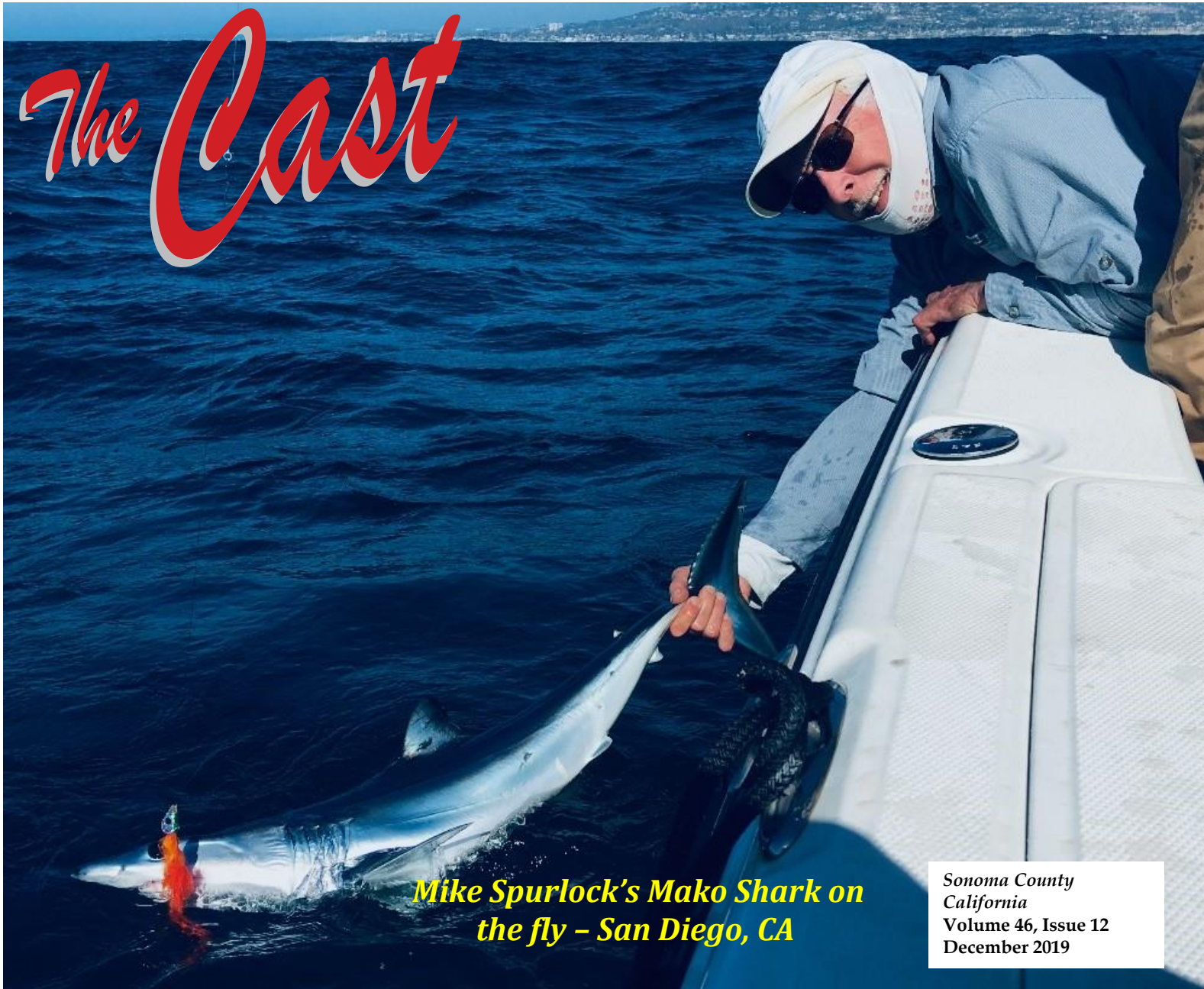


The Cast



Mike Spurlock's Mako Shark on the fly – San Diego, CA

Sonoma County
California
Volume 46, Issue 12
December 2019

President's Message

California Winter

After this year's particularly mellow fall (with the exception of a few fiery blasts), winter arrived during the Thanksgiving travel week and took command of the whole state of California. I left for work Tuesday morning dressed for a sunny day and came home rain-soaked and cold. In the old parable of the ant and the grasshopper, I must be the hopper who foolishly lives it up in the warm times, only to be shocked by the arrival of winter, unlike the ant who knows better and is prepared for the worst.

