

Creel Notes from the



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



August, 2009



Hello All!

It's August (already) and the pinks are in. It is easy to forget that there is so much outstanding fishing close to home. I've been getting reports that there have been pinks and some silvers in the

Sound and that they are starting up the rivers. Maybe I'll call a couple guys and hit it this week. If you have a great recipe for smoking salmon, or even an OK one, email it to me and I will see if we can cajole **Roger Rohrbeck** into posting the recipes on the members' area of the web site.

I somehow seem to have gotten sucked into involvement in my son's wedding. Happened this last weekend with no serious mishap. If you have daughters, start saving now for the expense of their wedding. It may cost more than their education. Amazing. Had an excellent rehearsal dinner at the Steelhead Diner across from Pike Place Market. Service was excellent and the food was to die for. Casual dress is the norm, but there is nothing casual about the food... Northwestern fare prepared in a Northwestern way.

Early reports from attendees indicate the FFF Conclave held this year in Loveland, CO, went well. I have not received any attendance numbers yet... it will be interesting to see how many attended. I know our own **Don Simonson** and **Jim Higgins** were back there helping out.

I am looking for someone to take the lead in our club's fly tying classes and fly casting classes. If you feel that you might be interested, drop me a line. If you feel your buddy might be a good fit, volunteer him while he's out of the room. Historically, we have touched more people and expanded their interest in our sport more through our education programs than all our other programs combined. Tying classes begin just after the

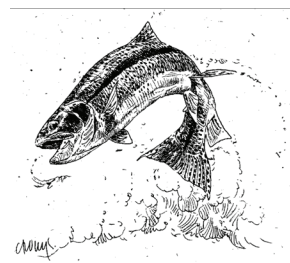
first of the year and we need to start publicizing them now.

Our Home Waters project is on the move again. **Kris Kristoferson** is lead on getting our lease in place, and he assures us that that will happen by the end of the month. I know many of you are interested in using the facility and we continue to support that goal. **Mike Wearne** is the committee chair and **Mark DeWitt** will coordinate the construction, and form and lead a subcommittee to set up use procedures and get them published.

This month we have an outing scheduled for Leach Lake. Sign up if you plan on attending.

And above all, Go Fishing...and take a friend!

Pat Peterman
WFFC President, 2009



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August Meeting *by Steve Sunich*

The August meeting is sure to peek some interest in other areas of fly fishing. We have not had anyone from the East Coast for a while. This month Brendan McCarthy of Urban Fly Guides is coming West to talk about fly fishing the East Coast. Brendan has worked as a guide for Urban Angler in NYC since 1998. He has fished all over the world as a client and guide—from the Seychelles, Belize, and Alaska to multiple trips to Mexico, Panama, and over 10 islands in the Bahamas. He's been featured in all the fly fishing magazines, as well as The New York Times, New York magazine, Entertainment Weekly, and many local papers and TV shows. His articles and photos have been widely published. Capt. McCarthy was also creator, writer, producer, and cast member in the very well-received ESPN series "Guidehouse: Montauk". Captain Brendan McCarthy is one of the only full-time captains in the Northeast doing upwards of 175 days a year and over 200 charters. He is an officer in the Fishermen's Conservation Association and is the local organizer for the Montauk Red-bone tournament benefiting children with Cystic Fibrosis.

See his website at www.Urbanflyguides.com, and be sure to make your reservation as Brendan is really dynamic. It should be an excellent presentation.

The Creel Calendar

Scenic Beach Outing, September 12th and 13th

Fishing Hood Canal when the tides are hopefully auspicious.
Saturday night at **Jay Deed's** home. Bring a boat.

Kayak Point Outing, the weekend of September 19th or 26th

Come fish for Pinks. When will depend upon when the run shows up.

Dry Falls Outing, October 3rd and 4th

Might be moved, depending on the water level at Dry Falls.

Boyd Aigner Fly Tying Competition Results

Tom Thumb:

- 1st: **Walt Swanson**
2nd: **Dick Brening**
3rd: **Joe Kristof**

Green Drake:

- 1st: **Bob Burdick**
2nd: **Ron Dion**
2nd: **Steve Sunich** (tie)

Yellow Jacket:

- 1st: **Bob Burdick**
2nd: **Joe Kristof**
2nd: **Walt Swanson** (tie)

Overall:

- 1st: **Bob Burdick**
2nd: **Walt Swanson**
3rd: **Joe Kristof**

Congratulations, gentlemen!

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 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.



