

The Cast



Russian River Fly Fishers

Sonoma County California
Volume 45, Number 5
May 2018

To the Net – on Baum Lake at the RRFF Opener
RRFF New Member Matthew Holmes

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

President's Message

(Virtually) Wild...

Virtual reality is all the buzz these days. It seems the expectation is that if something is good in the real world, it will be even better when someone pours its essence into software so that you can run it on your favorite computing device. But as fly fishers, we tend to lean toward actual reality, preferring to move our real bodies, out to the real outdoors, to catch real fish. If that makes us Luddites, so be it – we'll keep this up until our bodies fail us (or we run out of gas money).

The same goes for our fish. All the major fly fishing publications extoll the virtues of wild fish (keen

senses, strong-fighting, vivid colors, adaptable genetics) compared to planted fish (pellet-drugged, wimpy-fighting, washed-out colors, cookie-cutter genetics). And the conservation value of wild fish is undeniable; they are our aquatic "canaries in the coal mine", making it obvious to us when our environments have crossed the line from wilderness to domestic. All this makes wild fish preferable to us and worthy of our conservation efforts to keep them part of our, and the next generation's, experience.

But planted fish do have one substantial asset - availability. Most of us cut our early angling teeth on planters, mostly because they were nearby, plentiful, and fairly cooperative. If planters were not available, many of us would never have had that first-catch experience that launched a lifelong career

in angling. And even as we become more experienced, planters can provide a chance to practice our skills and often surprise us with characteristics we usually attribute to their wilder cousins.

Our recent club outing at Baum Lake was an example. Home to the DFW Crystal Lake Fish Hatchery, Baum is a put-and-take water with no wild trout, but some of the fish we encountered put even our most experienced anglers to the test. During the days we fished, the trout were changing their dining preferences as the weather and bug hatches varied. A fly that worked in the morning would go untouched in the afternoon, causing us to test new theories about what they were eating. Presentation was often as important as it is with wild trout; an upstream cast on the smooth flows of Baum would scare the planters away if the fly line passed over them. And once we got a take, some of the fish would head for a clump of weeds, resulting in a break-off and maybe a lost fly. These fish had picked up a few new tricks that they did not learn at the hatchery. Planters can be adaptable, given enough time to survive.

So while wild fish are probably still our preference, I think you would agree that planters do have a place in our angling world, and should be appreciated for the enjoyment they provide us.

~ Ed Barich



“Do fishermen eat avocados? This is a question no one ever thinks to ask.”

Russell Chatham, *Dark Waters*

Newsletter Editor

WANTED!!

Are you familiar with MS Word and Desktop Publishing, and do you have editing skills? Will help!

Please contact Steve Tubbs - steve@inspiri2.com

June General Meeting

Saturday, June 9th – 11:30 am

Annual RRFF Club Picnic - at the Casting Pond in Dan Galvin Park

Our June General Meeting will once again be our **Annual RRFF Picnic**, this year to be held on **Saturday, June 9th**, at the Casting Pond in Dan Galvin Park and beginning at 11:30 am.

A barbecue lunch will be served shortly after noon, compliments of the Russian River Fly Fishers. If you would like to bring additional entrée dishes to share with the group (salads, fruit, desserts, vegetable plates, dip, chips, etc.), please feel free to do so. In order to determine how much food to prepare, **it is important that you sign-up to attend** (on our website) at www.rrflyfisher.org, or call one of our board members and let us know how many will be accompanying you. Also, please indicate what you are planning to bring (so that we don't end up with 9 watermelons and 15 bags of chips at the end of the afternoon). Bring your own personal beverages (if you so desire) and water and sodas will be supplied by the RRFF.

Although there are a number of picnic tables at the Casting Pond, you may wish to bring blankets and your own folding chairs for greater comfort. We make use of the trees near the entrance gate for shade, and that tends to be our meeting area. As always, bring your fly rods for any casting games that may develop, or to just get some instructional pointers from our accomplished fly casters.

We will need some volunteers to arrive early and help our board members set up the festivities – perhaps around 10:30. This may involve putting up the canopy and moving the picnic tables into position, as well as setting up the food prep and serving areas. You can notify Ed Barich, or any of our board members, if you would like to help.

Our annual picnic is a social event and an opportunity to relax and share time with your RRFF friends. Families are always welcome! Lawn games are encouraged and having fun is a must. The picnic usually ends around 2:30 or 3:00, and assistance with the clean-up is greatly appreciated.

Won't you join us for this year's RRFF Annual Picnic?

Please Note - our next RRF meeting at the Santa Rosa Veteran's Hall will be on **Wednesday, September 12th**. Our July General Meeting will be held on the second Wednesday at the Casting Pond, and we do not have a RRF meeting in August.

~ Editor



Steelhead in the Classroom

On a sunny day in April, Ms. Rampone and Ms. Flores' first grade classes, from Oak Grove School in Graton, traveled with parent volunteers and their RRF coach, Tom Greer, to Santa Rosa Creek (off Willowside Road) to release their steelhead fry.



This was a really exciting and important time for their Steelhead in the Classroom programs. Both classes had a very high "hatch" percentage - losing only 4 eggs total while successfully raising about 60 steelhead fry.



