

Creel Notes from the



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

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Member of



MMXX NO.3

MARCH, 2020

President's Riffle

Spring is right around the corner, and I hope you are planning your Fly Fishing Trips for the spring and summer months.



Our club's first Outing will be at Gibbs Lake on Saturday March 28th and I hope that you can make it, I will.

CANCELLATIONS: Due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak here in the Seattle area, the WFFC Board made the decision to cancel the March 11th Fly Tying Forum, the March 17th Dinner Meeting and the March 21st Beginning Fly Tying Fishing class (which will be rescheduled) based on the King County Health Services recommendation urging all individuals to avoid large group meetings due to the risk of exposure. Later this month, the Board will appraise the virus outbreak situation to determine if it will be necessary to take similar actions in April for the best health interests of our membership and guests.

In February, a survey was sent out to the Membership asking for their evaluations and improvement recommendations for Dinner Meetings, Outings and the overall activities of the club. 41 survey responses were received, the majority of the responses gave both the Dinner Meetings and Outings "Excellent" or "Very Good" ratings.

When asked what prevent them from attending Dinner Meetings the primary reasons given were: traffic and meal prices. Earlier this year we look at holding the

dinners at three different venues and found that the cost per meal would be more than twice what we pay today plus parking, all with similar traffic problems. Currently we have the best meal deal staying at the Seattle Tennis Club, with no parking fees, and the "it is what it is" traffic hassle to get there.

I will have more about what steps the Board will be taking to improve the Dinner Meetings, Outings and other aspects of the club based on the Survey in my April Creel Notes Riffle.

Tight lines and stay healthy – Jim Goedhart



**Featured Fly: AK47
Neal Hoffberg**

Thread: Gray
(color to match hatch)

Tails: Coq d'Leon

Body: No

Hackle: Grizzle cape

Wing: Cul de canard

Inside this Issue

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Opinion: Time to Meet & Greet

So many members today join the WFFC and shortly after leave.

Many reasons contribute to this ,however, one that stands out is the lack of really getting to know these new members and engaging them into conversation and even more importantly is going fishing with them.

The club was formed as a “fly fishing”group. They went fishing at every opportunity.

I recognize we are in a different world today however there are some things we can do to start improving the situation.

Too often we sit with our old buddies at dinner . Making an effort to sit at other tables where the newer members sit is a good place to start.

Book Review: *The Australian Trout* by Unknown Author

A book review by Bob Young

I just finished this small book. It belongs to the Northwest Fly Anglers, so I have to return it. As the title suggest it is the story of trout got transplanted to Australia for Great Britain.

During the middle of the 19th century many of the British colonies wanted to ‘acclimatize’ their territories to be more like home. Organizations were established for this purpose locally and back in the old country. Englishmen wanted their surroundings to remind them of home. They wanted trees, shrubs, flowers as well as fish and game for sporting outings. The settlers in Victoria Territory in southeast Australia worked actively to accomplish these ends. There were forests and rivers that seemed suitable. There was an ‘acclimitization’ Society in England that worked closely with like-minded people in Australia.

It was not deemed practicable to transport live Salmonidae (trout and salmon) due the stringent requirements for cool aerated water for a trip of 3 to 4 months on sailing vessels. But perhaps fertilized ova survival could be accomplished. The first attempt was made in early 1852 with a tub of water and

I also can’t emphasize enough the importance of getting people involved in outings . Here you can really be a great help showing where to fish and fly patterns that work well even share a few flies of your own.

Perhaps even sharing transportation or lodging would be an option.

Lastly asking for help as a committee chair or officer is another place to start. The help may be very minimal in what your asking them to support, but they are now becoming engaged in the club activities and therefore may stay longer.

Think about this and see what you can do to keep the club healthy and sustainable.

Chuck Ballard

gravel containing fertilized ova. The eggs began to hatch part way through the journey. On arrival there was nothing but warm putrid water.