WFFC July Meeting *by Jim van de Erve*

Well, you have to hand it to **Bob Burdick**. In this year's Boyd Aigner fly tying competition, he laid out a challenge. Laid his own money on the line. Begged somebody to beat him. And then he won both the Green Drake and Yellow Jacket patterns, and took the overall title. Kudos to all the competitors, in particular **Walt Swanson** and **Joe Kristof** (2nd and 3rd overall, with Walt 1st in the Tom Thumb competition). But this guy Burdick was on fire.

You can tell that it's summer and good weather, because there were a lot of fish reports. The Deschutes; North Fork of the Clearwater; the Smith River; the Big Hole, Beaverhead, and Bitterroot; Stony River Lodge; Upper Columbia; Alaska West; Rattlesnake; and North Carolina intercoastal waterway. Highlights/lowlights were **Hugh Clark** dangling by the gunwale of the drift boat on the Deschutes (respectfully related by **John Schuitemaker**), and **Greg Crumbaker** honoring a 50-year old bamboo rod that he, sad to say, broke. Greg also related an interesting evening at a Wallace, Idaho, bar that included the sheriff. You'll have to hear about it from him. Also, check out Alaska West on the Internet. **Jim McRoberts**, **Scott Hagen**, and **Andrew Bennett** were up there, and the trip involved big fish.

Other news involved **Frank Headrick** going strong at 101, if complaining about a lack of energy. Congratulations to **Ed Sozinho** on the birth of his first child, Sierra. And lastly, the Renowned and Ignominious Order of the Dunk (or other words to that effect) was graced by the induction of Mr. **Jim McRoberts**.

Program

The July program was given by Joe Rotter of Red's Fly Shop on the Yakima. Joe spoke about Central Washington rivers: the Yakima, Naches, Columbia, Methow, Wenatchee, and Klickitat. His comments were accompanied by lots and lots of photos of beautiful lunkers, including—I kid you not—a video sequence of an angler hooking two fish simultaneously on a dry and a dropper.

Yakima

Joe updated us on the Yakima, indicating that the best hatch at the time of the program was a #6 summer stonefly. Other flies that have been hot were Black Chernobyls, Chubby Chernobyls, PMXs, and Stimulators.

Joe reminded us that in the summer the Yakima offers 19 miles of cut bank, with the river running high, clear, and cold. Normal flows of 1,200 cubic feet per second turn into 4,000 cubic feet per second in the summer (see the diagram on pg. 4). While wading is difficult in the summer, the 15- to 20-mile float can be very effective, giving you the chance to fish dries up against the bank.

Naches

The Naches has become Joe's favorite trout river. It runs off the east side of Chinook Pass, and can be a real challenge. On the one hand, there is a limited amount of public access, so it can be difficult to wade effectively. The river won't host a huge number of anglers. On the other hand, it can be difficult, technical rowing, because it can be a wild river with a big gradient, bad drops, log jams, and sweepers (it's not really the boulders that are dangerous). It can be tough to find where to put in your boat, and you have to be careful floating it. There is a short float window that typically runs from the first Saturday in June for a month and a half. However, the fishing remains good all summer, so when it gets too low to float, wade it. Fish the river from Yakima up about 60 miles.

The Naches is a beautiful, clear, and productive river that is one of the best dry fly rivers in the state. Cutthroat from 10" to 14" are common, and big fish are becoming more common. They are freestone trout, and there is the potential to catch 18" to 19" fish. There is a short growing season, so take terrestrial dries.

Joe also spoke about small feeder streams off the Naches, such as the Little Naches. This fishing offers small cutts, but apparently can be a blast. Fish those strings with elk-hair caddis, parachute ant, and Wolffs.

Carp on the Columbia

One of the more unusual bits of information that Joe shared with us was the Columbia carp fishery.

(Continued on page 4)

This involves fishing in knee- to thigh-deep water (somewhere below Vantage by Desert Aire), using 8-weight rods and floating lines. Joe was pretty stoked about this fishing because you can get 30-pound carp and, in Joe's words, they "fight like trucks" and "go through the flats like a torpedo." You use small crayfish and crustacean patterns, and a fly called the Carp Candy.

Methow

Joe makes the run up to the Methow often, because it is an outstanding steelhead and trout fishery. For steelhead, he mentioned that the season opens the first Saturday in October, and runs through November. He also talked about the winter fishing from the end of January through early February, in addition to the more heavily fished March.

In the fall, swing small spey flies on floating lines for steelhead. Joe called it one of the best rivers in the Northwest for this. He also talked about using long leader with floating lines for trout, and fishing muddlers or skating a caddis. However, he said it was more about the presentation than the fly. Dead drift or use indicators in the middle of the day.

