

Creel Notes from the



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



August, 2005

President's Riffle

Fishing Reports and other things... Least anyone think otherwise, fishing reports are a significant and interesting part of our monthly meetings and more written reports are needed for the Creel Notes. Fishing reports should include pertinent information such as date, time, place, equipment used, and results. Fines may be expected if specific details are not included or if the report is longer than the allotted time or if non-pertinent information is included. In the case of **John Gravendyk's** Deschutes trip, all the information was pertinent, if not a bit skimpy.

Last month I said I would try the Crackleback at HiHium Lake and indeed I did. I've always preferred to use a size 8 Tom Thumb at HiHium, particularly when the Traveling Sedges are hatching. After a day of slow action, I remembered to try the Crackleback. I had been casting a Tom Thumb to the reed bed on the south side of Duck Bay and only having little dinks splash at the fly. I had drifted through the reed bed earlier so I knew it was at least 3 to 4 feet deep along the edge. I cast a Crackleback into the reeds and was easing it back out when I saw the flash of a fish coming up from the bottom. It was a nice bright 19 inch Penask that was netted and released. The action was repeated 5 times before the rises stopped. I don't believe it was the same fish. Similar results were had along the weed beds on the east side of Duck Bay. Then, drifting with the wind towards Rock Island, I put out a Stimulator on one line and a Crackleback on the other. I did this several times during our stay at the lake, either drifting with the plentiful wind or rowing very slowly. The strike always came on the Crackleback, which often had been pulled under the surface.

We fished Rock Island several evenings. I had some spectacular strikes on the Tom Thumb but after several wild and high leaps the fish always came off the hook. I'm not complaining about the early releases because those fish were fantastic leapers and it was great just playing them briefly. The last night we fished Rock Island

I finally put on a Crackleback and hooked and landed two 19 inch bright fish. Do the size 12 barbless hooks hold better than the size 8?

My biggest fish were caught on the pheasant tail bodied nymph that Dick Stearns showed me years ago. (It's like the pattern that Jim Teeny patented.) One fish was 24 inches, bright and heavy, the other was a bright 21 inches. (Photo on pg x)

The HiHium fish seemed to taste better this year. We had fish smoked and I smoked a couple I had taken home fresh. All were delicious. Our catch record showed our group caught 298 fish and killed 20. The released fish, except for those the loons got, may still be there waiting for you.

The Northwest Women Flyfishers will be selling raffle tickets during the Wet Fly Hour at our August meeting. The raffle prize is a beautiful memorial fly plate. Proceeds from the sale will go toward the purchase and installation of a permanent toilet at Ringer Road on the Yakima River.

I've polled our Board of Trustees and we've decided to have the General Membership vote on a proposal to make a significant donation toward the toilet project. (See detailed article on page 5.)

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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.

(Cont. on pg 7)

Creel Notes

...is the official publication of the Washington Fly Fishing Club. Subscription is free with membership.

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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.

On the Fly *By David Ehrlich*

July 19, 2005

Bob Birkner opened the meeting to a harmonic chorus of twinkling glasses and hurrahs. Guest received polite introductions. One mentioned that he would like to "get to know the members," which received a wry aside that, "when he does, he'll never come back!" Bob took his prerogative and started off the fish stories with an account of HiHium Lake. He did well with shallow submerged Crackleback. The Ghillie reported two fish released into the mouth of adventurous Loons. The Southworth ferry dock yielded very small Coho. **Leland** is approaching summer steelheading with the same superstition as a baseball player in a slump. As Per superstition, he has changed just about everything in his wardrobe to no avail and has fallen back on blaming the environment. Good reports came in from the Deschutes, including quality ales, local Pinots, and "sparsely hackled" rafting nymphs. In fact a rare "golden nymph" bared all to one of the anglers (unnamed to protect the guilty) who cast toward her with a #16 Copper John. The Methow netted lovely Dollies, living up to the article in NW Fly Fishing. One fishing trip had so little to do with actual fishing that they failed to even catch any talk about the things. Ghillie!?! The reports from Eliguk lake poured in from several gentlemen: 17" or better rainbows, wonderful hospitality and excellent accommodations. Since ownership might change, members are encouraged to take advantage of club discounts sooner

rather than later. We even enjoyed reports from Sweden where the midnight sun of the summer solstice gave up herring, sea perch, sea bass and other fish soon to be joined on a white plate by mashed potatoes, white sauce and white beer.

