

The Cast



Russian River Fly Fishers

RRFFers at Pyramid Lake, Cheering on Walt Kruse's Great Fishing Day

Sonoma County
California
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Since June 1977
Visit our website at
www.rrflyfisher.org

Headwaters...

It is a different landscape from a year ago - our hills are a vibrant green, our reservoirs are very close to full and the cry of drought has lessened, though by most counts prematurely. The Sierra snowpack is still wanting, and although the rains of our 'Miracle March' helped mitigate statewide water storage concerns, the lack of snow, as it melts through our summer months, does not bode well for our fall fisheries. We've had a somewhat normal year for precipitation, following four years of significant drought...and one of the driest years on record. A brief respite. A drop in the bucket. A moment for our rivers and lakes to catch their breath as we move into summer.

Anticipating the best spring fishing conditions we've had in years, our **RRFF Trout Opener** is once again set for the Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort near Mt. Shasta, this year from April 28th - May 1st. Please refer to the article elsewhere in this newsletter for event and reservation information, and be sure to sign-up either online or at our April General Meeting

if you are planning to attend. You may tent camp, bring RV's or trailers, or rent cabins at the Resort if you would like to join us. The RRFF Opener is usually our most well-attended outing of the year and is always a lot of fun!

I would like to take a moment to thank again all of the RRFF members who volunteered and made this year's RRFF Cioppino Dinner a resounding success! There were so many volunteers, involved in all aspects of this event, that we could not call out everyone individually. Suffice it to say that it was an evening hosted by RRFF members for fellow RRFF members. I would like to especially acknowledge the stellar crew who seared the steaks and simmered the Cioppino (John, Lorrin, Steve, Jeff, Rod, Jackie, Joe) and who organized the service (Heather, Kelly, Tim). Each year the food seems to get better than the last, and our attendance grows accordingly.

At the Cioppino Dinner, it was my pleasure to award three RRFF members with recognition for their

Outstanding Service to the RRFF over the past year. Lorrin Ngum was acknowledged for his ongoing contribution as editor of our RRFF newsletter *The CAST*, and Doug and Sage Mackay were applauded for their diligent efforts in maintaining the RRFF Casting Pond in Dan Galvin Park. Please join me in thanking these dedicated RRFF members for their commitment to our organization...and be sure to give them a pat on the back the next time that you see them.

A new trout season beckons and we cannot help but feel the stirrings of anticipation. For the moment, conditions look good. Across the country, in the Florida Keys, tarpon entice many of us to join them for their annual spawning migration, May and June finding many fly fishermen from Northern California on the shimmering flats in determined pursuit. Nearer to home, bass wake-up our local lakes and farm ponds while shad migrate into our rivers. Spring is here...each day a bit longer than the previous and our world opening with promise. If you listen carefully, you can hear the collective sigh of relief that accompanies winter's end...

~ Steve Tubbs

Thanks to the following RRFF members and local businesses who generously donated items to our 2016 Cioppino Dinner Raffle and Silent Auction:

MEMBERS: Ed Barich, Derek Campbell, John Frenzel, Cecile Focha, Christie Geernaert, Tony Hebner, Lynn Hughes, Greg Jacobs, Ken Magoon, Margie Matzen, Howard Nakagawa, Gloria Norton, James Orosz, Don Shaw, Jan Shaw, Brook Shaw, Neil Silverman, Mike Spurlock, and Gregg Wrisley.

BUSINESSES: Cattlemen's Restaurant, Lagunitas Brewery, Outdoor Pro Shop, Sonoma Therapeutics, Tease Hair Salon, and Titan Tactical.

Several people have inquired about the beautifully engraved beer glasses that were for sale. You may contact Childester's Awards and Laser Engraving by emailing childestersawards@comcast.net or phoning (707) 318-2877 for information.

Thanks also to RRFF Board members Gregg Wrisley, Greg Jacobs, Paul Matzen, and Mike Spurlock who

joined me in collecting and organizing the raffle and auction items and a very special thanks to the RRFF's "website wizard", Mike Spurlock, for creating and updating detailed lists of the items.

~ Ken Magoon

By Popular Demand - Steve Potter & Ben Byng Slated As April Guest Speakers

Our backyard, the Delta is where we love to fish for Largemouth Bass. Ben and Steve will take you on a journey through the California Delta.

The Delta has over 1100 miles of shoreline to fish. Let us take some of the mystery out of this vast waterway. Steve and Ben will cover it all from top water to float tubes.



