

Creel Notes from the



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



August, 2011



President's Riffle

The "10-90 Rule". Most of you have heard it said before, especially when applied to steelhead fishing: 10% of the fishermen catch 90% of the fish. Could be an exaggeration, but I'm not sure. I know a couple of guys who really catch a lot of steelhead. Fellow member **Tovar** seems to be one of those guys right now. Personally, I think he is just lucky (at cribbage, too). I do know that I am NOT one of those 10% guys. But what sets those ten-percenters apart from the rest is their perseverance, and confidence. They stick with it time and time again, and they just know that each cast will result in a grab. If it doesn't, then the next one will.

The "10-90 Rule" also applies to another aspect of our lives ... in every organization, club, council—any group—10 percent of the membership does 90 percent of the work. That is just the way it is. Our club, the WFFC, is no exception. As a matter of fact, we are the standard bearer for that rule. I am so grateful for those who step up **time and time again** to help out with club matters. As I write this, two names jump out in neon lights at me. I am almost hesitant to call them out, for fear of not naming others who have always been around to help in other club matters. First, a big "Thank You!" to all who have helped with club projects and operations so far this year. I want to be sure not to slight anyone else, but **Dave Schorsch** and **Mark Pratt** have done yeoman's duty on the club outings and the Yakima Home Waters project. All of you reading this, take time and tell them you appreciate their efforts next time you see them. Without volunteers, nothing gets done!

Well, here we are, August 8th, and the rivers and streams are still not at the summertime levels. I can honestly say I have not remembered a water year quite like this one. Mid-August and wading across the N. Fork

Stilly is a tough proposition. I love fishing low-water conditions and having easy wading. This year will be a short season for doing that. No steelhead to hand so far for me this summer – ouch!

This month's general meeting on **August 16th** features **Heather Bartlett** from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. She has spoken to the club in the past and has done a great job presenting information. I look forward to her presentation. Also, that is the night we have our member Swap Meet ... bring your unused fishing gear to trade, buy, or sell before the meeting and at the break.

Remember the **September general meeting** will be held at the **Yakima River Home Waters site on September 20th**. Same general idea as last year. We can plan on another Taco truck or two ... maybe even a BBQ truck. **Mike Wearne** is working on the outing now as we speak and will fill us in on the details. If you have a boat and have room for another member or two on the river, please arrange with Mike Wearne, or just talk directly with other club members. Let's get a big turnout!

Rocco Maccarrone, President

Inside.....

August Meeting: Heather Bartlett	2
Hood Canal Outing	2
July Meeting: Dec Hogan	3
Leech Lake	4
British Columbia	4
Hi Hium	5
Restoring the Elwha	6
Dry Falls	7
Fly Plate Entries Needed	7
WDFW	7

August 16th Meeting: Heather Bartlett of WDFW on the status of the hatchery reform

Heather Bartlett of the WDFW will be speaking on the status of the hatchery reform implementation efforts and strategies to meet the FWC policies on hatchery and fishery reform that were adopted in November 2009.

We will be holding the traditional August “Swap Meet” at the meeting. Club members who have something to sell, or an interest in acquiring some fly fishing equipment, should take note.

Upcoming Hood Canal Outing *by Dave Schorsch*

We’re going to Hood Canal to chase sea-run cutts and silvers Sept. 17th and 18th!

Jay Deeds and his wife Jone have graciously agreed to host the club at their waterfront home near Seabeck again this year! We will be fishing all around the area from boats (mostly) and having a pizza feed in the evening. There is a public boat launch just north of their house, and a park with campground within a mile for those interested in more than a day trip.

This is another easy drive from Seattle, just over the hill from Silverdale. Last year we fished Saturday, ate pizza from Seabeck pizza delivery—might have had a few beers too, after all, it’s pizza—and fished Sunday.

