

Creel Notes from the



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

Website: www.wffc.com



MMXXV No. 10

October, 2025



Learning to Fish – A Guide for Beginners (and Others)

Danferd Henke, President,
Washington Fly Fishing Club

President's Riffle

We've all paid our dues. Learning to fly fish can be a grind. Who among us does not remember those halcyon days of collapsing casts, tangled leaders, and fly-eating trees? With time on the water, it will all come together and this Club can help you shorten that time and reduce the frustration you will likely experience along the way. Here's the advice I've developed over the years for new fly fishers, based on sad personal experience and that of others and the incredible resources available through this Club. The central theme running through each point, though, is whatever you do in fly fishing (or in life), try to do it with someone better and more experienced at it than you are. So here goes.



- **Take Casting Classes.** Casting is the one essential skill of our sport. If you can't present a fly to a fish in a manner that makes that fly look like a natural piece of food, you won't catch many fish and those you do catch are likely to be dumb juveniles, that is, tiny. I took my first casting class 38 years after starting to fish, don't do what I did. The Club provides fly casting classes annually. If you take those classes, regardless of your casting level, you likely will have instructors with a collective 150 years or more of fly-casting experience. Take advantage of that! There are a lot of YouTube videos and books out there on how to cast, and some of them are very good. But there is no substitute

for casting in front of an experienced instructor who can correct your cast or make suggestions on the spot. You can't get that on-line. We're discussing setting up infor-

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October Program

Greg Shimek

Coastal Cutthroat Commission and Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group

Greg Shimek is a retired telecommunications executive and fly fishing enthusiast.

He was born and raised in Shelton, and grew up on Hood Canal, building a passion for clean water, healthy fish and good habitat.



In addition to his service with the Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement

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Group, he has taken an interest in Washington's coastal cutthroat populations, working with WDFW on research in Puget Sound.

Meeting Location

October's meeting will be held at **The Hall on Occidental 589 Occidental Ave S, Seattle, WA 98134**

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.



(Continued from page 1) - Riffle

mal casting practice sessions, which I for one, look forward to attending. Also, practice, practice, practice. Find a pond or a ball field and go out for short sessions practicing drills, exercises that an instructor can provide – yes, homework.

- **Fish Where There Are Fish.** That is, learn to read the water. The water and the structure within it will tell you where the fish are most likely holding, whether moving water or stillwater. Start by reading a couple of books. Here are some recommendations. For streams, try Reading the Water, Dave Hughes. Also, Reading Trout Streams, Tom Rosenbauer. For stillwater, try Phil Rowley's The Orvis Guide to Stillwater Trout Fishing and Denny Rickard's Stillwater Presentation. If you would like to borrow these or any other books on fly fishing, let me know, I have an extensive library.
- **Take a Fly Fishing Class.** In the past, the Club has offered an introductory class on the basics of fly fishing. Tackle and tactics, with enough detail to get you started.
- **Learn Your Knots.** You need to be able to tie knots in a gale, in the dark, with one hand tied behind your back. We all have to re-rig and every minute spent re-rigging is a minute when you aren't fishing. Expedite your knot tying. Again, practice, practice, practice, while you aren't in terrible conditions. You need to know the appropriate knots for tying tippet to leader and fly to tippet, at a minimum. Here are a few to get you started. Tippet to leader: blood knot and triple surgeon's knot. Fly to tippet: Clinch knot, improved clinch knot, Duncan loop (uniknot), and non-slip loop knot. Animated "how to" videos can be found online. The Club's fly fishing class covers knots

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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.

2025 Outings

From Mike Nolan – Outings Chair
WFFC 2025 Outings Schedule



• November 1 Penrose Point Wet Buns



Upcoming Club Event: Wet Buns Outing 11/1/25

Mike Nolan – Outings Chairperson



The Wet Buns Outing is scheduled for November 1, 2025, at Penrose State Park. The meaning of "Wet Buns" has been the subject of friendly debate among club members. According to some members, "Wet Buns" stands for Winter Experience to Try Bouillabaisse Under Nocturnal Skies. Alternatively, other members suggest it means Wet Experience to Try Bouillabaisse Under Nocturnal Skies, typically referring to rainy conditions. Regardless of the weather, this outing is a unique opportunity to enjoy fishing and camaraderie.

