

# Creel Notes from the



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

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



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## Chopaka Alternative

By Dick Brening

Having packed my trailer prior to a trip to Hawaii in mid May I was disappointed to hear about the cancellation of the WFFC outing to Chopaka. Undaunted by that news I decided to fish a lake in the Okanagon that I heard about but had never fished. On Tuesday after Labor Day my friend Fran and I arrived at Blue Lake in the Sinlahekin area south of Loomis. The road from Loomis was washed out so we approached the lake from the south. We were advised to camp in the south campground since some of the north campground was flooded due to high water conditions. Our selected campsite was on a small rise next to the boat ramp (?). Our site was perfect, surrounded with wild roses in full bloom, choke cherry bushes and a great view down the lake to the north.

Since I had never fished this lake before it took me a while to find where the fish were and what they were willing to take. After a couple of days mouching I was able to get serious about catching. I caught fish everyday with my high being my last day with 8 fish. Almost all were very healthy looking rainbows up to 18" with most averaging 15 to 17". I also caught 2 browns at 14 & 15". Most of the fish were caught on a dragonfly nymph and a reddish brown micro leech using a slow retrieve on a full sink line.

We were also treated to a number of wild life sighting as a bonus to a great 8 day fishing trip. On our first day, a 24"+ Western Diamondback rattler was crossing the boat launch as I approached with my pontoon boat. There was a cinnamon colored black bear and three cubs which we saw on the hill side across the

road from our campsite. Many Whited Tail deer were around. There was a full grown skunk which visited some campsites every morning at the other side of the camp ground (thankfully). I received a nice splash from a beaver, saw a male mountain goat up close, had many song birds and a large Bald Eagle flying around and lots of military jets practicing maneuvers over head.

I missed not having any dry fly action although the fish were jumping to take mating damselflies in mid air but they totally ignored my feeble blue damsel pattern laying on the water surface.

Now onto the Cooper Lake outing!



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## Upcoming Events

### Leech Lake Looms

Our annual outing to Leech Lake is June 23rd and 24th this year. There are a few nice campsites right on the lake, but they fill up fast. A lot of us will be staying at the White Pass Village Inn, 509-672-3131, where they have ski condos (read bunkhouse) available that sleep from 2 to 6 people for a very reasonable cost. The Inn is right next to the lake, and they let us use their facilities for our happy hour and barbecue. Happy hour will be around 5:00 on Saturday, and we'll get the steaks going around 6:00. The club will provide steaks for those that sign up in advance, along with beverages. Please bring appetizers and side dishes to share! Pancake breakfast Sunday morning at the Inn, starting around 8:00, with all the fixins.

Fishing is usually dry lines, damsels, may's, and a variety of nymphs. Almost never more than a foot deep! Average rainbow in the lake is LARGE, and lots of Brookies from dinky to stout! A boat or float tube is a must!

This is it! Time for the Leech Lake outing on White Pass! Epic angling! Beautiful scenery! Adequate steaks! A pretty good happy hour, and Brookies!

Bring your dry line and mayfly dries, along with some adult damsels, and fish this beautiful mountain lake. The brook trout lurk in the weeds, hiding from the huge triploid rainbows above. Anything buggy, with an orange head, will get you into fish. No more than an intermediate line for the nymphs in this shallow lake. Bring a floating vessel to fish here. Anything works on this small, protected water.

There is a small forest service campground on the lake, so get there early to get a place. Otherwise, most of us stay at the White Pass Village

Inn, which has ski bum type condos for a reasonable nightly fee. All the necessary info is on the club website under outings. The unit I have rented for the last 5 years sleeps up to 6! Get a friend or three to share!

We will have a happy hour at the Inn (right next to the lake) about 5:00. We will be using the big gas grill for the steaks, which the club will provide for everyone that signs up on the web site. Bring along your favorite appetizers and side dishes to share! Steaks should go on around 6:00.