Steve Potter: Christmas of 1990 is when Steve received the gift of his first fly tying kit. In complete enjoyment he practiced for hours upon end, tying many different types of flies. Steve gained further expertise in this area from studying the pros like Billy Munn, Jimmy Nix and Chris Helm. As time went on, spinning deer hair not only became a favorite of Steve's, but he was a natural at it.

Steve has been tying bass bugs and trout flies ever since receiving that first fly tying kit. He has demonstrated his tying skills in Oregon, Idaho, Montana and California at Federation of Fly Fishing events. Steve has also tied at the International Sportsman's Expositions in Pleasanton, San Mateo, and Sacramento, California. The Fly Fishing Shows in San Rafael and Pleasanton, California have featured Steve as one of their tiers.

The waters of the Sierra supply various species of trout that make a bountiful day of fishing - well worth the time spent at the tying table! Steve also enjoys wetting his fly line out on the California Delta for Largemouth and Striped Bass. As a team member in 2008, Steve took first place at the 1st California Delta Bass and Fly Competition.



Ben Bying: Fishing has been in Ben's blood since he was a young boy. His grandfather took him on many journeys from the Great Lakes to the Florida Keys. His father took him on summertime trips to Eastern Idaho for remote small stream fishing and high mountain adventures. These experiences have armed Ben with lessons that would follow him into fly-fishing. Having the California Delta in his backyard, Ben has spent many hours jamming in his boat through this 1200-mile waterway looking for Striped Bass. This is his fly-fishing wintertime playground.

In the summers of 2000-2005, Ben helped Andre Puyans with his Fly Fishing Seminars in Eastern Idaho at Elk Creek Ranch. Ben, with the help of Andre, has worked his way to Operations Manager.

You can catch Ben tying at the International Sportsmen's Expos and the Fly-Fishing Shows on the West Coast. Stop by if you have time to see what he is tying. Ben's time is now spent as an instructor for Wilderness Unlimited Fly Fishing Clinics and The Becoming an Outdoor Women Fly Fishing clinics - both highly attended fly fishing schools.

Please join me in welcoming our guest speakers at the **Wednesday, April 13 general meeting**.

~ Joe Banovich
RRFF Program and Speaker Chairman

~ RRFF Finds Rain(bows) on the Lower Yuba River in March

March 5, 2016 was the third annual RRFF outing on the Yuba River near Marysville, CA. By participating in a multi-club lottery, we were able to secure exclusive use of the University of California-Davis property that borders one of the best wild rainbow trout fisheries on the West Coast. Our party included Derek Campbell, Chris Castellucci, Walt Kruse, Bill Laurie, Doug Mackay, Howard Nakagawa, Don Shaw, Ken Young, Gregg Wrisley, Jeff Cratty, Mike Samuelson, Charlie Miller, Tom Greer, James Wurts, Michael Kryss, Will Williams and Ed Barich.

Compared to last year's outing, the 2016 Yuba event was considerably damper. On the day before we arrived, the flow from the upstream Englebright dam was increased from 1000 to 1700 CFS, resulting in challenging wading and murky waters. For most of us that meant difficulty in getting any action, although both Derek and Walt were successful in landing some of the feisty Yuba rainbows. According to Derek, the hot fly of the day was the San Juan worm, which was more visible to trout in the cloudy flows.

After a morning of hiking over the cobbles in a steady drizzle, our party gathered at the UC pavilion for a lunch of hot dogs and chili that helped to relieve the chills we experienced during a real "El Nino" blast.

Hopefully Ma Nature will be a bit more cooperative next year!

~ Ed Barich

Conservation Corner 7: From The Russian ... With Love

A few articles back I wrote about steelhead and salmon conservation with some attention to the Russian River. Not being native to the area, I was somewhat surprised while doing research for the article to discover the number and quality of non-profit and governmental organizations that are either specifically focused on local anadromous fish recovery or have significant projects to this end in the watershed.

I take that as a very good sign. Some have asked if the Russian can ever get back to its former glory. Are the complex web of problems and stakeholders just too complicated to ever sort out? The easy, cynical answer is "Not until someone can make some money from it". But I beg to differ. To me it seems there are just too many forces for good arrayed to not eventually be successful. Realistically, it might take a while. The damage took 50 or 60 years to accumulat

e so I imagine it might take even longer to recover fully. But I take hope from Nature's resiliency and ability to respond to

favorable conditions, assuming things haven't gone over the final edge. An example close to where I grew up is the recovery of the Elwha River. Now dam removal is a swift change and the ecosystem upriver was still pristine, but the challenges of Habitat (global warming, ocean conditions), Hatchery, and Harvest were all still in play. And the fish came back.