Participants will have the chance to fish for Chums staging in the shallow estuaries, with resident Coho available for those who know the right spots to cast.

Sea-run cutthroat trout can be caught either from a boat or from the shore, offering something for anglers of all preferences.

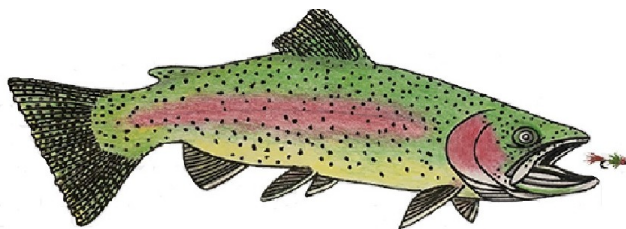
The group will meet at the Group Camp G1 area at Penrose Point State Park. Dinner preparations will begin at approximately 4:00 PM. Mike Nolan will be preparing the bouillabaisse seafood stew, and volunteers are encouraged to help with tasks such as cracking crabs, chopping fish, and shelling shrimp. Members are invited to bring a favorite appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share, as well as firewood for the evening fire.



Bouillabaisse Seafood Stew

For those interested in extending the outing, there is an option to camp overnight at Penrose State Park in the reserved group site, which accommodates up to 10 tents. The park is located at 321 158th Avenue Kp S, Lakebay, WA. A Discover Pass is required to park at Penrose State Park.

To attend the outing, please sign up on the WFFC website or contact Mike Nolan directly, as an accurate headcount is needed for the club-provided food and beverages.



"The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them." Like fishing an unknown stream"

- Earnest Hemingway

as well.

- **Learn to Tie Flies.** Fly tying is not an essential skill. You can catch plenty of fish with store-bought flies. However, the more you tie, the more you will learn about the behavior and appearance of insects and other prey. Imitating behavior and appearance, after all, is how we try to fool trout (and other fish). Over time, those hours spent at the vise will greatly improve your fishing and your enjoyment of the sport. There is nothing like figuring out the fly to use and catching that fish on a fly you tied yourself (or better yet, one you invented yourself). Every year, the Club sponsors a fly tying class that will more than get you started. The instructors are among the best tyers in the Pacific Northwest.
- **Attend the Club Outings.** I can't emphasize this one enough. See the central theme above – anything you do in fly fishing, try to do it with those better and more experienced than you are. If you attend the Club outings, particularly the overnight campouts, you will find yourself fishing with the most knowledgeable and generous anglers anywhere. Our members are willing to help any new fishers, and each other, with advice on flies, presentation, places to fish, rigging, anything to do with the sport. All you need do is show up, display interest, and pitch in and our members will hand you the keys to the kingdom. Don't pass that up.

I hope you will take advantage of this Club's resources, they truly are immense.
Tight Lines

Fly Fishers International Lifetime Achievement Award

Don Simonson Awarded FFI Lifetime Achievement In Fly Casting Education Award

From Neal Hoffberg FFI Liaison Committee Chair Education & Programs

It is with great pleasure that I announce that the FFI has awarded Don Simonson the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Don became a Certified Casting Instructor in 1995. Don continued his journey as a casting instructor, achieving Master Certified Casting (MCI) in 2006. As an MCI, Don is a Level II Examiner and FFI Casting Board Of Governors, Emeritus. In 2013 the FFI awarded Don the Mel Krieger Award for casting education. Don has worked tirelessly as a mentor, examiner and contributor to advancing FFI casting programs. Don joined the WFFC in 1970. The quality of our casting classes is due to the instructor's manual that Don wrote. When I called Don to congratulate him on this achievement, Don was emphatic that this honor is as much about the WFFC as it is about him personally.

Please join me in the acknowledgement of this award, and thanking Don for all that he has given to Washington Fly Fishing Club.





