



Sonoma County, California
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April 2025

RRFF member, James Kibler and his steelhead,
Trinity River, CA
Story by James Kibler, page 5

Since June 1977
Visit our website at
www.rrflyfisher.org

President's Message By Daniel Powers

We are making significant progress as a club, thanks to the unwavering support of our club members, RRFF Board of Directors and Coordinators. I extend my sincere gratitude to all of you for your generosity.

As promised, the 2025 Winter Dinner financial numbers are in and the club earned \$4,600, second highest of any dinner back to 2008. The event was well-organized, and the food was excellent.

The board is now planning our annual donations to be distributed to non-profit organizations like candidates Casting for Recovery, Steelhead in the Classroom and other fly-fishing related organizations.

The 2025 Nominations Ballot for RRFF Officers and Board of Directors will be printed in the May Cast. If you are interested in becoming a candidate as a board member and you want to be considered on the ballot, then contact me, Daniel Powers or if you have questions, please contact any board member, click [link](#). The ballot will be sent to all members. Please vote when you receive it.

The board has recently appointed Tracie Koenig as Treasurer. Mike Spurlock's RRFF Website duties will remain the same, but his RRFF responsibilities will also include being backup, per our bylaws, to Tracie if she is unavailable. He will also be responsible for all RRFF Membership tasks and issues.

Also, here are some upcoming dates to note. On Saturday, April 19, 2025, club volunteers will gather for our annual and much-needed cleanup of our casting pond liner. This important task requires at least 24 RRFF volunteers. Please read the specific information from Doug Mackay, our Pond Steward, in the text box to the right of this page.

On June 7, 2025, our club will have a potluck Summer Picnic gathering at the casting pond. This summer picnic is a *thank you celebration* to all club members for their volunteer service and support!

The July General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at the casting pond for a casual gathering instead of the usual Veterans Hall venue.

More details on those two events above as they get closer.

Happy Fishing,
Daniel Powers

Click [link](#) to club calendar and RRFF outing sign-up sheets.

Club Activities	April Date & Time	May Date & Time
Daylight Savings Time Fly Casting Clinics Day & Hours	Every Thursday 4:30-7:00 PM	Every Thursday 4:30-7:00 PM
Flash Steelhead Day Trips January through April (river flow & weather dependent, Ed Barich TBA)	Flash Steelhead Day Trips thru April 30th Sign up	X
Steelhead in the Classroom (SIC) Egg Delivery	4/2	X
General Meeting	4/9 6:30 -9:00 PM	5/14 6:30 -9:00 PM
Clear Lake Outing	4/11 – 4/13	X
Siskiyou Lake Outing	X	5/15 – 5/18
Jimmy Green Spey-O-Rama at GGACC	4/11, 4/12 or 4/13 8 AM – 5:00 PM	X
Board Meetings	4/16 7:00 to 8:00	5/21 7:00 to 8:00
Cleaning the Casting Pond Liner	4/19 8:00-11:00 AM	X
Baum Lake Outing	4/24 – 4/27	X

RRFF General Meeting By Mike Borba

Luke Geraty, a guide for Conference Outfitters, will speak at our General Meeting on April 9, 2025. With 35 years of fly-fishing experience across the lower 48 states including some time in eastern Africa and New Zealand. He'll discuss key Northern California streams and how to fish them. I look forward to Luke's talk and seeing everyone at the meeting.

Important Notice RRFF Volunteers Needed By Doug Mackay, Pond Steward

On Saturday, April 19 we will gather for a much-needed cleanup of our casting pond. Please join us in the southeast corner of Dan Galvin Park, on the corner of Bennett Valley Rd. and Yulupa Ave. The casting pond is located beyond the soccer fields and dog park.

Scrubbing the bottom of the pond requires at least **24 volunteers**. The sludge is moved toward a large pump at the opposite end to the pond by a wave of 24 push brooms and the volunteers marching forward shoulder to shoulder.

If we start gathering earlier and have full staff by 8:00 AM, we should be done by 11:00. Please bring rubber boots and a push broom, a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, and a sense of humor. New members, this is a good time to get to know everyone. The bottom of the pond is slippery. If you don't feel confident working in the pond, you might help with the pump or discharge hoses or bringing refreshments.

NOTE. We have eliminated the Sign-Up sheet for this work session since it has not proved necessary. You do NOT have to be a member to participate. So, if your fishing buddy is *free*, we hope you will drag him along.

As a side note—The pond liner is approaching its 20th birthday in 2028. This will be an opportunity to inspect the liner so we can decide when we will need to replace it.