Don Simonson gave us an update on the Greenlake casting class and future competitions. Look out for the Northwest Fly Casting Exposition on September 24, 9 AM to 5 PM at the Tacoma Elks Club. Don would like volunteers to help with beginning casting, administration of casting games and other competitions. Information is available at www.washingtoncouncilcliff.org. **Ed Sozinho**, captain of the WFFC casting team invited members to join him for practice on Greenlake Wednesday nights. Teams will be selected soon. **Jimmy Le Mert** invited members and young alike to join in and see how well you actually cast. He ended with a cheer, "let's kick some butt!" Jimmy also took a moment to admonish the membership for waxing on too long about too little in the fishing reports which clocked in longer than an hour, in order to get to the program in a timely fashion. If I may paraphrase; "if it's not about fishing, skip it." So much for golden Nymph stories.

Look for announcements describing the August meeting and Christmas parties. Ed looks for volunteers to contact businesses for donations. Email him at esozinho@earthlink.com. **Jack Berryman** introduced our guest speaker, Fred Goetz, who works on fish restoration projects for the Army Corp of Engineers. He described the tracking of Bull Trout, called Biotelemetry, or tags that

send a signal received by antenna in freshwater and hydrophones in saltwater. These tags are little finger sized and placed into the salmon and trout with surgery and last up to three years. Receivers range over the lower Puget Sound. Known informally as the Puget Sound Biotelemetry Project, many interested parties including some tribal groups, NOAA, the Seattle Aquarium and Seattle City Light join the project. Once tagged these fish are tracked along the coast at numerous fixed locations. Monitors are checked routinely to download data and perform maintenance. Other long lines stretch listening devices across various narrows from Whidbey to Alaska to monitor migrating fish. All this effort will allow better accuracy in terms of measuring population and monitor the effects of habitat. For example, as many of Washington's citizens build houses (and bulkheads) along shorelines, the Project can measure how fish accommodate or suffer from environmental changes and loss of habitat. We know based on historical documents that Bull Trout were once the fifth most important commercial fish in the Puget Sound. Today, netted fish are rare. Individual fish have been tracked from the Ballard Locks, to the Upper Fraser and back to the locks. One fish moved from the Ballard Locks on June 2 and made the upper Cascade River by June 26. Precise migration patterns are available for fish that stay in close to shore and illustrate just how complicated migration is. For example, fish move in and out of salt water, sometimes on the same day. More study is needed to determine the environmental factors

(cont. on pg. 5)

High Lakes Report, July 23-30

By Marv Young

The high lakes trip to the Wind River Mountains above Lander, WY occurred July 23-30, with eight of the members attending. The weather was great, the scenery marvelous, and the cutthroat, goldens, lake trout, and golden-cut hybrids provided great fishing. The altitude (9,200-11,000) provided a good workout for all on the way in and out. A detailed report will be forthcoming from **Dave Ehrich** for next month, giving more about the trip. Making the hike were **Pete Baird, Ron Dion, Don Simonson, Paul Lingbloom, Dick Robbins, Dave Ehrich, John Callahan**, and yours truly.

HiHium Lake Report, July 26-31

By Ted Pearson

My family outing to HiHium Lake, now a three year tradition, began on 7/26 and ended 7/31. There were eight of us including my son, two grandsons and four son in laws. The trip to and from Circle W Ranch was uneventful and we encountered no problems at the Border .

Weather was ok, but a little windy. We got a little rain one day and on 7/30, the last fishing day, it was cold – long john weather. This was a big contrast to the last two years when it was hot the whole week.

Fishing was miserable – the worst I've ever experienced at HiHium. Seven of us (one son in law didn't fish) caught a total of 47 fish in 209 hours of fishing. My total was 14. To make it even more perplexing, most of the fish were recovering spawners. We caught very few bright fish. **Gil Nyerges** was on the lake with two friends and, I understand, also experienced very poor fishing. I suppose it was the

screwy weather this year, but I'm convinced that there's a lot fewer mature fish in the lake than in the past – hope I'm wrong! I did see lots of fingerlings along the shore lines that I didn't see two weeks ago, so that's a good sign.

I did have a monster on for a minute. I was fishing a #12 caddis pupa deep on a full sink line near Half Cabin when I got a hard hit. I could feel the weight and power immediately. The fish stayed down for only a few seconds and then shot to the top and jumped 6 feet in the air only about 15 feet from me so I got a good, but all too brief, look at it. It was at least 26", maybe even 30". It threw the hook on that jump so it all ended too quickly, but it really made the trip for me, fishingwise.

We all had a good time despite the fishing and it was great to see the grandsons, now both 16, developing into avid fly fishermen.

Loreto, Baja California, July 30-Aug. 6

By Bob Young

Our annual trip to Baja was a little slow this year. Our group, which evolved from a small number of flyfishers that originally booked through the Swallow's Nest, and was last lead by **Les Johnson**, has grown to about 22 people this year. This year's 'jefe' was Peter Highlander of Seattle Saltwater.