9/13/25

Hood Canal Outing

From Mike Nolan Outdoor Chairperson

The Hood Canal Outing on September 13, 2025, brought together eleven participants: Mark Pratt, Ben Davidson, Tom Neu, Jay Deeds, Jim & Bob Young, Rocco Maccarrone, Jim McRoberts, Bill Neal, Tom George (Jay's neighbor) and his friend Dave McDonald.

According to Jay Deeds, the weather began to change at 10:00 AM, and by noon, fishing became increasingly difficult due to rough conditions. Jim Young and Bob Young noted that they did not catch any fish. Mark and Ben both managed to catch a few fish each. Mark described fishing as challenging amid rough, windy swells and waves, as the wind forced him out of areas of where the fish were in reach. The wind became a significant challenge in the early afternoon, making fishing tough for everyone.

Rocco recounted a special opportunity to fish from an 18' Grady White boat, thanks to Jay Deeds' neighbor, Tom. Alongside fellow club member Tom Neu, Rocco left Seabeck Marina at 9:00 AM and headed for Hazel Point. The conditions were initially calm with an incoming tide, and fish were actively rising and jumping around the point. Tom alternated between a floating line and an intermediate line, while Rocco fished exclusively with a 6 wt intermediate line. Together, they landed about a half dozen fish and lost twice that many. Most catches were small cutthroat trout; Tom caught a juvenile coho, and Rocco landed a juvenile black mouth. The action was fast for roughly an hour before slowing down. They continued to Oak Point, where the breeze picked up and fishing slowed. After lunch at Barbie's at the Marina, they traveled south around Misery Point to Stavis Bay and beyond, experiencing occasional hookups until worsening wind forced them to head in around 3:00 PM. Rocco extended special thanks to their skipper, Tom, for his knowl-

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edge and hospitality.

The group reconvened at Jay's house in the late afternoon around 4pm. Fishing reports were shared back and forth until the pizza arrived at 6:00pm. In addition to the pizza there was Caesar salad, and pie with ice cream. Everyone had a good time during the evening festivities which lasted until 7pm. Special appreciation was given to Tom George and Dave McDonald for providing boats, which helped make for a good day of fishing for a couple of the attendees.



Delicious Pizza

(I'd like 2 slices along with an angioplasty and two stents)

Warriors and Quiet Waters Flyfishing Jumpstarts Veterans' Healing Journey *From Midcurrent*

A group of veterans gathered last month on the North Fork of the Flathead for a fly-fishing expedition where a story was told about how the river changes over time.

"We can focus on being sad and wishing things were different, or we can look around the bend for the next good spot," said Katie Megahee, Army veteran and group facilitator.

The concept of changing like the river resonates with veterans, she said.

"It is our choice to look forward or backward," Megahee said. "Our program is forward-focused, emphasizing post-traumatic growth, which requires looking toward what comes next."

For the cohort of seven veterans from across the nation, the river trip was the start of a nine-month long personal growth program called Built for More.

The program is offered by Warriors for Quiet Waters, a southwest Montana-based nonprofit. The organization was founded in 2007 in Bozeman when retired Marine Eric Hastings and his wife Jean had the idea to help post-9/11 combat veterans heal by offering free fly-fishing experiences.

Most programming happens in the Gallatin Valley area, but August's North Fork expedition was the first held in the northwest part of the state.

"One of my favorite parts of the week was watching Warriors stop fishing for periods of time to just sit and enjoy the views," Megahee added.

Ryan, a Warrior from Fargo, said during the trip, "I'm looking forward to linking these experiences to the future, and to becoming a more open person to pursuing what's out there... To not being afraid of change; facing yourself in the mirror and realizing what you don't have going right, and then taking the skills you have learned and applying them."

Another participant on the trip, Steven from Louisiana, said, "I foresee this program helping me in my personal life to establish healthy relationships, increase my spirituality and my mental and physical fitness, and giving me a community to help facilitate that."

