



The *Tippet*

January, 2011

Clearwater Fly Casters
www.clearwaterflycasters.com
A Federation of Fly Fishers Club



January Speaker: Rick Hedding and his daughter Madison, "Fly Fishing for Spring Steelhead on the Grande Ronde"

As winter keeps its grasp on most of the NW during February and March, cool mornings and sunny afternoons on the Grande Ronde River are made for catching steelhead on the fly. During February, the steelhead are stacking up in the runs to pass on their genetics to the next generation of sea run rainbows. For us fly fishers, this leads to a great opportunity for hooking many steelhead each day. During this presentation tonight, I will discuss in detail the systematic approach to catching steelhead with a fly that I have developed over the past years on the Grande Ronde River.

It was in March of 1993 that I made my first cast into the scenic Grande Ronde River. I had just read about the terminal fishery at the Cottonwood acclimation pond area and drove the 150 miles from Spokane to the river. Much to my dismay when I arrived, there were already 20 people lined up and down the bank casting away, but none were fly fishing. I left the crowd of bait chucker's and drove downstream looking for a place with enough room to cast. In the first run I found to myself, I waded in and started fishing a traditional steelhead fly, I think it was a sky sunrise. Three runs, eight hours, a box full of flies, and 500 casts later, I left dejected believing that catching a steelhead with a fly would be a mythical journey. It was not until later that year in October that I caught my first Grande Ronde steelhead. Little did I know that chasing these magnificent fish would consume my soul and change my life.

BIO: I moved to WA from AZ in 1990 after spending the previous five summers on the Kenai Peninsula. During my time in Alaska I got my first taste of the life of a fishing guide. A local guide and I became good friends and the last three summers I was there I spent every day fishing and guiding fly fishermen from around the world. After finally catching my first steelhead on a fly in the fall of 1993, I became consumed with fly fishing the Grande Ronde. The small and intimate size of the river coupled with the spectacular scenery kept me coming back time and time again, fish or no fish. The next 7 years I spent every day off fishing the Ronde. I got my first drift boat in 1995 and started exploring and fishing the lower canyon stretch. I was on a mission to learn every run, slot, and gravel bar that could hold a steelhead. After a few seasons I had my "go to" spots that consistently produced fish on the fly. The fateful day came in the summer of 1999 when I was laid off from my full time job. This was the open door I needed to start my lifelong dream of becoming a fishing guide. Now ten plus years later, I spend over 100 days each season chasing these most prized jewel of the Northwest, the mighty Steelhead!

Calendar

**Jan 12: CFC Meeting,
Rick Hedding, Fly Fishing the Grande Ronde**

**Jan 25: Fly Tying Night,
Moscow Title**

Feb 9: CFC Meeting

**Mar 9: CFC Meeting,
Sam Sickles, River
Borne Outfitters,
Deschutes River Fishing**

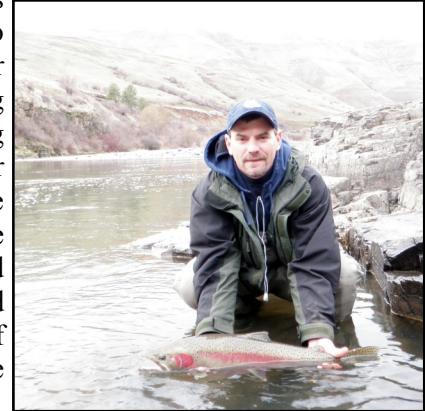
Information

The Tippet is available as a PDF file on our web site. Please submit information to the Newsletter Editor.

Meetings 2nd Wed:

**Wet Fly Hour: 5:30 PM
Dinner: 6:30 PM
(buffet, \$16 per person)
Program: 7:30 PM**

I began fly fishing at the age of 12 in the White Mountain region of the Arizona high country. Float tubing around the high mountain lakes trolling around a wooly bugger brought me my first trout to hand on a fly, a nice little brown trout all of about 13 inches. My love for fooling trout with a fly really began when I was attending college in Flagstaff, AZ. Lee's Ferry, the tail water section of the Colorado River below Glen Canyon Dam, was continuously flowing past my waders. The water is gin clear, and the sight fishing to the rainbows was very technically demanding compared to their AK cousins I had chased all summer long. This was such a blessing in disguise, as I learned how critical the proper presentation and mending can make or break your catching for the day. I love to fish all the Montana rivers, as well as the Deschutes and Wilson rivers in Oregon. I caught my first OP steelhead on the Bogachiel about five years ago, lots of cast, not so many fish over there. Above and beyond the great list of rivers I mentioned above, my favorite place to cast a fly would have to be the Goodnews River in Alaska. I could talk for hours on the wonders of fishing remote Alaska rivers, but you must truly be there yourself to understand the magnitude of the last frontier.



Backcast to December Meeting

Guests: Former member Tony Wright and his wife Janet Chisholm from Palouse, and former member Gary Thorgaard, professor in Biological Sciences at WSU.

Fishing reports: No actual fishing reports were given, but **Bob Harwood** had a fish print report – he brought a small print of a Lake Whitefish from Lake Pend Oreille. The largest Lake whitefish ever caught was a record 41 pounder.

Conservation Report: Doug Baldwin noted that there's still time to comment on the megaloads proposed to travel on Hwy 12. John Read said that another company is now applying for permits too, also that the pullouts along the highway will be unavailable for 24 hours before the loads go through, so parking for fishing access will be limited at those times. Steve Bush reported on the effects of clear-cutting along Partridge Creek near Elk River, including the Rinky-Dink campground. He also noted that the number of acres proposed for the Lochsa land swap has been reduced down to 14,000.