So who is out there trying to love the Russian fish back to health? What are their goals? And what challenges do they face? As you'll see, there's a lot of potential horsepower to make a difference. One challenge may be that all of these organizations have similar but not necessarily identical goals and leadership. Each are staffed and run by people, who all have their own ideas on what to do and how to do it. Maybe a potential path is a watershed approach which unites all of the interested organizations together to pull even more weight. An example that seems to be on the right path is the [Eel River Forum](#) which is made up of 22 separate stakeholder groups united around a common goal to restore the 3rd largest watershed in California. At least until Congressional apathy pulled them apart,



another example was the Klamath Basin Agreements partners.

Below is a sampling of who is involved in the Russian River and Mission Statements from their websites. In a later article, we'll talk in more detail about specific projects going on in the watershed.

[Redwood Empire Trout Unlimited](#) – It is the mission of the Redwood Empire chapter of Trout Unlimited to support wild and native coldwater fisheries within

the California North Coast by protecting, reconnecting, restoring, and sustaining local rivers and watersheds for anadromous species. RETU has helped create partnerships to fund the Colgan Creek restoration project in Santa Rosa and is currently looking for another large-scale project to energize and coalesce membership. Trout Unlimited at the state and national levels is part of other local projects such as habitat restoration on Lower Willow Creek and the RRCWRP (see above).

[Russian River Wild Steelhead](#)

[Society](#) – The Russian River Wild Steelhead Society is a group of dedicated individuals focused on the restoration of the Russian River ecosystem. Founded in 2009, their mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the wild Russian River Steelhead and the Russian River watershed through



hands-on river restoration and enhancement projects and through education. Examples include the placement of LWD in the lower Russian and the Korbel Bank Stabilization project.

[Russian River Coho Water Resources Partnership](#) – In response to the precipitous decline of coho salmon in the Russian River watershed, the Russian River Coho Water Resources Partnership formed in 2009 to develop a systematic approach to improve streamflow and water supply reliability in five Russian River tributaries: Dutch Bill Creek, Grape Creek, Green Valley Creek, Mark West Creek, and Mill Creek.

[Sonoma County Water Agency](#) – A complex partner responsible for water use in our County. They put up dams and regulate use based on economic drivers, but they also sponsor fisheries research, improve stream habitat and remove upstream barriers to fish passage like the Crocker and Mumford Dams. They also administer one of the largest restoration projects in the watershed, the Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Program.

[Warm Springs Fish Hatchery](#) – Coho Conservation program – CDF&W conservation hatchery designed to re-establish a wild self-sustaining population of Coho in the Russian.

[National Fish Habitat Partnership](#) – The mission of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan is to protect, restore and enhance the nation's fish and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and improve the quality of life for the American people. Grape Creek in the Russian River watershed was the first Habitat Focus Area selected as part of NOAA's new agency-wide Habitat Blueprint initiative. Habitat Focus Areas are places where NOAA is pooling resources and expertise to maximize conservation of important habitat.

[Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation](#) - The Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation works to restore and conserve the Laguna de Santa Rosa, the largest tributary of the Russian River, and to inspire public appreciation for this Sonoma County Wetland of International Importance.

[Sonoma Resource Conservation Districts](#) – The mission of the Sonoma RCDs is to help agricultural and rural landowners protect, conserve, and restore natural resources through information, education, and technical assistance programs. Examples include [Gold Ridge](#) and [Mark West](#) Conservation Districts.

[Friends of the Mark West Watershed](#) - A community dedicated to preserving, protecting, and restoring

the Mark West Creek and its watershed as a natural and community resource.

[Watershed Councils](#) – Their mission is to bring together the people who live and work in our watersheds to help each other in taking responsibility for our impact on the watershed through protection, restoration and education. Examples include the [Dutch Bill Creek Watershed Council](#), [Atascadero Green Valley Watershed Council](#).

[Russian River Watershed Association](#) - An association of nine cities, counties and special districts in the Russian River Watershed that have come together to coordinate regional programs for clean water, fisheries restoration and watershed enhancement.

[Russian River Watershed Protection Committee](#) - RRWPC's specific purpose is to serve as a civic association concerned with public interest issues related to the Russian River and its watershed. Our primary focus is on the lower river watershed and its major tributaries.

[Endangered Habitats Conservancy](#) – Leading a coalition of funding from the State Coastal Conservancy, Sonoma County, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service West Coast Region, and California Wildlife Foundation to study the feasibility of restoring an old Windsor-area gravel mine through the Hanson Russian River Ponds Floodplain Restoration Project.

