



President's Message

A New Kind of Cabin Fever

Back in the “good old days”, cabin fever was reserved for the depths of winter when our favorite waters were inaccessible due to heavy snows or flooding rains. That was always tough on fly fishers who yearned to be outdoors enjoying their sport, but we tend to be a patient bunch who are accustomed to delayed gratification (take steelheaders as an example). Knowing that the arrival of Spring is predictable, we just hunkered down and waited it out.

This new Corona virus thing is something else though. The shelter-in-place orders have forced the RRF to cancel all meetings, outings and casting clinics for the not-so-foreseeable future. That's a tough pill to swallow, especially when we see

flowers blooming outside and know that some of the best fishing of the year is about to start. But the seriousness of the situation puts our sport in perspective; there are more important things in our lives, and we need to protect ourselves, our families and our communities as best we can. But if you find that you have more time on your hands than you can use productively, here are some ideas to keep yourself occupied during the crisis:

- Tie Flies – When the going gets rough, fly fishers tie flies. Need more of your favorite pattern or crave to try something different this year? There are many online videos to inspire both new and advanced tiers on YouTube. The RRF website <https://www.rflyfisher.org/casting-knot-tying-fly-tying-handouts.html> has a link to get you started.

- Organize your fly box – You often tell yourself that you will do this someday – now’s the time! I saw an interesting presentation by aquatic biologist Peter Stichter on this subject at the Pleasanton Fly Show. Check it out at <https://ascentflyfishing.com/fly-box-organization/>
- More fly fishing videos – Steve Tubbs updates our club Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/russianriverflyfishers> daily, so there are always new videos and articles there about fly fishing. (Note: You do not need to be a Facebook member to use the site).
- Help keep a guide in business – California guides are practically all shut down now, so they and their families are in for rough times. If you know you will be using a guide service later this year when all the craziness is over, why not put some money down now to reserve a trip? It might help ensure that your favorite guide is still in business when you need them.

So, let’s be cautious, patient and prepared all at the same time. As all anglers know, good things come to those who can wait.

Tight lines.

~ *Ed Barich*

P. S. The annual elections for the RRFF officers and board are approaching and we are soliciting your nominations at the <https://www.rflyfisher.org/> website until April 30. The board presently has 12 members and we would welcome having a couple more. The completed ballot will be in the May CAST and the votes will be tallied in June.

Fly Fishing 101 – Let’s Get Started

As a long-time RRFF board member, I have noticed an increasing number (especially in recent years) of Russian River Fly Fishers members who are new to

the sport of Fly Fishing. These members have expressed an interest in instructional classes and mentoring programs covering the fly fishing basics – everything from equipment review and set-up, fly casting, knot-tying, fly selection, to “reading water” and related fly fishing strategies and techniques. This is certainly understandable as fly fishing is considerably more involved than bait or spin fishing and can be quite confusing at the outset. The learning curve in fly fishing does require a deeper personal commitment to “wade in” and somehow process the vast amounts of information that are currently available. Despite this, perhaps the most important attraction for a new fly fisher is the sense that fly fishing can be a more rewarding way to pursue the practice of angling, and through it discover a new perspective and relationship with the world.

At various times, the RRFF has offered Beginning Fly-Fishing classes for our interested members. We currently hold weekly fly-casting clinics that encourage our members (and the general public) to learn the fundamentals of fly casting and to ask questions about fly fishing from our volunteer instructors. I have been involved with, and have hosted, many of those classes and fly-casting clinics, and have realized through this interaction that there is a tremendous amount of information pertaining to fly fishing and that this information is continually evolving. That’s the thing – once begun, fly fishing is a process of discovery. This process requires you as an angler to take whatever you know at any particular time and expand upon that knowledge. It is a process of observation, of experimentation, and certainly of perspective. The more you bring to fly fishing - the deeper your background and experience - the more your questions evolve and influence your always growing understanding.

In the course of my teaching activities, I discovered that I knew many things about fly fishing that were no longer a part of my conscious awareness, information gleaned from my early background and discovery of this pursuit that I now took for granted. I was reminded that others who were new to this sport could benefit from this information. Although I strongly believe that evolution in fly fishing is a decidedly personal experience, I also feel that helping new fly fishers move beyond the initial mystery and uncertainty that surrounds their first

foray into this adventure is a vital deterrent to a loss of interest that will certainly deprive them of the many benefits that await. To this purpose, I will attempt to address some of those basic questions here in our newsletter, and through this process help remind those of us who have already navigated this stage that we (too) once started at “square one”. It may also suggest to all of us things that we may have forgotten, and illustrate how our current perspectives on fly fishing have evolved and may now differ from our early preferences and understandings.