The weather was a few degrees cooler than usual this year. Early reports of a shortage of Dorado turned out to be true. They were rather scarce. There was, however, a substantial number of bill fish—both marlin and sailfish. It was also a pretty good year for Bonito, Skipjacks and Rooster fish.

Except for the Bonito and Skipjacks, the majority of fishing was conducted by trolling. My take for the week was a few Skipjacks and Bonito, a Marlin of about 75 pounds, a Dorado of approximately 35 pounds and my first Rooster which ran about 12 pounds. My

boat mate got a couple of Dorado and got a Sailfish of about 80 pounds to the boat. Everyone jumped some billfish as they are generally found resting on the surface with just the upper part of the tail fin exposed. When approached by the boat, you can see them start up and head down. Often they will then come after the trolled fly or teaser, but this year very few followed this pattern. This year most of the fish just went down and were not seen again. Fly patterns used by some are often very complex and if purchased can be very expensive. I usually keep things very simple. I had heard that pink was working pretty well so I tied some flies that basically consisted of a group of four large pink hackles tied on a tube and then had four more tied on just in front of those. This is then rigged just behind a one inch diameter foam popper head. I got almost all my fish on this simple pattern.

This is great trip especially if one considers it as half fishing trip and half vacation. The fishing part starts before sun up and after lunch the day is spent drinking cold beer, hanging at the pool, gear tinkering or a walk uptown for some shopping. Oh yes, siestas are popular also. All meals are included in the plan but often folks wander up town to get hamburgers (good ones are available) or ice cream, a real treat.

Below: A couple of Bob Birkner's 'dinner' fish'.



Funding a Permanent Vault Toilet at Ringer Road

By Bob Birkner

We've been asked by the Northwest Women Flyfishers (NWF) to participate in a project that will place a permanent vault toilet on the Yakima River at Ringer Road. Since we have no Board meeting in August, the Board of Trustees was polled electronically and we are recommending that we provide at least \$2,000 to this project. This requires a vote of the General Membership at the August meeting.

Excerpts of a letter from Stacy Stratton, President of Northwest Women Flyfishers:

"The Yakima is a favorite river for many of our members, as I am sure it is with your fellow WFFC members. NWF paid for a sani-can at Ringer Road for a number of years, but with frequent vandalism, the sani-can servicer refuses to install another portable toilet. We would like to see permanent toilet facilities installed at Ringer Road given its heavy usage by both fishers and rafters.

"NWF is prepared to make a sizable commitment of at least \$4,000 plus all proceeds from the sale of raffle tickets for the Connie Stelter Memorial Fly Plate. If WFFC and a couple of other clubs would partner with us, we could install a permanent pre-cast concrete facility by this fall.

"The total cost of a vault toilet is \$13,300 including excavation costs and sales tax. This is based on a bid by CXT Precast Products in Spokane for its Gunnison model.

It is a very popular model used by WDFW, BLM, the state of Oregon and others. CXT has a contract with the state of Washington and it sells approximately 600 toilets per year in the Northwest.

"We would love to partner with your club to get this done and look forward to hearing if this is a project that interests you."

On The Fly (Cont. from pg 3) that trigger movement, but they know that water temperature matters. Ironically, the Endangered Species Act made funding for such a project possible. The Federal Government looked to the agency that brought us many dams and dredged rivers to provide more information before they do more of the same. Eventually this study will provide baseline information to enhance ESA investigations and it will provide completely new information in terms of tracking fish migration patterns. Anglers will enjoy knowing that fish are not predictable, so according to Fred, if you say you know bull Trout based on the few you've caught, you're fooling yourself. We do know that bull Trout eat fish and if the environment can't support food, bull Trout move on in a hurry. The membership showed their appreciation with active questions and discussion and applause.

Lunceford's Rule of Scientific Endeavor

The simple explanation always follows the complex solution!

August 16th meeting and Swap Meet 5:30-6:45

By Jack Berryman

Swap Meet details:

1. Tables will be set-up in lobby
2. Items for sale should be marked with seller's name and price
3. Owner can lower price
4. All sales will be recorded by cashier
5. Cashier will take money and disperse money to owner
6. Those who sell merchandise are required to donate 10% of sales to the WFFC Foundation
7. Owners of sale items must stay with their merchandise and are responsible for set-up and take down.