Efforts continued and 50,000 ova were placed in gravel beds suspended on wires in the hold to avoid vibration and fed with ice water. The trip did not go with several delays, storms and the ice ran out. It was still cool in the ice hold and some ova that were packed in moss had survived a good portion of the trip. This was the clue needed to succeed subsequently.

While all this was going on, in Victoria holding ponds were built to accept any surviving fish or eggs. In England further experiments showed the eggs could survive for long periods of time if they were packed in moss and kept cool by melting ice water.

Another attempt would be made aboard the fully rigged clipper ship ‘Norfolk’. The packing consisted of charcoal spread over the bottom of the box then a layer of crushed ice, this covered with a nest of wet moss, wetted and the eggs gently added and covered with moss. More crushed ice and the lid was screwed down. 164 such boxes were prepared thusly each containing

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

about 600 eggs. All are then stored in an icehouse in the bottom of the ship. About 9 feet of ice covered the boxes. 16 more boxes were stored in another part of the ships hole. The total of 100,000 salmon eggs and significantly 3000 trout ova.

The Norfolk sailed on the Jan. 21, 1864 and after 84 days arrived in Vic-

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On the Fly

The Meeting in Reel Time

by David Ehrich

February 18

President Jim Goedhart opened meeting to deserved applause and immediately handed off the mic to Dextor Brown who circulated among members and their guests. Some of these introductions were humble, others included Seattle Super Sonic Royalty, a member of the Olympic Fly Fishing Team, and Rich Gaspar who rejoined the club after taking care of grandchildren, getting fitted for hearing aids, and trying on some new hips.

New member inductions - nine in total - had to be put off because none of them showed up. Rather than follow as usual with fishing reports, Jim moved on to a budget report so that some members might still pay attention. David Spratt, our Treasurer, reviewed our projected budget. I'll give you the short version: dues and meal fees remain static while funding for community outreach, youth programs, and conservation show increases. Programs will cost a little more. Budget was passed unanimously by voice vote. President G took back the mic and gave us an update on Mike Moscyński. From there, we got fishing reports from Scott Hagen who fished along with a veritable dean's list of members in Southern Argentina for sea run brown trout. On more humble waters, some members scoured the South Sound for Searun, of which there were none, and silvers, of which there was one. Westover trolled Lake Samamish and brought up some Kokanee. He described the journey as "similar to kissing your sister". I've never come up with in-



cest as a fishing metaphor, but what the heck, I'm open to learning new things. Lily got skunked on Rocky Ford, with the hat to prove it. Bob Burdick, "the world's greatest" as we call him, took a trip on the Yakima that turned into an exercise in winter water swimming due to pilot error.



Photos courtesy of Bob Birkner

Committee reports followed. Of note, the "Fly Fishing Federation" considered cancelling the Ellensburg conclave due to low Eastside attendance, but they've rallied to pull off a conclave on May 4th in Luther Burbank Park. Fly tiers are needed and lots of attendees are important to keep the event alive. Mike Wearn warned us of a Lake Hanna outing for May, chili and all. Mel shared updates to the Website. From there we moved to the "Fruits and Flowers" report, which aside from a birth in the family was one cancer after another. Some grim news.

Neal Hoffberg introduced our speaker, Linda Mapps, Seattle Times reporter, author, and activist, who feels like one of the WFFC family. She wound up and spoke of "Hostile Waters: Orcas and Salmon are Struggling to Survive". But to start, Linda noted that contrary to recent history, the Seattle Times is doing

well, including significant increases in environmental researchers and reporter. The series, by the same title, took 18 months to research, recently winning a prestigious science award for science reporting. Check out tomorrow's Times for her report on "The Blob" - an enormous system of warm water in the Pacific, which has dissipated and disappeared thanks to fall storms.

Now to the bad news. Surface temperatures of the Pacific off the coast of Washington and Oregon may have mitigated, but the ocean has a memory and somewhere there's heat, such as the cod waters off the Alaska which have retained heat below 100 meters. Since she last spoke club members, she has written an alarming series of obituaries for resident Orcas. She remembers each of the predators of the ocean and can speak of individual whales like a family member. For example, L-41 just passed. He was an elder, big, and a real lady's man and father of much of the pod. He will be missed.