Wenatchee

Joe's comments about the Wenatchee were primarily about how cool it's been that the river is open once again. Hopefully, the river will open on a regular basis; however, there are obstacles to that, particularly regarding funding. We need to keep the catch rate up, and solve the funding issues, perhaps by instituting a steelhead stamp.

Klickitat

The Klickitat is a beautiful and productive river with great aesthetics. Joe called it "spirited water." Its source is Conrad Glacier on Mt. Adams, so it is challenging glacial white water. It is also rugged and remote, with 12 miles of it running through a deep and untouched wilderness canyon.

It is tough to get to areas deep in the canyon where you can wade, although you can mountain bike to it, and Joe said that the wading is easy, stepping on small gravel. And the rowing on the Klickitat can be tough. But no other river in that area of Washington sports as big fish as the Klickitat. On some days, 10 to 11 pounds is average. There is a big opportunity to bag a fish in the teens on a floating

line. And Joe said that the seams can only be effectively fished on the drift.

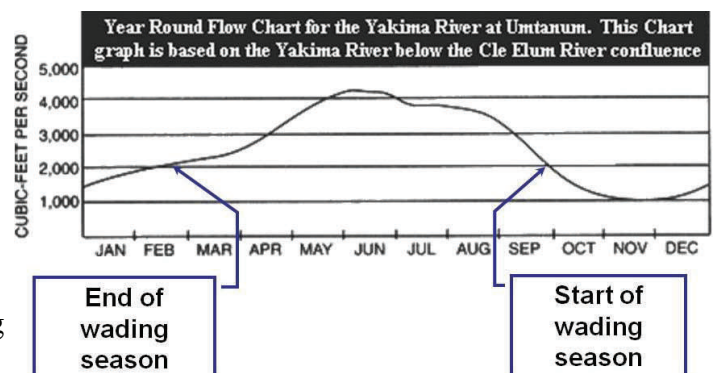
The flow is most predictable in the fall. That's when there is the maximum number of wild fish in the river, and the weather is mostly dry, with clear water and blue skies because it's in a rain shadow. Joe said to fish in the middle of the day when there is a lot of shade from overhanging trees. Note that on the Klickitat there can be a big fall run of Kings up to 60 pounds.

Joe said that the Klickitat is a manageable-size river. You can cover it with a spey rod. You can fish the upper Klickitat, especially Summit Creek to the hatchery, which has good wading access, but not great holding water and not as many fishermen. But Joe spoke about the wild canyon with a fascination. "It feels like a faraway place," he said.

Yakima River Tips and Techniques *by* *John Schuitemaker and Jim van de Erve*

(Ed. Note: This comes from material John used in an August 2008 roundtable discussion of the Yakima River.)

On the Yakima River, flows are vitally important. The flows on the Yakima dictate how well you can wade fish vs. drift fish from a boat. Above 2000 cfs, the canyon section of the river is more suitable for drift fishing from a boat as opposed to wade fishing, because much of the wading access is limited by high water. Consider using a boat (your own or rent one from one of the local fly shops) to gain much more access to the river and improve your chances. From late February to mid September the river is best fished from a boat. You get much better access to the river and do so on a comfortable fishing platform.



You might think that renting a boat would be costly enough that you would be better off buying one. But if you rent a boat from, say, Red's Fly Shop in the canyon, and share it with a couple of fishing buddies, you can do a lot of drift fishing before you ever come close to the cost of buying a boat. Assuming that you rent a boat for \$175 and share it with two friends, that is the equivalent of 116 floats in a \$7,000 boat.

Drift Fishing Techniques

When approaching the river for drift fishing, concentrate your casting to the banks on the outside curves of the river. This will mean crossing the river back and forth as it meanders. It stands to reason that the outside of the bends is where food is transported via the surface water. Also, this is where the deepest water channel is usually located.

As you fish the bank water, rely on clues to help you find fish. Look for bubble lines. This is where surface food is likely to be. The fish watch these areas. Also, put your fly in current seams that come off of bank-side structure or rocks that may be just under the surface of the water. When fishing grassy banks, get your fly as close to the bank as possible, especially in high water.

Barring any other clues about where to cast your fly, consider putting it right at the point where you see the bank structure underwater disappear from view. This is usually the same place where fish will lie, because they are hidden from predators yet are efficiently within the slower water of the current.

When casting from a boat, always cast toward the current, quartering toward shore. This way you will experience longer drifts, and if two anglers in a boat follow this rule they will stay out of each other's way and avoid tangles. The oarsman should position the boat to maximize casting efficiency for the anglers without spooking fish by getting too close to shore. Generally 30 to 40 feet is a good distance. The rower should view/scan downriver, watching for rise activity and anchoring the boat at hot spots.

