

Creel Notes from the



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

Website: www.wffc.com



MMXXIV No. 3

March, 2024



President's Riffle

A quick riffle this month, to pass along a summary of our recent member survey. We had 43 responses, with many helpful suggestions. Here are some of the highlights.

Member Survey Responses

Danferd Henke, President, Washington Fly Fishing Club



- Our members would like to see more local outings and more overnight outings. In short, they'd like to see more fishing – wouldn't we all? We're working on this with the concept of "flash outings," those not on the regular schedule on relatively short notice. The upcoming Lone Lake outing is the first of those.
- Our members would like to have more (or at least some) river outings and some beach outings.. These are tough to pull off, given that it is more difficult to put a bunch of fishers on a stretch of river or a short strand of beach than on a lake, but we are working on this one.
- A conservation-themed outing would be well received. We're investigating possibilities for that now.
- Our members would like to see our monthly programs provide more information about local fishing, rather than exotic destinations. Fair point, this is where we fish, mostly. This coming meeting, on Tuesday, will feature two speakers from WDFW on fishing the eastern Washington lakes. In April, we'll here from David Williams about fishing Washington gen-

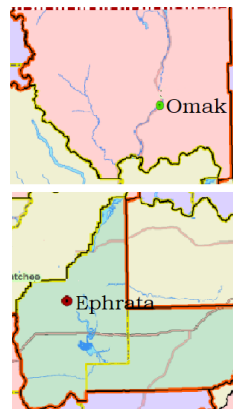
erally.

- A large number of respondents reported difficulty using the Club's website and complained of broken features. Those responding also made a number of suggestions about additional features the website could include. Some of those were a "Classified Ad" section for the sale and exchange of gear, a section where members could state their intention

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March Program

Ryan Fortier and Michael Schmuck Washington Fish Biologists



Ryan Fortier, of the WFDW District 6 North Central Fisheries Biologist and Michael Schmuck of WDFW District 5 South Central Fisheries Biologist will be highlighting current information about the excellent fishing opportunities in their responsible areas

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to fish a location invite others to join, a members' forum (we actually do have that one, but no one uses it – perhaps a “new content” notification system would help).

- Last, and perhaps most important, the idea of a mentor system to help engage new members and involve them in the Club got very positive responses. We are working up a plan to get this going and will be calling for volunteers.

Thanks to all of those who responded, your input really helps. And if any of you have ideas of how the Club could better serve its members and attract new members, don't hesitate!

Tight Lines and Pretty Lies,

Dan

2024 Outings



WFFC 2024 Outings Schedule

From Mike Nolan – Outings Chair

We're looking forward to you joining us on some of the club outings this year. I'll be hosting the majority of the outings and a few members have volunteered to host other outings. I'm looking for a volunteer to assist me with hosting a river outing to the Cedar River or the Yakima River.

Contact me if you have a fishing outing suggestion or are interested in volunteering to host an outing. I hope to hear from you soon and email me at mikesnolan@comcast.net or call me at (425) 754-1234.

The outings shown below are now live on the WFFC website and please sign up if you plan to attend.

WFFC 2024 Outings Schedule

- March 24 Lone Lake
- April 6 Pass Lake
- April 27 Lake Hannan
- May 24-27 Lake Chopaka
- June 22-23 Leech Lake
- September 21 Hood Canal
- October 5-6 Big Green Lake (Okanogan County)
- October 12-13 Big Twin Lake
- November 2 Penrose Point Wet Buns



Creel Notes

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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.

FFI Fly Tying Expo

FFI Fly Tying Expo, Albany Oregon

(Held on March 8th and 9th)

By Chuck Ballard

This years Albany Oregon FFI tying expo was attended by Jim McRoberts and Gary & Ann Bergquist.



Jim participated in the Project Healing Waters with me in between my tying times for the Expo. Besides the 180 Fly tiers there were some amazing opportunities to acquire tying materials. For the second and last year there was a family estate sale of more quality material than 20 of the best fly shops could possibly stock. The prices were maybe 20% of retail. You can imagine the frenzy of buyers.