Emily Heiber, chief marketing officer for Warriors and Quiet Waters, said expanding in Montana, both in

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**A Warriors and Quiet Waters expedition on the North Fork.
(Michael MacLeod photo).**

(Continued from page 7) Warriors

location and number of participants, has been a focus for the organization.

“The North Fork is a great opportunity for the Warriors to have a key experience in nature,” she said. “We also want to have a presence, and have people get to know Warriors and Quiet Waters.”

She said they have about five times as many Warriors apply as they have the capacity to serve.

“That’s always at the forefront of our minds when trying to get donor support. We are always striving to get the resources to grow the team and serve more Warriors.”

While flyfishing is at the heart of the program, there is a sense of urgency that goes beyond the water, she said.

“We feel urgency to serve this cohort of veterans. They leave the military, and they can lose community, identity and sense of mission – and that makes transition difficult. That’s when we see challenges with addiction and mental health. Our program is built to overcome those challenges – to help rediscover purpose and rebuild community.”

There is a waitlist that veterans can sign up for that will notify them when applications open, which happens a few times a year.

“When applications open, we want to set them up for success. We have webinars and try to provide the guidance needed so they can put their best foot forward,” Heiber said.

For more information visit
www.warriorsandquietwaters.org

“The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places”

Like mended fishing lines.

-Ernest Hemingway

Fishing Reports



October 3rd and 4th Green Lake / Big Twin

By Chuck Ballard

I fished Green Lake / Big Twin over the weekend of October 3 . Green fished as usual with most caught on a dry line and a light olive leech fishing right against shore. There was a very limited hatch of a tiny number 28 sized white mayfly but no surface activity . The conditions were great warm , calm and few other competitors .

The Big Twin outing on Saturday was also a beautiful day with some light wind off and on until late afternoon and then it got windy. The attendance was limited however a good dinner was enjoyed by all . Many thanks to Mike Nolan for cooking some great corn on the cob and grilling the steaks.

Fishing was spotty for me . Hooked 4 total . Three were recent plants one hold over . I was mostly fishing a dry line with a light olive nymph with limited results . Switched to full sink still didn’t do well . Late in the day I put on a sink tip and a water boatman pattern and caught the hold over fish . Should have used this set up earlier ! Bummer



Photo 1 [The group gathered together for a photo at Brooks Camp]

September 20-27. 2025 Katmai Trophy Lodge

By Tom Neu

My fishing fly-fishing trip to Alaska started at the 2024 Christmas party when I bid for a week long fishing trip on the Natnek River on the Alaska Peninsula. In the past few years the owner of the Katmai Trophy Lodge has generously donated a free trip to one of his fishing camps with proceeds going directly into the WFFC fund. Joining me on this incredible trip were five other WFFC members (president Danferd Henke, Adair Dammann, Stephan Fjelstad and wife Kris, and Ben Davidson.

With much gear in hand we boarded our Alaska Air plane to Anchorage and caught a 40-minute flight to King Salmon near Katmai National Park (home of the truly big bears, more about that later). The camp's van picked us up and as we arrived mid-day giving us plenty of time to settle in and get our gear ready for fishing the next day. We joined 10 other lodgers from other parts of the country.

Our days followed a routine of early breakfast and out to the boats by 8:00 a.m. At the start of each day we were given a choice of fishing spots: Brooks river and falls, the expansive Natnek river or seaplane to more

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Photo 2 [Heading out on the boat to Brooks River on a cold morning, day 1]

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distant fishing holes. The first day out we chose Brooks river. Our experienced guides gave us the best eggs for our lines and the fun began. With that bait I caught four rainbow trout in four casts. The rainbows were in the 22-24-inch range and a good start. Ben Davidson, nicknamed BENDALLY for his fishing prowess, quickly brought in two sockeye in two casts on his go-to-fly, the dollylama. In the Brooks river we used single-handed rods, 5-8 weight with a small 5mm orange egg for those wondering.