I like to start my *Beginning Fly Fishing* classes with personal introductions from everyone in attendance. Usually, I have other RRFF members assisting me who provide their own perspectives and insights into the topics that we cover, which definitely emphasizes that all of our perspectives are different and based on our individual experience. This is an important point to remember! I can only share with you my understanding as it is based from my perspective. I will always try to be as inclusive of other viewpoints as possible when sharing information, but my opinions will be based on my experiences and personal bias. Take my views with a grain of salt. That said, let me introduce myself. “I have been fly fishing for over 30 years, but grew up bait fishing as a child and then spin-fishing through college and young adulthood. I taught myself to fly cast (at the RRFF Casting Pond under the tutelage of Bob Sisson), then pursued the FFI Casting Instruction Certification Program when it was offered by Mel Krieger and Al Kyte as part of the NCCFFF Conclave(s) at Kings Beach, Lake Tahoe, in the mid 1990’s. I successfully completed both the casting demonstration and classroom instruction sessions during that time period. I began my fly fishing exploration in freshwater, but early on was also initiated into saltwater fly fishing through the RRFF Outings to Loreto, Baja del Sur, Mexico. Over the last 25 years, I have travelled (some) and caught a wide range of freshwater and saltwater species on a fly. Currently, I lead the RRFF Casting Instruction Program (following Bob Sisson’s death in 2005). “

The class is *Beginning Fly Fishing*. We will refer to it as *Fly Fishing 101*. I will follow my course outline as we proceed, but please keep in mind that this article reflects my personal perspective. It will also concentrate primarily on the basic information that

would be required to begin fly fishing for trout, bass and pan fish.

Why fly fishing?

There was a moment that inspired each one of us to take our first step into fly fishing - each of us drawn to it by our own unique circumstances and bringing with us our personal expectations and desires. Some of us came from a background of bait or spin fishing, while others may have been attracted by the beauty and grace of the fly cast, the Zen-like serenity often depicted in fly fishing photography, and/or the lure of Nature and the promise of spectacular places. We may have had family members, or friends, who provided the initial inspiration, and perhaps even our first fly rod and reel. When did you decide that you wanted to learn to fly fish?

How does fly fishing differ from other methods of fishing?

Although there are numerous differences, the most important is in how the fly fisher delivers the fly to the fish. In both bait fishing and spin fishing, the fishing rod and reel are used to launch a weight that is attached near (or at the end of) a small diameter fishing line (usually monofilament). The cast allows the weight or lure to pull the fishing line from the reel with minimal resistance and thereby deliver the offering to its destination. In fly fishing, the weight of the fly at the end of the leader is negligible and does not allow this. Instead, the fly fisher must learn how to cast a fly line, which is much thicker than monofilament line and actually provides the weight that is required to deliver a fly to its target. To this end, the fly rod is often longer (typically around 9 feet) than bait or spin fishing rods. The fly caster learns to manage the fly line by using loops to “load the rod” and which provide the momentum that will deliver the fly. Done properly, fly casting is a beautiful expression of continuous motion, the fly line snaking back and forth through the air, tight loops allowing a smooth transfer of power, until the angler allows the fly line to unroll and straighten, thus delivering the fly that has until then been following along behind. This unrolling of the fly line delivers the fly first, at the end of a monofilament leader to which it is attached. Fly casting is essentially about learning loop control, and this is

accomplished through the correct application of power and timing.

Whereas bait and lure casting reels usually have only one size of small diameter fishing line, fly reels have a monofilament leader (length varies) attached to the thicker fly line (usually about 100-feet), which is then connected to the fly reel by a small diameter “backing” line. The backing provides additional line to fight larger fish, those that may be able to pull out all of your fly line and “take you into your backing” (often quite exciting). The fly line provides the weight to cast your fly and also determines where your fly will fish in the water column. There are floating fly lines that stay on the surface, as well as a wide range of sinking fly lines that offer different sink rates and allow you to fish at different depths. There are also fly lines that combine a floating line with a sinking tip. Remember, most flies have negligible weight, so the weight and type of fly line generally determines where the fly will be presented. As a fly angler, your first decision on any fishing trip will be what type of fly line will work best for how and where you would like to fish.

And so, we begin... Again, these articles are directed toward those who are new to fly fishing and offer basic information to help you get started. You will find (as you learn more) that nothing here is absolute. There are always exceptions. For those more experienced fly anglers, I hope this material inspires you to reflect on those exceptions and to inventory the evolution of your own fly fishing knowledge.

Next time... *The Benefits of Fly Fishing and The Different Methods of Fly Fishing.*

~ Steve Tubbs
RRFF Casting Instruction Director

Steelhead in The Classroom - Adapting to swift change

CDFW, RRFF and RTU Steelhead Coaches, Teachers and Students Move Pretty Quickly ...



50 orange steelhead eggs, eyed up, wiggling, just delivered to classrooms on Wednesday 3/11. Anticipation and excitement!



Alevin moving/hiding in the gravel from 2/26 eggs in tanks all around Sonoma County Schools.

75 additional classrooms waiting, waiting... their tanks all carefully kept at cold fishy temps by students and teachers.

Then- the Covid-19 virus and response..... day by day, hour by hour- finally schools closed and the 3/25 egg delivery cancelled.

