

# Creel Notes from the



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

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

Member of



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## President's Riffle

### On Tying Flies

Why do we tie flies?

It makes no sense at a certain level. There was a time when it was an absolute necessity to tie your own, back in the pre-internet age. But we live in an age where you can buy flies online in thousands of patterns for less than a buck each and have them delivered to your door by the end of the week, if not the next day. (Please don't do that, by the way, the flies tend to be of inferior quality, although they'll get you through a trip, instead support your local fly shop. They are an endangered species and need our help.) And don't forget the cost of the time it takes to tie – it's the biggest expense! So, we don't tie to save money, even compared to buying at a shop. If you encounter someone who tells you that you will save money tying your own flies, check that person's criminal history. You will find convictions for fraud.

"I can tie a fly specific to local conditions," you say. Well, that's true, but whenever I tell myself this is the reason I remember the famous quote, "I was struggling with which fly to tie on next, when my guide reminded me that 90% of what a trout eats is 3/8ths of an inch long and brown." Truth is, if you put something, anything, in front of a trout with a decent presentation, you're likely to get a hit. Even if your fly is not exactly perfect for the bugs on that



water.

"I can tie better, more durable flies, if I tie my own." Likely true. But given that the life expectancy of a fly is short anyway, it hardly seems a reason to buy all the materials and take the time to tie then yourself.

"I need to tie, because I never remember that I need more flies until the night before the trip and after the local fly shop has closed." Can't help you with your personal planning. (I've been there myself more than once.)

"I need to tie, because sometimes the fish are on a bug that I don't have in my box." Okay, we've all seen that, but if we study the water before we go, we can buy and carry the range of flies likely needed. Just another planning issue.

So, why tie? First, I'd say, tying is a hobby related to fishing but distinctly separate from it. (And, as my wife would confirm, collecting tying materials is yet another separate hobby.) Why does anyone engage in a hobby. Because it pleases them to do so, it's an artistic outlet, it's little more than that for many of us.

For me, though, walking along a small stream, alone, making my own decisions of which fly to use in the situation before me, reading the water, making a great presentation, and hooking a trout on a fly I tied myself cast with a rod I built myself is the absolute pinnacle of fishing. (Rod building is another ridiculous hobby, by the way.) I still giggle like a six-year old when I catch a fish that way. If you have the fishing gene, you fully understand.

The fly ties it all together.

## Club Business

### JIM BECK WINS 2023 BOYD AIGNER COMPETITION

By Bill Neal, Awards Chairman

Congratulations to Jim Beck, the overall winner of the Boyd Aigner Fly Tying Competition for 2023. His winning performance was announced at the July members' meeting. Flies from the Competition, judged at the June members' meeting, were again on display for review by the members

The Competition is named to honor Boyd Aigner, a beloved member of the Club known for his fly tying skill and originality. We were fortunate to have Boyd's daughter Marion Hiller at the July meeting to present the Award to Jim.

The 2023 fly patterns and the first three place finishers in each were:

Wally wing mayfly: 1st – Jim Beck; 2nd – Tom Neu; 3rd – Denny Westover.

Golden stone nymph: 1st - -David Hart (Project Healing Waters); 2nd -- Chuck Ballard; 3rd -- Jim Beck

Spun deer hair head streamer: 1st – Chuck Ballard; 2nd – Jim Beck; 3rd – Marcy Kindinger and Tom Neu (tie).

The overall winners were 1st – Jim Beck; 2nd – Chuck Ballard; 3rd – Marcy Kindinger.

Congratulations to all winners, and thank you to all participants.

## Methow Survey Delayed Until Later in August

Good evening, WFFC

Our good friend, Ryan Fortier has sent the email copied to this club letter head. The survey has been rescheduled for late September. Details are in Ryan's email below:

We are attempting to reschedule the pilot project for the Methow River trout survey and will again be looking for volunteers to help capture fish for the WDFW staff to mark. Would you be able to pass on this information to the club members?

The proposed dates would be Thursday September 28 and Friday September 29. There was a lot of interest for club members in August so we will be hoping to keep the momentum and get as many volunteers as we can to partner with WDFW staff.

Anglers will work in a group of 1-3 to capture trout while a WDFW staffer will measure, mark, and release the trout. Anglers will fish the same hole/run/reach cooperatively and would place captured trout into PVC tubes for holding similar to the steelhead broodstock project.

The intent of the pilot is to get an idea of how many fish can be reasonably marked in a day over a given area. This will help answer planning questions about how many resources are needed to scale up the effort to obtain the precision we need in our survey for a full understanding of the fishery.

Anglers would need to meet early in the day to avoid warmer water conditions and should plan to provide their own equipment, transportation, food, and water. Anglers will also need to register as volunteers with WDFW prior to heading

## Creel Notes

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CREEL NOTES EDITOR  
DAVID EHRICH  
DAVIDEHRICH@ROCKETMAIL.COM

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into the field:

Department of Fish and Wildlife Volunteer Program - Volunteer Console (cervistech.com).