Work the water in "relaxed intensity". Make quick casts. Pick up when dragging, cast angling toward the front of the boat. Anchor up and hunt fish, or just observe over a glass of wine. Get out and cast a nymph into drop offs.

Break the rules once in a while. Try fishing away from the bank, or nymphing down the center, espe-

cially in low water. Also, look for gravel bars under water and fish the edges.

Flies to Use

Dry flies commonly used on the Yakima include mayflies, caddisflies, and big floaters. With regard to the caddis, I like to use both x-caddis and egg-laying patterns as opposed to the standard elk-hair caddis. These flies are more likely to elicit a strike and are more vulnerable stages of the fly. The "Big Floaters" are useful in dropper-style fishing. Tie a short tippet of 8 to 12 inches to the hook bend of the floater and then tie on a small nymph or small emerger or even a dry such as an ant pattern. This can double your chances of getting a strike.

Common nymphs on the Yakima include mayflies, caddisflies, streamers, and other dropper flies such as the San Juan Worm. Don't forget to try streamers when the water is not clear or running too high for small bugs.

Try streamers when visibility is low, or just because... Cast close to shore and strip toward the boat. Vary the depth by using interchangeable sink-tip systems. For higher water, use a heavier tip.

Fish see a lot of the same flies from fisherman after fisherman. It can be effective to use alternate patterns for current hatches. Also consider using attractors vs. accurate imitations.

Bring plenty of flies, and be prepared to lose them in the brush or the rocks.

Equipment

I like a heavier rod for nymphing and streamers, lighter for dry flies. Use a faster action for quick casts and wind penetration. Keep leaders in the shorter range as casts will be quick and wind will sometimes pick up in the canyon section of river. Usually 7 1/2 feet is good, with 2-3x for large flies and nymphs, 4-5x for dries and droppers, and 6x for occasional small flies and low-wind conditions.

For More Information

- www.washingtonflyfishing.com/faq/idx/0/034/article/Yakima_River_Fly_Fishing_A_River_of_All_Seasons_by_Jack_Mitchell.html
- www.worleybuggerflyco.com
- www.theeveninghatch.com
- www.redsflyshop.com

British Chalk Stream Fishing

by Mike Santangelo

My wife's job allowed my family to live in The Netherlands from 2002 to 2007. That gave me the ability to fly fish in a variety of great European locations. In Europe, discount airlines work hard to gain market share. Every so often Ryan Air, an Irish discount airline, offered limited promotional airfares direct from Eindhoven to London's Stansted airport. The September 2004 promotion was for a Euro cent each way. I decided to get my 2 cent's worth and check out some British chalk stream fishing.

I researched the fishing in an English chalk stream article in the April 2002 issue of *Fly Rod & Reel*; "Angling in England on \$90 a Day (Lodging, Food and Fishing)"; some references from a friend in the Grayling Society; and looking on the Internet. I chose to book two days with "Fishing Breaks". They offered days on a variety of different chalk streams in the Hampshire area.

I gave Simon at the "Fishing Breaks" the dates I wanted to fish and my price break (£117/day). I asked for the available beats that had the longest stretch, largest fish, and which were least likely to be influenced by rain. Simon selected beats on the Test and its tributary, the Dever.

Since this was a self-guided trip, I needed to work out my own logistics. As far as a place to stay, Stockbridge was the closest town to where I would be fishing. Stockbridge is right on the River Test and is about ten miles from each of the selected fishing sites per the detailed directions forwarded to me by "Fishing Breaks". I called around and found an inexpensive room at the Carbery Guest House. I selected a car with an automatic transmission because this was the first time I was going to be driving on the right hand side in about fifteen years.

Since there was no guide involved, I needed to tie up some flies. Simon told me to take along Parachute Adams, Royal Coachman, Daddy Long Legs, and Mayfly Nymphs. These flies were to be fished in the traditional methods: "The dry fly may be fished up, across, or downstream. The nymph may be fished up or across, but not downstream."

The first day's fishing was at "Bullington Manor" on the Dever. It is a smaller river about 20 to 30 feet across in most places. Much of the Dever



Bullington Manor on the Dever

at Bullington Manor is shaded due to the many trees right along its banks. The brown trout follow the shade as the sun moves across the sky on bright days. The Dever holds brown trout ranging from 8" to 24". There were also many grayling (Ladies of the Stream) with the larger fish going up to 14". There were no steady hatches occurring during the course of the day, so I needed to sight fish with nymphs. Due to the contrasting light conditions caused by the tree shade and clear skies, brighter flies were necessary than the traditional GRHR or PT's. The day wound up with 10 grayling and eight browns.