While there is some shore fishing available in the area, the guys with boats will carry the day here. Runs to Dabob Bay and rocky beaches miles away are common. Even so, last year we caught most of our fish in the bay just south of Jay’s house! This is a great trip for those of us with “motor” boats. I’m hoping to get enough boats out that everyone has a ride who wants one! Pontoon boats and prams work well too with protected water at places like the bay at Seabeck.

Please sign up if you think you might attend, and I’ll send you directions to Jay’s house and the park/boat launch area. If you haven’t fished for sea-runs and silvers in the salt, this is a good time to learn from the real die-hards of the sport! Rods in the 5 to 7 weights are plenty, with attractor patterns (read yellow and orange and green) and forage fish ties the most effective. Small Clousers in white/green/olive and some candlefish steamers will turn on the cutties most days. Silvers take the same stuff, preferring slightly deeper water.

Any questions, give me a call, or e-mail (I check it about once a week). Will have more specific site info on the Web in the next week or so.

The Creel Calendar

Hood Canal, Sat., Sept. 17th and Sun., Sept. 18th

WFFC General Meeting, Yakima Home Waters Site
Tues., Sept. 20th

Creel Notes

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

Jim van de Erve ... Editor
425-489-0971 jimvde@comcast.net
Ron Tschetter ... Publisher
425-746-6652 batribble@juno.com

President

Rocco Maccarrone maccarrone@frontier.com

1st Vice President (Membership)

David Ehrich demuslindley@yahoo.com

2nd Vice President (Programs)

Mike Wearne michael_wearne@msn.com

3rd Vice President (Christmas Party)

Mike Santangelo Mikeonthefly@gmail.com

Treasurer

Don Barton dbarton44@comcast.net

Secretary

Ron Tschetter batribble@juno.com

Ghillie 1

Jim Macdonald macdonaldco@msn.com

Ghillie 2

Conrad Gowell CGowell@pugetsound.edu

Trustees

Scott Hagen '09 Jim Young '09
Andrew Bennett '10 Craig Koepler '10
Bob Young '11 Chapin Henry III '11

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, steelhead, and salmon 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.

July Meeting: Dec Hogan *by Jim van de Erve*

Dec Hogan is a renowned steelhead guide, one of the originators of Skagit-style spey casting. He is a teacher, a speaker, a photographer, the writer of the acclaimed book, “A Passion for Steelhead”, and above all, a fisherman. He showed his passion throughout his presentation at our July meeting. You couldn’t help but get jazzed.

Dec started out with a tribute to WFFC members. He talked about how he caught his first fly on Pass Lake using... a **Nyerges** nymph. He talked about steelhead flies and people—many of whom are in the WFFC. Guys like **John Farrar** and **Wes Drain**. **Ralph Wahl**, steelhead on the Stilly, and *Come Wade the River*. **Steve Raymond**, who he has spent many a night reading. **Scott Hagen**, one of his long-time friends.

Dec doesn’t take a dry and clinical approach to fly fishing for steelhead. His presentation is not just fact built on fact built on fact. Dec is a professional photographer, and pays attention to the majesty of the landscape and the moment. “It is important to realize, when you’re on the river,” he said, “how beautiful the surroundings are... You need to know your area... Steelhead fishing engages all the senses.”

It is also, of course, about the mystery. “The profound question is: Why do you think that steelhead take your fly?” He pondered that question, ruminating, cogitating, letting the suspense build, before answering, “Don’t know, but I’m glad they do!”



He did then reflect that steelhead have conditioned reflexes. How they cannot help themselves. How when they’re on a hatch, there’s nothing easier.

So where do you go looking for them? Dec says look in three to six feet of depth. That’s good steelhead fly water. You don’t necessarily have to go deep. Steelhead will move to the fly. You don’t have to dredge the bottom. They look up.

Dec will take the right speed over the right depth. Look for a spot with good speed all the way across. “You have to find the stream within the river,” he says. Look for the sweet spot in between bars. Look at the texture of the water, find where it shows lots of structure. See where the water dips and slow—OK, there’s a boulder four feet under. Good runs all have one thing above and one thing below, usually some kind of structure. Travel the path of least resistance. Over and over again, Dec intoned, as if in a reverie, “Beautiful pockets.”