The show seemed to be well attended and if you want to get experience from the best tiers this is the place to go!

Jim and I also spent time with 92 year old Jesse Scott who is one of the creators of the Evergreen Hand a device for people who have lost their arm which allows them to cast and retrieve a fish as well.

Jesse and I are pictured below at the Evergreen Hand booth.



Chuck Ballard and Jesse Scott

Upcoming 2024 WFFC Classes

Introduction to Fly Casting

April 4, 11, 18, 25 & May 2nd - 6 pm

Luther Burbank Park, Mercer Island

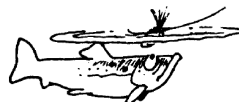
Begins April 4th, Class meetup in the parking lot.

This class will teach you the pickup and laydown (PULD) cast, False Casting, Roll Cast and how to shoot the line.



Introduction to Fly Fishing

3 Zoom Sessions—April 8th, 15th and 22nd at 7PM



Begins April 8th for three consecutive weeks.

The course will be online via Zoom, starting at 7:00pm each week. Each class is one hour in length.

WSCFFI Casting Fair

WSCFFI Casting Fair

From Neal Hoffberg Casting Director, WSCFFI

This year's Casting Fair will be held on May 4th, from 9:00a.m. to 4:30p.m. Once again, our lineup of classes and instructors is fantastic. Classes include women's, beginning, intermediate and advanced courses. Molly Semenik CBOGE CI MCI THMCI L-2 Examiner and Todd Somsel will conduct a spey. We will have lunchtime casting demonstrations by Don Simonson CI MCI L-2 Examiner CBOGE, Todd Somsel CI MCI THMCI L-3 Examiner and Molly Semenik, C.I. MCI Level 3, THMCI, COBG.



Classes will be taught by FFI certified casting instructors; Marion Hiller, C.I., Ruth Simms, C.I., Tom Camarrata, C.I. Pat Peterman CI MCI L-1 Examiner, Frank Koterba, C.I. and Ryan Smith, C.I. owner of Avid Angler Fly Fishing.

Have a flaw in your casting that needs fixing or want an early season tune up? Stop by the Walk-In Clinic. A certified instructor will spend time with you, free of charge.

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New to our event this year is the Fly-Casting Skills Development. The FCSD is a fun way to improve your casting skills in a self-paced way. There are four levels: Foundation, Bronze, Silver and Gold. Take yourself through the different levels or better yet, come with friends and make a contest out of the FCSD. There are targets and distance markers. Work on your aerial mending, curve cast, single and double hauling. The sky's the limit! No matter your experience, play around and see how much your fishing improves by working on your skills in a fun way. The courses will have a C.I. to assist you.

Our website, wffc.org has all the information and a link to sign up.

All of us at the WSCFFI look forward to seeing you there. Tight lines, leaders & knots, Neal Hoffberg Casting Director, WSCFFI

On the Fly



'On the Fly'
February 20, 2024
By David Ehrich



Tonight's speaker, Linda Mapes, brought in a good crowd and populated the big room; it felt like old times. I enjoyed the pleasure of chatting with three new members who had joined just this last weekend at the Fly Fishing Expo in beautiful Bellevue, Washington. There are several advantages to the Big Room; you can spy on people in the mirrors, the bar is close, and we all had plenty of room. New people mean new fishing origin stories which drifted around steelhead, falling on snotty rocks, trips to Oregon, magic rods, scrambles, and other agents of angling chaos.

Our President was remote, so Neal Hoffberg took the gavel. Bob Burdick, also known as the greatest tier of flies, pointed us towards a generous supply of donated fly tying materials from member Gene Grudger. Jim Goedhart pointed us toward the Scott Hagen Estate fly rod collection; bargains to be sure! Bill Neal got us up to speed on the Boyd Aigner Fly Tying Contest. Get with Bill for the rules and regulations and/or pay attention to Creel Notes.

