cracker a few others. I caught three on my 6wt single-hander and the rest on my two-hander. Up until now, I considered dollies to be the steelhead bycatch but I'll revise my statement to. . . Steelhead are the dolly bycatch. The dollies are very big and are laying in the steelhead water and not necessarily in the slow stuff. And unlike the steelhead, they are feeding.

That's all folks!

Here is the 2004 Out Doors schedule. Post it where you need to..calender....creel notes...web site etc. Please note: In a couple cases minor date adjustments have been made from the traditional weekends to take better advantage of the tide and moon conditions, hopefully to improve fishing.

March 20,21 Early Columbia Basin Lakes (the frozen ass trip)
 April 17,18 Spring Dry Falls Lake Outing
 May 29-31 Chopaka Lake Outing
 June 26, 27 British Columbia Lake Trip
 July or August High Lakes Trip- See Pete Baird
 September 18 Yakima River
 October 9,10 Dryfalls
 November 13 Wet buns

Sharing the pleasure of this sport and the outdoors with others is one of the main reasons this club was founded! Therefore, I will be encouraging all club members thru out the year to share where they will be going on fishing trips, in case other members want to hook up. Yes, this means you!
 Mark DeWitt

February Guest Speaker

Jack Gartside, author of *Successful Striper Strategies*

Jack got his first fly tying lesson in 1956 from Ted Williams, the great Boston Red Sox outfielder. He's been tying and fishing ever since – in both fresh water and salt – accumulating an extraordinary range of fishing experience in the US and throughout the world. He was one of the first fly tiers to be profiled in *Sports Illustrated* (Oct. 12, 1982). Since then, he has been written about in *Fly Rod & Reel*, *Fly Fisherman*, *Fly Fishing in Salt Waters*, *VillmarksLiv* (Norwegian), *La Peche en Mer* (French), *Tight Loop* (Japanese), and other national and international magazines. And, yes, it was Jack and his inflatable giraffe on the cover of *Fly Fishing in Salt Waters*.

Jack is the author of *Striper Flies*, the first book written specifically on this subject. Another book, *Successful Striper Strategies*, is described by reviewer Steve Raymond as "...one of the most remarkable striper-fishing manuals to see the light of day" and by Tom Meade as "Blessed with bright writing, keen observations, and the most concise advice a striper hunter can find".

His most recent books are *Scratching the Surface*, which deals with fishing surface and (slightly) subsurface flies, and *The Flyfisherman's Guide to Boston Harbor*.



Bill Neal presents last years Treasurer Jim Sokol with a special Thank You Award.

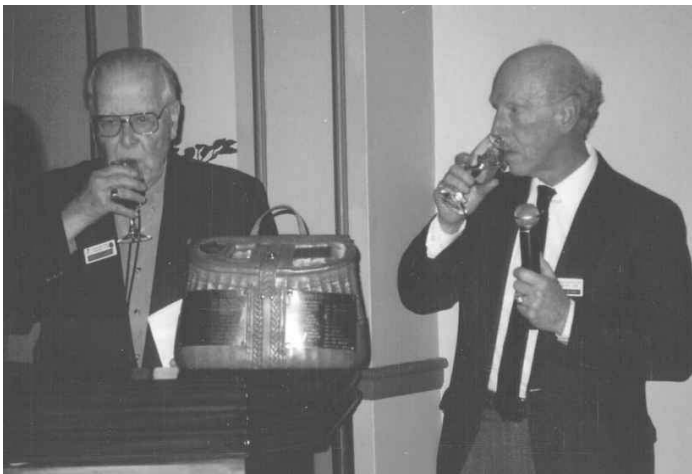
Oscars, Grammys? We got our own Awards.



2003 President Richard Embry presents the Tommy Brayshaw Award to Jim McRoberts.



New President Jim McRoberts presents Ed Sozinho his Award for Distance Casting at the WSCFFF Casting Expo.



Gordy Young toasts Ron Dion on his receipt of the "Empty Creel Award" (Ron is drinking to forget)



Pres. McRoberts presents outgoing Pres. Richard Embry a nice 'Thank You Gift' for a job well done.



NEW MEMBER VOTING THIS MONTH

The Membership Committee has approved three potential new members which we'll be voting on this month.

Walter Alexander

Walter and his family live on Bainbridge Island, where he is a caretaker of a large estate. He grew up fly fishing with his dad, WFFC member **Blair Alexander**. Walter's sponsors are Blair and **Leland Miyawaki**.

Doug Smith

Doug is a transplant to Washington state from Tennessee. He moved here in 1999 to be Director of Corporate Sales for the Seattle Seahawks. He is married with three children, and lives on Bainbridge Island. Doug found the WFFC on his own and made a bold effort to become a member, enlisting the support of **Don Simonson** and **Steve Raymond** as sponsors. He loves the Tennessee Vols and fly fishing!