Our guides not only gave us all we needed to have a rewarding day on the river, but kept us safely away from the many, very big bears (it's possible we saw 1,200 pound Chunk, this years winner of the Big Bears at Brooks Falls, but then they were ALL huge). Half of our time fishing was giving the bears plenty of room to feed on the thousands of sockeye salmon. The bears were so well fed that they literally walked right past us, never considering us on par with a juicy, fatty fish on their dinner menu. At the end of the day we boarded a catamaran for the hour-long trip back from Natnek Lake, tired but happy for the experience.

Other days we fished the big Natnek, spey casting from boats, a new experience for many in the group.

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Photo 3[One of the big ones, though not Chunk]



Photo 4 [Bears at Brooks Falls catching their fill of sockeye]



Photo 5 [Ben Davidson Spey fishing on the Natnek]

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With the guidance from our guide everyone was able to catch some monster rainbows that day. BENDALLY caught a 29 ½-inch fish, laudible as it was his first time ever using a spey rod.

The Katmai Trophy Lodge is a cozy log-cabin with ample room for dining and relaxing. (I should note that we were moved to the lodge from the Natnek River Camp, a considerable upgrade and for which we give thanks to owner Jim Johnson) Our nightly meals were nothing short of gourmet, with no one going to their bunks hungry.



Photo 5 [Katmai Trophy Lodge]

One day, on a return to the Brooks river, the guides navigated two-foot waves, beaching the boat successfully despite the challenge. One guide was left on the boat as a safety precaution, not wanting to lose our transportation back to the lodge.

As the week wound down we heard that Kris caught A 30-inch rainbow, the biggest of the trip. Saturday, sated from the great meals and satisfied with our time on the Alaska Peninsula, we flew out of King Salmon

(Continued on page 13)



Photo 6 [Ben's 29 ½ inch rainbow catch]

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and home to Seattle with many of us vowing to do this all again next year.

As the week wound down we heard that Kris caught A 30-inch rainbow, the biggest of the trip. Saturday, sated from the great meals and satisfied with our time on the Alaska Peninsula, we flew out of King Salmon and home to Seattle with many of us vowing to do this all again next year.



Photo 8 [President Danferd Henke (and guide)]

"Silent stalking, loud results." The contrast between the quiet approach and the exciting strike.



"Solve the river, catch its treasures." Treating each stream as a puzzle to be decoded.



Photo 9 [a very happy me]



Photo 10 [Kris nabs the big one]



Healthy Fishing

Prevention of Skin Cancer

By David South, MD



UVL is responsible for 90% of non-melanoma skin CA (NMSC) and 70-85% of malignant melanoma (MM). Hereditary factors are also important, especially with MM. The annual cost of treating skin CA in USA is \$8.1 Billion. Two die of skin CA every hour in the USA.

The most common is Basal Cell CA, with 4.3 million annual cases in USA. Fortunately very treatable and only 2,000 related deaths/year. Squamous Cell CA accounts for 1 million cases with 15,000 deaths/year.

MM accounts for 200,000 cases and 7,000 deaths per year, as it is more aggressive and less treatable, and unfortunately its incidence doubles every decade. MM has a 2:1 male to female ratio. Only 20-30% of MM starts in existing moles, so it is important to look for new black lesions.

Sun protection is the key to avoiding skin CA. Hats (no mesh), sun-gloves, "Buff" bandanas for face and neck, sunglasses, long sleeved shirts and pants are the best. Thread count is most important....a \$10 Kmart shirt that you can't see through when held up to light is equal in protection to an \$85 one impregnated with SPF chemical.

Sunscreens have repeatedly been shown experimentally to prevent most BCC and SCC, and at least 50% of MM. They have recently come under scrutiny and controversy regarding THEORETICAL

effect on human hormone production, bleaching of coral reefs, effect on algae in still waters, and presence of nanoparticles in the bloodstream. To date there is NO EVIDENCE for harm in any of these areas.

The "bad" ingredients suspected are: Benzophenone (Oxybenzone), Avobenzone, Homosalicalate, Octinoxate. Sunscreens thought to be "safe" are the mineral type (containing mainly zinc oxide or titanium dioxide), but these wash and wear off easily, requiring reapplication every few hours. "Safe" brands include: Think Sport, All GoodSport, Stream 2 Sea, Mama Koulenne, Art of SportSkin Armor, Hello Bello, Babo Botanicals, PurelySimple and Sun Bum.

