



The Tippet

March 2001

President's Message

Well, with the recent weather I'm sure there are quite a few vices being put through their paces by our club members. I know I've been infected with one serious itch that can only be scratched with the business end of a fly rod. If you need to get out now you may want to give the Ronde a try. There are plenty of willing steelhead hanging out in its upper sections.

Jim Palmersheim and I took Ken Iwamasa to Bogan's after the February meeting and were pleased to make the acquaintance of more than a couple of the Ronde's steelhead.

Speaking of Ken, wasn't that a beautiful presentation he blessed us with the last meeting? I was ready to clear my fishing schedule and tag along on his next trip, that is, until he mentioned the \$6500 price tag! I guess it will have to be filed with all the other dream trips.

Keep in mind that this month's meeting is our club auction. So, remember to grab some of those flies you're tying and bring them to be auctioned. Bring anything else that needs a home and we'll send it off with the highest bidder. With my farm background I'm curious to witness the auctioneer skill of our own Dave Tharp and George Johnson. There's no doubt in my mind it will be entertaining.

I'm looking forward to seeing a great turn-out and enjoying some fabulous food and fun with some fine fishing friends.

Thank you.

Your Prez,

John D. Toker



March is auction time!
Don't forget to bring your items,
generous attitude and checkbook!

Backcast (February meeting)

Guests

Guests at the February meeting included James Foster's wife, Martha, Dave Yonge's wife, Marion, and new members Jill and Ray Dacey. Welcome!

Fishing reports

Gary Evers reported on his bonefishing trip to the Christmas Islands, 1300 mile south of Hawaii. Tony McDonnell reported tailing a 31" steelhead on the Grande Ronde for Rick Markley. Stacey Dean told of his son's first king salmon and steelhead.

Old Business

Just in case you missed those dates for this year's outings here they are again:

May 5th, 2001 Amber Lake Fishout
July 11th, 2001 BBQ Sunnyside Park
July 12-15th, 2001 Fishout on the St Joe

Other old business included a reminder that dues are due. Hats were available at the last meeting and they sure were going like hotcakes! The hats will be again be available at the March meeting. Great job on the hats John!

Conservation Committee Report

In response to the surveys, Jim reported the conservation committee recommended adding an additional outing in late September and possibly one in June. Discussion centered on heading up to the Elk River in Canada with Kelly Creek as an alternative. More details

should be forthcoming. Coffeepot Lake in eastern Washington was also suggested for the June outing.

John Read reported on fly tying and suggested meeting once a month starting sometime in the fall would probably work best for all. No formal instruction would be set up but rather an open format structure used. Meeting at Tri-State would probably not be a problem providing the mezzanine wasn't being used for store activities.

Tim Cavileer

Clearwater Fly Casters 2001 Officers

President John Toker
Vice-President Jim Siebe
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Shirley Engerbretson
Conservation Chair Jim Palmersheim
FFF Representative George Johnson
Newsletter Editor Tim Cavileer
editor's email: tcavileer@uidaho.edu

Virtual Tippet (CFC Website)
<http://www.uidaho.edu/~tcavi/clearwater/>

CFC membership dues are now \$20/year for individuals, \$25/year for families, \$10/year for students.

Meetings on 2nd Wednesday, Sept - May, at Shermer's Restaurant, 300 S Grand, Pullman, WA

Wet Fly time at 6:00pm, dinner at 6:30pm
and program at 8:00pm

Book Review - by Don Shearer

The Estuary Flyfisher

By Steve Raymond

Frank Amato Publications, Inc., Portland, OR

96 pages, softbound, ISBN: 1571880607

I will come clean and admit that I haven't read anything written by Steve Raymond that I haven't thoroughly enjoyed. He just gets the whole point of what using a fly rod is all about and maybe more importantly he is able to articulate why I choose to fish with a fly. While this book falls more into the *how to* instead of the *why to* column of fishing books, it is still an enjoyable read.

The book itself is well organized. Raymond assumes that you are already a fly angler and leaves out the chapter that is found in many *how to book* explaining what rods, reels, lines, and flies are. Instead, he mentions what rods and lines he prefers and why he prefers them for fishing the estuaries. He also breaks down estuaries, tides, the fish to be found and what season to find them, techniques, and a bit of conservation.