Rob Masonis

Rob is the Northwest Regional Director of American Rivers, and also serves on the board of directors of the Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition and on the Advisory Board of the Western Water Alliance. He is a graduate of Bucknell University and the Boston College Law School and the U.W. School of Law. He lives in Seattle's Crown Hill neighborhood, and frequents the Yakima river. His sponsors are **Bill Redman** and **Ed Pettigrew**.



Fly Tier's Round Table

By Dick Brening

February Meeting: 7 to 9 PM – Wednesday, February 25, 2004

Due to the dilligent work of our tiers the Ghilly has a newly replenished supply of club flies for the member initiation packages. A special thanks goes to **Pete Baird, Mark Pratt, Ron Dion** and **Dick Scales** for spending an evening tying flies for the good of the club.

It is time to begin thinking about spring lake fishing.... At the Febraury meeting let's tie Damsel and Dragon patterns. I know you all have a favorite pattern that you have had success fishing with. Come and share it with the rest of us! Or, if you need a good pattern or two come and see what others are tying.

You and your guests are welcome. Come to tie, watch or just share ideas. Place: Mercer Island Covenant Church, 3200 78th S.E. (S.E. corner of 78th S.E. and SE 32nd). Just south of the Mercer Island business district. Off street parking is available off 78th S.E.

If you have any questions on directions contact **Pete Baird** or me at the club meeting or give me a call.

WFFC Member & Spouse Gathering for 2004 High Lake Trip Planning

By Pete baird

A planning meeting for our 2004 high lake trip(s) will take place at the Baird residence on Friday, March 5th, starting at 7:30 PM. Anyone interested & your spouse are invited to attend to partake of coffee, tea, a light desert, discussion, and perhaps a slide show of interesting 2003 travels (not necessarily fishing). Please **RSVP** and let me know if you need directions on how to get here.

UNDERSTANDING THE CAST

ARTICLE # 4:PRACTICING

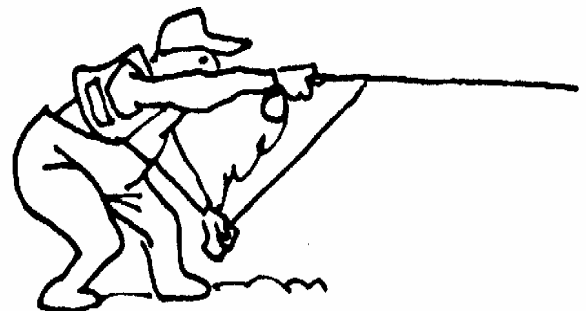
As the saying goes, "Practice Makes Perfect". If we want to excel in our fly casting skills we need to set aside time to practice. I like to suggest to a student that approximately ½ hour, three times per week is a good schedule to start with. I want to emphasize right up front that we need to strive for **good quality** practice sessions. This means not subjecting ourselves to long sessions where we become tired and start to establish bad habits. Practice is not done while fishing. Practice should normally be done on grass or over water using a piece of yarn at the end of the leader. When we go fishing we want to concentrate on fishing not casting. With practice, casting should be an automatic function while fishing.

Practice should be fun. Try to organize your practice sessions so you are not doing the same drill more than 10 minutes at a time. I like to start with 20 to 30 ft. of line outside the rod tip. The following lists some drills you might try:

- A pick up and lay down concentrating on producing a nice tight loop both on the back cast and forward cast. The line should land all at the same time in a nice straight line with minimal slack after the completion of the forward cast. Notice I said **both** the back cast and the forward cast. If you don't look at the back cast you don't a clue what the loop looks like. So, you will need to develop your own style for looking at your back cast. Strive to rotate your head without rotating your body allowing you to see the loop formation without causing the casting plane to change. I offer a couple suggestions one can use to accomplish

this. First, open up your stance. For a right handed caster move the right foot back. Second, cast side arm so you can easily see both the back and forward cast. I call this the tip down method.

- Concentrate on shortening stroke length. With 20 feet or less line outside the rod tip, practice trying to hit the line forming the loop with the rod tip. This will force you to form real tight loops.
- Accuracy: I call this drill shooting dandelions. Attempt to hit your target while doing a pick up and lay down. If dandelions are scarce, paper plates work great.
- False casting: The sequence would go like this. Pick up, back cast, forward cast, back cast, forward cast, lay down. Again watching your loop control, being sure to begin your second back cast just as the fly line is almost straight and horizontal to the grass or water at the end of your first forward cast.
- With all of the above drills try casting with your non-dominant hand. This accomplishes two things. It will discipline your dominant hand to produce a better casting stroke. It will also allow you to continue to enjoy fly fishing if you develop physical problems on your dominant side.





Washington Fly Fishing Club
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Meeting Announcement



Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at The College Club, 505 Madison St.
The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM

This months guest speaker is Jack Gartside, author of "Successful Striper Strategies". Join us for some interesting insights on fishing for this wonderful game fish. More about Jack on page 4.