

Creel Notes from the



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



July, 2005

Presidents Riffle, July 2005



Several people have asked me about the Crackleback pattern I've mentioned in fishing reports. I learned about it when I was preparing to fish in Missouri last October. It was developed in 1952, or thereabouts, by Ed Story of St. Louis who owns the Feathercraft Fly Shop there. He describes the fly as 'the dry fly wooly'. It's like a small wooly worm, or a Griffith's Gnat on steroids.

The body was originally 10 to 15 barbs of a turkey tail feather but floss or tri-lobal yarn or other materials are used now too. The dorsal rib is two or three peacock herls. A palmered brown hackle finishes the fly. (I often use grizzly saddle for the hackle and it gets good results.) It's usually tied on 12, 14, and 16 size dry fly hooks.

Ed Story's recommended stream fishing method is drift the pattern to the start of the swing then pull it under the surface and hold it there a while before stripping it in. That's when he gets most of his strikes.

A version by Ron Oben can be found at this site:

<http://www.flyangleronline.com/flytying/fotw2/080.502fotw.html>

Tim Reunion's version doesn't look much like the original:

<http://flytyingworld.com/PagesT/tr-crackleback.htm>

A more standard version by Matt Tucker is at:

http://www.ozarkchronicles.com/flybox/patterns/pattern_sheets/crackleback/crackleback.htm

And, other sites, if you're interested:

<http://teosinte2.agron.missouri.edu/flyfishing/crackleback.html>

<http://ozarkanglers.com/recipes/crackleback.phtml>

I will have tested it at HiHium Lake before the July meeting. We'll see how it compares to the Tom Thumb for Kamloops trout surface action.

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Efficiency might lead to exploitation, but conversely to greater conservation. Are we ignoring water temperature and flow? Taylor argued that temperature might delay things a few days. What we perceive as temperature related delays might be related to light and dark cycles. Do we see the same flux during hatchery voluntary release? We do if the lights are off in the hatchery.

Can you dumb this down? Summer steelhead are active at dusk and dawn during dark lunar cycles. For winter steelhead that take flies while they rest, do the opposite and get them as they rest from migration. And finally: should I leave the lights off when I get up at night to pee in order to fall back to sleep more quickly?

Yup!

Proposed changes to the WFFC Bylaws:

Under ARTICLE 1, AIMS AND PURPOSES

E. To encourage and assist others--particularly young persons of high school age--to become fly **fishers** (it was fishermen) and true **conservationists** (it was sportsmen). [Also the Creel Notes Item # 6 under "Aims & Purposes" to read the same.]

F. To foster outlawing the use of fish roe as bait for resident trout. (item #2 in the Creel Notes version). This is now covered by WDFW regulations under "Selective Fisheries and Fly Fishing Only". When this item was included there were no regulations that covered what we have now. **Therefore item F. to be deleted entirely.** [Also item #2 in the Creel Notes should be deleted.]

The Long Range Planning Committee suggested that the club have a mission statement and that it be in the Creel Notes.

WFFC Mission Statement (proposed)

"The Washington Fly Fishing Club is a social organization of fly fishermen whose mission is to provide resources to members, improve fisheries and habitat, and develop a public conservation ethic through fly fishing."

Please note the word **fishermen** is still the correct word for what we are as used in this statement!

Respectfully,
Jim McRoberts

Revival of Gold Button Awards

By Bill Neal, Awards Chairman

The Board is considering a revival in modified form of the Gold Button award program. The previous program, which gave recognition to Club members who caught the largest fish in a variety of categories, used weight and length as the criteria. It was abandoned a number of years ago because of its conflict with a catch and release philosophy. Despite abandonment of the program, many Club members still proudly wear their gold button pins, and in fact, catching the "biggest" fish still is an accomplishment. The Club recognizes those who have skills in fly tying and casting, and it seems only natural to recognize those who have brought these and other skills together to catch fish of respectable size. In fact, a number of States have implemented programs such as this geared to "catch and release" fishing.

The "new" Gold Button Awards program is described below. In keeping with tradition, much of the language and style is retained from the prior program, but modified to fit our present circumstances.

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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.