This program involved a lot of learning, hands-on experiences, and a "spark" to hopefully encourage our developing scientists and the protectors of our watersheds. These kids are truly the future of our conservation and protection efforts.



Many thanks to all of our 15 RRF volunteer coaches, who shared similar experiences with over 20 schools in Windsor, Santa Rosa, Kenwood, Sebastopol, Rohnert Park and Novato! Their steelhead stories, and release adventures, all contribute to the continued success of this program in years to come.

All of the steelhead fry releases will be completed by the second week of May.

~ Karl Joost, 707.483.6172

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

www.rrflyfisher.org

*for outings information, RRFF events,
member news, photos and more!*

Listening to Stillness

The overcast conditions held into the afternoon, an intermittent wind occasionally dancing in ripples across the surface of the lake, which reflected the gray sky and muted shoreline with little other disturbance. It was cool, keeping the typical midday hatches of this early fishing season at bay while infrequent rises of rainbow trout teased my observation. There was little pattern to their feeding, and they were always just beyond reach. The stillness of the morning had made the trout wary, those that were active staying well away from me. A few muskrats worked the shoreline, venturing out as if to cross before making a splashy return to the safety of the reeds and broken bank.

There were a lot of people on the lake. Conversation carried loud across the water, and hikers with spinning and bait rods unwittingly shared their thoughts and banter as they worked their way toward the rocky point downstream. I believe that most people are unaware of how well sound carries over water, and suspect that they would probably be quieter if they were. This was certainly the case with the older gentleman already on the point, his canoe pulled up in the reeds. I could hear every curse as he plied his spinning lure, and watched as he caught a few trout and lost a bigger one. He was sharing his misfortune with a buddy on a pontoon boat near me, of course talking even more loudly to ensure that his laments were heard. This was not necessary. The cool, stillness was not a quiet one.

When the hikers reached the point, it wasn't long before they realized that there was really room for only one or two anglers at the best spot, and that spot was already occupied. They began making their way back up the shoreline, climbing over downed trees and navigating muskrat holes while looking for

some place else to fish. This went on for a few minutes, and when they had worked their way to a downed tree above me, the older gentleman called out and indicated that they could have his spot. He was leaving, while claiming that he had just broken off a 30-inch trout.

The four hikers protested at first, but it wasn't long before they were back on the trail and heading back downstream. They arrived as the canoe departed and quickly populated the open areas that would allow a cast. I had also shifted position, moving my pram a hundred yards closer to them although still at least that distance upstream. I watched as one of them caught a trout from the best vantage point, and then listened to their observations as they commented on the fish right in front of them that they couldn't get to strike. After about forty minutes, the hikers began to lose interest and talked about returning to camp, which they did soon after. Within six feet of the bank, fish continued to feed on the surface and it was evident that there were at least two trout that were working the shoreline, moving from a partially submerged snag up to the point, and then back again.

I drifted my boat down to the point, anchoring about seventy feet from the shore where I could cast to the three locations where they were consistently feeding. Nothing much had changed with the still conditions, except they were now enhanced by a relative quiet as the hikers voices faded off in the distance. I knew from experience that the water was a few feet deep just off the bank here, and suspected that the trout might be feeding on something that was falling out of the trees overhanging the water. Black ants immediately came to mind as they were evident nearly everywhere on the shore.

A perusal of my fly boxes indicated that I had not brought any ant patterns with me, so I opted for a size 18 Royal Wulff, a generic pattern that is often "close enough" to an ant pattern when the trout are so inclined. I began working the areas where I had seen the rises, but to no avail. The fish continued to swirl on the surface now and then, and I watched the pattern of their movement as they worked up and down the bank. The light changed a little, brightening as it looked like the overcast might be preparing to break.

I swatted at a few bugs that were flying around my head, noticing at the same time that the Callibaetis had begun to hatch, the adults hovering above the surface around me. Not a big hatch, but the first I had seen all day. One of my favorite flies is the Callibaetis Cripple, a productive pattern that I fish half-submerged in the surface film and that I always carry with me. Fish swirled off the bank as I changed flies, suddenly becoming a little more consistent in their rise patterns. When ready, I stood and cast upstream toward the snag, dropping the dry fly five-feet from the bank. Within moments, my offering was rewarded and the line came tight.

The hatch did not last long, but it was evident that the clouds were burning off and the temperature was rising. I worked the bank with the cripple, and landed another nice trout off the point, again about six feet off the bank. The rises quieted after that, although a couple of sporadic swirls indicated that there might be a third trout working the area as well. I was unable to entice it, however, and could not discern a particular pattern to its feeding. Having already missed lunch myself, I pulled anchor and motored back upstream in search of my companions...



Post Script – Baum Lake is a dammed portion of Hat Creek, and was the location of our RRFF Trout Opener this year from May 3rd to 6th. Although the early trout season can often be adversely affected by weather, this year’s outing was blessed with nice temperatures, dry conditions and willing trout. The PG&E Campground at Cassel is just up the hill from Baum Lake, and many of our 23 RRFF’ers chose to spend at least part of the weekend fishing this section of Hat Creek. All were successful, and the “catching” complimented the fishing.