The book goes into great detail on tides and their importance to the estuary angler. The section on how tides work was a bit more technical than the average fisherman will probably ever need, but all the information is there explaining how tides work in case you are interested. He also lets the reader in on an eighteen year long personal experiment in which he monitored sea run cutthroat in regards to which tides and time of the year they are most prevalent. This section itself makes the book worth reading.

2001 Steelhead Projections

By Barry Espenson

(for full text see <http://www.cbbulletin.com>)

THE COLUMBIA BASIN BULLETIN:

Weekly Fish and Wildlife News

March 2, 2001

The upriver steelhead run is expected also decrease slightly according to the early projections.

The earlier returning upriver A-run summer steelhead is projected to be 201,300 this year compared to an actual return of 216,700 in 2000. This year's return is forecast to include 49,000 wild A fish (compared to 63,600 in 2000) and 152,300 hatchery fish (153,100 in 2000). The smaller A stock are bound for the mid- and upper Columbia and Snake River Basin. Run counts at Bonneville Dam historically peak in mid-August. Steelhead passing the dam after Aug. 26 are counted as B stock, mostly swimming toward Idaho's Clearwater and Salmon river basins.

The B-run forecast for 2001 is 36,000 fish compared to a return of 40,900 in 2000. The 2001 forecast predicts 8,900 wild fish (8,400 in 2000) and 27,100 B steelhead (32,500 in 2000) will return.

Announcements

✓ 2001 Membership dues. See Shirley before the meeting to pay your dues or send them to the club address: Clearwater Fly Casters, PO Box 2149 CS. Pullman, WA 99165. Dues are \$300/lifetime, \$50/sustaining, \$20/individual, \$25/family and \$10 student. Tippet mailing list will be revised for the April mailing.

✓ March's meeting will be the Club's fund raising auction. Be sure to bring flies, baked goods, unwanted fly fishing or fly tying equipment to donate. And don't forget to bring your wallet.

✓ Angler's 2001 Calendars are available for \$10. See Shirley before the next meeting.

✓ Northwest Fly Casting Exposition. September 29th, 2001. Port Orchard, WA. A casting clinic is being arranged for April/May with the members of the Spokane, Inland Empire and Dryside clubs. Stay tuned! Volunteers are needed to help organize. For more information email Dick Raisler raisler@cnw.com

Upcoming Events

March 13, 2001 6:00 pm. Clearwater Fly Casters meeting at Shermer's in Pullman

February 20, 2001 CFC Board/Conservation meeting, 5:30 pm at Rico's in Pullman

March 24, 2001 NW Fly Tier's Expo, Eugene, Oregon

May 5th, 2001 Amber Lake Fishout

July 11th, 2001 BBQ at Sunnyside Park, Pullman

July 12-15th, 2001 Fishout on the St Joe

President

John Toker (johntoker@hotmail.com) 332-6603

Vice-President

Jim Siebe (jsiebe@moscow.com) 883-0622

Secretary/Treasurer

Shirley Engerbretson (shirle1@hotmail.com) 882-1687

FFF Representative

George Johnson (gjohnson@pullman.com) 334-3135

Conservation Chair

Jim Palmersheim (jamesp@turbonet.com) 882-4502

Newsletter Editor

Tim Cavileer (tcavileer@uidaho.edu) 883-4572

Playing with your food

I grow tired of those who point a finger at anglers who release their catch, as I do, and accuse us of fish molestation. The phrase "playing with your food" wasn't clever the first time it was uttered. But it has acquired a particularly unintelligent and irritating ring now that it has become a pet phrase used by buffalo hunters from rod and gun clubs, belligerent natives with huge chips on their shoulders, and the oh-so-sensitive among us who seek thrills on clear cut ski slopes, or on golf courses that lie where wetlands once lay, or on wild lands turned to tennis courts.

To the people who think every fishing outing must have killing as its end point, I say grow up. Killing fish is what kids do. And, they do it well. Kids want to catch a lot of fish and they want to catch big fish. Left to their own devices they turn into ruthless predators. Forty years ago my ten-year-old buddies and I stumbled across a creek. Before long we spotted signs of fish. We unwound the braided green line from the hand-sized, rectangular wooden frames we'd bought at the five-and-dime. We threaded worms on the snelled hooks that hung below the pinch-on sinkers and a small float that completed the outfit. That done, we pitched our baits to the head of the pool lying at our feet. Time and time again our floats bobbed through the pool unmolested.