Domke Lake, June 12 -17 *By Don Gulliford*

Flew up with Chelan Airways as usual which is 20 minutes vs. hours & backpack on the Lady of the Lake. Fishing great for 4 days for cutts around 10"-14" and rainbows some even larger and most rainbows do not now show the diphyllbothrium latham disease of some years ago --many fat and silvery. I ate a 12" with red meat that was delicious. Mother goldeneye and 4 little ones gobbling some of the milfoil which sadly grows well in clear water.

I used Green Carey specials, size 12 and larger, and flashabou tailed wooly buggers. Many spawners in Emerald Park Creek which is always a good sign. The flight into Domke showed how close the massive wildfire came last August, getting to Bearcat Ridge about half mile south of the end of Domke. For solitude and fly fishing, with comforts of two furnished cedar shake cabins plus rowboats (and sigh, some with motors horsed in over 2 miles), Domke is hard to beat, at least I have found it so for 58 years.

Deschutes (near Maupin), - June 9,10,11,12

By John Gravendyk

After listening to friend and new WFFC member **Bill Deters** wax poetic about the charms of the Deschutes Canyon for several years, we finally succeeded in putting together a long weekend trip in early June to these fabled "Blue Ribbon" Oregon waters. Bill graciously offered to drive and Friday morning found us on our way. Murray Hart, a close friend of Bill's fell in behind us just below Olympia for the remainder of what turned out to be an easy five hour ride. First order of business on arrival around noon on Friday was to obtain fishing licenses and boat permits at the Maupin hardware store. We were pleasantly surprised to find that the Oregon Department of Fish and Game had declared June 10 and 11 to be a "fish for free weekend".

We quickly set up camp at Devil's Canyon, strung up our rods and headed to some of Bill and Murray's favorite spots up river between the campgrounds and the "locked gate". The weather on Friday was windy and cool and we observed no surface activity. Nymphing was the order of the day and although Bill got a couple of bumps and even though we fished until we ran out of light, we all recorded skunks on Friday. Back at camp it was a pleasure for me to hear stories from Murray and Bill dealing with not only fishing the Deschutes but also mountaineering adventures. Turns out both have led summiting expeditions to Denali as well as many ascents of Rai-

ner and other Northwest peaks.

Murray, who is a senior clinical psychologist for Washington State and manages a cattle ranch in his "spare" time, assumed the role of camp cook and whipped up a wonderful steak and shoestring potatoes dinner. The balance of the evening consisted of micro brew tasting evaluations and a few more "you should have been here last year" fishing stories. I crawled off to my tent around 11:00pm and slept like the dead despite the howling wind and occasional piercing whistle of the Burlington Northern freight trains that operate around the clock.

Saturday's weather mirrored Friday's with the same slow fishing. Bill caught a nice redside by nymphing a riprap back eddy near the locked gate but by noon Murray and I still hadn't connected. Due to the slow action we decided to do a little sight-seeing and drove down to the Sherars Falls area after lunch in Maupin. It was quite a site to watch a couple of tribal members plying their ancient fishing methods there.

After our side trip, we determined to tackle a sizable eddy above the locked gate and headed back upriver. While passing through Maupin, Bill suggested we stop at The Deschutes Canyon Fly Shop to see how others were fairing. Turns out that Dick Sagarra, a rep for TFO Rods, was on hand demonstrating the full TFO line. We were urged to put our names in the hat for a drawing that was to take place in a few minutes. What a hoot! Yours truly won second prize which was a beautiful "Lefty Kreh" signature 4 wt series 1 rod! Karen and John Smeraglio, owners of Deschutes Canyon Fly Shop helped me pick out an appropriate reel and line to complete my new 4 wt system. Thanks to both TFO Rods and John and Karen for this great attitude changing experience! The "big eddy" fishing was good for Bill and he landed and released two nice trout before we put up our rods for the evening. Murray continued to fair about as poorly as me and in the failing light when he was unable to see well enough to tie on a new leader announced with great gusto and attendant expletives that he was; "GIVING UP FISHING!"