[Russian Riverkeeper](#) – Based in Guerneville, the organization's mission is inspiring the Community to protect the Russian River forever. They focus on river and community clean-ups and a local park.

[Clean River Alliance](#) - Our Mission: To remove trash from the Russian River Watershed and to educate citizens about the problem of river trash in our waters by creating more community river clean-up events.



[Russian River Watershed Cleanup](#) Committee - The mission of the Russian River Watershed Cleanup Committee is to coordinate cleanup and removal of trash in the Russian River and its tributaries between Cloverdale and Jenner. We organize and coordinate teams of volunteers for an annual cleanup and promote stewardship of the Russian River watershed.

So, what can YOU do to help the Russian?

1. Push for long-term watershed-based solutions. Make connections between organizations you support. Get involved with your local watershed council, conservation district, committee, or Friends Of... group
2. Volunteer for habitat restoration and clean-up days in the Russian River watershed
3. Support local organizations that sponsor larger restoration projects like RRWSS and RETU. Advocate for organizations like CalTrout and IFFF to get involved in our watershed.
4. Support businesses and programs that make fisheries conservation a priority like Water & Wine Stewardship Program and the Fish Friendly Farming Program – examples include Martoroma, Amista Vineyards, Dry Creek Vineyard, Seghesio, Rued Winery, Quivira Vineyards and Winery, and Yellow Dog Vineyard.

~ Derek Campbell
Conservation Chairman

2016 Pyramid Outing Report

We had about twenty members venture between storms over Donner Summit to Pyramid Lake, March 17 to 20. However, the weather over the weekend was disappointingly sunny with light winds. As in past years, "Bluebird Days" at Pyramid left many of us with the "No Grab Blues". I had no hook-ups on Thursday and four on Friday and Saturday, one of which resulted in my landing a 16 inch Cui-Ui, a sacred fish to the Paiute Tribe . . . which left me feeling like I had hooked my golden retriever, Pearl.

Due to the attention Pyramid Lake is getting over the return of the original big fast growing genetic strain of cutthroat, its popularity has exploded. There were long lines of men and women on ladders at the North and South Nets, which sandwich the Reservation's hatchery in-take channel. There was

quite a bit of talk and complaining along the lines about people crowding in on each other or trying to reserve space for friends. As an example of the latter, Tom Mersich who slept in his camper on the beach, woke up to find one guy putting out five ladders. Later, we learned that the potential fishermen, who were having breakfast somewhere, had those ladders confiscated by the Tribal Police and had to pay a \$75 fine. I must confess that on Saturday, some of our club members squeezed 6 of us into a stretch at the North Nets, which would have usually held three ladders.

Among those of us fishing from ladders at the North Nets, Ed Barich, Chris Castellucci and Don Shaw each had many hook ups over the weekend. But, **Walt Kruse was the RRFF 2016 Pyramid Outing "All Star"**, landing 31 cutthroat trout using midges under an indicator! What was interesting about Walt's day, is that he had set up his ladder at predawn next to local Greg Sano, who had shared his considerable knowledge of nymph fishing Pyramid Lake at our Friday dinner. After some negotiation about how much space Greg needed to "drift his line with the wind", Walt proceeded to catch fish. Later in the day, he had the RRFF guys watching and keeping track of his numbers and we managed to not become a loud cheering section for each fish landed.

In the past couple of years, our Pyramid group has diverged between those mainly using ladders at the Nets and folks wading along the many other beach accesses. Unfortunately, as an addicted ladder dragger, I did a poor job of gathering information on how the waders' fishing days went, so I hope everyone shares their fishing experiences at our next meeting and on our website and Facebook page.

As with past Pyramid outings, the great unifying events of this trip were the beautiful delicious dinners prepared by the Cattlemen's Restaurant professional John Frenzel with Steve Tubbs, Heather Hamm, Lee Soares, Maria Hamm, and Lorrin Ngum.

Thanks to them and club members in attendance.

~ Ken Magoon

RRFF Opener - Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort

April 28th - May 1st

Reservations are now in place for our RRFF Opener at the Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort in Mt. Shasta. This

year's RRFF Opener will be held on Opening Day Weekend, **April 28 to May 1**. ***Opening Day of the general Trout Season is on Saturday, April 30th.*** There are numerous lakes in the area that will be open for fishing, as will the Upper Sacramento and Trinity Rivers, before the Saturday Opening Day.