Neal got us going while Dan looked over us from Zoomland. We started with new members, of which there are many, several who were attracted to join at the Fly Fishing Show. We will have new members by the half dozen very soon. With some help, Neal got the move on for fishing reports. We had Searun on the Olympic Peninsula and Steelhead on the Cowlitz.

Committee reports got us on the ball about upcoming outings (check the website), including April 6 at Pass Lake. John Gravendyk reported that the Youth academy enlistment is off and running for the late June. Neal alerted members to a day of Master Caster instruction at Ballinger Park on May 4. Sign up on-line.

Without any pause, Neal introduced Linda Mapes from the Seattle Times, an award winning writer who keeps readers informed about all things to do with our environment. For tonight, she focused on fish and the mammals who feed on them.

After a warm welcome, Linda got right to work. She has been at Harvard writing a book about bi-coastal analysis and history of what we've been doing with and to salmon from the time the first big tree fell in Maine and the damage such exploitation created. Linda always turns the spotlight away from her and toward members for our many strong qualities, including simple things like caring about rivers, lakes and shorelines.

Linda came to the meeting from the Oso landslide area (10 years ago!) She came to the club with three things to discuss. Topic one: Oso. Ten years ago a landslide let loose from a hillside in unprecedented liquidity and speed. In those ten years, the firs are 10 feet above our heads. Ponds have appeared; beavers are in great evidence. The system has restored itself without much help. She reminds us to remember how resilient our environment is. The initial landslide put a brief pause on fish movement and the small fish were moving again in a few months. The moral of this story is to for us to stand back and let nature do its work.

Secondly, a fishing report. Linda got some good weather on the Hoh. The heavenly environment shared in photos for us and soon to be shared on the Seattle times in words, images, videos, and on line environments. Joy and beauty aside, Linda found the

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Steelhead in jeopardy from all the usual sources: ocean conditions, logging, climate, and otherwise. And with the demise of fish, comes so many threats to the NW ecosystem.

Linda's last topic is good news; There are no Orcas in the Salish Seas. Wait, how is this good news? Well, the Orca whales are still around, the names have changed. The new species that replaced the southern residents are now called the Black Fish. Genetically distant by 300,000 years, the Black Fish or Southern Residents are distinct from The Biggs, the Transient populations, or Killers, who eat various diets, are growing like mad. The Southern Population or Blacks, are stuck with urban waters, lesser and smaller salmon, and loads of boat noise.

Why separate the populations? Well, the Southern Residents live very distinct lives and those lives need careful study. These giant mammals love messing with their human counterparts. These wolves of the sea hunt at 35 mph, dive 100 feet, move 50 miles a day, and see fish with their sonar in three dimensions. The L Pod leader is nearly 100 years old and she has lived among us since before any dams were built in the state.

The distinction is key for understanding that these southern resident orcas are not interchangeable with the other Biggs Orcas. This particular population is small and troubled and laws have to be changed accordingly. They move between salmon populations in California and BC. Their world has less salmon, more noise and more pollution and toxins in the fish. There are only 74 of them and that's the entire gene pool. Family orientated, the females midwife the new calves, get them nursing, and help each other find fish. They grieve when they lose a calf.

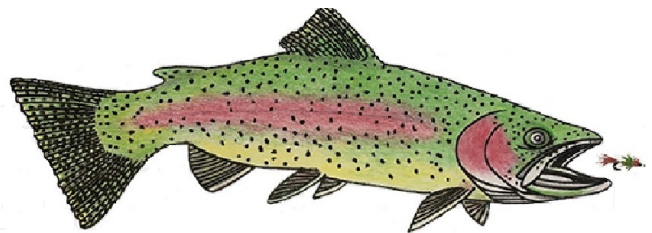
Linda finished with a discussion of the food web that sustains these apex predators. Herring need undisturbed soft sand shorelines. Seattle has about 30' of this environment left. It's amazing that salmon even live in Elliot Bay. There's hope. The Southern Residents keep producing. The population doesn't seem to change, but they survive.

