

Creel Notes from the



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

Website: www.wffc.com

Member of



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President's Riffle

The third prong of our Club's mission is education of the public, particularly of our youth, about fly fishing and conservation. It is in this area that our Club truly excels. We provide financial support to conservation and education groups, in association with other groups, and, more importantly, many of our members devote countless volunteer hours to organizations dedicated to those efforts, for example Project Healing Waters and the Northwest Youth Conservation Fly Fishing Academy. Closer to home, the Club seeks to provide to the public the opportunity to learn more about fly fishing and conservation through the classes we offer, in fly fishing, fly tying, and fly casting. Through our monthly meetings and our outings, all open to the public, we create more opportunities for others (and ourselves) to learn about where to fish, how to fish, the threats to fishing, and how we can improve fishing and our environment. We, collectively, are a tremendous resource of knowledge, talent, resourcefulness, and dedication.

And, yet, who knows about those opportunities that we provide? Who knows we exist? How can they find us? How can they reach us, once they do find us? These are the sorts of questions I've come to ask myself every day, first as Vice President – Membership and now as President. The answer to



the question of how people find us has been, for decades, through word of mouth. That sufficed, in an age where information moved slowly. That still works, slowly and at the margins. Today, people get the vast majority of their information from the web. For better or worse, they way to find it quickly and easily and on the go, and move on if they can't find it. The younger you are, the more likely you will rely on the internet instead of word of mouth. That's where our website comes in. It's how we communicate with each other and the rest of the world and how the rest of the world communicates with us. The Club's website provides a lot of information about us and our mission, when people can find it and when it actually works. But it's hard to find and, often, harder to use. If you run a search of "Fly Fishing Seattle" or anything similar, we don't appear. "Fly casting classes," same result. I can't access the website on my cell phone. Many people who managed to find us have told me that they couldn't join the Club through the website or couldn't pay their dues or sign up for a class or an outing. Our web-

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Education

Education Corner: Classes, Demonstrations, and More

Greetings from the Education Committee. Everything is in place for WSCFFI Casting Fair, April 29th, Ballinger Park, Mountlake Terrace. The event is open to all. Times are 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. There will be fly tying demonstrations and fly-tying classes. PHWFF will be represented. Women Connect, Youth Education and the FFI will be represented. Casting classes are offered for anglers of all skill levels; from beginner to advanced. This year we have added on water Two Handed Spey and Single Hand Spey classes. For those looking for a quick tune up or to correct a recurring flaw, we will have the Walk-in Clinic. Classes are filling quickly. Visit WSCFFI.org to register today. I look forward to seeing you on the 29th!

Tight lines,

Neal Hoffberg

Committee Chair Education

Tyer's Corner

Rickard's Stillwater Nymph

We're leaving winter behind, the lakes will warm up soon, and the trout will be on the prowl and hungry after the cold months. It's time to fill my lake boxes. Prominent in those boxes will be my favorite lake prospector, a pattern that never has let me down – Denny Rickard's Stillwater Nymph.

This fly is one of those patterns that the trout could take for anything – a damsel or dragon nymph, a leech, a small minnow or fry, a scud, a beetle. Properly tied, every



material in it moves. I tie it in burnt orange and olive colors.

Here's what you'll need to tie this great fly: Hook, 2x1, sz 10-12 (TMC 5262 or equivalent); Weight (optional), .020 lead or lead-free wire (preferred); Thread, 70 or 140 Denier, black or olive; Tail, marabou, burnt orange (center stem removed at tip, hook shank length) (sometimes I tie a tail of burnt orange marabou over olive marabou); Wing Case, marabou, burnt orange or olive or Thin Skin; Rib, copper wire; Hackle, grizzly dyed burnt orange (tied in tip first, palmered, 3-4 wraps only); Body, seal, seal sub, or marabou (I use marabou).

Keep it sparse, you want those barbs to move a lot, not to be jammed up against each other. Rib the body after palmering the hackle, then pull the wing case over and tie it down behind the eye. I like to leave a little hump in the wing case, I don't pull it taut.