Thanks goodness that giving up fishing doesn't mean giving up cooking! Murray did up a beautiful dinner of London broils with gorgonzola pasta. Bill provided the evening's libation, a lovely Woop Woop Cabernet from down under. After dinner, Murray left for town to make some calls while Bill and I continued to solve world problems from our camp chairs in Devil's Canyon.

Over coffee on Sunday morning, Murray announced that a call home the night before had revealed that his significant other was ill and needed

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some tending. He would have to cut his trip short. We helped Murray pack up his tuck and shook hands all around. Before motoring out of the camp, Murray sniffed the air and predicted a warming trend and better fishing.

Sunday really did turn out to be a nice weather day and Bill suggested we scout the area between camp and town. Well, low and behold at one of the turnouts we could actually see about 4 nice looking trout actively surface feeding. Bill, being Bill, suggested that I should go catch those critters because I already had a dry fly tied on. I think he actually said; "John, you fish this hole". Bill worked his way down just below the rapids to do some nymphing. I finally managed to hook up with one of those bad boys and bring it to hand.

What a great fish! Those redsides fight like nothing else I've experienced. Really made my day.

Bill meanwhile had landed another couple of really nice fish and when he returned and discovered I had finally been successful he was very pleased and relieved. Naturally, this became my favorite spot for the remainder of the trip and we dubbed the site John's U-Fish hole.

Anyway, after lunch we pretty much repeated the morning's success. We also hung around Monday till about 4:00pm and Bill actually switched to a dry caddis and was rewarded with another nice fish. I also hooked up with my biggest fish Monday afternoon but broke him off before bringing him to hand but not before much leaping, tail walking and similar commotion! (Both me and the fish)

A lovely trip all in all. Special thanks to Murray Hart, Bill Deters, TFO Rods, and Deschutes Canyon Fly Shop for making this an extraordinary outing for me.



Bill Deters playing a feisty "redside" off the rocks



Murray Hart demonstrating proper "stealth" technique for these skittish Deschutes Trout

Hosmer Lake, Oregon, June 13-18 *By Steve Raymond*

This is the 36th consecutive year I've fished Hosmer Lake. My expectations were not very high this year because the fishing has not been good the past couple of years and I was not aware of any changes that might lead to improvement. However, I did plan my trip a week earlier than usual in the hope of encountering hatches that seemed to be missing altogether last year.

That paid off: During the first three days, when the weather was decent, big caddisflies hatched sporadically throughout each day, the landlocked Atlantic salmon rose to them willingly and the fishing was surprisingly good. The salmon also were in unusually good condition and extremely lively, probably a consequence of the mild winter in the Oregon Cascades. As usual, there were several distinct age classes in the salmon population--many fish in the 12- to 14-inch class, good numbers around 15 to 17 inches and fewer fish in the 18- to 20-inch class--although there

were more of the latter than I've seen at Hosmer in several years. There are also many brook trout in the lake--probably more brookies than salmon--but in typical brook-trout fashion they kept their dour heads down and grubbed around on the bottom, refusing to rise to dry flies. All but one, that is; I took one 18-inch Brookie on a caddis emerger, the same pattern that accounted for nearly all the fish I caught.

The weather crashed during the last three days: Cold, gusty winds, torrential rain and sleet. That shut down the hatches and made the fishing tough. But that's the chance you take when you're fishing at 5,000 feet elevation.

Randy joined me for the trip and stayed on after I left. He had some good fishing also. It was nothing like the old days, but then what is?

The Farce Service was even more heavy-handed than usual this year, sweeping through both Hosmer Lake campgrounds and cutting living and dead trees indiscriminately, regardless of size or species. We found many trees as small as two inches in diameter that had been cut; it's hard to see how even the stupefied Farce Service could regard such trees as "hazardous." But if they weren't hazardous before, they are now: the sharpened little stumps are everywhere in the campgrounds, and it'll be a miracle if the summer passes without somebody falling and getting impaled on one. The loggers also used heavy equipment and yarded timber through campsites, leaving deep ruts and furrows. The place looks like a battlefield. Or maybe it's what George W. Bush thinks a "healthy forest" looks like.