Teachers and districts scramble to develop distance learning- live feed, Youtube, Facebook and other methods all being considered.

CDFW through Ethan Rotman, polled the teachers to find out what we best could do for them. Several

offered to bring their tanks home, receive eggs on 4/15 and use the situation to live stream or YouTube, or FB to help distance teaching/ learning.

Teacher work load rising for distance teaching, most had children at home... family job losses, coaches cautioned (especially us over 70 vintage).

Truly a new situation, and *everyone began to adapt pretty quickly.*

How quickly? Well faster than service at a breakfast diner! - Just kidding, of course, they all were thought out and took a huge amount of effort and coordination!

- Follow district and county health orders, stay safe
- Teachers advised to release their fish as close to home/school as possible
- OK for teachers to do mass release with/without coach help
- OK to release earlier than you normally would
- Live steam or video stream or send photos of release to students if you can- several have done/doing this using FB, Youtube and cameras
- Take your tank home and continue on, with a 4/15 egg delivery
- Opt out and do this again next year
- Remember- Teacher and coach and student health more important than the fish!

Additionally, with great coordination between RRF, RETU, CDFW, Mission Peak Fly Fishers and others Tom Greer is collaborating with David Berman, Charlie Schneider and others, testing out a live feed camera system. The plan is currently to refine that and use it at a tank at Tom's home, develop a feed to RETU and RRF websites that teachers can link to for real time distributed learning- from egg delivery to release. And more, maybe Meet a Fish Biologist.

And this enterprising junior coach and his talented coach dad may develop a feed from their location.

Exciting for all involved, including his teacher, at Live Oak Charter in Petaluma.



Much, much more is to follow as we move forward with great hope to get to the other side of the current situation.

Huge gratitude to our coaches and their efforts- next CAST and see RRF website for more of what they have been doing. - endless gratitude to: Alan Espinosa, Andy Crichton, Jonah Crichton, Jeff Cratty, Charles Jacobs, Tom Greer, Gregg Wrisley, Mike Spurlock, Tony Ramsden, Elvin Gines and Kevin Ostrom.

Stay safe, wash hand frequently with soap and water, practice social distancing 6ft.

All the best,

~ Karl Joost (707) 483 6172 cell/txt



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April Calendar of Events

BECAUSE OF CORONAVIRUS AND THE SHELTER

IN PLACE ORDER, ALL CLUB MEETINGS, OUTINGS

AND FLY CASTING CLINICS ARE CANCELLED

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

PLEASE ALL STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE

RRFF Board of Directors

President: **Ed Barich**

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Vice President: **Doug Mackay**

575-5709 demackay@sonic.net

Secretary: **Vacant**

Treasurer & Webmaster: **Mike Spurlock**

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

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Program Chairman: **Don Shaw**

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Outings Chairman: **Chris Castellucci**

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

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Conservation Chairman: **Charlie Schneider and Tom Greer**

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Coordinators

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Women's Activities: **Susan Bostwick**

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Casting Pond Steward: **Doug Mackay**

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Casting Pond Monitor: **Binky Castleberry**

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Russian River Fly Fishers

2020 Board Nominations

for Officers & Board of Directors

The following candidates have been nominated by the RRFF Board of Directors to serve for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020. As a RRFF member, you may also choose to write-in additional candidate nominations and submit them for inclusion on the ballot. All nominations will be vetted to make sure that they are current RRFF members and are willing to serve if elected. According to our Bylaws, our RRFF Board of Directors can have up to 15 members.

RRFF Officers

President

- 1.) Ed Barich
- 2.) _____

Vice-President

- 1.) Doug Mackay
- 2.) _____

Board Members - (Elected for a 2-year Term)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1.) Don Shaw | 7.) Jeff Cratty |
| 2.) Mike Spurlock | 8.) Karl Joost |
| 3.) Paul Matzen | 9.) Brendan Galten |
| 4.) Doug Mackay | |
| 5.) Ed Barich | |
| 6.) Chris Castellucci | |
| 10.) _____ | |
| 11.) _____ | |
| 12.) _____ | |

Returning Board Members (beginning second year of 2-year term)

- 1.) Steve Tubbs
- 2.) Gregg Wrisley
- 3.) Marcus Pipkin

Please return all nominations by April 30, 2020
Nominations can be submitted online at rrflyfisher.org

Nominations may be mailed to: **Russian River Fly Fishers,**
c/o Doug Mackay, 1221 Olive Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95407.

Russian River Fly Fishers
c/o Mike Spurlock
20 San Domingo Way
Novato, CA 94945



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* _____

Main Interests in the Club? _____

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](http://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](http://www.rrflyfisher.org)

Junior membership - \$25 annual dues

Choose any areas you want help with:

I would like help learning or improving my 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.

Dues paid by a new member joining the RRFF after March 1st 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**
c/o **Mike Spurlock, 20 San Domingo Way, Novato, CA 94945**