Fish this on a floater or intermediate line, slow short retrieves. Let it sit once in a while as those materials will move on their own, even in still water. The trout will beat the heck out of this fly, but it will keep fishing!

'Riffle' Continued

site, as good as it was a decade ago, is overdue for a redo.

The Club needs your help, particularly those of you who may have experience in website

Creel Notes

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design, search engine optimization, and site maintenance. Over the next several months, let's put together our collective ideas for how we can make the website user friendly, at both the front end and administratively, and how we can draw traffic to it.

If you can help in this effort, give me a call at 206-949-8187 or shoot me an email at danferd.henke@gmail.com.

On the Fly

Then and Now

by David Ehrich

Thanks to Chuck Ballard, I have been re-viewing a pile of old Creel Notes in the interest of updating Backcasts, the Club's seminal tome. You've seen an occasional trip down memory lane in these pages. Today, I thought I take a meta look at the club "Then & Now" from the standpoint of Creel Notes.

The Dec/Jan, 1999 calendar pictured below caught my eye, especially the Wednesday schedule. Members had an opportunity every



with a similar pace: awards, education, outings, and the like with a few more articles on the "How and Why" of fishing such as Pete Rafle's article on "How to Improve Your Fishing, Guaranteed." Pete came from Trout Unlimited.

Although I doubt anyone could guarantee improvement of my half-ass casting, his advice included five valid and timeless points:

- Become Aware. "Don't assume a river, lake or ocean is protected. Learn what manmade influences impact your home waters."

- Become Involved: "The key to activism is to make it fun." Everyone has a skill and for each angler, that skill can be put to work making fishing better.

- Get Organized: "Because anglers have such a passion for their rivers and understand the ecology

- Stay Committed: "The price of good fishing, like the price of freedom, is eternal vigilance. A river isn't restored overnight; it almost always involves years, even decades of work."

Doug Shaad continued to fund conservation studies. Bill Neal gave us guidelines for the Boyd Aigner fly tying competition, new members joined, Don Simonson taught another generation (including me) how to cast, President Greg Crumbaker impelled members to bring guests to meetings and outings, and Donn Mills listed an impressive list of outings including the familiar trips to Chopaka, Dry Falls and Wet Buns, but also the now retired High Country outing, a Roche Lake, BC weekend in June, two trips to Yakutat, Alaska and even a trip to Baja, Mexico.

A look through April's Creel Notes advertised a "WFFC picnic for summer 2000" at Meridian Park.

December 1999-January 2000

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 Spend time with family	6 WFFC BOARD MEETING 7:00 PM COLLEGE CLUB	7	8 LUNCHEON EVERY WEDNESDAY 11:45 AM CAMLIN HOTEL, 9TH & PINE		10	11 Go Fishing!
12 Spend time with family	13	14	15 LUNCHEON EVERY WEDNESDAY 11:45 AM CAMLIN CLOUD ROOM	16	17	18 Go Fishing!
19 Get ready for the Christmas Party!	20	21 WFFC CHRISTMAS PARTY 3:30 PM COLLEGE CLUB	22 LUNCHEON EVERY WEDNESDAY 11:45 AM CAMLIN CLOUD ROOM	23	24	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!
26 Spend time with family	27	28	29 FLY TYER'S ROUNDTABLE 7:00 PM MERCER IS. COVNTY CHURCH	30 NO CONSERVATION COM. MEETING THIS MONTH	1 JANUARY HAPPY NEW YEAR!	2 Go Fishing!
3 Go Fishing!	4 WFFC BOARD MEETING 7:00 PM COLLEGE CLUB	5	6 LUNCHEON EVERY WEDNESDAY 11:45 AM CAMLIN CLOUD ROOM	7	8 CREEL NOTES FROZEN	9 Go Fishing!
10 Go Fishing!	11	12	13 LUNCHEON EVERY WEDNESDAY 11:45 AM CAMLIN CLOUD ROOM	14	15	16 Go Fishing!

week to take time with club members either during the lunch hour or in the evening. Assuming members had fulfilled their other duties like "spending time with family" or "Go fishing," lunch with fellow anglers must have been a privledge.

Other wise, club life moved on

of the river so well, they make extremely effective advocates."

