

# Creel Notes from the



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



August, 2008

## President's Riffle

Fellow Fly Fishermen,

Since this is the time of year when we all should be getting our line wet at least a little bit, myself included, this month's Riffle will be short and sweet.

I hope you all have been able to sneak in a little time on a stream, a beach, or your favorite lake this summer. It's surely been beautiful in these parts, and we all know these days are all too infrequent around here, so take advantage!

Our swap meet and expert's roundtable is the agenda for this month, so let's get together and see what kind of treasures we can find or new knowledge we can gain.

Remember, the truth is that you can spend your life any way you want, but you can spend it only once!

Tight lines to all,

Bill Kuper



*Bill Kuper on a recent summer trip with some friends and his loyal companion, Biscuit*

## WFFC Fly Tiers Round Table

*by Dick Brening*

It is time again to restart the Fly Tiers Round Table. The first session of the season will be on the 2nd Wednesday in September, September 10th, from 7 to 9 pm.

This September's round table would be a good opportunity to get some flies tied for the Reel Recovery Program. I have a very large wooden fly box that needs to be filled and will become a WFFC contribution to this worthy men's cancer recovery program.

Come and tie any patterns you would like and help fill the box!

Place: Mercer Island Covenant Church, 3200 78th SE (S.E. corner of 78th SE and SE 32nd). Just south of the Mercer Island business district. Off-street parking is available off 78th SE.

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

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## August WFFC Speakers *by Keith Robbins*

The swap meet portion of the August meeting will feature the following four speakers. Each will have twenty minutes to speak to a small group. Then members can rotate to a new table.

### **Roger Rohrbeck**

Title: Your website forum and other member-area features

Description: Learn how to access and use your new website forum (bulletin board). Learn how to access and use other member-area features, like submitting roster info changes, entering a profile of your fly fishing habits, searching for other members sharing your fly fishing habit, requesting books from the library, signing up for outings, etc.

### **Rocco Maccarrone**

Title: North Umpqua River Summer Steelhead ... When, Where, and How

### **John Schuitemaker and friends**

Title: Yakima River Strategies - A Panel

Description: Three members with many years of experience on the Yakima will lead a discussion and share information on our blue-ribbon fishery, the Yakima River. Bring your questions and thoughts and let's see if we can uncover a few Yakima mysteries.

### **Richard Embry**

Title: Practical fishing knots and line connections

Description: Learn how to tie relatively quick and easy (emphasis on easy, so this is a no-bimini zone!) knots for freshwater and saltwater fishing. Knot types may be for joining mono to fluorocarbon, wire leader to fly, wire leader to leader, tippet to leader, leader to fly, etc.

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## **Reel Recovery's 2008 Washington Retreat**

*by Kris Kristoferson*

WFFC members have been a key part of Reel Recovery's successful Washington State Retreats, and the 2008 Retreat, Sept. 9-11, is just around the corner. The retreat this year will be at Sleeping Lady Resort in Leavenworth. Reel Recovery would love your help as a fishing buddy to a retreat participant. WFFC members seem to have a great feel for this, as participants have consistently raved about the buddies at the Washington State Retreat. Being a buddy involves helping a participant to fish, wade, select water, and so on. Many of the same things you'd expect of a guide. But perhaps more important is just being a fishing buddy, someone with whom the participant shares time on the water. Buddies are needed on both Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> and Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, and if you can help, please contact Kris Kristoferson.

## *Creel Notes*

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Rocco Maccarrone '08 Ed Pettigrew '08

### **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 promote and work for the betterment of trout streams and lakes.
3. To encourage and advocate the conservation and increase of trout in state waters.
4. To promote a campaign of education against pollution in streams, lakes or Sound waters of the State of Washington.
5. To encourage and assist others — particularly young persons of high school age—to become fly fishers and true conservationists.

## Last Month's Meeting: The WDFW Steelhead Management Plan by Jim van de Erve

Many of us know Heather Bartlett from her previous presentations to the club as a regional fish biologist. Since then, she has assumed a new role in the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, that of Salmon and Steelhead Division Manager. This role has brought her new responsibilities and new opportunities: Heather is right at the heart of the effort to create a statewide steelhead management plan.

When **Bill Redman** introduced Heather at our July meeting, he commented that she listens well, discusses, engages—and has a lot of guts. “Her job is an absolute maelstrom of conflicting interests and ideas,” Bill said. “She is one of the bright young lights in the department. We have high hopes [that she will help] bring the department more toward a wild fish-oriented policy.”

Bill also led us in wishing her a happy birthday, which was the day before the meeting.

The title of Heather's presentation was “A New Era for Steelhead Management”. That reflects the hope with which Heather is approaching the new management plan. Unfortunately, it also reflects the sad state of affairs that we find ourselves in. As Heather noted, the resource is becoming depleted and many species are federally listed. Fifteen salmon and trout stocks in Washington are listed as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.