He has a preference for swinging the fly. “Don’t nymph on beautiful swing water!” he said. But remember—things that move laterally do so jerkily. He also tends in many situations toward a dry line. Says you can cover more water with a floating line. Says east of the mountains he uses a dry line exclusively.

Dec is writing a second book. This one is on steelhead flies. He shook his head about the notion of advancements in fly tying. “There’s nothing new in fly tying,” he said. He loves the Ackroyd, which belongs to the family of Dee strip winged flies, with their characteristic turkey wings and long spey hackle. The Ackroyd, with its yellow and black body, is a beautiful fly. So is the Skagit Mist, a fly Dec created with red and black body sections and wings of white goose shoulder strips.

Dec likes to tie flies that look like shrimp. He likes to give them something beautiful that’s a part of him. Beautiful fish, water, environment; beautiful fly. Be that as it may, if Dec had only one fly for everywhere, he would make it a natural muddler minnow. “Steelhead love natural colors, as well.”

Dec is realistic about what catches fish. “The difference between one fish and no fish is one cast. It’s all in how you present. You got to believe—fish it slow!”

He has the same philosophy, of course, about casting. How many times in his book does he suggest to the erstwhile caster to slow down? “Don’t be

(Continued on page 5)

controlled by the cast,” he told us. “It should be the other way around.” If you have big rips of water, you’re probably doing it too fast. And by the way, don’t spey case without glasses on.

Find the right water. Present the fly well. Enjoy the bone-rattling take! Listen to that cool sound of the reel playing out your line. Wrap your mind around how magnificent the pursuit of steelhead is.

Slow down.



Leech Lake *by Dave Schorsch*

We had another great trip to Leech Lake at White Pass July 16th and 17th.

Sixteen members turned out for the best fishing many of us have ever had there. Weather was “mountain spring” on Saturday, with sun and rain and mist and wind and calm and hot all together. A real nice callibaetis hatch started around 11:00 and the fish were on ‘em! Most were triploid rainbows running 15 to 18 inches with a sprinkling of brookies from 8 to 15. I did very well with a Chopaka May, or a comparadun in brown/grey. Over a dozen on dries with a few grabbing damsel nymphs in between hatches. Missed lots more. I think having the outing two weeks earlier made a big difference!

Dinner and happy hour were well attended, with 20 steaks dispatched. Stories and well lubricated antics around the fire ran deep into the night. Family groups were well represented with **Ron Dion** and his sons, **Jack Crowley** and his son, and Mike “Steak Rub” Wozinsky (sp?) and his grandson. This is where active new members come from!

Sunday morning we had a pancake breakfast, with lots of volunteer help, especially the Dion clan and **Mark Pratt**. Ron came through with lots of coffee and stuff, while his sons saved the day by coming up with the pancake syrup that I forgot. The weather Sunday was a bit more weatherish, a little misty and wet in the morning, followed by sun and wind. The hatches didn’t happen like Saturday, but the fish were still looking up, so several more were taken or missed on dries. Most of us packed it in around noon or one and were home in time for dinner.

Special thanks to the folks at White Pass Village Inn! They take good care of us, and are glad to see us

each year. Check out their place if you want to fish or hike or ski in the White Pass area!

See you at the next outing.

