

The Cast



Russian River Fly Fishers

Sonoma County California
Volume 43 Number 11
November 2016

Ken's Trinity River Steelhead

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

President's Message

Sometimes it's the fly...

It was the middle of the afternoon on Lewiston Lake and we were officially in the doldrums. Not only had the wind died, but the promising midge bite that started hours ago had definitely expired under the bright sun. A damselfly rested on my indicator with little fear of drowning. If things got any slower, the sun would be heading back to the eastern horizon.

That's not to say that there were no fish in the neighborhood. All around us, trout were breaking through the mirror-like water, leaping several feet high and landing flat on their sides, making a resounding commotion. Some stuck their noses discretely through the film, creating ever expanding surface rings. They may not have been interested in what we were serving up, but there was obviously some aquatic dining going on.

The other guys in the area were not doing any better. I looked over to the boat fifty yards away and saw that Chris was switching over to a dry fly rig. I had the same idea an hour earlier, but my efforts to get some surface action were in vain. After trying several different dries, I

had switched back to the "dependable", but boring, indicator rig.

Then I noticed that Chris was getting some grabs and he eventually landed a fish. I asked him what he was using. He shared that it was a Callibaetis dry fly he intentionally sunk so he could use a slow sub-surface retrieve. While explaining this technique, he got another grab. It became apparent that Chris was onto something.

I quickly put the indicator rig away and switched to a dry fly. Normally, keeping a dry on the surface is a challenge, but getting the little bugger to sink was harder than I expected. Once I got that part of the technique down, I concentrated on replicating Chris's slow-motion retrieve, but found no takers. I switched to a second dry fly, but with the same fruitless results. Finally, I tried an unweighted stillwater nymph, hoping that it would stay just under the surface. On the first cast I got a grab. Ah-ha, that's the ticket! But it was just a tease and a dozen casts later I gave up in frustration and went back to the indicator rig in a frump.

Meanwhile, Chris was putting on quite an angling exhibition. Those of us in the area watched in awe as he got either a grab or landed a trout on successive casts.

This went on for what seemed like an eternity to those of us who did not seem to have the “right stuff”. And when he finally ran out of fishy clients, we knew the bite was over for all of us and headed for the dock.

Back on shore we crowded around Chris to see the magic fly. He said he got the tying instructions on YouTube and that his creation was not as pretty as the video version. He called it his “Ugly Bug”. Those who are new to fly fishing might think that tying your own is kind of crazy. After all, anyone can buy a handful of fairly well-made flies off the internet for a few bucks. And it may be rewarding to fool a trout using your first feathery creation, but after that thrill wears off, what’s the point?

Well, sometimes even hand-made ugly works better than store-bought perfect. Those of us who tie are always striving for the perfect proportions and visual effects. But after all is said and done, what really matters is how good your fly looks to a fish – the ultimate judge.

~ Ed Barich

Trinity River - after the Lewiston Outing (Cover Photo)

Greg Jacobs and I tried to repeat our success after last year’s Lewiston trip, once again fishing with Jason Cockrum on the Trinity River for the two days following the club outing. It was not quite a repeat. Last year we landed 30 steelies, and last week we landed 9 out of 14 fish hooked over two days, which was still one of my best steelhead trips ever.

Jason wasn’t sure if the numbers of fish in the area would justify two days of fishing, but we are happy that we stayed. It rained heavily most of Monday and we still landed six nice steelies, so the rain didn’t matter. Two of my fish were tagged behind the dorsal fin and you can see the small hole in the photo. Jason said I should send them in for the record and a \$30 reward.

We’re looking forward to the November Trinity outing.

~Ken Magoon



Greg Jacobs with Trinity Steelhead...



RRFF General Meeting

Wednesday, November 9th - 7:00 PM

Lodge Room, Santa Rosa Veteran's Memorial Building

Fly Fishing Alaska

The real cost of a trip, what you need to know and the options that are available.