Sunday morning, we will provide a pancake breakfast for everyone, in room 123 at the inn. It's cozy, but we feed twenty or more every time! We'll shoot for 8:00 for hot cakes and bacon and coffee ready. Should be time to fuel up before the 9:45 bite....

So come on up for a good time, good fishing, and great company! Sign up on the web site for head count!

Dave Schorsch, outing host

### Hoffberg Takes Bronze



As a member of the FFI, I look to the organization as a source to expand my experience as an angler and fly tier. This past year I joined the FFI Fly Tiers group to further my tying. Within the group there are three levels of skills achievement; Bronze, Silver, Gold. Twenty four flies are submitted for evaluation and judged on a scale of one hundred possible points. I am proud to have achieved the first level, Bronze Award, with a score of 95.

Neal Hoffberg

## Creel Notes

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



President's Riffle will return in September. Meanwhile on the Neva.

# On the Fly

## The Meeting in Reel Time

by David Ehrlich

John Graven-dyk opened the meeting with sad news - the passing of long time and much loved member, Perry Barth. At our table, as at others, memories were shared with a tear and a chuckle. Some members were taken aback. My neighbor, Candy Alton, knew him as a 15 year old at Ballard High. A long moment of silence brought to my mind the many kindness of Perry.



From there, we introduced guests and heard some reports about our favorite sport. Members enjoyed trips to Dry Falls, Rocky Ford, Munn Lake, big cuts on the Upper Yakima, cleaning needles up and catching some small cuts on the Deschutes near Tumwater, “wade fishing” in snow on the North Platt in Wyoming, and some pedestrian fishing in a used boat to catch some plants on weedy little Lake Leland in scenic Jefferson County, fishing with vets in fish infested waters on Langlois, the Oregon Deschutes,

### 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.

and then some. In other words, lake openings, good weather, and our natural desire to fish, prompted many members to get busy on the water.

From there to business. John brought up the difficult question of the legality of informing our members electronically - through Creel Notes - as to the business of the meeting. As you would expect, the lawyers in the group found us in a state of illegality. Bill Neal took us through on the fine points. First off, it is Gary Berquist ‘s fault. He found out our by-laws ask for written notice. Hence, the problem. The solution? Here’s where the brilliance of the club really takes hold. Motions were moved, removed, and approved. Stay tuned.

Fortunately this mundane business got interrupted with a healthy slice of prime rib - making this the third month in a row sans poulet! As if on cue for these heightened heights, the wait staff served us like the royal family, four to a table, serve right, serve left. Beautiful.

Don’t get too happy. The tragic news of Perry’s passing was compounded by evil tidings from David Schorsch: Chopaka is inaccessible. Washed out on all sides. Trip cancelled. After 52 years. Blame British Columbia, blame the warm weather, blame Schorsch; whatever. It’s a done deal. All the folks staying there at high water left their boats, trailers and cars, if you want to walk in. Otherwise, substitutes are in progress, but by the time you read this, that deal will be done.

Other committee reports were too sanctimonious to record. My iPad remains unworthy. My report, to prove the exception, meant to remind members that Creel Notes will take a hiatus during July and August. Don’t blame me, blame summer.

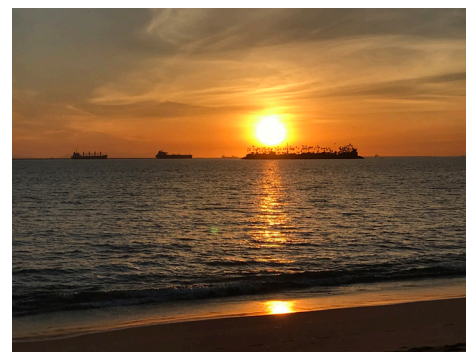
Wine was delivered to the table. Glasses were filled. The occasion? Gil Nyerges is 97. That meant cake, merlot, and good cheer.