HiHium Lake, June 30 - July

By Doug Schaad

Due to the beneficence of one of my guests at the Holiday event, I was invited to join the winner in an early summer trip to HiHium. Hav-

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ing never fished the lake at this time of the year, my productivity showed a steep learning curve. All of the "honey-holes" that are productive in September were devoid of fish. Further, the September fly patterns weren't worth diddly dog-squat. That said, I began to understand the lake on the second day and was fully productive by the third day.

For those that haven't followed the weather in central BC, this has been a wet spring. The Lake has risen nearly a foot since ice-out and surface temperatures ran from 57 to 61 degrees. While a few traveling sedges were rising from the surface, their primary predator was birds rushing from the lakeside brush. The trout were still keyed on caddis pupae, scuds and chironomids. And, I'm a particularly poor fisher of the latter. Despite their effectiveness, I find few things as boring as chironomid fishing; it just doesn't suit my temperament.

That said, we managed to find a significant number of eager trout to 19 inches. While the larger males were in post-spawn recovery, the 14-16 inch bright hens were unbelievable. On two occasions I was looking up as the hens raced away from their torment - one of them doing 11 cartwheeling leaps that left my heart straining. Though I've seen it many times, I continue to stare in amazement any time a trout leaps to a height that exceeds my normal horizon. I also found one monster, some behemoth of the depths that wasn't to be constrained. After draining my fly line and sixty yards of my backing, I began to apply pressure. As the spool gained visibility, I applied more. A good plan, limited success. With no weeds or obstructions in sight (I was fishing 18+ feet water), the 8 pound fluoro broke between my knot to the tapered leader and the fly (there were no indications of wind knots). A good fish, though I'll never know how good.

And then, there is the ambience

of HiHium. Eagles everywhere - mature citizens feeding the young of the year, and harassing the loons until they released their trout for easy grappling with strong talons. Tiger lilies, paint-brush, columbine and lupine in profusion. Bucks in velvet in the early am and the final shadows of dusk. Ravens holding conclaves at 0-dark-thirty. Voles and young robins picked from the trees by shrieking Northern Harriers and Sharp-shinned hawks. An absolute cornucopia of activity!

Though I'm sure it's been said many times; my thanks to the Bendzak family for their continuing support of the WFFC and it's Holiday raffle. And for those of you that haven't yet fished this hallowed lake, put it on your list of "must-do" fishing.

Eliguk Lake, B.C.

This was the best year ever at Eliguk. I have been going there for 15 years and the fish were bigger than ever. My fishing partner John Stachurski and I had 20+fish days (@ 17"). Only two "line in the prop" days (both John's) and no fish lost to the loons.

The hot fly was anything black and a beadhead. The usual white marabou fly also worked well and emergers were good as dry line patterns.

I did catch a dolly vardon for the first time ever and there was another one caught by one of the other guests of Dean Ingram.

We didn't even make the usual trip to Petry Lake because the fishing was so good.

The only bad thing was the mosquitos. They were very bad and this was a problem when trying to fish in the evening. There was only limited dry fly fishing but effective when they were on top. The food was great, as usual, as was the 80th birthday cake for **Perry Barth**.

Chuck Ballard

Like Chuck said, the fishing was the best in 15 years! Why the fish have gone from 12-14 to 15-18

inches we don't know. Some were 19 and Gil caught one that measured 20!!!! Fantastic. The Edmonds group booked for next year on the 3rd day.

Weather was scruffy but we fished every day for two weeks.

One rod over board with a "Hardy" reel.

The WFFC week in 2006 will be from June 10 to 17th.

The offer for \$1,000 off for fishing club members and friends will be good again.

My best patterns were Gil's Monster, white Maribou streamer, and a green Doc Spratley. **Perry Barth**

The lodge has a handyman to do odd jobs around the place. That includes helping clean up after meals, handling luggage to and from cabins. This "ghillie" type person also tends to the boats, motors, often helping us old timers in and out after tying up. The "ghillie" also cleans and smokes everyone's fish. Last year there was a nice young man named Jonathon from Victoria, a student at UV. This year we were well taken care of by a close relative, his sister Katie.

She was a delightful young lady who handled all her "chores" with alacrity. This year there were 3-4 young persons (grandsons, etc) in our group and she had some guests she could really relate to.