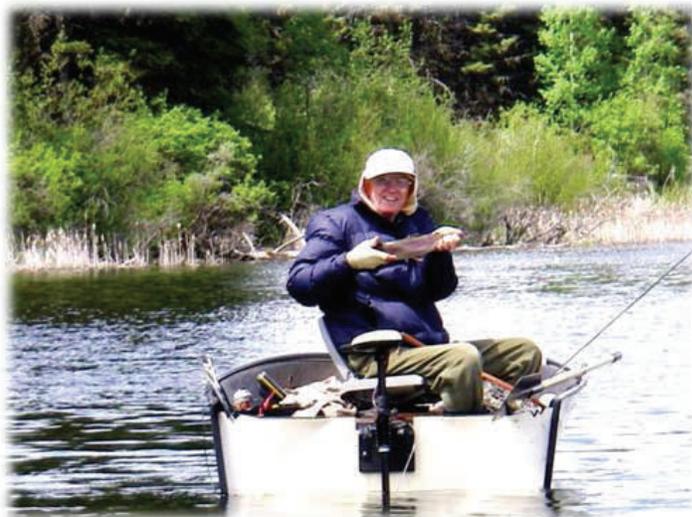
Glimpse Lake, Cane Rods, and Wet Weather *by Ron Tschetter*

My old 1994 Explorer (202,000 miles) kicked down into low gear. The Coquihalla grade that leads to Merritt, B.C., seems to have gotten steeper this year. With my gas pedal to the floorboard, it was somewhat embarrassing to have a couple fully loaded semi rigs creep by me on my left. But the Coquihalla highway is gorgeous scenery meant to be viewed at a leisurely pace.

Our annual trek to British Columbia was a rather simple one. We didn’t want to travel as far north this year with the gas prices the way they are. For some reason in 40+ years of traveling north, we’ve never been to the Glimpse, Peterhope, and surrounding area lakes such as Blue and Plateau. These lakes lie to the northeast between Merritt and Kamloops.

This year was a special treat because we hooked up with Ray Gould (May’s WFFC presenter on Kamloops trout fishing) for some general advice about the area.

Ray was kind enough to invite us to dinner at his cabin on Glimpse Lake on our arrival the first night. Ray introduced us to his contingent of Olympic Fly Fishing Club members who were staying with him, including Terry Zeitner, Jack Byrd, Jim Gaunett, and Dick Hedges. I figured dinner would be the usual “bachelor fisherman fare”: hamburgers, beans,





something of that venue. We were surprised by a gourmet-class meal! Dick Hedges whipped up a boneless chicken breast slice covered with a lemon sauce that included capers. It was absolutely terrific. And a fresh salad to boot. Dick is good with the skillet.

One thing noticeable was the preponderance of bamboo fly rods. In fact, I believe these were the ONLY type of rod on premises. I've looked at a few cane rods in the past, but most sat in pretty rod cases along with typical remarks like, "Oh, I'd never fish with it." Not the situation at Ray's place. These rods were meant to be used and were!

A close look at these babies is utter perfection. The work, detail, and handicraft that went into each rod were unbelievable. I knew Ray Gould was a master builder, but Terry Zeitner is also a master rod builder who, as I understand it, builds them for clients all over the world. In fact, these guys all seem to have some hand in building cane rods. Overhearing talk of stress calculations and double parabolic designs convinced me all these guys are masters of this craft.

I think everyone in my group would consider our best-day fishing to be our first. Through the week the weather and water temperature turned colder day by day with rain, and at one time hail and swirling wind. On the first day the water temperature was 58 F. By the time we left the water temperature was 55 F or lower depending on where you were on the lake. The barometric pressure fluctuated up and down all week long. The fish run larger than I was led to believe with many healthy, strong fish in the 16" range. The biggest I caught was one fish just about 20" near (what I call) the "Indian Bay". Others in my group caught a few similar size fish. There are a lot of scuds

in Glimpse Lake. **Steve Raymond's** Golden Shrimp imitates them to perfection. Don't go to Glimpse Lake without it! On the way out we looked over Peterhope Lake, which has been stocked with triploids. It's a big lake with more summer homes than I would have preferred (not exactly wilderness), but it has a good reputation of putting out some big trout.

In summary, we all caught fish, but it was slower than we would have liked. Glimpse is a beautiful place with two nice campgrounds. It was an enjoyable week despite the weather. Crystal clean air, quiet restful nights, there is more to fishing than just catching fish. I think the best of B.C. fishing is yet to come. Summer is late in coming.