That evening I returned to the Carbery Guesthouse in Stockbridge and had dinner and a couple of pints at The Three Cups. Traditional pub fare may have once been deep-fried fish and chips, but my sautéed scallops came with seasoned rice and fresh steamed vegetables.

The next day I fished the "The Parsonage" on the River Test. Again, sight fishing was called for since the fish weren't rising consistently. The middle Test is much wider than the Dever. Therefore, it wasn't possible to sight fish the opposite bank. Here it was important to walk slowly and quietly and sneak up on the fish holding close to the near bank. Also, instead of bright late-summer skies, there was a low ceiling that refused to burn off during the course of the day. The overcast and dark grassy river bottom made it possible to fish more conventional nymph patterns, but a fly with some color still shook things up a bit. The Test has populations of browns, 'bows, and grayling with many of the browns getting into

(Continued from page 6)

the 4 to 5 lb. range. However, the grayling appeared smaller than those on the Dever. The day played out well with 10 fish (four browns, three 'bows, and three grayling).

All in all, a great experience. A bit more expensive than I had read about in the FR&R article mentioned above. I had planned on fishing three days, but had to limit myself to two in order to stay within budget. The most reasonable time of year to fish is in October through December. That is grayling season. Prices drop to about £25 - £30 per day for some of the same rivers. Also, you may be offered an extended range over the standard beats of the regular season.

Project Healing Waters by Jim McRoberts (WFFC) and Vicki Hoagland (NWF)

I took one of my grandsons, Joe, 13, to Bill's this afternoon to check out **Bill's Fishin' Hole** in Orting, a subsidiary of Trout Lodge, Inc. Joe used my 9 foot 6 wt. and caught four in 30 minutes, although he could have caught a lot more. The biggest one came from the medium-sized pond; it was 3-3.5 #s. The three others were about 12-17 inches. They were all taken on the same fly, a size 8 **Two-buck-chuck** with a hot-orange bead head. He hooked many of the smaller size, but let them un-hook themselves by not setting the hook and letting slack in the line. It is very suitable for the wheelchair folks. There is a



Veterans and WFFC members at Bill's Fishing Hole

covered picnic area. We would bring our own lunch. It may be a bit tame for the folks who are better casters, but we can cut the point off the hook and just let them have lots of strikes.

This test run proved that this would be a great place to take some of the less-mobile vets for a fun outing. On Saturday, July 18th, we took five vets to **Bill's**. Three were in wheelchairs and one used a walker; the fifth was a young man from the PTSD group. Our volunteers were Vicki Hoagland, **Bob Birkner**, **Don Schroder**, and **Jim McRoberts**. We also had two therapists from the Seattle VA Hospital. We arrived about 10 am and set up our rods. We used floating lines and started out using the same **two-buck-chuck** as my grandson used on one of the rods, but we cut the hook off at the bend! We did the same for small foam beetles with rubber legs. They had a great time for the first two hours, just letting the fish hammer these flies and then let go! Since we were allowed to keep fish—it is a pay pond—we kept our first fish just before lunch. The 14-incher swallowed a “hook-less” foam beetle so deep we had to keep it. After lunch we used the same type flies, but with barbless hooks. We kept all the fish we wanted and left around 2 pm. **Dick Stearns** and **Don Anderson** agreed to smoke the fish at Don's place on Stretch Island near Allyn. On Sunday I took the fish to Dick Stearns'. We went to Don's place and prepared the fish for the smoke house. Dick brought the smoked fish to the Seattle VA Hospital when he came to help the vets with fly tying on Tuesday. Everyone loved the smoked trout and they are ready to do it again!

Our next outing was at Rattlesnake Lake on Saturday, July 25th. We had two vets who were kayakers; we were expecting four. One wanted to try fishing from his kayak. The other wanted to fish from my boat. We rigged one of them up with a type 4 full-sinking line and the other with a 20-foot fast-sinking tip. The surface temperature was 71 degrees! The fish on my sounder were down deep, from 35 feet to 12 feet. They had many bumps, but nothing hooked up. We were using olive bead-head woolly buggers, size six. The volunteers were Vicki Hoagland, **Don Schroder**, **Jim McRoberts**, and Chuck Tye, the PHW NW regional director. We also had a recreational therapist from the Seattle VA and a kayak safety person.



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here

August, 2009

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: Brendan McCarthy of Urban Fly Guides

Brendan will speak on East coast saltwater fly fishing opportunities.