Presented by Sean Harrell

Sean, will speak about the "nuts and bolts" of fishing in Alaska - the Last Frontier. He will speak about the different options that are available, from Do-It-Yourself trips on the Kenai Peninsula & Bristol Bay to guided raft and lodge-based trips in the Bristol Bay area. He will cover the timing of fish (trout & salmon) runs and the best times to target them (not all trout fishing is with beads).

Sean Harrell grew up in Healdsburg, chasing anything that swam in the Russian River and throughout Northern California. While attending college he started working as guide on the Kenai River, targeting salmon and trout for four years in the mid 2,000's. After graduation, Sean transferred north to Bristol Bay and worked at the two most renowned lodges in the region for an additional four years. During the winters, he fished and traveled throughout the world and spent significant time fishing in Belize, Costa Rica and New Zealand. He has since retired from the romance of the fly fishing industry and is currently a Financial Advisor with Morgan Stanley in Santa Rosa. Sean now resides, with his wife Elizabeth, in Healdsburg.

~ Joe Banovich, Program Director

Conservation Corner

Why Your Vote Matters this Election Cycle

Finally, the 2016 Election is near. It seems so much of the oxygen in the room has been sucked up by gassy windbags running for office and the media vultures, so-called pundits and pollsters in orbit around them. I, for one, am glad it's almost over. For now. But for all the rancor initiated at the top of the ticket, there are many more issues that potentially can effect fisheries conservation efforts here locally. I'm going to take the high ground and stay away from discussing the pros and cons of individual candidates and what they may or may not do for our local waterways. I'll stick to the main County Measures and State Propositions that might have an effect on our fishing.

Spoiler alert: I plan on voting for the fishes.



I'm going to try to present the options in a measured, thoughtful way that may not play towards your individual leanings and welcome any discussion that might ensue. You might not agree with me, but I promise I'll have done my homework.

One side note. There is one over-arching Federal issue that I think deserves more press and thought by those of us in the West who hunt and fish on government (our) land. This will be the only place I take an overtly partisan stand. But my party is the Fish Party, and it votes for those who support a clean environment, thoughtful, science-based rules for its use, and free public access to the most beautiful places in the world that recharge spirit and soul. One of our main national parties has created a platform that has once again proposed selling off public lands in the West to the highest bidder. This is not the first time this has been proposed. It is supported by

those, like Ammon Bundy, who believe that the few should prosper off of our national treasures, while the rest of us pay for the right to fish on degraded private landings.

There has been a series of thoughtful articles in publications that I trust and respect that have attacked this idea with far more eloquence than I can. I strongly recommend you read the Conservation section article by Whit Fosburgh in the July/August edition of NW Fly Fishing, the strong editorial by the president of Trout Unlimited, Chris Wood, in the Summer edition of Trout magazine (and the scary "What If" story by Greg McReynolds in the same issue), and the editorial in the Fall edition of the Drake magazine by Editor Tom Bie. If you don't believe that our public lands could be taken away by private interests and fishermen pushed off the rivers, read the article by E. Donnall Thomas Jr. on Montana stream access in the Sept/Oct NW Fly Fishing magazine. Chilling.

Now, on to local things.

There is only one local issue, Measure J, that seems to overtly have an impact on conservation and water this year in Sonoma County. Somewhat odd, given the state of our fish, watersheds and aquifers. But this is what we've got. Measure J is for voters in unincorporated areas of Sonoma County and seeks to add a half-cent to the sales tax to provide up to \$10 million per year for regional parks. The tax would sunset in 10 years and likely would be replaced by other funding sources for parks expected to come on-line then (thank you Graton Rancheria casino). The measure requires a two-thirds majority to pass which somewhat ensures that the money would get spent as intended on infrastructure, education and habitat improvements, including water projects that would affect regional parks that steelheaders use. Sounds pretty good. The argument against this Measure is that it puts the tax on those in unincorporated areas while those of us who live in the towns (where there are more people and parks users) get off the hook. A weaker argument made by the Press Democrat Editorial Board (who don't support the Measure) is that there are other more important fish to fry in our spending habits than this. That seems like someone else's problem to me. I'd like to see more spending on our park environments. Yeah, the roads suck, but I get more from the streams.