Stay tuned. Perhaps the dams will come down on the

Snake and historical salmon runs to the interior will reemerge. Perhaps habitat will be restored. Perhaps we will share our world with them more fully. To live in a place that has Opera, sports, and Orcas frolicking on our doorstep will be as magical as ever.

As befits a great speaker, tonight's questions were real questions and members sat at the knee of listening. Marvelous presentation.

David



Extra Tip

Create Fire from Junk Food

From Field and Stream

Who likes chips? You know—the greasy, salty ones you can eat with just about any sandwich?

That the grease in those chips is a flammable oil you can use to your advantage in a survival pinch. Pull a few out and light them up with the open flame from your lighter.

In the survival continuum of importance, those chips are not nearly as important for food as they are for a fire that will keep you warm. The grease and oil of a potato chip, corn chip are flammable and great at starting a fire in a pinch.



The cure seems to be recruiting new members in any club is, making them feel welcome and involving them..... rinse and repeat.

Pass Lake Primer

The below and depth contour map to the right is from some of our "old club masters" who fished Pass Lake many years ago. I will bet that some of these methods still work and you ought to try them at next months outing! - Ed

Ex-Spurts' Advice:

Areas 1,3,4 and 5 best fished from anchored boat, casting toward shore.

Area 1: Good for both casters and moochers, if they don't get in each other's hair.

Area 4: Not always good early in season, but excellent during May and June.

Area 5: NE and SW of rock bank. Can be real hot spot in PM, casting to rises.

As spot check among some of the WFFC's long-time Pass Lake addicts brought these suggestions to opening day there:

The late Vince Sellen: "It doesn't make a hell of a lot of difference what fly you use on opening day, but after the first several weeks pattern becomes most important." First choice, his "Golden Spider: #10 or #12 long shank, golden pheasant tail, thin red acetate or cellophane body, 1-2 turns of red rump hackle from golden pheasant. Second choice, ordinary Carey Special, silver rib, herl body.

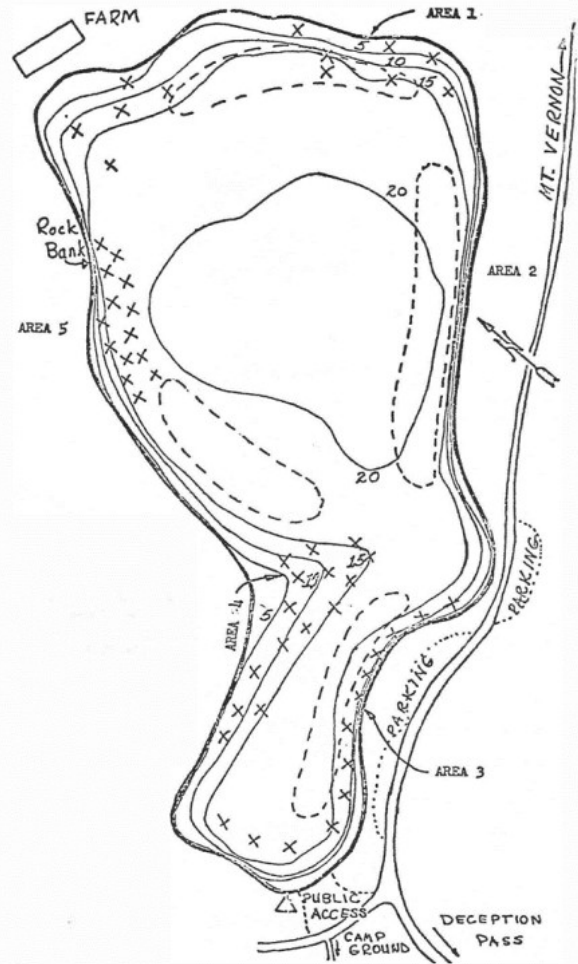
Dick Thompson: TDC (can you imagine this from the originator!) if chironomids are emerging. Blackbody Carey, heavy silver rib, #8 or 10, long shank. Also Golden Spider (see above), Nyerges nymph, Six-Pack.

