

# Creel Notes from the



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

Website: [www.wffc.com](http://www.wffc.com)



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## President's Riffle

Well, the majority of the leaves are down and while I viewed my pending shoulder replacement surgery (scheduled for November 1st) as a good, if somewhat extreme, excuse to avoid fall yard work this year, the really good news is that during pre-op the doc decided that I'd made enough progress over the last six months to waive off surgery for now. Hurray! The really mi-raculous news is that this same doctor had only one restriction for me going forward—no rak-ing—which he expressed with my wife in the room. Guess I got my Christmas present early!

In prior years a clean bill of health such as this would have me celebrating by breaking out the steelhead gear in anticipation of the winter run that traditionally gets rolling around here in mid December but one really has to wonder if that is appropriate this year. Do I



continued on page 2

## WE NEED YOUR DONATIONS NOW!!!

November is the month to support your club with a call or email to Stephanie Hagen or Kerry Hodges to donate to our club's annual Holiday Dinner and Auction. Funds raised ensure the health of our club's annual budget and the ongoing funding of our community service programs. It makes the evening even more fun to see the great selections of items available in the Live and Silent Auctions and Raffle Cans.

Take a moment to pull together a few Raffle Can, Live or Silent auction donation ideas. Go shopping for new gear or donate "slightly" used gear. BE CREATIVE! Purchase a gift certificate to your favorite restaurant, a case of great wine, or arrange a gift certificate to a resort lodge! We need your help to make our WFFC Holiday Dinner and Auction a fun and festive event.

**THEN, SAVE THE DATE! DECEMBER 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017 AND REMEMBER TO REGISTER IN NOVEMBER** on our WFFC Web site. Bring your sweetheart, family members and friends to this festive event!

Please contact Kerry Hodges (206) 226 8828. email: [kerry.o.hodges@gmail.com](mailto:kerry.o.hodges@gmail.com) or Stephanie Hagen (206) 313-3830. Email: [river.lady@comcast.net](mailto:river.lady@comcast.net) with your donation idea. Like Santa, they will arrange to meet you, pick up your items or arrange printed auction gift certificate for items such as trips, dinners, weekend stays, or guided fishing outings. Items can also be dropped off at the Seattle Tennis Club on November 7<sup>th</sup> or November 21<sup>st</sup> during our November WFFC board or dinner meetings. Please write "FOR WFFC" and put your name on any items dropped off at the club.

**MAKE YOUR DONATION CALL NOW!**

**Your support is much appreciated!**

**Kerry Hodges and Stephanie Hagen**



## Inside this Issue

Page 2...Project Healing Waters needs your tools

Page 3...On the Fly: The Meeting in Reel Time

Page 4...Fishing Reports

## Presiden'ts Riffle, cont.

fish my local rivers knowing that if I do I will be buying into the WDFW argument that hatchery steelhead are the way to go? An even worse (though remote) possibility would be hooking a precious wild fish that must be released immediately with unfortunately the higher risk of mortality due to my good fortune as an angler. What a conundrum. Maybe our November Dinner meeting speaker, John Shewey will be able to shed some light. John has been swinging flies for steelies and writing about it for as long as I can remember. I look forward to his presentation. I hope you plan to attend as well.

I think one thing that we can all agree on is how important the annual fundraising Christmas Party is to The WFFC. We have about a month to do a final sweep of our

individual gear closets to see what might be appropriate as a donation to one of our auctions and or decide if this is the year to make a monetary donation. There are other ways to support as well. See Kerry Hodges' report in this issue of The Creel Notes. Whichever tack you take please don't forget that the most significant way to support the club is to ATTEND the fundraiser. It is certainly the social event of the year for me and for many others in the club. The vibe in the room is always festive and upbeat, our members and guests dress up a bit in the spirit of the season. Excellent food and wine, good conversation, bids and counter bids, raffle cans and fly box drawings and before you know it the good old WFFC is set financially for another year!

Tight Lines, John

## FISHING TOOLS NEEDED

Vises, bobbins, scissors, hair stackers, hackle pliers, etc. needed for veterans participating in Project Healing Waters (PHW). On a weekly basis the question of where to get a fly tying kit comes up from a PTSD veteran who will soon be leaving the program and returning home. A common answer is Cabellas or Bass Pro. But with that suggestion, there comes a price/

Over the past few years, friends and Club members have given me quite a bit of fly tying material due to my involvement with PHW and Casting Forward, a project similar to PHW, but it is for Seattle's homeless.