OK, so now that Old Father Winter has got our attention, what is a fly fisher supposed to do in this darker, cooler season? One could certainly bide their time productively at a warm and dry fly-tying bench or start doing some web research on new angling opportunities for the sunnier times of the year. But if you are like me, hunkering down at home eventually leads to cabin fever, and I just have to get outside. Fortunately, not all of our California waters freeze solid in the winter and there are still opportunities for fly fishers in this season. With this week's predicted "atmospheric river" of rain headed our way, the Sonoma County coastal rivers should soon be open for steelheading (check the DFW hotline 707-944-5533). Due to the rapidly changing water

conditions, it's tough for the club to schedule steelhead outings in advance, but we have a Gualala River signup sheet on the RRF website outings calendar – put your name on this list if you would like to be contacted when river conditions are optimal for a “flash outing”. If you are new to steelheading or want to brush up on your skills, you will also find a signup sheet for our annual Steelhead Clinic that will be held Dec. 14 at the Monte Rio beach on the Russian River (weather permitting). This is also a great opportunity to hang out with other club members and have a nice breakfast at Northwoods Golf Club before the clinic (see the signup sheet for times). Finally, if you need training and/or practice in throwing those bulky steelhead flies, don't forget our Casting Clinics at the Galvin Park pond on first and third Saturdays, noon to 2:30PM (also weather permitting).

I wish you and your families the best for this holiday season and I hope that in the New Year you will enjoy all the adventure, beauty and peace that nature provides.

~ Ed Barich

Trinity Outing Report

Ten Russian River Fly Fishers trekked up to the Trinity River for our annual attempt to catch a steelhead trout. Due to a lack of rain, the river was low, slow and crystal clear making the trip difficult with only a few fish being caught. There were two meals prepared and served in the dining room of The Old Lewiston Inn.

Elvin Gines, a new member, served delicious Hawaiian Chicken with macaroni salad, presented by Ken Youn,) one night. On another day, I served my ubiquitous pasta in meat sauce.

Also, along for his first outing, was 15 1/2-year-old Billy Hohle. The only thing teenage about him was his ability to sleep in. Other than that, he was a perfect gentleman, fished well and had a good time.

There were discussions of moving the trip up from November to late September or early October. But a local drinker at the Lewiston Hotel restaurant said he never steelheads before Thanksgiving. Climate change (wait - does that really exist?) and the Hooper Indian tribes' nets may be playing a part in the reduced number of fish present.

~ Bill Laurie



Jeff fishing the Trinity

Flyfishing for Mako Sharks in San Diego

For three days, Walt Kruse and I and another friend fished with guide, Conway Bowman, in San Diego. I had seen his presentation at the Pleasanton Flyfishing Show and added it to my bucket list.

Each day we would leave the dock behind the Dana Hotel on Mission Bay where Conway moors his boat. The boat ride would be about 30-60 minutes targeting a location about 3 to 7 miles off-shore where we would stop the engine and drift depending on the current and wind. Once at the target location, Conway would put blocks of frozen ground up fish in 5-gallon buckets punched with holes tied to the side of the boat. As the boat would drift sideways in the breeze, we would leave a trail of fish smell and bits of fish behind us, trying to attract Mako sharks.

Conway supplied all the gear. Eventually when we would see a shark circling the boat, one person would cast either a 12 or 14 weight rod with a floating line and Zino Toad tube fly with a 10/0 barbless hook. A wire leader was used with a 40 lb class mono tippet section in case a large one was too big to land and had to be broken off.