- Get Help: "Protecting and restoring a river can be challenging and expensive" Partnering up with national and well funded organizations adds more volume to our voices.

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.

Fly Fishers International and Mountlake Terrace Recreation

Fly Casting Fair



**CASTING CLASSES
FLY TYING DEMOS AND TYING CLASSES
SPEY CASTING CLASSES
WALK-IN CASTING CLINIC
CASTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

**Saturday April 29, 2023 9 am to 4 pm
Ballinger Park, Mountlake Terrace WA**



**FLY FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL**
Washington State Council

The FFI Fly Casting Fair is back at Ballinger Park in the Mountlake Terrace neighborhood of Seattle and we hope you will join us.

The day-long event April 29 will offer a Walk-In Casting clinic, a skills development course and detailed classes in specific casting skills taught by FFI certified instructors. In addition, FFI will host some of the best fly tiers in the Pacific Northwest in a rotating series of tying sessions. New this year will be two classes on Spey Casting—both single handed and double handed spey. Also new this year will be a Youth Fly Casting Class that is free for kids 10 to 14 years of age, and an

www.smchurch.com



Introduction to Fly Tying Class for all ages. Registration is limited, so please head to the Washington State Council FFI Website at WSCFFI.ORG for details and online registration.

In addition to instruction, you can explore ideas about fishing with our conservation and education partners who will be at the event as well. The Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy will have representatives at the event to discuss their week-long summer camp for teenagers. The Coastal Cutthroat Coalition that works to understand and conserve Puget Sound's native trout will have representatives at the Fair to talk

about their latest research and Project Healing Waters that serves disabled veterans will be there as well.

Want help solving that annoying tailing loop? Want to figure out the double-haul or develop a better roll cast? Bring your questions to the Walk-In Clinic and spend time with a Certified FFI Casting Instructor. The process will be simple. Bring your own rod. Stop at the registration desk when you arrive and describe what you want to learn, or the problem you want to address. You will be matched with an instructor either individually or in groups of 2 or 3 to work on the skill.

The Skills Development Course will be back this year as well. The course is a fun and easy way to test and develop your cast at your own pace either with the help of an instructor or in casual competition with friends. Like the name says, the course is aimed at helping casters improve aspects of their cast from a reach mend to a double haul. The course also will be set up for participants to challenge themselves to reach Bronze, Silver and Gold casting levels and receive FFI recognition for the accomplishment.

To keep us all on our toes, we will have coffee available for sale throughout the day and lunch for sale beginning at 11:30.

For the best experience, register for one of the detailed classes in specific casting skills. Those 90-minute sessions—in the morning and afternoon—will provide you with the concise instruction that FFI is known for. Classes will be delivered by Certified FFI Casting Instructors. Ryan Smith and Craig Koeppler will cover Beginning Fly Casting, Molly Semenik and Todd Somsel will teach Spey Casting. Marion Hiller and Ruth Sims will lead Women's Fly Casting, Tom Cammarata will teach Intermediate Fly Casting, Don Simonson will lead Advanced Fly Casting, Pat Peterman will manage the Walk-in Casting Clinic and Jim Black will lead the Skills Development Course.

These are among the best casting instructors anywhere, right in the Northwest.

And if you are interested in fly tying, we've got you covered too. There will be a series of excellent tiers rotating through stations all day in the Lakeview Room in the lodge adjacent to the casting fields. We will have some of the most accomplished fly tiers in the Northwest and the world, including Dareld Thompson who is the featured tier in Art Lingen's Book "Syd Glassco", Atlantic Salmon fly tier Mike McCoy and accomplished still-water tier Kuni Masuda. There will be ample seating to watch these and other tiers work and time to talk with them as well. For beginning tiers, Instructors Sam Matalone and Vern Jeremica are offering classes to get you off on the right foot.

Ballinger Park is an ideal place for an event of this kind. It's in the center of the North Sound area where hundreds of FFI members live. The site was a former golf course. It has a large club house, kitchen and meeting area, all of which will be available to us. Coffee in the morning, lunch at noon – we've got you covered. The parking lot accommodates more than 150 cars and trucks. Enter through the club house and beyond it to the south there is an expansive open lawn leading down to Lake Ballinger. Spey Casting Classes will be held on the water at the beach at the south end of the lawns.