I would like to start making fly tying kits for the veterans. I have the materials, but not the tools. Most of us have extra tools that are no longer used or our senior members may have quite a few, but no longer tie. If you could bring any tools you no longer need to the 11/21/17 Fly Club meeting, it would be greatly appreciated. If you contact me (206)763-6762, I could also arrange to pick them up.

Thank you in advance, and I can assure you it will be greatly appreciated and used by veterans returning home after 6 weeks of an intensive program.

Thank You and Happy Thanksgiving,  
Greg Crumbaker

## Creel Notes

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*Club officers and chairmen can be contacted by logging in the WFFC website in the roster area.*



Could the Pirate/Ghillie be sizing up her next victim?

## On the Fly

### The Meeting in Reel Time

by David Ehrich

Boy I got lucky tonight. I got to sit with Gil Nyerges, the venerable conscience of our club. Conversation ranged from new side arms, to fishing, to bird watching, on to baseball. That's a nice glimpse of club life. Before the meal began, I talked to Scott Hagen about fishing in the remotest of the remote, other members told me about summer adventures, and a new friend and I dropped into a deep discussion about college applications. In fact, tank warfare on the Eastern Front even crossed the bow of conversation. You want to complain about your dues? Heck, you can't pay for this level of good fellowship. I hope you join me at the next meeting and tell a few great stories.

And then to interrupt my musings, John Gravendyk took up the gavel and opened up the meeting to great applause. Guest introductions followed on the heel of the president's



### 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.

words. Our newest member, Peter Hawkes, came to our table to hear the encouraging words of Gil, who inducted Peter with the usual admonishments mixed with good love and great flies. A true gift for any member.

Fishing reports followed in course with tall tales of fishing in Bolivia, Idaho's Clearwater (MF), various breakfast joints in Montana (your fish comes fired), precious waters in Sun Valley, hoppers and droppers netting big bows right at your feet, dismal Steelhead fishing in BC, questionable lake fishing at Rat Lake, better fishing on Twin Lakes, good times fishing stocked fish at Gibb's lake in Jefferson County, and good risers with poor results at Lone Lake. The skunk hat was often called for, but sadly left at home. Watch out next month.

President John reminded members how important new members, acknowledging key positions they have filled. To that point, our Christmas Party Committee co-chairs, Stephanie Hagen and Kelly Oldenburg welcome you help for the party. To start with, go through your equipment and see if you have something to donate.

Other committee members shared dire warnings about fish populations in the Columbia system. In contrast, Dick Brening invited new and prospective members to learn the basics of fly tying. Keep an eye out for announcements in the website. Outings chair, David Schorsch reminded members to get to Lake Hannan (replete with maps) and Wet Buns.

And on to the Main Event. Don Thomas took up the mic after a rousing introduction from member and old friend, Jerry, who described the beginnings of a great medical career chasing his own father's Nobel Prize, who dropped the nameplate on the office door to be a small town doctor in Lewiston, Montana. There, in the middle of nowhere, he chased his true passions, fishing and hunting, while holding office hours when not on the water or writing articles.

Don started fishing Brookies in

New York State, moved to Seattle in the 60s, took up medicine, and then explained his route to the Seattle Tennis Club with the help of his wife, photographer and digital expert, Lori. First off, it involved more wing shooting and bow hunting, than fishing. Once in Seattle, he decided to skip his local passion for Steelhead, a much too common a subject for the august crew of the WFFC. So off to Australia we went.

Don started his story off in NE Australia, Queensland, bow hunting for buffalo. Feeding the hunting camp with local fish led to other things, including Queen fish (member of the Jack family) on flies. Doubling down on the fishing, Don and his group chartered the SS Eclipse, finding acres of bait fish, which led to lassoed Barracuda, stripped in mackerel, and exotic fish too numerous to mention. The Eclipse supports a few skiffs that took anglers just off the bait ball for cast and catch action.

Don got into some tidal riff fishing on shore for Ladyfish, Swallowtail Dart, Barramundi. I didn't learn too much about technique, but I got an encyclopedia of exotic fish with equally misleading names in Australian, a distant relative of American English. The beat went on: big fish, screaming reels, and fresh sashimi for dinner. Fly choice was simple; stick with the basics. If it worked for you on Atlantic Tarpon, keep it in your fly box.

Don ended his lovely talk with some slides of wildlife, including birds, crocs, and strange things that jump and box. Plan your trip between the April and October dry season (their winter) and bring a nine weight. If your checkbook shows a healthy balance, get on board the Eclipse.