"Birds of a Feather" Topic Tables 8:30-9:30

1. Fish and Fly Photography-- **Ed Sozinho** and **Earl Harper**
2. Cutthroat-- **Preston Singletary**
3. Cedar River Rainbows-- **Nathan Keen**
4. High Lakes-- **Ron Dion** and (?)
5. Fly Fishing Puget Sound-- **Capt. Keith Robbins**
6. Summer Run Steelhead-- **Leland Miyawaki**
7. Physics and the Fly Cast-- **Don Simonson**
8. Pink Salmon-- **Dave Schorsch**

The 'Round Table' discussions are designed to allow members to 'share the wealth' regarding specific fishing topics and species. The sessions will be 20 min. each to permit members to chose at least 3 topics to attend.

(This article was submitted some time ago but space has been limited. This is about half the complete article. The rest will be printed at a later date. You should save this and the future article for review before next springs trip to Chopaka.)

Some Notes on Mayflies (with particular reference to Lake Chopaka's Callibaetis)

By Preston Singletary

While no entomological whiz-kid myself, I have gleaned some information concerning mayflies over the years. Listening to the comments of some anglers while fishing at Lake Chopaka this year I concluded that there must be some widespread basic misconceptions about them and this is a modest effort to sort some of that out.

The mayfly is the only aquatic insect that exhibits two separate winged stages; dun (*subimago*) and spinner (*imago*) and this apparently leads to some confusion. The period of time during which the nymph changes into a dun or subimago is commonly referred to by anglers as the *hatch* or *emergence*. In the process, the dorsal surface of the nymph's exoskeleton splits, and the fully formed dun emerges, needing only to unfurl and dry its wings before flying away. There are three ways in which the dun can find its way to the surface, depending on the species: the nymph may crawl out of the water onto a rock, log or the stem of some aquatic plant before its shuck splits, it may happen on the bottom and the dun must then swim to the surface, or the nymph may swim to the top and the emergence of the dun occurs in, or just beneath, the surface film. In the first case, the dun is rarely subjected to predation by fish; examples are the gray and yellow drakes (*Siphonurus sp.*), which are only important to the fish in their nymphal and spinner stages. In the sec-

ond case, typical of the western March brown (*Rhithrogena sp.*), the dun may emerge anywhere from the bottom to an inch or two beneath the surface. And in the third case, typical of species which are members of genera such as *Baetis* or *Callibaetis*, the nymphs swim to the surface where the duns emerge in the surface film.

The nymphal stage is probably the stage during which most mayflies are eaten by fish. In the case of those species which emerge directly in or on the surface, the heaviest predation occurs during the period of emergence; this includes nymphs moving to the surface prior to emergence, mayflies near or on the surface, struggling to emerge from the nymphal shuck, and duns, sitting on the surface, preparing to take flight.

When the duns have emerged they fly ashore to rest in the grass and trees, sometimes at a considerable distance from the body of water where they hatched. The dun must undergo one more molt; from subimago to imago, or spinner, before becoming capable of reproduction, and this may take place anywhere from a few minutes to several days after emergence, depending on the species. The average is one to two days.

The dun is easily differentiated from the spinner. The colors of its body are dull and the wings are translucent rather than clear and shiny. The word *dun* comes from the Anglo-Saxon and refers to a color; a dull, grayish brown, and is the color of the subimago of the most common mayfly found in the British Isles, *Ephemera danica*, known simply as "the mayfly" because of the time of its emergence. The word "dun" has thus come to be attached to the subimago stage of mayflies worldwide. In its final molt, the sexually mature imago stage of the mayfly emerges. Typi-

cally, it has much longer tails than the dun, the rather dull colors of the body have become brighter and glossier and the wings have become glassy-looking (*hyaline*, is the term used by entomologists).

The mature males fly back to the water and swarm above the surface, the mature females fly into these swarms and the males compete to fertilize their eggs. After mating, the mayflies return to the land, the males to die and the females to allow their eggs to ripen. Depending upon the species, the fertilized eggs may ripen almost immediately or may take up to several days. When this has taken place, the females fly back to the water to deposit them. Among some species the eggs are released a foot or two above the surface, in some the female actually lands on the surface of the water and dips the tip of her abdomen below the surface to release them. In a few cases the female crawls into the water, down a rock or the stem of an aquatic plant, and attaches them directly to the bottom.

After laying their eggs, the females, exhausted by their efforts, usually drop to the surface as *upright spinners*, holding their wings straight up and together just as they did in the dun stage. But their lives are nearly over and, as they tire, their wings droop to the water's surface in the form of the typical *spent spinner*, wings flat to the surface at ninety degrees to their bodies, and tails widely spread. Anglers know this stage as the *spinner fall* and in some, but by no means all, cases it can stir a period of vigorous feeding by trout.

(To be continued)



(Cont. from pg 2)

This will be discussed at the 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

August, 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

The August 16th meeting will be the Annual Swap Meet and Round Table Discussions. See details on page 5.