The previous week, a guest had given her brief instructions in casting and taken her out fishing. But alas, no fish. I asked if she would have a little time to venture out again during the week and she said she probably would. On Friday she asked if she could take me up on my offer and I readily agreed. After lunch, I offered just a brief review of casting, recognizing that it could not be mastered in a few brief minutes, and we set out on the lake. I thought the best thing I could teach her at this time was how to 'play' a fish, which was absolutely necessary for Eliguk trout. Handing her one of my rods, we started trolling with an

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olive wooly bugger. Soon she was hooked up to a nice fish and without a lot of shouting and arm waving on my part, she handled the fish nicely and brought it to net. Being her first fish she proudly kept it. We fished for about another hour or so and she hooked and landed two more fish.

Upon our departure the next morning, I presented her with the tackle and fly she successfully employed the day before (plus some extra flies). **Bob Young**

("And now for something completely different!")

A saltwater report

by *Leland Miyawaki*

The resident silvers at the Narrows that I fished for during the winter are still there. They are up to 20+ inches and can now be measured in pounds. They have been joined in the last month by shaker blackmouth. Last week, on the morning of July 3, I landed a very nice silver of 3-4 pounds on my popper and this morning, I counted four nice fish caught between 9:30am and 10 by three of us.

I have put together a fall coho "buzz-bomb beater" rod and line combo for Kaufmann's. We've teamed up the Sage 8126 with Rio's new Outbound flyline. The 8126 is a European fast action Spey rod that was designed to generate high line speeds for Scandinavian underhand casting and best of all, for us in Puget Sound - *two-handed overhead casting*. The stars must have aligned because the 8126 loves the new Rio Outbound line. The Outbound is a 120 foot-long integrated shooting head. The head is only 37.5' long and everything else is a super slick floating running line with a cold water coating that is perfect for our Puget Sound waters. In our test sessions, we took the setup to the Tacoma Narrows and were soon casting over 90' with a quick water-load and a single backcast!

The longer rod will keep your backcasts off our sloping beaches and above the driftwood. The shorter backcasts will let you fish through all but the highest tides and the longer casting distances will get your fly out to where the big boys are eating. In the beach-fishing game, distance, as we know is everything, and the longer rod is definitely better!

Interestingly, I've been having a hard time finding my popper when it lands so far out. It makes me wonder why I want to fish the surface if I can't see my fly!

On the Fly By David Ehrlich June 21, 2005

Guest introductions competed with the clatter of "silver meeting chicken." The chicken seemed to have the upper hand. One guest thrilled the audience with an impromptu suggestion to go coed. He was escorted quietly to the street and his chicken shared around the table. **Rocco** pushed the limits of the Ghillie's patience by failing to state his name three times before speaking. **John Schuitemaker** did so with an off-color joke (if you're dyslexic). Lucky **John Townsell** was confused as a guest after fishing the blue roads as the family migrated north for summer from Mexico

Fishing reports started with a mystery: why does this fly work in Oregon and not in Washington? **Rocco** suggested they were designed only for suckers. (The Ghillie missed this opportunity)? The Chopaka trip netted some aggressive reports. Hot weather, low water and bright skies brought out heavy feeding in deep water. Still, food and friendship reports outnumbered fishing stories, leading this writer to assume the food alone was worth the trip. Reports of big fish netted came from the surf below Torrey Pines to spring floods on the Boulder in Montana. The upper Columbia, above Roosevelt Lake, boasted impressive rainbows. Banks Lake yielded big carp, bats on the fly and

reports of beer by the barrel. **Andy Hall** introduced new member **Marty Lieth** and immediately signed him up for several committees. Perspective members received unadulterated praise and the club stands to gain if accounts hold even modest amounts of truth. **Fran Wood** directed our attention to a CELP (Center for Environmental Law and Policy) meeting to hear about a September trip to SE Alaska for salmon on the fly. Call 223-8454 for details. WFFC members donated \$1700+ to same.

Kris Kristoferson started a Buddy Board to encourage members to "hook up" with new fishing partners. Simply add your name to the board, announce the time and place you intend to fish and others might join you. Look for a web version.