Once the circling shark was seen in the vicinity of the fly, we would strip or wiggle the fly and if the shark would hit it, set the hook. For fish larger than about 25 lbs, we were told not to set until the shark was headed AWAY from the boat. Sometimes the shark would miss the fly or not hang on, we would cast again, and they would always come back for it. Once hooked, many would go ballistic and take off into the backing and some would jump. Flies get pretty beat up after a few fish!!

In three days, we caught 12 fish:

- Day 1 = 3
- Day 2 = 1
- Day 3 = 8

Our largest was estimated at ~125 lbs (Walt) and the rest were mostly in the range of 15-25 lbs (with a few smaller).



New Fly



Walt with his 125 lb fish



Beat up fly at the end of the day



Mako circling the boat, parasites on the dorsal fin

The peak season for Makos is June – July, but October was a lot of fun. Conway is a great guide who also guides for other species and hosts trips around the world.

~ Mike Spurlock



A hungry Mako

Gateway

Recently there have been a number of articles regarding an increase in Flyfishing enthusiasm among women and young adults. This heightened interest has also been labeled a “gateway” into the conservation and environmental movements, an introduction into a worldview that is much more inclusively aware of Nature and the interconnectedness of our natural world.

I embrace this new enthusiasm, as fly fishing provided this gateway for me. When I first began my foray into fly angling, I was caught up in my ego-self, consumed with my life roles and superficially “playing the parts” that provided my self-identity. As this illusory world began to crumble, I began to question who I really was and (perhaps coincidentally, perhaps not) decided to learn to fly fish. This idea had intrigued me for many years. I allowed my pursuit of fly fishing to consume me, and by doing so found a release from my collapsing personal reality as I focused on the objective insights of the natural world.

I discovered that, as one learns the nuances of fly fishing, the immersion into waters that hold fish demands focus on an objective world beyond the personal day-to-day self. This new perspective was very liberating and soul-satisfying, and became a sought-after balm for my spirit. Fly fishing cultivates observation and awareness. While fly fishing, I found an ability stop my personal dialogue, forget my problems, and a realization that the beauty and mystery around me hinted at a larger, more inclusive worldview. This insight remained with me in my personal life, providing an impetus for reflection and growth.

As understanding increases, the subtle connections that influence the health and productivity of a fishery expand outward to include the larger environment. This expansion encourages awareness of an ever-increasing number of factors that affect our objective reality. From a more inclusive perspective, we begin to see our ecosystems, our environment and our planet as a unified whole, a holistic interplay of connected parts, interrelated and interdependent, all the way up and all the way down. And as we become cognizant of these connections, we also realize that they never really stop. The more we include, the more there is to discover and integrate. Nature, our environment, our aquatic ecosystems become a classroom for our personal evolution, and help us to redefine our self-identity in a larger context.

In this age of Climate Change, cultivating inclusive perspectives will be the key to developing a comprehensive environmental strategy. Vital to this, the voices of women, young adults, and our youth are essential contributors to this dialogue. It is also imperative that all of us evolve our personal consciousness to a higher (more inclusive) understanding of this world and our place in it. There is always room for growth, if we choose to seek it, and the more inclusive perspectives are always of higher value when determining the actions and policies that affect our relation to all aspects of human interaction with Life. We must not act as if we are separate from the “other” forms that populate this world, a careless arbiter chosen for mastery over all things and whose only purpose is to use up the resources provided for us. Our awareness must evolve beyond that destructive separation and realize that, just as in the ecosystems

we visit when we are fly fishing, all parts of the world around us play an important role in the overall health of the whole.

Evolution, personal and otherwise, is a slow process. Each one of us cannot see, and has no conception of, the next (more inclusive) level of our own personal evolution. In fact, we choose whether we even wish to seek it. But the Mystery of Life offers inspiration and provides guidance as we develop our awareness beyond ourselves. Man has created many metaphors that point toward this ineffable Mystery, and these metaphors are reflective of human development through the ages. We have created mythologies, religions, art and writing that, in its highest forms, are efforts to capture that which is beyond our conception. We must realize that these attempts are human creations and are only trying to explain that which we cannot fully grasp. They represent our own evolution of awareness as we develop toward a more unified and inclusive participation in the world around us.