Join the RRFF on Facebook

We currently have **769 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>



There are several State-wide Propositions that could affect our fish and fishing. The biggy is Prop 64, Marijuana Legalization. We obviously have an environmental disaster in this state because of "marijuana grows" on our public lands. It was easier to look past this until the last five years of historic drought brought the damage into harsh sunlight. There is literally no organization that thinks this has been good for the environment or the fisheries that depend on sufficient cold, clean water. And it is clear that our current plan, such as it is, isn't working. According to a September 2015 editorial in the LA Times, we grow up to 70% of the entire country's pot, and put only \$3.3 million dollars towards enforcement of grows. CDF&W has only 16 people in the entire state to inspect grows. I won't take a moral stand on whether legalizing pot for those over 21 is a good idea, but I can't look past the potential \$200 million in tax revenues that the Measure allocates for clean up and prevention of environmental damage from illegal grows. I don't know if that's enough. I don't know if this signals the moral demise of our nation. But it damn sure seems like better than what we've got now.

The other environmental issues on the ballot are Propositions 65 & 67. These are both plastic bag use issues. Proposition 67 does nothing more than uphold the state law we already approved in 2014. Not much of a stretch if you've ever been out on the water and had to pull the stupid things from out of the weeds to wade on through. That Great Pacific Garbage Patch doesn't come from nowhere. Proposition 65 is trickier. This Proposition requires the grocery stores to relinquish their \$0.10 bag fees to a new Environmental Protection and Enhancement Fund. Sounds good, right? But follow the money. Proposition 65 is sponsored by four large out-of-state plastic bag manufacturers and was intended to turn the

grocery stores against the plastic bag ban. Editorial boards at newspapers such as the Press Democrat and the San Jose Mercury News have labelled this Proposition as "cynical" and a "tricky strategy". Neither support it.

I'm headed into the next two weeks with a stiff drink in hand and headphones to drown out the shouting. Hope I can wake up November 9 to a better world.

~ Derek Campbell, RRF Conservation Director

Lewiston Lake Outing: Another Excellent October Adventure

For the second year in a row, RRF members gathered for an October outing at Lewiston Lake, a reservoir on the Trinity River. Our crew consisted of Ken Magoon, Greg Jacobs, Chris Castellucci, Doug MacKay and Ed Barich. Once again we stayed in a cabin at the Lakeview Terrace Resort, which provided a comfortable yet affordable alternative to camping. Most of us used the rental fishing boats from the Resort, while Bill rowed his pram and I paddled my kayak. As during last year's event, we were blessed with warm and dry Indian Summer days and nights.



Ed Barich with "Fish On!" - Lewiston Lake

The fishing was not too bad either. On last year's outing, we caught copious numbers of rainbow trout that gathered in the high flows in the narrows at the outlet of Trinity Lake. This year the flows through Lewiston were dropped by a couple hundred CFS just a day before we arrived. As a result, the fish were less concentrated and we had to work a bit harder to find them. But an interesting benefit of the lower flow regime was that the water in Lewiston was much clearer and the fish seemed to run a bit larger. Most of the trout we caught were "planters" in the 9-11 inch range, but about a third of the catch were over 15 inches. Ken landed a 20 inch beauty by stripping an orange wiggly-tail streamer. Most trout were



Nice Lewiston Lake rainbow...

caught using a black zebra midge under an indicator, but Chris had some amazing action using dry flies.

It was a beautiful time to be on the water, with the trees turning their autumn colors and the sounds of migrating waterfowl echoing across the lake. We look forward to repeating this outing next year.