### WFFC Youth Committe

by John Gravendyk

Adventure plus learning plus fly fishing equals tons of fun at the

Continued on next page

2023 Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy.

For the past 20 Years or so, The Academy has been introducing youngsters to the world of fly angling, aquatic conservation and the serious work of becoming young stewards of the natural world. In a departure from prior years, this years class of 16 boys and girls gathered at beautiful Panhandle Lake near Shelton Washington for an intensive week long program.

For the first time in the Academies history participants at this years session were able to check out canoes, pontoon boats and float tubes for lake outings. This proved to be a big hit as the students were able to put into practice all the fishing knowledge they were gaining in real time. Several outings to local streams and rivers, entomology classes, careers in the outdoors overviews and casting instruction and competitions rounded out the week. All the participants caught fish and every student expressed a desire to return next year!

The Academy is a program of The Washington Council of Trout Unlimited with significant support from Fly Fishers International, local businesses and private Fly Fishing Clubs. The WFFC is a major donor of both funds and expertise. Currently two of the three Academy Directors are WFFC members (yours truly and Jim Goedhart) and in addition, Neal Hoffberg and Bob Burdick helped out at the 2023 Academy in a big way. Thanks to all the volunteers and presenters for making this years Academy such a huge success.

For a more detailed look at the program check out our website: [flyfish.academy](http://flyfish.academy)

## Outtings

### September 16th Trip to Hood Canal

This year's outing will be hosted by Jay Deeds, to fish for Sea-run cutthroat, the occasional coho and pink salmon. along with hot pizza, and cold beer. What could be better! The sunsets from Jays yard are amazing, and the fishing can be pretty good too! Saturday happy hour/ dinner around 5:00 at Jays. The boat launch is just north at Misery point, and camping is available at Scenic Beach State Park, right next door. Sign up for headcount. Jays contact info is: 15350 NW Maple Ln., Seabeck. 360-830-4885 [dogooddeeds@wavecable.com](mailto:dogooddeeds@wavecable.com).

The outing is Free for WFFC Members and \$40 fee for non-WFFC Members which can be applied towards becoming a annual member dues of \$80. Optionally, you can also make a \$10 donation to support the costs of the Pizza Dinner and beverage libations.

Please signup early so that Jay will know how many pizzas to order for us, and the amount of beers to have on hand too!

<https://wffc.com/event/september-16-2023-wffc-hood-canal-outing/>

### Upcoming: Big Twin Lakes Outing October 14-15, 2023

You don't want to miss the last freshwater lake outing of the year at Big Twin Lake Campground. I fished the lake in late May of this

year and caught some fish even when the lake water temperature was abnormally warm. With the cooler weather moving in, the fish should be in a feeding frenzy as they bulk up in preparation for winter.

The club will provide steaks for those that sign up in advance, along with beverages. Please bring appetizers and side dishes to share. As usual, happy hour (with club beverages) starts around 4:00 PM, with dinner an hour or so later.

At Big Twin Lake Campground there are RV sites, tent sites and cabin rentals available as well as showers, rowboat rentals and a boat launch. Let the campground know that you are with the WFFC as they are holding campsites in Area "A" near the lakeshore. You can make reservations at [www.bigtwinlakesresort.com/reserve](http://www.bigtwinlakesresort.com/reserve) or call 509-996-2650. The address is 210 Twin Lakes Rd., Winthrop, WA 98862.

Please sign up on the WFFC website or call me to attend the Outing as I need a count for the Club provided food. For more information about the Big Twin Lakes Outing, please click on the following link to do so:

<https://wffc.com/event/october-14-15-wffc-big-twin-lake-outing/>

# Editorial

## WFFC “Going Out of Business”

Well if this title didn't get your attention you must be dead!

The message here is that, like it or not, we are in a situation of losing active members faster than they are being replaced.

Try as we have, we don't seem to get or retain the attention and long term interest in the WFFC by the newer members.

One can guess as to all the reasons such as time, for those with children to getting their fly fishing information elsewhere. It really doesn't matter because people neither log onto the web to view programs or take one evening a month to become acquainted with those of vast knowledge of Washington State fly fishing opportunities.

If I had answers to this issue I would certainly offer them. However, given the situation what I see happening is reducing the club internal and external functions and staffing requirements. This becomes necessary because there are not enough active members to fill all the positions.

So if you are one of those who have not been active, please recognize that all organizations need to be sustained and we need the support before we end up with a going out of business sale!!!

Chuck Ballard



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



Last Sunday at Lincoln Park. Anyone waving a fly rod would have caught more plunkers and tourists than salmon, but I did see some fly anglers casting from a drifting boat off shore. D. Ehrich

## Fishing Reports

### Lake McMurray

by Mike Nolan

On Sunday, 8/27/23, I fished from my float tube at Lake McMurray near Mt Vernon early in the morning on a hot summer day. I was using a 5W full HD line with a size 8 olive hare bob fly and letting it sink near the bottom of the lake. A very slow retrieve would usually result in a take of my fly. I fished for approximately 3 hours and hooked 8 rainbow trout averaging 10"-12" in size with the largest fish approaching 14" in size.

### 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.