Les announced an Orvis deal. Any fly rod or reel donated to Orvis brings 25% off a new Orvis rod or reel. You get a good deal and the old rods are donated to kids. This offer stands at the Bellevue store until mid July.

Bernie Taylor, our speaker enlightened the faithful with a slideshow and discussion of Salmon and Steelhead Timing. To explain; salmon are dumb; they respond to celestial cues, if you know what you're doing you can read the signs. For example, the Indians knew that four days after the Columbia River swallows first returned, the salmon arrived. Another example, Coho move in lesser numbers during full moons. The Steelies migrate in the dark of night while the angler rests. Our systematic melatonin responds to light in our awake and sleeping cycles, Steelhead respond the opposite way. Even moon glow knocks the big fish down. Questions (often disguised as comments) probed Bernie's motivation. Do predictions of salmon populations aid in predation or aid in more accurate counts?

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This will be discussed at the June members meeting.

“GOLD BUTTON” Awards

- a. Gold Button Awards, each in the form of a certificate, shall be presented at the January meeting each year to Members qualifying with the largest fish caught during the prior qualifying year in the below-listed classes, which may be modified from time to time by the Board.

This awards program is modeled after an earlier “Gold Button” award, which featured the presentation to winners of a replica of the regulation Club button with fish species and weight inscribed. Although the earlier program was discontinued because of its conflict with a catch and release philosophy, these buttons are still proudly worn by WFFC members. The new program, which is intended to be consistent with a catch and release philosophy, carries forward the tradition.

CLASSES:

STEELHEAD TROUT

RAINBOW TROUT (Provided,

that they are caught in waters where natural or artificial barriers prevent anadromous fish from reaching these waters)

CUT-THROAT TROUT

BROWN TROUT

BROOK TROUT

GOLDEN TROUT

KING or CHINOOK SALMON

SILVER or COHO SALMON

PINK SALMON

CHUM SALMON

LOHANTON CUT-THROAT TROUT

- b. Largest fish for purposes of this award shall mean the longest fish, measured from tip of jaw with mouth closed to tip of tail. Measurements shall be taken in a manner that is least traumatic to the fish.

- c. The certificates presented to winners shall give the data on each fish as regards to length, date of catch, and related information. They shall bear a likeness of the regulation Club button and shall be signed by the President.

- d. Each qualifying year shall run from December 15th to December 14th.

- e. Fish entered must be caught in

waters of the state of Washington that are open to the general public.

- f. Fish entered must have been taken on a fly in regulation manner, without the use of spinner or bait, and otherwise in accordance with all applicable fishing regulations. No fish caught from state, club, or private hatchery or pond is eligible for entry. All fish must be caught by a WFFC member in good standing.

- g. The regulation manner of fly-fishing shall be with a fly and leader attached to a fly line, carried on a fly reel; said fly line to be of such weight that the weight of the line combined with the action of the fly rod shall be capable of controlling the presentation and action of the fly.

- h. Entry form applications, as per copy here included, must be properly executed and delivered to the Awards Committee by December 31 following the qualifying year then ended.

Sample

Sample

Sample

GOLD BUTTON AWARDS APPLICATION

SPECIES: _____

LENGTH: _____ inches FLY (pattern, size): _____

DATE CAUGHT: _____ TIME OF DAY: _____

WHERE CAUGHT: _____

CAUGHT BY: _____

I hereby certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on _____, _____, at _____, WA

(signature)



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Stamp
here

July 2005

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

July Program presents Fred Goetz, "Tracking Puget Sound Bull Trout"

Fred Goetz is a fishery biologist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Seattle. His research work includes monitoring and evaluation of freshwater and estuary restoration projects in western Washington and behavioral study of migratory salmon and trout. He has worked with Eric Jeanes and Ed Connor for the past three years in studying the habitat use of bull trout in the marine waters of Puget Sound. In 2005 the study team expanded to include Tom Quinn, University of Washington and Correigh Greene, NMFS. Correigh is leading a focused study of juvenile Chinook salmon habitat use, migratory behavior in Skagit Bay and North Puget Sound.