My First Fish on A Fly Memoir By Mike Borba

In 1967, my Boy Scout troop planned a camping trip at Salmon Creek, which is a tributary of the upper Kern River. Prior to the trip, I decided to attempt fly

fishing. Aside from reading a few articles about fly fishing, I had no knowledge of it and did not know anyone familiar with this way to fish. I managed to gather some gear and buy flies from the only place in town that sold them—our Payless drug store.

When my Boy Scout troop reached the campground, I immediately took my gear to the stream. I can hardly remember learning to cast my fly rod. Fortunately, the stream was full of small, unpressured rainbow trout.

On my first cast, I missed a fish by setting the hook too late. The same thing happened on the second cast. On my third cast, when a trout rose, I set the hook and caught a 6" rainbow. Pausing for a moment, I wanted to remember the trout before releasing it.

While I had caught a few planted trout at that point in my life, I never had experienced a wild trout before. I was amazed at how beautiful and perfect it was. I still remembered that fish to this day.

That winter, I received a beginner's fly-tying kit for Christmas. Using the instruction manual, I learned how to tie a few patterns. And in the summer of 1968, our troop went back to Salmon Creek. I caught trout with flies I had tied and paused to remember those moments too. It was an exciting time in my life.

During the learning process of fly fishing there were several notable events such as catching a 20-inch trout, a bass, and a saltwater fish.

Fly Line Recycling By Rick Baker

Do you have a growing collection of older fly lines that you no longer have use for because they are just plain worn-out? Below are a couple of suggestions for you if are sick of hanging onto lines which you no longer use.

- **Flyvines**

Flyvines, click [link](#), accepts old fly lines and upcycles them into items like lanyards, bracelets, keychains, and sunglass retainers. You can donate your fly line to Flyvines, and they will send you one item of your choice for free (just pay

shipping cost). Each donation makes you eligible for one gift every 6 months.

Below is my photograph of a bracelet I had made from a memorable tarpon who trashed my line rendering it unusable.



Rick Baker's worn-out tarpon fly line was converted by Flyvines into a unique bracelet.

- **Airflo**

Airflo, click [link](#), a company owned by Mayfly Outdoors offers a free recycling program for plastic fly lines and spools at any Airflo retailer. You can use the Airflo website to find a participating location and check the list of eligible materials. Airflo then partners with *TerraCycle* to sort and recycle the materials with other similar plastics.

- **Local fishing stores**

What prompted my search was the difficulty in finding local fly line and monofilament recycling outlets. Shops within the area who accept fly lines for recycling are *Lost Coast Outfitters* and *Fly-Fishing Specialties*. Truthfully though, if lines are not returnable to the manufacturer, they send lines they receive to Flyvines.

NCCFFI Update By Penelope Gadd-Coster

I am the RRF representative connection to Northern California Council Fly Fishers International. To help bring better communication between Northern California clubs and FFI, this is the news for the

month. NCCFFI is the local chapter of FFI and would like you to be aware of their volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to preserving fly fishing and aquatic watersheds through education, conservation advocacy, and outreach. FFI is the organization that provides insurance coverage for our club.

First, I'd like you to be aware of an opportunity to participate as a volunteer on the Ah Di Na Campground Restoration Project on the McCloud River. Please click [link](#), volunteers are needed!

Also, click [link](#) to access the NCCFFI informative newsletter, the *River Mouth* for more information about our local advocate to FFI.

RRFF 2025 Fly-Fishing Classes Assessment of Interest Level By Gregg Wrisley

RRFF would like to offer two fly-fishing classes to our members this year.

One class would be a **Beginner Class** and the other would be an **Advanced Beginner Class**. The one with the most interest will be offered in May or June. The other will likely be offered in the Fall. Both would be offered on a Saturday at the pond with a possible Sunday trip to go fishing.

- The **Beginner Class** will cover an introduction to fly fishing, equipment, setting up a rod, knot tying, aquatic bugs, and casting. Anybody who has taken this class before is welcome to take it again.
- The **Advanced Beginner Class** is designed for someone who has taken the Beginner class or if not, has some fly fishing experience and does not need to experience the beginner topics. It will cover line selection, fly selection, how to fight a fish, how to net a fish, how to read water, and advanced beginner casting techniques.

If you are interested, sign up for one or both classes using the link below to reach the RRFF Website Calendar. Click [link](#) to access the sign-up sheet located under the month of May.

Contact Gregg Wrisley if you have questions. gwriss@yahoo.com or call 707-823-5572.