She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to speak to us. “I love to come to the [WFFC] meetings because it's a good barometer of what people are thinking,” she commented. “For someone like me, I consider you guys to be extremely educated, and knowledgeable, and passionate about the resource, as am I.”

### The Vision

To start off, Heather clarified the vision of the effort to manage steelhead stocks, as elucidated in the management plan. It is: “To protect and restore steelhead to achieve cultural, economic, and ecosystem benefits for current and future residents of Washington State.”

And the goal of the effort? It aligns with the hope that Bill spoke about when he introduced Heather: “To restore and maintain abundant, diverse, well

distributed wild steelhead populations.”

Heather indicated that the state's objectives focus on integration of habitat, harvest, and hatcheries (or as she called them, “the three H's”). She spoke about making changes in harvest that allow more wild fish to get back to the natural spawning areas. She spoke about changing hatchery practices to reduce the hatchery influences on natural spawning areas. And she spoke about changing, restoring, and protecting habitat so it is optimal for wild fish. But she is careful to say that these are not isolated efforts. “If you don't do those together,” she said, “you are going to fail.”

### True North

Information is one of the keys to the effort to restore steelhead. “Frankly, steelhead spawn, many of them, in obscurity,” Heather said. “We don't have a good idea about how abundant or defeated some of our stocks are.”

One of the primary facets of the current effort has been to consolidate information in a science paper. Another facet was creating a stakeholder's group to help work on the plan. It included WFFC members **Bill Redman, Doug Schaad, Jim McRoberts, and Scott Hagen**. They acted as a sounding board for the early drafts of the statewide steelhead management plan, and recommended additions and changes to the final proposal.

After completion, the plan went to the Fish and Wildlife Commission. But is the effort done? No. “Really, the management plan is in its infancy,”



*Heather Bartlett at the July WFFC Meeting*

*(Continued on page 4)*

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Heather said.

The management plan is a statewide plan that provides policy guidelines and directions. The plan provides what Heather calls ‘true north’. It’s an orientation around wild fish. As Heather explained, “The commission said that our highest priority is the protection of wild steelhead stocks.”

### **The Three H’s**

Of the three H’s, Heather acknowledged that habitat is not always the primary focus of WDFW. “Most of our efforts are spent on stock assessment, and providing fishing opportunity, and [managing] the hatcheries.” The management plan calls for the department to provide technical expertise and guidance in managing WDFW-owned lands, but the first step is to encourage local problem solving. The regions in the state can cut harvest, or make changes in hatchery programs, but as Heather said, “... ultimately our success depends upon habitat.”

The harvest, or fisheries, section of the plan focuses on achieving a natural production policy and promoting selective harvest. Another important part is accounting for the sources of mortality. “In this day and age,” Heather said, “our runs are so depleted that for any of the fisheries that we provide, we just don’t have the luxury of not identifying the sources of mortality.”

In terms of hatchery goals, Heather said, “We embrace the twin goal that came from the hatchery reform project, and that was that hatchery programs should conserve wild stocks and support sustainable fisheries.” That means following one of two management schemes: either rebuilding wild steelhead with a hatchery program, or operating a harvest hatchery program with a strain that might be markedly different than the wild strain. The second scheme involves enhancing harvest in a way that is consistent with wild stock management. That scheme, however, is risky. “You have a pretty high threshold by which it has to operate in order to be consistent with the needs of the wild fish,” Heather said. “If [regional areas] cannot meet the threshold by which [they need to] operate, then discontinue the program.”

### **Regional Plans**

Details of restoration efforts throughout the state

are contained in regional management plans. The statewide plan provides guidance; the regional plans indicate how local authorities plan to implement the guidance. For example, the statewide plan recommends how to protect wild steelhead by establishing wild stock gene banks and providing sufficient wild spawners. The regional plans indicate how each region plans to do so.

Regional efforts involve watershed plans that focus on four population goals: abundance (number of fish), productivity (how well they are replacing themselves), spatial structure (how many tributaries a river system has), and diversity (genetics and size). This is different from the emphasis on maximum sustainable harvest that the department previously had. As Heather said, “MSH might be appropriate for some coastal rivers that have intact habitat, [but] it’s not applicable for Puget Sound where we have habitat that’s not the same as it used to be.”

The department’s plan is to complete regional management plans during the next 24 to 36 months. The initial focus of regional planning? Puget Sound.

### **Their Goal, Our Goal**

Someone asked Heather whether she thought our sport will be better for our kids than it is now. “Absolutely,” she responded. “I grew up fishing. I want my kids to have the same opportunities available to them.”