Ultimately, we are not separate from the Mystery and our actions do have an effect on the whole. The natural world offers us the opportunity to evolve our perspectives, and a window into the interconnectedness of all aspects of our environment. As we delve deeper into it, we discover that its health is reflective of the health of its smallest parts. In so doing, we focus on and learn from the objective world around us, using our capacities for observation to create a more inclusive understanding of our own purpose.

Nature is often described as a prescription to relieve stress and experience connection. A walk in the forest, a trek in the mountains, standing in a river fly fishing – these are all opportunities to stop our self-involved, day to day perceptions and move outside of ourselves into something larger. Through these perspectives, we may experience an “aha moment”, a peak experience that takes us totally outside of ourselves and connects us, however briefly, to All that Is. These are the moments that indicate to each of us our next step in our own, personal evolution.

Fly fishing is an immersion into the natural world. As in all things, we choose how far we wish to take it. If we wade in deeply, it can be an opportunity to expand our perspectives and help us redefine our

participation in the life around us. I have observed that, as an angler evolves into and explores fly fishing, their deepening understanding of the ecosystems they visit translates into a desire to enhance, preserve and protect those ecosystems. They become advocates for conservation and avid supporters of a healthy participation in, and preservation of, our environment. Their new perspectives allow them to move beyond a world defined by a separate self-sense into a more inclusive and interrelated sensibility.

For these reasons, I welcome all to the sport of Flyfishing and hope that through their participation they discover the insight to turn their involvement into Art. This realization will evolve their conceptual ideas regarding our purpose in the environment, and will foster an emotional appreciation of the beauty and power inherent within this world and in all of its interdependent parts. Through this gateway, perhaps we can all find inspiration...and a new way to express our relationship with Life and All that Is.

~ *Steve Tubbs*

December General Meeting and Speaker

December 11, 2019 - General Meeting at the Veteran's Memorial Hall, 7PM featuring a presentation by **Ken Hanley** on Largemouth Bass

Ken's been a fly-fishing ambassador since the early 70's. As a guide and instructor, he's worked with thousands of students in the field. He was inducted into the FFF Hall of Fame (NCC Chapter) in 2005.

He's the author of seven fly fishing books. He also writes and photographs for both international and regional publications in the outdoor industry. In addition, his outreach to audiences includes videos celebrating both saltwater & freshwater adventures.

Ken's extensive field experience spans the globe; from the highest peaks in Tibet and the Himalaya, to the remote wilderness regions of Asia, New Zealand, Mexico, Europe, and North America.

He's on Pro Staff with the following sponsors; SAGE Instructor, SIMMS, RIO Products Intl, Daiichi, Renzetti, Dr. Slick, Hatch, and Patagonia

RAFFLE DONATIONS

RRFF Cioppino Dinner Raffle and Silent Auction Saturday, February 15th, 2020

Contact one of the following Board members to have your donation picked up:

Gregg Wrisley, 823-5572 or gwriss@yahoo.com
Doug Mackay, 575-5709 or demackay@sonic.net

All of the following contributions are desirable:

- Fly Fishing Gear and all types of fishing accessories. (Other fishing gear welcomed.)
- Fly Tying Vises and Tools.
- Prams, Pontoons, or Float Tubes (Must be in very good and safe condition.)
- Camping, Hiking, and Recreational Equipment.
- Art Work and Books.
- Products and services (from your, or a friend's, business.)
- Guided Fishing Trips or access to private fishing water.
- Spa Sessions or Cosmetology Services.
- Food Items or Wine.
- Tickets to Sporting Events or Souvenirs.
- Dinners or stays at B and B's.
- Fun Family Activities.

Include donor's name and description of the item donated. (Unfortunately, we won't be able to accept RV's, autos or large boats.) The RRFF Cioppino Dinner is our only fund-raising event of the year. Your donations and your participation always make this evening a memorable one! Make plans now to attend...