RRFF Wading Clinic By Mike Spurlock



Learning to river wade with RRFF helpers.

The RRFF Wading Clinic is open to all club members. It will be held on Saturday, October 4, from 8 AM - 1 PM and will be located at Del Rio Woods Regional Park in Healdsburg on the Russian River.

If you are new to wading, this class would be good for you whether you are an experienced fly fisher, or you are just beginning. Bring your own waders, boots and staff or if you don't have equipment yet, wear a swimming suit and tennis shoes to wet-wade and we will supply a wading staff. It is normally beautiful day at Del Rio beach at a hidden section of the river reserved just for us.

As part of the class, our five mentors will each demonstrate our own personal wading equipment which will be helpful if you still plan to buy some equipment or if you just want to see what others use and why.

In the class, we will show how to read water and wade safely, and how to shuffle your feet while keeping two points of contact. We will guide you one-on-one wading safely across the river. If you are comfortable, we will offer you the opportunity to cross the river alone without a guide. Click [link](#) to view 2024/2023 Wading Clinics slideshows.

After lunch, we will have a chance to visit the mouth of Dry Creek on the Russian River, a popular fishing

spot. These clinics were highly successful, and they filled up each of the last two years. To sign up for the Wading Clinic, go to Russian River Fly Fishers Website, Calendar & Trip Signups, locate the clinic on October 4th and register for this clinic.

Mentors for this class: Jeff Cratty, Gregg Wrisley, Rosa Sanchez, Alan Neally, and Mike Spurlock. For inquiries, contact [Mike Spurlock](#).

Discovering California Trinity River in October By James Kibler

My first fall in California, I really wanted to learn how to swing flies for steelhead. Nerd that I am, I had done abundant research prior to the move. Everything pointed to floating the Trinity as the closest, best place for a reasonable shot at one of these sea-going behemoths. I decided to hire a guide—one that specialized in swinging flies—to scout the river and learn the technique.

After a long day of swinging, we were nearing the takeout point. I had caught enough half-pounders throughout the day to keep my hopes up, but I was beginning to think this might not be my day. At least, I was thinking, maybe I could convince my guide to tie on a nymph rig. This was a promising run, so I'd just swing it a few more—TUUUGG!!! Suddenly I wasn't thinking any more, I was holding on. That tug led to a fight that led to a medium sized hatchery steelhead. That hefty tug has kept me coming back and has turned floating the Trinity in October into an annual tradition for me.

As I am writing this, it is March, and a full season of hatches, dry flies and wet wading is right around the corner. The practical concerns of this upcoming summer, when I'll be guiding in the rugged country of Northern New Mexico, are front of my mind. Still, I can't help but get dreamy when I take a moment to think about my next October float on the Trinity River. Why the Trinity in October? I am not a steelhead expert. But my understanding is that the rains of October get steelhead moving and active in the Trinity River system. It also happens to be when the October Caddis hatch provides bugs in fitting

proportion to the huge trout, while a sparse run of salmon makes their spawning runs upriver.

October flows are generally gentle, making the stretches I float comfortable even for a rower of my modest experience. And the weather is sufficiently *steel heady* often cool and misty or rainy, but not cold to the point of significant discomfort. Fall colors add to the charm, making it just about perfect in terms of timing.

Since getting a lay of the river on the previously mentioned guide trip, I have been floating the Trinity on my own. My favorite section is near Lewiston. For example, Bucktail to Steel Bridge below the campground is a great, easy float and the water is just incredibly fishy, with one bucket after another to swing into. The float allows a sense of freedom and the actual physical freedom to reach water that wading folk can't reach. I don't fish from my Watermaster usually, but float to a nice spot, get out, and swing flies for a while.

From a practical standpoint, the area around Lewiston has some additional advantages. There is a helpful fly shop, several campgrounds, and a (more or less) reasonably priced shuttle service that make the logistics of floating possible. There are also some food/grocery options and lodges nearby if you are so inclined, which is not always the case along other sections of the Trinity.

I followed up my fishing trip with my guide with a solo float the very next week, convinced I would replicate my successes. Of course I didn't. In fact, I have yet to catch another full-grown steelhead on the Trinity. Still, I would say that I have never had a bad day on this stretch of river (OK, knock on wood!). Most days have been days that I would consider great—half a dozen or more 12-16" fish—if I didn't know that submarines lurked below. I could probably up my numbers by resorting to nymphs, but something about the idea of swinging flies just feels right to me.