Steve Raymond: TDC

Frank Headrick: Start with blackbody Carey or Dandy Green Nymph, sizes #8 or 10, long shank, sparse. Also, peacock herl Carey. Then on to anything that works.

Dawn Hdbrook: Any nymph of appropriate size. Chironomid, damsel fly, mayfly - in that sequence, depending upon weather and warmth and how far the season has progressed. Damsel (needle) fly might be best this year. Tie as follows: tail, 4 strands pleasantrump; body, stripped peacock herl (quill); pheasant rump hackle sparse; collar of peacock herl, taken from near eye of feather; #8-10 extra-long shank. Fish close to bottom. If you don't pick up weeds you're not down enough. After first pressure, day light to about 9:30, fishing often lulls through midday while fish rest up, then picks up again, 2-4 in afternoon. Method more important than fly pattern. Favorite method: long cast, row about 100 feet let boat drift, then strip line in, drift, then strip line in.

Pass Lake Depth Contour



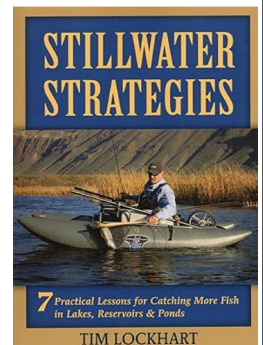
Book of the Month

Stillwater Strategies

By Tim Lockhart—Author

This is not a beginning flyfishing book. No discussion of knots, how to tie the flies, how to play and land the fish, etc. It assumes you know these things, and focuses on the methodology one should use to analyze a lake and thereby make their plan of action for catching trout.

It emphasizes that the plan is nothing, because conditions change often throughout the day; but it also emphasizes that the planning is everything.



Tim Lockhart's *Stillwater Strategies* has a lot of information on Pass Lake and how to fish it - Ed

Fly of the Month

Fathead Minnow (Pimephales)

Pass Lake has a good population of these minnows that you will see schooling around the shore. This might serve as a good imitation. I've 'heard' that it's good to have 2 sizes in your fly box.



TF's Craft Fur Fathead Minnow

HOOK: Mustad S71SNP-DT, size 4.

THREAD: Danville ultrafine monofilament.

UNDERBODY: Two layers of pearl Flashabou wrapped around the shank.

BODY: Medium olive craft fur over medium gray craft fur on top, and off-white craft fur on the bottom.

CHEEKS: Pink craft fur.

LATERAL LINE: Several strands of black Icelandic sheep hair and two strips of pearl Flashabou.

HEAD: Size 3 Fish-Skull Fish-Mask.

EYES: Ice Living Eyes.



2024 Dues Reminder

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
Annual Dues

2024 dues are due! You can pay online on the website at "Member Dues." Dues for 2024 are \$80 for Active Members and \$50 for Associate Members.

Monthly Meeting Location

In 2024, the Club's monthly meetings will be held at the Seattle Tennis Club, 922 McGilvra Blvd. East, Seattle, WA 98112.

Wet Fly and fly tying commence at 5:30, dinner 6:15, with a program commencing at 7:00.

Please sign up early on the website.



Fly Tying Competition

Boyd Aigner Fly Tying Competition Continues

Here are the three patterns:

Split Case PMD Nymph, size 18

Near Nuff Sculpin, size 6

Balanced Leech-Bruised, size 10 jig hook

Flies for the Competition will be due by Sunday, May 12; judging will occur at the June Members Meeting; and results of the Competition will be announced at the July Members Meeting.



29 1/2" Redband Rainbow

Oncorhynchus Mykiss

Elbow Lake, Ferry County, Year 1979

Oh time, swift despoiler of all things, how many nations has thou undone, how many states and of circumstances have happened since this wondrous fish perished.

-Leonardo Di Vinci