Steelhead in the Classroom 2020

Important Dates & Contacts

December 14, 2019 Marin (Marin, Napa & Lake Counties)

January 25, 2020 Sonoma County (Sonoma & Mendocino Counties)

Sonoma County (David Berman)

New Teachers Workshop: Sign Up (on a first come, first served basis)

Teachers may sign up by contacting David Berman (David.Berman@scwa.ca.gov) 707-484-9518 or 707-521-6201 or online at <https://www.sonomawater.org/workshops/>

Marin & Napa Counties: Contact

Ethan Rotman (Ethan.Rotman@Wildlife.ca.gov)
415-342-7106

Teachers may sign up via Eventbrite at:

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/CAEP/R3/Workshops>

2020 Egg Delivery Dates:

February 26, 2020; March 11, 2020; March 25, 2020
The fry should be ready to be relapsed approximately 6 weeks after egg delivery



Support Our Local Fly Fishing Businesses!

Archuleta's Reel Works

Custom fishing reel repair, servicing, and manufacturing.

733 Detrick Drive, Grants Pass, OR 97527

(541) 956-1691

Bill Archuleta, owner

www.archuletasreelworks.com

King's Sport and Tackle

Clothing, flies, rods, supplies, gear, accessories, instruction, guide service, and canoe rental.

16258 Main Street, Guerneville, CA 95446.

(707) 869-2156.

www.kingsrussianriver.com

Outdoor Pro Shop, Inc.

Fishing gear, supplies, fly fishing, flies, rods and accessories.

412 Houser Street, Cotati, CA 94931.

(707) 588-8033,

Fax (707) 588-8035

www.outdoorproshop.com

Sportsman's Warehouse

Top brands for hunting, fishing, and more at America's Premier Outfitter

5195 Redwood Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928

(707) 585-1500

www.sportsmanswarehouse.com

December Calendar of Events

December 2019 Casting Pond Clinics on Winter

Schedule: 1st & 3rd Saturdays 12 noon - 2:30pm

7-8 Yuba River outing (Ed Barich) (Canceled due to high water)

11 General meeting at Santa Rosa Vets Hall, speaker: Ken Hanley, Largemouth Bass (Don Shaw)

14 Steelhead Clinic at Monte Rio Bridge after breakfast at Northwoods Golf (Steve Tubbs, Jeff Cratty, Mike Spurlock)

18 Board Meeting

Visit www.rrflyfisher.org for a complete list of upcoming events!

RRFF Board of Directors

President: Ed Barich

539-4608 ebarich@sonic.net

Vice President: Doug Mackay

575-5709 demackay@sonic.net

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer & Webmaster: Mike Spurlock

(415) 599-6138 mikerrff@gmail.com

Casting Instruction Chairman, Facebook: Steve Tubbs

765-1787 steve@inspire2.com

Program Chairman: Don Shaw

477-5928 donjanshaw@comcast.net

Outings Chairman: Chris Castellucci

763-2017 chrslucci@aol.com

Membership Chairman & Pond Steward: Doug Mackay

575-5709 demackay@sonic.net

Raffle Committee: Paul Matzen

795-8885 gbridgeman@att.net

Conservation Chairman: Vacant

Newsletter Editor: Marcus Pipkin

(615) 969-9200 marcus.pipkin@comcast.net

Raffle Coordinator: Gregg Wrisley

823-5572 gwriss@yahoo.com

Member at Large: Jeff Cratty

765-2404 rjcratty@yahoo.com

Steelhead in the Classroom: Karl Joost

978-3897 joost@pacbell.net

Coordinators

Day Fishers & Fly Tying: Lee Soares

974-2651 frommewee@comcast.net

Women's Activities: Susan Bostwick

815-5926 shbgold@gmail.com

Casting Pond Steward: Doug Mackay

575-5709 demackay@sonic.net

Casting Pond Monitor: Binky Castleberry

527-9607 fsh2xsbcc@earthlink.net

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

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