I still have a huge amount of California to explore—Golden Trout Wilderness is high on my list—but the Trinity in October is a special experience, and I can't wait to get back.



Russian River Fly Fishers

Thursday Evening Fly Casting Clinics

4:30 until 7:00 pm - Every Thursday
(weather permitting)

This event is always **FREE** and is **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!**
Beginners are welcome!

LEARN TO FLY CAST!

Please join us in the southeast corner of Dan Galvin Park, on the corner of Bennett Valley Road and Yulupa Avenue. The Casting Pond is located beyond the soccer fields and Dog Park. For more information, visit

rrflyfisher.org

facebook.com/russianriverflyfishers

We do have some equipment available for your use at the Casting Pond if you do not have your own.

Support Our Local Fly-Fishing Businesses!

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How to Contact Board of Directors & Coordinators

If you want to contact one or more of the Board of Directors and/or Coordinators below, then click on this link, which will bring you to our website.

<https://www.rrflyfisher.org/board-of-directors--coordinators.html>

The names of our Board of Directors and Coordinators will appear. You may click on a name and leave a message for any person below and our website will send it to their personal email address, and they will respond to your message.

RRFF Board of Directors

President: **Daniel Powers**

Vice President, Women's Outreach & Resources: **Penelope Gadd-Coster**

Outings Coordinator: **Ed Barich**

Secretary: **Brendan Galten**

Treasurer: **Tracie Koenig**

Webmaster and Membership: **Mike Spurlock**

Casting Instruction Chairman, Facebook: **Steve Tubbs**

Casting Instruction: **Don Shaw**

Membership Badges & Pond Steward: **Doug Mackay**

Raffle & Education Chairman: **Gregg Wisley**

New Member Mentoring, Casting Instruction: **Jeff Cratty**

Outings and Clinics: **Pam Boyd DeCoite**

Program Chair and Fly of the Month: **Mike Borba**

Women's Activities Coordinator, Outings and Clinics: **Catherine Miller**

Member at Large: **Spencer Bader**

Coordinators

Fly Tying: **Lee Soares**

Conservation Advisors: **Charlie Schneider & Tom Greer**

Women's North Sonoma County Outreach: **Leafa Fiore**

Fly Rod Building: **Rick Baker**

The Cast Newsletter Editor: **Dave Stone**

Steelhead in the Classroom: **Karl Joost**

Russian River Fly Fishers Membership Application

(if possible, we prefer that you use the on-line application on our website where you can also pay online:
<https://www.rrflyfisher.org/membership-application--payment.html>)

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. This agreement is valid for all RRFF sanctioned events, (fishing outings, picnics, dinner fund raisers, meetings, pond casting clinics, etc.) some of which are open to the public and all of which are covered by RRFF insurance. As a club member you are approved to participate in certain covered events which are not available to non-members: fishing outings and training for fly-casting certification.

Note: Private activities arranged by club members (not sponsored or approved by the club) are not sanctioned and will not be covered by RRFF insurance.

I have read this statement and agree to its terms as a condition of my membership in the Russian River Fly Fishers.

***Indicates required field.**

*Name _____ *Date _____

*How did you hear about us? _____ *Referred by? _____

*Address _____ *City/State/Zip _____

*Preferred Phone: Home _____ or Cell _____ *E-mail _____

Occupation _____ *Signature _____

* I'm applying as a new member. Circle (Yes / No) or I'm renewing my existing membership. Circle: Yes or No

*Check the boxes below that is applicable:

Single membership - \$50 annual dues

Junior membership - \$25 annual dues (age 16-18 or live >75 miles from Santa Rosa)

Gold membership - \$1,000 (one-time) Family Membership - \$55 annual dues List family members: _____

Membership includes a woman who would like to be contacted by our RRFF Women's Group: Circle Yes or No.

The club would like to help you meet your fly-fishing needs. How many years have you been fly fishing? _____

Check any areas you want help with:

I would like help learning or improving my fly-fishing cast. I would like advice on fishing equipment.

I would like a lesson in tying knots. I would like a lesson in tying flies.

I would like to have an experienced member mentor me on local waters or on a club outing.

Any other areas not mentioned above _____

*How are you planning to pay? _____

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

IF YOU PREFER, YOU MAY JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE at www.rrflyfisher.org.

OR

NEW MEMBERS, MAY MAIL THIS APPLICATION TO:

RUSSIAN RIVER FLY FISHERS, C/O MIKE SPURLOCK, 20 SAN DOMINGO WAY, NOVATO, CA 94945