It all depends upon us and our fellow citizens. There are as many fishermen in the state as there used to be, but the percentage of licensed fishermen to our overall population is lower. One of the most important pieces of guidance in the management plan is to involve the citizens of Washington more effectively, to ensure that we all value, support, and have the opportunity to participate in the restoration and protection of steelhead and their habitat. That means getting citizens involved in restoring wild steelhead, and promoting the historical significance of steelhead.

For the members of this club, that’s an easy sell.

For more information about the statewide steelhead management plan, check out the WDFW Web site at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/recovery.htm>.

## The Fly-Fishing WASL

Time for the final exam in the fly-fishing WASL! This time the subject is entomology (for those who have trouble with big words, that means bugs). As an expert fly fisher, you're supposed to know something about this. Here's a chance to test your knowledge.

This is a multiple-choice quiz. Try to match each term with the most correct description among the choices offered.

1. *Zygoptera*:
  - a. Caddisflies
  - b. A small automobile manufactured in Albania
  - c. Damselflies
  - d. Dragonflies
  
2. *Coleoptera*:
  - a. Stoneflies
  - b. Beetles
  - c. An invasive exam of the human digestive system
  - d. Backswimmers
  
3. *Hymenoptera*:
  - a. Ask your doctor
  - b. Caddisflies
  - c. Ants
  - d. Beetles
  
4. *Ephemera*:
  - a. A burrowing stonefly
  - b. A burrowing caddisfly
  - c. A burrowing mayfly
  - d. A burrowing Republican
  
5. *Siphonurus*:
  - a. Mayfly
  - b. Caddisfly
  - c. Midge
  - d. A sexually transmitted disease
  
6. *Crustaeen*:
  - a. Sowbug
  - b. Freshwater shrimp
  - c. Lobster
  - d. All of the above
  
7. Hellgramite:
  - a. A member of Dave Hawkinson's motorcycle gang
  - b. Alderfly larva
  - c. Dragonfly nymph
  - d. Dobsonfly larva

8. *Diptera*:
  - a. Chironomid
  - b. Beetle
  - c. You were inoculated for it when you were a kid
  - d. Water flea
  
9. Stonefly:
  - a. *Trichoptera*
  - b. A dope-smoking fly
  - c. *Plecoptera*
  - d. *Anisoptera*
  
10. *Enallagma*:
  - a. Dragonfly
  - b. Damselfly
  - c. Scud
  - d. A World War II German coding device

(Answers on pg. 7)

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## New Members

New members John Jones and Randy Hieronymous were inducted at the July meeting. Welcome aboard, gentlemen!



John, Randy, their sponsors, and Gil Nyerges



## Rock Island Lake, July 3-11

by Bob Birkner

At the general time horizon of 0630, a stalwart group consisting of **Don Schroder**; Doug Thiemens; Jack Westman, NM; Dave Miller, SC; and **Bob Birkner** departed Shoreline, WA, for Rock Island Lake, BC, via Sumas, Coquihalla HWY, Kamloops, and Little Fort. Rock Island Lake is located on the eastern side of what is called the Interlakes Region between Little Fort and 70 Mile House or 90 Mile House.

Westman had left his passport on his desk in Albuquerque, but because he was able to have it express mailed to the fly shop in Little Fort, he didn't have to come back to the U.S. rolled up in a rug in the trailer.

Fishing was so-so with a 20-inch rainbow being the largest caught. The weather was predicted to be "smoking hot", but turned out to be cloudy and much cooler than normal. The most fish caught in one day was 33 each for Schroder and Westman at Hardcastle Lake, one of the hike-in lakes near Rock Island Lake. Thiemens and Birkner had 25 each at Hardcastle the following day. On the day before departure, Birkner had 18 at Hardcastle and Schroder was in second place with 14. It was quite windy that day, but the fish were still rising to Stimulators and Tom Thumbs in waves 1 to 1.5 feet high. Later, back at the camp, Schroder and Westman were in the showers while Miller, Thiemens, and Birkner were having hors d'oeuvres before dinner. Then the wind really came up. There was sleet and hail along with the rain. We heard and felt a couple of heavy "thuds". We went outside and found the "thuds" were caused by four large tall trees coming down together, blocking the access road, crushing Thiemens' Explorer, damaging the cabin that Thiemens and Miller were using, and smashing the water tower which supplied the camp. Dinner that evening and breakfast the next morning were still served on schedule, thanks to the dedication of the Rock Island crew.

Fortunately, one of the camp owners had a large chain saw with which he was able to open the access road and get enough of the trunks off Thiemens' Explorer so vital papers and items could be removed. Thiemens said the insurance adjuster had some difficulty finding the camp, but the end result was a fair settlement.

Because one of the six who planned to go on the trip had canceled, we were all able to fit in Birkner's Yukon for the trip back home.