PLEASE NOTE – ALL CAMPING RESERVATIONS MUST BE PURCHASED FROM THE LAKE SISKIYOU CAMP RESORT BY THOSE MEMBERS WHO WILL BE USING THE SITES. THE RRFF HAS RESERVED THE SITES BELOW FOR OUR USE...BUT HAS NOT PAID ANY MONIES TO RENT THESE SPACES. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO USE THESE SITES, YOU MUST HANDLE ALL DEPOSITS AND SITE PAYMENTS.

- 1.) Tent Camping** - Just as we did last year, we have reserved the following tent campsites for RRFF use –

335 A	336 A	337 A
363 A	363 B	363 C

If you would like to tent camp, each site will hold multiple tents. Please contact the Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort to reserve your site (see contact information below). These are the same sites that we reserved last year for the tent campers. ***You must identify yourselves as part of the RRFF Group to be able to reserve these sites.*** You will also be required to make a deposit for your reservation. If you will be sharing a tent site, please work out the financial responsibilities with those members who will share your site.

- 2.) RV's & Trailers** - We have also reserved the following sites for RV and Trailer use.

345	346
347	

(Don & Jan Shaw are already in Site # 348.)

Again, if you would like to reserve any of these sites, ***identify yourself as a member of the RRFF Group*** and you will be able to do so. You will be required to make a deposit to reserve your site. Just like last year, if you would rather stay in another site (RV or Trailer Guests), you may reserve one from those that are available when you make your reservations. Please identify yourselves as RRFF members so that the Camp Resort Office knows what group you belong to. Typically, this time of year is fairly slow for the Camp Resort...so there should be plenty of room for anyone who wishes to attend.

3.) Cabins –

There are also cabins available for rent if you would rather not enjoy the camping experience. Contact the **Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort** to determine what is available for the days you wish to attend.

4.) Contact Information –

Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort

4239 W A Barr Road
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067
530-926-2618
530-926-5061

Our Friday and Saturday night dinners will be held in the **Recreation Room** overlooking the Lake, either on the beautiful outdoor deck (weather permitting) or indoors. The RRFF will provide the Friday and Saturday evening meals, and there may be a nominal charge if our dinner fare exceeds the allotted budget. The volunteer cooking crew and hosts (John Frenzel, Heather Hamm, Kelly Ames, Tim Grogan and Steve Tubbs) will be staying in the cabin adjacent to the Recreation Room (**L19**).

RRFF members attending the Opener will be responsible for any other meals and foodstuffs, for making their camping reservations and for any personal watercraft or other equipment that they may require. The weather near Mt. Shasta can be unpredictable. We recommend that you prepare for any eventuality that Mother Nature may toss our way.

TELL US YOU ARE COMING! - Please sign-up for this event at our **April General Meeting on Wednesday, April 13th**, or online at www.rrflyfisher.org. We will need an accurate head count for our Friday & Saturday evening meal planning and preparation. The RRFF Opener is typically our most well-attended outing of the year...and is always an excellent opportunity to share in the camaraderie of our RRFF family.

I look forward to seeing you at Lake Siskiyou...

~ Steve Tubbs

**Check out the Russian River Fly
Fishers
on the Internet at**

www.rrflyfisher.org

Russian River Fly Fishers

P.O. Box 2673
Santa Rosa, CA 95405



Russian River Fly Fishers Membership Application

I acknowledge in this agreement, and fully understand, that it is a release of liability. I further acknowledge that I am waiving any right that I may have to bring legal action or to assert a claim against Russian River Fly Fishers (RRFF) for its negligence. Any member who invites a non-member (including member's spouse and family) agrees that such guest is bound by the same conditions and agrees to so advise the guest. I have read this statement and agree to its terms as a condition of my membership in the Russian River Fly Fishers. This agreement is valid for all RRFF sanctioned events, (fishing outings, picnics, meetings).

Name _____ Date _____ Referred by _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ E-mail Address* _____

How Can You Help the RRFF? _____

Occupation _____ Signature _____

* Required for e-mail newsletter

Please mark one of the following categories:

I apply as a new member: Single membership – \$50 annual dues

Gold membership - \$1,000.00 (one-time)

Family membership – \$55 annual dues

[JOIN ONLINE @ www.rrflyfisher.org](#)

Junior membership – \$25 annual dues

Existing membership renewal: Single membership – \$50 annual dues

Gold membership - \$1,000.00 (one-time)

Family membership – \$55 annual dues

[RENEW ONLINE @ www.rrflyfisher.org](#)

Junior membership – \$25 annual dues

Dues paid by a new member joining the RRFF after March 30th of any year will cover the balance of that year and also the membership dues for the following fiscal year. The RRFF fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th

Please mail this application and your check payable to: **Russian River Fly Fishers, P.O. Box 2673, Santa Rosa, CA 95405**