Linda's new book, "Learning Tree" just came out and speaks about climate change through the life of one tree. She's got a longer version of her talk coming out in 2021. We love orcas. Why? Well for one, they are accessible right off our urban docks. They ply the waters and fish that feed the Frazier river system. We love them because we have a long standing relationship with these resident orcas. Like those fish we all love to catch, we admire these behemoths of the Salish Sea and we know their songs. We know where they troll for salmon, and we admire their beauty and power. They are a barometer of the health of our waters. Although people might think Orcas are cuddly, they are the biggest, baddest mammals in the ocean. Nothing threatens an orca.

To that point, the Seattle Times

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Fishing Report

Rio Grande, Argentina
by Scott Hagen

Jay Deeds, Jim McRoberts and I arrived in Ushuaia, Argentina in the morning of February 1 after a painful trip from SeaTac that began on January 29. We did get to go from LAX to Buenos Aires on a 787, which was a very nice ride. We were met at the Ushuaia airport and loaded on a small bus which drove almost to the edge of town and picked up another guest, then back to the center of town and picked up Bob Burdick, Gene Gudger, and

snot (didymo). Also, we had to be packed and ready to get on a bus to the airport at 3:30 in the morning.

When we arrived at the Rio Grande airport, we found out the airplane we were supposed to catch had not landed, instead it had turned around and gone back to Buenos Aires because of fog. A mad scramble ensued and we finally got a bus to Ushuaia.



Hugh Clark. Then we were off on a four hour drive to Estancia Maria Behety, arriving mid afternoon.

The fishing was pretty fair, maybe not quite as good as last year for some of us. The usual program, up for breakfast at 7:00 and then out to the river at 8:00, fishing to noon. Then the big meal of the day, a nap and out at 6:00PM, fishing until 10:15PM. Jay Deeds got (as usual) the big fish for the group at 21 pounds. I think everyone landed at least one fish over 15 pounds.

On the morning of the seventh (the last day) Jim and I got a double. Jim and I didn't fish much in the evening, the weather turned warm and the river was full of rock
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Pictured above: Jim McRoberts and Scott Hagen pose with a couple South American beauties. Below, the group poses. From the left: Jay Deeds, Jim, Hugh Clark, Gene Gudger, Scott, and Bob Burdick.

When we got there, we found out the flight we had to Buenos Aires would arrive too late to make our connection to Dallas. Another mad scramble, we found a flight from Ushuaia to Calefate and then on to BA that would allow us to make our connection. We finally got back to SeaTac mid morning of the 9th. The fishing was pretty good, but the travel left something to be desired.

Club Aims and Purposes

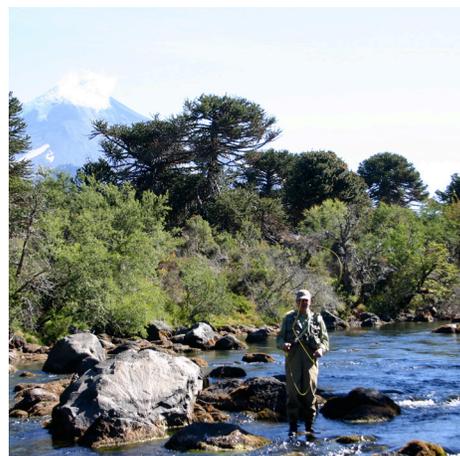
The purpose of this club shall be:

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.

Australian Trout continued from page 2

toria, Aus. About 80% of the eggs survived and less than half the ice had melted. From there eggs were trans-shipped to prepared rearing ponds and other waters. After rearing, mature fish were released in rivers and streams throughout the territory eventually reaching Tasmania and New Zealand.

The trout thrived including 'sea trout' but salmon were not established. No returns were noted. Some salmon fisheries are maintained only by hatchery production.