The frustration didn't last long. We dammed both ends of the pool with boulders then used our bait cans to scoop out enough water to strand the terrified fish. We pounced on our quarry and flipped them up and over the bank. For all we knew -and we knew very little about our surroundings then-these were only trout in the stream. We took them all. It was an act of innocence and ignorance, one that wouldn't have happened if an adult had been there to define the limits for us and explain the reason for them. We found those limits years later, at great cost to trout and every other species of fish and shellfish that had the misfortune of becoming our targets.

Now with so much undermined habitat and so many exhausted fish stocks, it's essential we teach children that the continuance of this bloodsport called angling may well hinge upon it becoming almost bloodless. "Why such a reluctance in a professed fisherman to kill fish," wrote Roderick Haig-Brown, reflecting on this habit in himself, "The main reason, I suppose, is that I don't enjoy killing anything, so I cannot see that doing so adds to the sport of going fishing."

Exactly. Everything leading up to the kill is captivating, exhilarating, instructive, and profoundly spiritual. When it comes to

the killing, well, it's not pleasant, and the older one gets, the harder it becomes.

As for those who worry that hooking a fish hurts it, and would, for that reason, get rid of angling altogether, I say consider your own participation in the grand scheme of things and reflect on the ways of the natural world. Inflicting pain makes a lot of people squeamish, but if you stop and drop all those anthropomorphic notions of cruelty and appreciate the ruthless environs in which fish exist, things come into focus. At one moment a smolt, responding to some inscrutable call, moves downstream to the sea, then-snap- it is gone, a meal for a bull trout. In one instant, a salmon sits, quivering in a shallow riffle a moment later the fish feels sharp pain as talons stab into its sides and it is hoisted aloft; a short time later it's torn apart by an osprey. In the natural context pricking the lip of fish, bringing it to hand in a few minutes, then twisting the hook to free it, is a very mild stylized form of predation.

For us angling goes back thousands of years. It is an important part of our culture, a link between our predatory past, the natural world and us. If it turns out we are no longer able to kill fish without putting their population at risk, we will still need to fish for them and let them go to maintain that cultural imperative. Angling is vital to millions of us. It is ritualized predation we call sport.

If you think about it you will realize that this kind sport is too benign to offend any gods.

(by Rob Brown, director and the chair of the Steelhead Committee of the BCFFF for the ClubWire Email NewsWire)

Sherm Lowell passes on

Sherm told us when we saw him last - a couple of months ago - that he had been told that nothing could be done about his heart problems. Fran died shortly thereafter and then Sherm. Holly (*Sherm's daughter*) said he tried heroically to recover from his most recent problems, but couldn't do it.

- Jim Short



Persistence pays off for Rick Markley! A 31" Grande Ronde steelhead caught last month by Rick and tailed by Tony McDonnell.

Fly of the Month--Super Fly

Submitted by Bill Hendrix

I didn't create this fly, nor did I give it its name. The fly was given to me by a friend and former student, Jason Henry, who comes out every year to fish with us for the Amber Lake outing. It was apparently created by an angler on the West Side. I fished it last year on Amber Lake with considerable success.

The pattern is:

Hook: Tiemco 3761 (or similar wet fly hook)
Bead: 5/32" gold
Tail: Olive maribou like fibers from the base of a saddle hackle, Guinea fowl, or similar feather
Body: Olive hare's ear/Antron mix
Overback: 4 strands of peacock herl
Rib: Fine gold wire
Collar: Peacock herl
Hackle: Same as tail

This is a pretty straight forward fly to tie. I found it fished best on an intermediate sinking line just above the weed beds. Most likely it is taken as a Damsel Fly nymph. It could no doubt be tied in other colors, and brown or black would probably make a good micro-leech pattern



(Photo by Jim Palmersheim)

Clearwater Fly Casters
Tim Cavileer - Newsletter Editor
124 South Hayes St
Moscow, Idaho 83843