Once you enter the clubhouse from the parking area, there will be a sign in desk. If you have registered for a class you can check your reservation and the time and place on the field where the class will be held. If you simply want to work on a casting skill at the Walk-in Clinic, head to the reception area for the clinic and inquire there about the instructors available and when. Friends can arrive at their leisure and challenge themselves and one another on the Skills Development Course. There may be a wait to begin the course, so you can duck into the building and get a cup of coffee while you wait. While there, take some time to check out the Lakeview Room where there will be fly tying throughout the day.

FFI director and membership chairman Larry Gibbs will have an FFI

membership table. There will be information on all 17 Washington affiliate clubs of FFI.

Join us. If you care about recovery of salmon and steelhead in our state, Washington FFI is your partner. If you care about inviting kids and families into our sport, FFI is your partner. If you want to welcome women and veterans into our sport, FFI is your partner. If you want the opportunity to fly fish for all fish in all waters, FFI is your partner. Join Washington FFI on April 29 at Ballinger Park in Mountlake Terrace.

Outings

Mike Nolan – Outings Chairperson

The Quincy Lake outing will be held at the end of the month on Saturday-Sunday, March 25-26. I will be camping at Quincy Lake on Friday-Sunday. Plan to meet me by my Lance camping trailer with the displayed WFFC banner at 7:30am on Saturday the 25th or thereafter on the lake. Free camping is available throughout the area but bring your own food and water. We can gather near my campsite on Saturday afternoon for Club provided beverages and maybe a campfire.

We've added a Cooper Lake outing on a TBD date in August 2023, hosted by David Spratt and Robert Tovar. Cooper Lake is a high lake (2788 feet) 3 1/2 miles northwest of Salmon-La-Sac. The lake enjoys a year-round open fishing season and, in the past, has provided fair fishing for brook trout and rainbows 8-10 inches. Brown trout in the 1 to 3-pound range and some much larger are also available. Small kokanee and cutthroat are also taken. David has offered to let us overnight tent camp on his property in Roslyn.

I was able to negotiate a one-night stay rate instead of the mandatory two-night stay rate at the White Pass Village Inn for our Leech Lake outing on June 24-25. Camping in the area is sparse and the closest overnight accommodations are located in Packwood. If you are not camping, renting or sharing a condo will be the best

strategy if you want to be as close as possible to Leech Lake. Ben Davidson has booked unit #23 and he is looking for roommates to fill up the condo.

We're still looking for members that are interested in hosting an outing. So, if you're interested in going fishing with other folks as a day or extended weekend trip let me know. There's way more lakes and rivers to fish than we can ever hope to hit in the calendar year. You can email me at mikesnolan@comcast.net or call me at (425) 754-1234 if you are interested in volunteering to host an outing.

WFFC 2023 Outings Schedule

- March 25-26 Quincy Lakes Unit (Quincy, Burke, Dusty)
- April 29-30 Seep Lakes Unit (Quail, Sage)
- May 6-7 Green Lake-Okanogan County
- June 24-25 Leech Lake
- September 16 Hood Canal
- October 14-15 Big Twin Lake
- November 4 Wet Buns

WFFC is proud to announce the return of in-person fly casting classes.

Our sessions will be taught by Jim Black, Certified Casting Instructor, FFI. Our classes will teach you the Pick Up and Lay Down (PULD) cast, False casting, Roll Cast, and how to shoot line.

Luther Burbank Park, Mercer Island – Class Meetup in the Parking lot.

Dates: April 5 /12/ 19/ 26 & May 3rd 2023. Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Cost: \$80 – Tuition for non-members may be applied to first year membership dues.

There is no charge for WFFC members. The Beginning Fly Casting course will be limited to 12 attendees. For more information and to sign-up to attend the casting classes, click on the following link: <https://wffc.com/event/2023-wffc-beginning-fly-casting-class-five-sessions-april-5th-12th-19th-and-may-3rd/>