Hi Hium Lake, B.C. *by Bob Bendzak*

Shocked at Circle W. For those of you familiar with Hi Hium Lake, the weed beds near "home" cabin and Main Dock preclude much fishing in the area. The increased lake level this year has allowed more open water than usual.

Not only is the water level high, but combined with the cooler summer thus far, the fish are sweet and plump for fresh eating. We shared one with daughter Kim last evening, caught three days before, oven-baked it was delicious.

The night we arrived, Ron and Dad spent two hours casting a caddis pupa imitation in these waters and were able to boat three beautiful bright Kamloops. The "head-shakes" on all fish hooked indicated an abundance of larger fish.

The last fish caught at 10 pm shocked us. At 6 lb and 24+ inches, it appeared to be a triploid: shorter and fatter with no evidence of milt sacs or egg skeins. It was absolutely beautiful. Smoked, it will adorn the appetizer table at granddaughter Tali's upcoming wedding.

Those of you scheduled for September best prepare for some larger sized fish.

And that's the news from "Circle W Hi Hium".

Restore the Elwha Without Hatchery Fish

by Will Atlas, Kurt Beardslee, and Rich Simms

With removal of the Elwha River dams scheduled to begin this summer, the river can demonstrate a new paradigm for sustainable salmon management based upon wild fish, rather than hatchery production.

The dam removal will open up about 90 miles of protected river for spawning fish. Given the amount and quality of the habitat, biologists predict tens of thousands of wild salmon and steelhead could eventually return to the Elwha River above the dams within our children's lifetimes. The recovery will reach its full potential only if hatchery fish are removed from the Elwha.

On the Elwha we have an opportunity to restore wild salmon and steelhead to a pristine river unlike any remaining in our state. Before dam construction in 1910, the river supported robust populations of steelhead and five different species of salmon, including some of the largest chinook ever documented.

Given time and conservative harvest management, there is reason to believe that within a few decades we will see those magnificent fish return in similar numbers. Unfortunately, we are poised to squander what would otherwise be a tremendous opportunity.

Each year, Washington state releases hundreds of millions of juvenile salmon and steelhead from hatcheries to supplement sport and commercial fisheries. These releases are known to be harmful to wild stocks: interbreeding with wild fish, altering their genetic makeup and reducing the survival of their offspring; competing for space and resources; introducing disease; attracting predators; encouraging overfishing, to cite just a few deleterious impacts. Countless researchers have confirmed that hatchery programs are incompatible with healthy, abundant wild salmon and steelhead.

The stated goal of the Elwha River dam removal is to restore healthy populations of wild salmon and steelhead to the watershed. Yet despite an overwhelming body of evidence confirming the harmful impacts of hatcheries, state, federal, and tribal governments have agreed upon a plan that relies heavily on hatchery supplementation. Faced with the single greatest opportunity to restore wild salmon, they've opted for business as usual, perpetuating a failing

paradigm of replacing native fish with a man-made alternative.

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, long advocates for dam removal in the watershed, have built a huge, new hatchery which will be used to plant steelhead, Chinook, and other salmon species, threatening the future of wild fish in the basin. These fish, bred in captivity, are no longer able to produce self-sustaining numbers of offspring when spawning in the wild. Consequently, large numbers of hatchery fish spawning in a river can greatly reduce the productivity of wild stocks.

A five-year fishing moratorium is scheduled to take effect this year, yet managers have been adamant about continuing to release hatchery steelhead and salmon into the Elwha, despite the fact that none will be caught in sport or commercial fisheries. Instead, these non-native fish will return to spawn with the few remaining wild fish that have managed to keep a tenuous foothold below the dams.

For decades, hatchery salmon and steelhead have sustained tribal fisheries on the Elwha. Understandably, the tribe fears that without hatcheries they will no longer have opportunities to fish. While we believe strongly that the Lower Elwha Klallam tribe should have the opportunity to fish in accordance with their treaty rights, continuing to release non-native hatchery fish in the Elwha throughout the recovery period is wrongheaded and counterproductive.