After the break, Mike Wearne introduced us to Ryan Fortier who works for the WDFW, in other words, he gets

paid by your fishing license. A former Midwesterner, Ryan moved west to study fish and has been wandering the east side of nowhere ever since. He’s based out of the Winthrop area, where he supervises over 200 lakes, high and low, around the central part of our state. He gave us the skinny on his area - north of Chelan, from the Cascade Crest to the Okanogan Highlands.

Starting with some simplified rules courtesy of new focus on usability from our WDFW, he focused on a few areas: Methow Lowland Lakes, Okanogan Highlands, Loup Loup Pass Lakes, Lime Belt, and Sinlahekin (Chopakan). Too much information to relay, the gist of what I learned is that WDFW responds to consumer demand, bass for those who watch the Bass Channel, Tigers for those who watch the Tiger Channel, and the usual for those who don’t watch TV for fishing. Some lakes are in prime, some are burned out, flooded and ready for a fish kill. I am not sure what to tell you. Some lakes looked good, so noted was Rat Lake near Loup Loup. You can find Lahontans in Albright, Blue and upper Green Lake in the Lime Lake region. Otherwise, I would ask before I drove in to some of these waters.

Member questions drilled down to lake by lake reports, targeting their favorite spots for deep intel. One idea that came out during the inquisition was a request: tell Ryan what’s going on at the lake you fished; take a picture of you best with a ruler, and help him keep track of the 200 lakes in his region.



## Fishing Reports

### Corbett Lake BC, May 13-18

The annual trip that a group of we WFFC members make to Corbett Lake Lodge for trophy size Kamloops rainbows was disappointing this year as we encountered warm sunny days all week, with the the lake heating up to as high as 68 degrees which was resulted in puny chironomid and callibaetis hatches. Instead of averaging 10 fish a day in the 2 pound to 2 ½ pound range on a mix of wet and dry flies our best efforts yielded an average of 3 fish a day, except for professor Denny Westover who did produce the more usual 10. Walt Swanson, Greg Collins, Doug Larson, Gary Bergquist, and I spent most days scratching our heads and praying to the fish gods for some form of relief! As usual we established a baseline for what the fish weren't very interested in which included damselfly, scuds, and ants, and focused on chironomids and San Juan Worms. From time to time white leaches and orange tailed buggers. The glowing stories we had picked up last year from a carpenter ant aficionado surprisingly did not bear fruit. Fish would make an occasional rush at the ant but didn't seem to prefer it to other lake fare and when they would slash at it, they weren't being hooked suggesting they were just slapping it around.

After fishing with my chironomid fruitlessly for several hours at a typical 2 feet off the bottom in 20 feet of water Denny and Walt pointed out to me that our depth finders illustrated clusters of fish at 10 to 15 feet and suggested that my worm would do better if fished at a level where the fish were locating and traveling, the so-called thermocline. After an alteration in gear, "Voila!" on the first cast and on each of 6 subsequent casts my worm hooked fish!

For many years, despite what the manufacturers claim, I have been



skeptical that small portable fish finders actually mark fish and not weeds and debris, however on this trip it was very apparent that a \$99 Little Buddy from Hummingbird was visualizing fish and that those fish were in the thermocline where the optimum combination of oxygen and temperature prevailed---not at 18feet when fishing in 20 feet of water where it was coolest but poor in oxygen that had been consumed by the florid bottom weed growth, nor in the top 5 or 6 feet of water which was oxygen rich but too warm at 68 degrees, both of which situations yielding nothing in several hours of fishing.

Despite the less than average fishing, the lake scenery continued to be spectacular with the usual loon swim by, the osprey dives, deer and bear sightings, cattle calls, and red finches everywhere.

Bob Burdick



### Rat, Davis, & Antilon Lakes

Memorial Day weekend was almost ruined by the loss of Chopaka. Kind of like a death in the family! So, I had to resort to

A few local Chelan area options. Tried Rat lk Friday and Monday and caught a few (7) in total for the two days. The good news is that they were all 16" ( real measure) . On Saturday I headed to Davis and after the big wind blow all morning ,I managed to catch 3 14" fish.