Thankfully as flyfishers, if properly clothed we only need a dab of sunscreen on ears, nose and hands, so we don't need to sweat safety issues

The Amusing



"Tippets thin, patience thick." Delicate presentations require substantial mental fortitude.



For Sale

Fisherman's Row Boat Offered For Sale **Contact Bill Booth at 206-465-8299**

A nicely tricked out small fiberglass rowboat from former WFFC member.

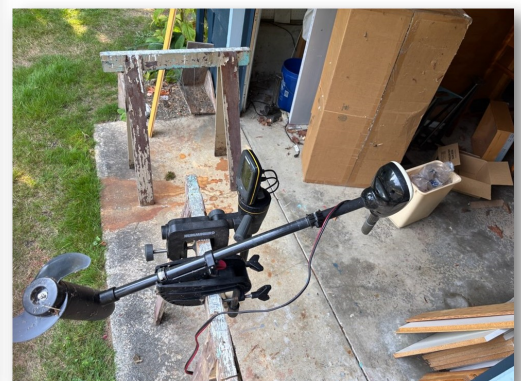
The hull was designed and built by Pearson Yachts Vancouver, British Columbia. The custom teak wood trim was assembled by furniture maker Bill Booth.

Here are the specs: length overall 105", beam 47", eight about 55 pounds. Fitted with bronze hardware.

Accessories included:

- Slip-on comfy towing seat;
- Teak foot support stretcher;
- Car rack roller bar for easy cartop loading;
- 12v electric Mini Kota motor 30 lb. thrust;
- Hummingbird fish finder AA batteries;
- Ground transport cart on 20"D. wheels.

Offered altogether for \$250 or better offer.



Fly of the Month

Zug Bug

Originator: Cliff Zug



MATERIALS:

- Hook: 2X-long nymph hook (e.g. Dai-Riki #730), sizes 12–16.
- Thread: Black, 6/0.
- Tails: Peacock herl.
- Rib: Silver tinsel.
- Body: Peacock herl.
- Legs: Hen hackle.
- Wing case: Mallard or wood-duck flank feather.
- Head: Tying thread.

Recipe of the Month

Broiled Lingcod with Miso Glaze

From the Williams Sonoma Seafood Cookbook

- 4 lingcod fillets, 6-8 oz.
- 2 tbsps. peanut or canola oil
- 1 tbsp. Tamari or light soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. peeled and minced fresh ginger
- For the Miso Glaze:
- 1/2 c. red miso paste
- 2 tbsp. dry white vermouth or wine
- 2 tbsp. peanut or canola oil
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, crushed through a garlic press
- 1 1/2 tbsps. sesame seeds, toasted fresh cilantro sprigs for garnish



1. Place the lingcod fillets in a small glass or ceramic dish just large enough to hold them. In a small bowl, combine the oil, tamari and ginger. Stir to blend. Pour the mixture over the fillets and turn to coat on both sides. Let the fillets stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, make the miso glaze. In a small saucepan, combine the miso paste, vermouth (or wine), oil, honey, lemon juice, and garlic and stir to blend. Place over low heat and bring to a simmer; cook for 2-3 minutes to allow the flavors to blend, then remove from the heat and set aside.

3. Preheat the broiler (grill). Line the bottom of a broiler pan with aluminum foil and oil the top with a paper towel soaked with oil.

Measure the lingcod fillets at their thickest point. Place the fish, rounded side down, on the prepared pan and place the pan under the broiler 2-3 inches from the heat source. Broil for 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the broiler, turn the fish over, and spread the miso

glaze evenly over the top. Place the pan under the broiler again and cook until the fish is opaque throughout, about 3 minutes longer; the total cooking time should be about 5 minutes per 1/2 inch thickness of the fish.

4. Serve the fish immediately on warmed plates or a platter, sprinkled with the sesame seeds and garnished with the cilantro.