Announcements: Cliff Swanson passed around a list for members to check and correct their email addresses. Steve Bush asked who was a member of FFF; six people raised their hand. The club reports how many CFC members belong to FFF and then the club gets a membership discount. Steve suggested that members consider joining FFF – they have an informative magazine and expos in Ellensburg and Boise that folks can attend. Cliff announced that the Kelly Creek Flycasters Club meeting is on Thursday with a speaker on fishing cut-throat trout.

Business Meeting: Cliff opened the nominations for Vice President. Dave Tharp nominated Dave Uberuaga, Tim Cavileer seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Cliff reminded everyone that there will be a drawing for a fly rod, possibly from the Pullman fly shop, in January with all the raffle tickets from 2010. The club officers, Dave and Sharon Tharp, John and Mary Read, Lynn and Kay Youngblood, and Roxanne Bush were all appointed to the auction committee. The auction will be discussed further at the January meeting. Dave Tharp remarked that the book *Lochsa Story* by Bud Moore was a good read – someone promptly requested a book report from Dave for the next Tippet.

Program: Jen Bruns, coordinator of both the volunteer and hunter safety programs from the Lewiston Office of Idaho Fish and Game, talked about “Fisheries Volunteer Opportunities in the Clearwater Region”. She showed slides of various activities that they offer throughout the year, many of which our members have helped with. A sampling of fishery activities by season where help is needed include:

Winter – Ice Fishing Derby and Clinic at Spring Valley Reservoir in partnership with the UI Rec. Student organization, usually held in January

Spring – Habitat plantings as needed in March and April, Kids’ Fishing Day at Hordeman’s Park in Moscow in partnership with the local Kiwanis club in April, and habitat management work on the Potlatch River system. Volunteers helped install a steelhead interpretive sign with three panels of information near the river in Julietta.

This year, the Lewiston office has an aquatic education trailer that they hope to take around to different venues from March through June, and they could use additional help to staff it.

Summer – Free Fishing Day events at both Spring Valley and Mann Lake in June, and steelhead tagging on the East Fork of the Potlatch River in June. A total of 364 smolts have been tagged over the last four years (154 of them in 2010), with just one day of tagging per year. See the PIT (Passive Integrated Transponder) Tag Information System website at www.ptagis.org for more information.

Fall – fish plantings in August and September, hatchery spawning at Ahsahka and Riggins in August and September, Kokanee Redd Surveys on the North Fork of the Clearwater in September, the Youth Steelhead Clinic on the Clearwater near Lewiston in October (two steelhead were caught last year!), and the limnology study on the Dworshak Reservoir from summer into fall.

Matt Bruns spoke briefly about the steelhead program that he works with in the Troy school system. In each of the last two years, high school juniors and seniors have raised about 100 steelhead with eggs from the Dworshak hatchery at Ahsahka. 7th through 12th graders have the opportunity to see the tank that they use to raise the fish and become aware of the fish life cycle.

Gift Exchange: A fun time was had by all who brought gifts to exchange. Some of the highlights were tied flies, a travel rod case, wine, a photo frame, a reel, Go Fish game, cocoa mixes, a fishing guide to Alaska, a bait box, *Fly Fishing for Salmon in the Pacific* book, among others.

Membership Renewal

Please remember to pay your dues for the 2011 year at the January meeting, or send them in to our Treasurer. Print and fill out the form on the following page and turn it in with your dues, to help us keep our records up to date.

Fly of the Month for January: UV Madison Special

(private communication from Rick Hedding)

Hook (Daichii 1510 size 6)

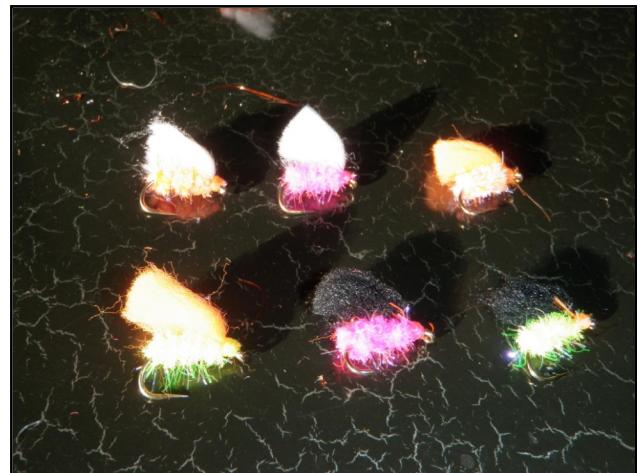
Thread (flat waxed nylon: cerise, orange, chart.)

Body (Trilobal Chenille: cerise, orange, chart.)

Ribbing (Micro UV Polar Chenille: cerise, orange, chart.)

Wing (Glo Bug Yarn 1/2 strand: white, orange, black)

Note: Madison will tie some of these flies as a demonstration before the January meeting and will have some for sale.



Membership Record for 2011

Name _____

Address _____

E-Mail _____

FFF Member? Y N

Membership: Single \$20 Family \$30 Supporting \$50 Life \$300

Send Newsletter by: E-Mail Link Snail Mail Both

Clearwater Fly Casters
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Clearwater Fly Casters

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Clearwater Fly Casters Officers 2010

President	Cliff Swanson	clswan12@gmail.com
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Webmaster	Tim Cavileer	tcavi@uidaho.edu (208)883-4572

CFC membership dues are \$20/yr for individuals, \$30/yr for families, \$10/yr for students, \$50/yr sustaining, \$300/lifetime. Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday, September through May, at the Best Western University Inn, 1516 Pullman Rd, Moscow, Idaho. Wet Fly Hour 5:30 PM, Dinner at 6:30 PM and Program at 7:30 PM.