All the fish caught in Rat lk and Davis were caught on a ruby Rat fly, still works well!

Sunday I headed up to Antilon lk and met Mark Pratt ,Pat Becker and Dave Schorsch. They all had good fishing for Browns to 17" so I was told . I only caught 3 10" and left as it was getting warm and the bite was off.

The really FUN event was the guns going off for at least 45 minutes by shooters who were still drunk from the big party's the night before! The message is don't go there on Memorial Day! All other times seem to be ok.

Rumor has it that Chopaka road will reopen June 15 . Better check before going though.

Chuck Ballard

### Loreto, Baha Sur, June 2-9

At long last, I (we) got to return to Loreto! The last time I was here, 30 years ago, the Dorado was king. Oh, how times have changed!

It used to be, the way one fished here was to pitch out a few sardines, cast into the resulting frenzy of fish, and hang on! This is what Loreto was famous for, a seemingly endless bounty of gamefish, hungry for whatever crossed their path. Dorado, sailfish, marlin, tuna, yellowtail, on and on... That was then. Now is a different kind of fun.

The waters cooled here. Yeah, I know, different than the problems the rest of the world seems to have... The result is that the big pelagic (ocean

living) fish don't migrate as far up the Sea of Cortez as they used to, and if they do, it's later in the season. At least until this year. This year, the sardines have returned! More bait, in more places than has been seen in 20 years! Everyone in Loreto is excited about the prospect of the Dorado returning in July. Time will tell. Meanwhile....

I booked a day trip with a Loreto flyfishing guide. Pamela and Francisco hooked me up with the right gear (8 and 10 wt), loaded me in a Panga, and ran me around miles of islands and beaches. We threw streamers imitating the sardines we saw everywhere, about 6 inches long. The water we fished looked like the same stuff I fish in the South Sound, except that it was 80 degrees, and the fish were on speed! Sight fishing for the most part, I would cast to the most recent surface explosion, and strip like hell! Cabrilla (flag grouper and barred grouper) would hit the fly on the surface! If I was lucky enough to get the fly down 6 feet, near the bait, a yellowtail would hit like a freight train, and cork the 10 wt. rod in a hurry! I caught Vermillion snapper, Pink Scissor Tail, Amber Jack, and Jack Crevalle. All hot fish by any northwestern fly guy standard!

Burritos and cerveza for lunch, and off to the next island. At Danzante Island, we had the real Baha



experience. Casting at yet another city block size ball of sardines, I saw them. Roosterfish. The real bad guys of the beach. This was a pair, cruising over a white sand beach, in 6 feet of water. 4 feet long. No shit. 4 feet long. They cruised past the sardines as if they weren't even there. I covered the lead fish with the sardine fly twice before the guide saw them. Yelling "Roha", "Roha" and flailing his arms, throwing bait at them, I figured these must be pretty good fish! They were unimpressed with my fly and presentation. I clearly needed something MUCH bigger. The huge hole in the sardine school that formed around them told the tale. They sank

out of sight, but not out of memory!

The long run back to town got interrupted by a brief feeding frenzy of Jack Crevalle, not a bad thing, that really like the streamer.

Two more trips on the Sea of Cortez broke up our tour of restaurants and bars in Loreto. Lynn snorkeled while I cast near Isla Corinado, and later on the North mainland shore of Baha itself.

This is a great trip! Not expensive, great food, friendly people, and awesome fishing if you are open to new experiences!

Dave Schorsch



**Fishing partner Francisco with one of several Jack Crevalle landed**





**Washington Fly Fishing Club**

**P.O. Box 639**

**Mercer Island, WA 98040**

**June 2018**

**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 June 19. The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM.**

**This month: Roger Fletcher will speak on drift boats. Roger has authored a book titled Drift Boats and River Dories on the history of drift boats. He has models of various drift boats, which will be on display.**

**Gary Bergquist will be tying his favorite fly for all to learn how to tie.**