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## Rat Lake, August 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>

by Chuck Ballard

Sunday was a perfect day, no illegals and no other people all day. Caught (12), including one 18" rainbow, all on adult damsels. I was able to get several shots of jumping fish in the air. There were so many fish, they were averaging one jump every 3 seconds.

Tuesday was similar, but fewer caught (8) because they kept coming off the barbless hooks. The pattern was better if it had wings outspread vs. parallel to the hook shank??? I was met at the boat launch by eight Hispanics who were "not fishing but were taking a bath (with soap) in the lake." At least they were not fishing and were very helpful in loading my boat for me. Give this lake a try en route to Chopaka some time.

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## Leach Lake, July 25<sup>th</sup> by Ron Dion

Arrived at the lake close to noon. Two guys who had been there since the preceding Tuesday told me I was too late. There had been a callibaetis hatch that morning, and the fish were all on a surface frenzy. Now the breeze had started and not much surface activity. There were 11 boats/float tubes already on the water, so I joined them hoping to catch some of the triploids released there just before the 4th of July.

I was unable to locate the triploids, but had some success catching brookies on a size 12 **Ted Pearson's** Tom Thumb. Best success was casting into the weeds where fish were after damselflies. The Tom Thumb must have looked like a damsel! The smaller brookies (6" - 10") seldom got hooked and

(Continued from page 6)

several of the larger fish (12" - 14") were LDR'd, but I did get seven to hand.

After a couple hours of catching brookies, I decided to try and locate the triploids. So I tied on a **Steve Sunich**'s whitefly and started mooching around looking for the deeper water. (The lake is mostly 3' -4' deep with the deeper water on the north side of the lake being 5'-7' deep.) When I got to the deeper water, a triploid finally hit the whitefly. This resulted in a release close to the boat. So I anchored and proceeded to cast and strip Steve's fly. This white fly hooked several brookies and two more triploids. At 5:00 the wind picked up, creating whitecaps, so it was time to quit.

www.eastonsbooks.com. There is a wonderful selection of fly fishing books in this store. Again, this is a place you can stop in, check out, and be back on I-5 in 20 minutes, not that I recommend that habit.

Finally, I like to go to the Bookworm in West Yellowstone. It is located on the west side of the street, squeezed between a couple of T-shirt shops, just north of the intersection which heads east into the Park. There is a good selection of Montana and Wyoming, and of course YNP, fly fishing books in this store. They have a complete collection of almost anything written about the Park and the West. The phone number is 406.646.9736. The address is P.O. Box 583, West Yellowstone, MT, 59758.

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## Bookstores *by Mike Wearne*

I have been into Vargo's Books, located in Bozeman, in each of the previous three years. On each occasion Miles Davis was playing on the sound system. I like consistency.

The following is a series of recommendations of bookstores that have a selection of fly fishing books to tempt the interested customer.

Vargo's Books is located at 6 West Main in downtown Bozeman. Just west is the County Book Shelf, a delightful independent bookstore that also has a wide selection of fly fishing books. Vargo's also has a great collection of jazz CDs and vinyl. Between the two stores is an excellent coffee shop that is big, quiet, and has wonderful couches. Whenever I am in Bozeman, I make a point of stopping. This time the complete stop took less than 30 minutes. The website is [www.vargosbooks.com](http://www.vargosbooks.com). The phone number is 406.587.5383.

**Greg Crumbaker** suggested I check out the Book Bin in Tacoma. This is a warehouse filled—and I mean filled—with books. It is in the Tacoma Dome neighborhood, at the corner of East 26<sup>th</sup> Street and East D Street. The fly fishing books are plentiful; however, the range of selection is limited.

**Steve Raymond** suggested I check out Easton's Books in Mt. Vernon. I did and it was worth the visit. This is a used bookstore in downtown Mt. Vernon. They just moved into a new location at 701 South First Street. The phone number is 360.336.2066. The website is

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## The Fly-Fishing WASL (from pg. 5)

Answers:

1. d. Dragonflies
2. b. Beetles
3. c. Ants
4. c. A burrowing mayfly
5. a. Mayfly
6. d. All of the above
7. d. Dobsonfly larva
8. a. Chironomid
9. c. *Plecoptera*
10. b. Damselfly

Score:

- 0-4: Dung beetle  
5-8: Maggot  
9-10: Bugmaster



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Stamp  
here

August, 2008

## Meeting Announcement



Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Seattle Tennis Club, 922 McGilvra Blvd. E.

The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM.

This month: The WFFC Swap Meet

Roger Rohrbeck, Rocco Maccarrone, John Schuitemaker, and Richard Embry will chair discussions on our Web site, the North Umpqua, the Yakima, and fishing knots. Don't miss it!