The Elwha River restoration is an opportunity to see the capacity of wild salmon and steelhead to recover without costly, ineffective hatchery intervention.

If we hope to restore the Elwha to its former glory, we must let wild fish recolonize the river naturally. For generations, the river sustained the Lower Elwha Klallam tribe and, unlike many rivers in our region, the wild Elwha remains more than capable of giving life to its people and standing as a singular example of a world-class wild-fish restoration project, one that will ultimately allow wild salmon and steelhead to return to levels unthinkable in the 21st century.

It's time we get out of the fishes' way.

Will Atlas is chair of the Federation of Fly Fishers Steelhead Committee; Kurt Beardslee is executive

(Continued from page 6)

director of the Wild Fish Conservancy; Rich Simms is president of the Wild Steelhead Coalition.

Reprinted by permission of Will Atlas.

Dry Falls Fall Outing *by Dave Schorsch*

Our annual fall outing to Dry Falls Lake will be held on the weekend of October 1st and 2nd.

This is the favorite trip of the year for many members! The weather is usually nice, the fishing is usually great, and the scenery is always awesome. The Saturday potluck happy hour is legendary. The club will provide steaks and beverages for those who sign up.

This is the trip to bring your spouse/significant other/better half to show you really don't hang out with cretins all the time! Lots of wives attend, and there's plenty for kids to do, too. Music breaks out around the fire, so bring your singing voice or musical weapon of choice.

We will be gathering in the "cove" area in the campground at Sun Lakes State Park. That's toward the back, around site 29 for those of you wanting to make reservations in advance.

Most of us have fished Dry Falls for years, but for those who haven't, it's about time you learned how great lake fishing can be. The fall has the water cooling, and the fish are feeding heavily for the winter.

They've had a whole season to bulk up, and the browns are prowling the shallows in fall spawning mode. Long leaders and dry lines work all day along the shorelines, with buggy nymphs in buggy colors working best. Slow mooching a deep-level sinker with a leech will work, as will bobbing chironomid worms, but the fish are smaller in my experience. This is the trip to get your biggest trout of the year!

So don't miss it! Sign up for an accurate steak count, and don't forget your best appetizer or side dish! See you there!

Reminder: Bring Your Fly for the WFFC Members Fly Plate! *by Gil Nyerges*

In an effort to prepare a special item for the annual Christmas Party in December, I would like to request each member (actives, associates, and seniors) to submit his very favorite fly pattern to the board by or before the October meeting. Dries, wets, streamers, nymphs are all welcome. It should be accompanied by the tier's name, the name of the pattern, and the fish species that it is intended for (rainbow, brookie, sea run, native or Lahontan cutthroat, steelhead, salmon, or any of the larger salt-water exotics such as snook, dorado, sailfish, bonefish, permit, trevally, etc.). If a member is not an eager tier, then buy a pattern, or ask your best friend to tie one for you—the idea is to have every one of our 180 or so members represented.

In order to maintain balance in the presentation's appearance, there may be two fly plates. All patterns tied on trout hook sizes up to number 4 might be displayed on one plate, and larger patterns on larger hook sizes might be on a separate plate. That would be up to me as I see it developing.

Give your pattern to me, **Gil Nyerges**, or to **Rocco**. DON'T FORGET! This will be a very special collector's item.

WDFW Enforcement Panel Summary

by Don Gulliford

The quarterly meeting was at DNR in E-Berg, and almost no fishing related topics—mostly hunting. The new Discovery Pass is generating a lot of negative input, especially since the WDFW vehicle pass will not suffice in many locations. Costly and good for only one vehicle. Some WDFW do not want to be "parking meter ladies". WDFW staff opined that the coming legislative session will be very difficult due to usual budget problems; enforcement staff is down from past numbers, e.g., in one county from 5 to 2.



Washington Fly Fishing Club
P.O. Box 639
Mercer Island, WA 98040
www.wffc.com

Stamp
here

August, 2011

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:

Heather Bartlett of WDFW on the status of hatchery reform.