Our February speaker, Linda Mapps lays down the hard truth about the connections between South Sound health and Orca viability.

has sent researchers to see the northern resident pods. They are healthy. They live in water that is quiet, clean, and full of salmon. In fact, these northern pods are feasting on our local returning fish before they get home. They are smart. Here's the angle: when we love Orcas, we are really loving healthy waters. So, the conservation of the Salish Sea southern residents might just come down to the fact that west coast citizens "love" the Orca. And they need our love now. They need clean, they need quiet, and they need food.

Orcas, like other mammals including us, speak a learned language. That language is unique; their culture, including what they eat, is learned and specific. These populations and their transient cousins do not mix; they do not eat the same thing, they know each other from afar, and they would never get things mixed up.

Orcas have developed their skills for millions of years, specifically in the area for 12,000 years. They compete with eight millions residents between Vancouver and Olympia. For example, one of the Southern Resident Orcas was born in 1928, a time when there were no dams, less people, and a lot more salmon. She remembers big runs on

the Sacramento River system. She remembers Chum runs near Seattle. She leads her pod (Orca pods are matriarchal) to places she remembers year after year and the salmon are gone. She brings them back to the Columbia and hopes for the best.

What's the hope? Orcas are tough and we love them, but we need to manifest that love and let them win. If we take it all, we'll end up with nothing. It's simple, we need to step back and let them enjoy the fish, let them enjoy the quiet, let them survive.

Seattle Times reporting has told some tough stories about calves that have died almost at birth, J35 who held on to her dead calf for weeks until the calf fell apart, Orcas who swim among coal docks and other hostile environments. Six million readers followed the series and journey of J35. Six million readers called out for legislative action. This is how it can work: learn the food web and find out how small changes can lead to big changes. Find out the impediments and insist your legislator acts.

Linda's talk was as tough as the Orca. My wife had to leave twice to wipe off tears. But Linda doesn't choke up. She finds hope: hope in the resistance of the great animals and hope in our love of these great

mammals and the food we both share the hunt for. She sees progress in the potential for removal of the lower Snake River dams. Why? Because what used to be about salmon is now about Orcas. And we love Orcas.

From there, questions. Naturally the hatcheries on the Elwha came up. Two things: NOAA worried first about the 26 King Domes of sediment and losing fish; they insisted on a hatchery. Second, the tribes insisted on hatcheries because they did not want to wait generations for returning fish. We may not see a return to normalcy for twenty years. An imperfect solution to a perfect mess may take time. The promise is this; when the fish levels return, the hatcheries will shut down. Hold 'em to it. Don't forget.

Gil netting came up next. Linda believes Gil netting is around for a while. New ideas are out there and alternatives will do more than prohibitions. Next, dam removal: Linda believes that the Eastside will need to cure the east side. Bonneville which used to be the low coast power option of choice is now getting outbid by solar and wind. They pay the same 18 billion for salmon restoration, but they aren't making as much off power. The balance of economic power of the Columbia system is teetering. What forces changes? Climate change and energy changes may tip the balance. Lastly, the irony of hatchery fish keeping the Orcas alive may become the next imperative. Can we keep the orcas alive without them? Can we satisfy the tribes without them? Her opinion is some hatcheries in intelligent places might be necessary, but will-nilly hatcheries are a recipe for tragedy.

To wit, that guy you know who remembers that great salmon he caught when he was ten. Where did they go? How can we get them back? Well, that's the same question J35 is asking.



Washington Fly Fishing Club

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March

Meeting Cancelled



At the discretion of the WFFC Board Members, the decision has been made to cancel the March 17th Dinner Meeting based on the King County Health Services recommendation urging all individuals to avoid all large group meetings due to the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

All members who have already signed up for this event will have their dinner credit card fees refunded.

The current COVID-19 virus situation is still evolving, but the Board feels that it is in the best health interests for our membership and guests to prudently cancel this dinner meeting.