***Gentlemen are to wear a coat and tie to our WFFC Holiday Dinner.***

## Fishing Reports

### Wetbuns 2017

What can I say? It's called "Wet buns" after all, and the weather did not disappoint! Light rain during setup around 3:00 slowly evolved into piddling, then to dripping, and eventually to full on pissing... but the WFFC was not deterred! The usual cadre of volunteers chopped, shelled, and cracked their way through happy hour, while enjoying a warm bonfire and a nice shelter. Angling reports ranged the usual "really good in tight lip cove" to pretty slow on John Q. Public beach. Details emerged after Jim Geodhart arrived with a case of his home bottled Chardonnay.

Jim Young and Chuck Ballard had a good day on sea-runs fishing out of Vaughn bay, covering a lot of water in the process. Mark Pratt and Ben Davidson did their usual bang up job on the beaches of Joemma State park, across the road from Penrose. Others, fishing from the beach mostly, reported slow action. Not to put too fine a point on it, but, BOAT, BOAT, BOAT! Access is the key! (with all due respect to local fly shop proprietors)

The meal, with thanks to all who pitched in, was superb! We bumped up the Dungeness, and

feathered down the cook time and temp., resulting in a particularly good Bouillabaisse. The garlic bread crew kept all supplied, Larry Karlovich whomped up a big salad, and there was no risk of running dry!

A few of the usual die hards camped overnight, but most of us, author included headed on home. I love this outing! Lets do it again!

Dave Schorsch

### Eagle Creek, November 2, 2017

Ex member Bob Tarleton joined me in a repeat of our assault on the beaches of Hood Canal. He took a break from practicing for his next "gig" with testy band members, and I took a day off from the "new" Seattle. Eagle Creek is a small stream that enters the west side of Hood Canal south of the Hamma Hamma river. A perfect place to get away. We timed our arrival with the low tide, hoping to fish over chums coming in with the flood.

Sometimes a plan comes together. We pulled over at the bridge, and saw fish jumping in the shallows of the oyster flats. A steady light rain, and an overcast day spelled perfect chum conditions. A quick granola bar at the

truck, and we were on em! The fish were in about a foot of water, cruising back and forth in front of the stream. We knew the chums would head up the creek as soon as depth allowed, so we cast to the groups as they passed our feet. An intermediate line was almost too much! A dry line would have been fine, as the fish took flies 3 to 6 inches down. A small green fly was the ticket, and we both had 10 to 16 lb. fish on for the next hour and a half!

November is not the kindest month, weather wise, so it wasn't long before the winds arrived. Within a half hour the shallows were turned to mud, and the leaves and seaweed made fishing impossible. The fish kept coming, but short of foul hooking them in the salad, (which was remarkably easy) there was no hope of a fair hookup. A retreat to the beer cooler was called for, and rods broken down for the ferry ride home. During take down, we both realized that our "slimelines" were totally destroyed. The fish, running through the sharp oyster shells, had shredded the lines down to the cores.

For those of us that pursue these tiger striped beasties, one really good trip per season is about all one can expect. The season can be short in the best of times, and weather and commercial harvest can conspire to shorten it even more. As we were heading back to the Kingston ferry, we passed a large number of purse sieners and gill netters staging for the commercial harvest opening the next day. Hopefully a bunch of chums have already gathered in the estuary area in front of Eagle Creek (and others) inside of the egg hunters nets.

As always, I will say, get your butt out there! The chums should be trickling in through Thanksgiving. Tight lines!

Dave Schorsch



A Chinook hen protects her redd, 900 miles from the mouth of the Columbia.



**Washington Fly Fishing Club**

**P.O. Box 639**

**Mercer Island, WA 98040**

**NOVEMBER 2017**



**Meeting Announcement**

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

**This month's program is on November 21. The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM.**

**This month: Confessions of a Swinger: Fly Fishing for Summer-run Steelhead**

From May through the end of autumn, depending on specific run timings in specific rivers, summer steelhead are on the move in the Pacific Northwest, and anglers claim their share of a legacy that spans decades, a legacy of pursuing these noble fish with flies. The art and passion that enshrouds steelhead fly fishing afflicts countless devotees, forming an addiction that borders on religion. In his most popular program, longtime steelhead angling enthusiast John Shewey takes you on a stirring journey of discovery, delving into the techniques and flies and rivers and attitudes that compose this regal sport.

Bob Burdick, Assistant program chairman