My continued thanks to John Frenzel, Heather Hamm, Kelly Ames, Tim Grogan and Rick Bowlds for their valuable support in hosting this event. We have been doing this together for over 8 years now, and their dedication to the planning, preparation and execution of the group meals, and set-up of our RRFF campsite, has made this event the premier outing of our RRFF calendar. Once again the food was fantastic, and the camaraderie and fellowship around the campfire superb. I hope that all of you who attended felt equally rewarded...



Post, Post Script - The clouds did partially burn off as the afternoon progressed, and the wind stayed down (which usually doesn’t happen on Hat Creek). As a result, the fishing was considerably more productive later in the day, and trout were consistently rising to dry flies even as we went back to camp to prepare our RRFF *Cinco de Mayo* feast. It proved to be a memorable weekend on all fronts.

~ Steve Tubbs

Join the RRFF on Facebook

We currently have **884 members** on our RRFF Facebook page. You can keep up with the RRFF and our fly fishing and conservation community by joining us at:

<http://www.facebook.com/russianriverflyfishers>

Support Our Local Fly Fishing Businesses!

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www.outdoorproshop.com

Calendar of Events

Thursday Evening Fly Casting Clinics – Held every Thursday evening, 4:30 to 7:00 pm (weather permitting).
This event is FREE and is OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!
Beginners are welcome...

May

- 3-6 **RRFF Trout Opener** (Cassel, CA – Steve Tubbs)
- 9 **RRFF General Meeting** (Vet's Hall) – 6:30 pm
- 12 **Casting Pond Cleaning** (Doug Mackay)
- 16 **RRFF Board Meeting**
- 24-28 **Memorial Day Shad Outing** (Verona, CA – Lee Soares)

June

- 8-24 **Oregon Rivers Road Trip** (Bill Laurie)
- 9 **RRFF Annual Picnic** (Casting Pond – Dan Galvin Park)
- 20 **RRFF Board Meeting**
- 21-24 **Lake Almanor Hex Hatch** (Don Shaw)

Visit www.rflyfisher.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 and Outings Chairman: **Ken Magoon**

527- 8376 magoon5294@aol.com

Treasurer & Webmaster: **Mike Spurlock**

(415)-599-6138 mikerrff@gmail.com

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

765-1787 steve@inspiri2.com

Program Chairman: **Joe Banovich**

889-6089 joebanovich@sonic.net

Library Master: **Don Shaw**

664-8573 donjanshaw@comcast.net

Member at Large: **Chris Castellucci**

763-2017 chrslucci@aol.com

Member at Large: **Mike Kast**

538-9762 michaelrkast@gmail.com

Membership Chairman: **Doug Mackay**

575-5709 demackay@sonic.net

Member at Large, Casting for Recovery: **Paul Matzen**

795-8885 gbridgeman@att.net

Member at Large: **Ken Young**

539-9649 wlk4fun@sbcglobal.net

Conservation Chairman: **Derek Campbell**

591-5667 dcampbell00@hotmail.com

Raffle Coordinator: **Gregg Wrisley**

823-5572 gwris@yahoo.com

Coordinators

Day Fishers & Fly Tying: **Lee Soares**

974-2651 frommewee@comcast.net

Women's Activities: **Susan Bostwick**

815-5926 shbgold@gmail.com

Raffle Coordinator: **Christie Geernaert**

292-1304 christiegeer@gmail.com

Casting Pond Stewards: **Doug & Sage Mackay**

575-5709 demackay@sonic.net

Casting Pond Monitor: **Binky Castleberry**

527-9607 fsh2xsbcearthlink.net

Newsletter Editor: **Steve Tubbs** (reluctant)

765-1787 steve@inspiri2.com

Russian River Fly Fishers



2018 Ballot

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, 2018. You may choose to elect the candidate slate as presented or you may write-in other RRFF members in the spaces provided. There were no nominations received from the general membership for this ballot.

RRFF Officers

President

- 1.) Ed Barich
- 2.) _____

Vice-President

- 1.) Doug Mackay
- 2.) _____

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

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Ken Magoon | 7.) Ed Barich |
| 2.) Don Shaw | 8.) Chris Castellucci |
| 3.) Mike Spurlock | 9.) Jeff Cratty |
| 4.) Paul Matzen | 10.) Karl Joost |
| 5.) Ken Young | |
| 6.) Doug Mackay | |

I choose to elect the Candidate Slate as presented above.
(Check box to accept ballot as presented.)

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

- 1.) Joe Banovich
- 2.) Steve Tubbs
- 3.) Mike Kast
- 4.) Derek Campbell
- 5.) Gregg Wrisley

Please return all ballots by July 31, 2018

Ballots may be mailed to: **Russian River Fly Fishers**,
c/o Mike Spurlock, 20 San Domingo Way. Novato, CA 94945.
You may also turn in your ballot personally at the RRFF General Meeting on Wednesday, July 11th.

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* _____

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](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 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**
c/o Mike Spurlock, 20 San Domingo Way, Novato, CA 94945