~ Ed Barich

Two RRF September Outings

Manzanita Lake

Seven of us went to Manzanita Lake the weekend of September 8 to 11. Days were pleasant (but breezy) and the nights cool. That was not a problem because Tom Magliulo had brought a pick-up load of wood from his previous camp at Battle Lake, so we built a couple of semi-bonfires reminiscent of the blazes created at our Trout Openers. In addition to the toasty warmth, we enjoyed a tasty meal of Paella prepared from scratch by Matt Cardle, in his Spanish family tradition (with his grandmother's recipe), over a camp stove. It was cooked in a three-foot pan and completely consumed that night.



Matt's delicious camp stove Paella...

The fishing was "so-so". Don Shaw, Ken Young and I averaged one fish to the net per day. I think Ed Barich, Chris Castellucci, Matt and Tom each caught a couple more. They were all fishing from kayaks which allowed exploration of more of the lake.



Don's favorite spot...

There wasn't much of a callibaetis hatch due to the wind. Olive woolly buggers and damsel fly nymphs brought most of our grabs. I was hoping to see some small flying ants blown up in the valley heat, but instead we saw a number of larger dark orange ants that fish were taking with splashy rises. Ed hooked a couple using an orange caddis dry.



Manzanita Brown...

One odd situation developed in the usually well managed Manzanita Campground. A large extended family with grandparents in wheel chairs occupied one of our sites with several tents and five vehicles. They claimed they didn't know we had reserved them and since the site was level and more spacious than the one they reserved, we agreed to take another. The Camp Host was of little help in working this all out.

Davis Lake

The last weekend in September, Ed, Chris, Ken and I were joined by Mike Spurlock to stay at the Lake Davis Resort. This was a return outing to try to catch some Davis Lake lunkers. The sizes of the fish landed by Ed, Chris and Mike were 20 to 22 inches, but not many fish were hooked. Ken Young and I didn't land anything.



Ken Magoon at Jenkin's Point...

By way of an excuse for our poor results was the factor of daily 20 to 25 MPH winds that made rowing and fishing from our pontoon boats very difficult and hazardous. Ken and I spent most days waiting for a lull that didn't happen. Mike had a motor for his 'toon, while Ed and Chris managed to stay out longer in their kayaks. Mike solved the wind problem by going off to fish Jamieson Creek and the Middle fork of the Feather with his Tenkara rod. He hooked a lot more fish than any of us.



Fine dining at Lake Davis...

We've been discussing the desirability of finding alternative Fall fishing locations. Next year we might try Heenan Lake again. any other suggestions are welcome.

~ Ken Magoon, Outings Co-Chair



Davis Lake sunset...

RRFF Gold Membership

The Russian River Fly Fishers would like to acknowledge and thank our newest

Gold Member

Rick Baker

for his \$1,000.00 contribution.

Santa Rosa Fishing Tackle, Duck Decoy, Sporting Collectible Show

Friday, March 10, 2017

Saturday, March 11, 2017

Show Hours -

Fri. 9 am to 5 pm & Sat. 8 am to 3 pm.

Santa Rosa Veterans Building

1351 Maple Avenue in Santa Rosa, off Hwy 12 across from the Santa Rosa Fairgrounds.

For more information, call

Red Johnson,

707-539-3662, cell: 707-888-7935

email: warrenjo@pacbell.net

www.redsshow.com

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

www.rrflyfisher.org

Support Our Local Fly Fishing Businesses!

(and take advantage of their discounts when available)

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

Calendar of Events

Thursday Evening Fly Casting Clinics – From 4:30 until 7:00 pm (weather permitting). Held every Thursday at the RRFB Casting Pond in Dan Galvin Park, Santa Rosa.

November

10 – 13 Trinity River Indian Creek Lodge. Steelhead. (B. Laurie)

December

3 Steelhead Clinic

January

12 – 15 Gualala River (B. Laurie)
19 – 22 Sacramento ISE

Make plans now to attend the
RRFB Annual Cioppino Dinner

Saturday, February 25th, 2017
at the Santa Rosa Veteran's Memorial Building.

RRFB Board of Directors

President: **Ed Barich**

539-4608 ebarich@sonic.net

Vice President & Outings Co-Chairman: **Bill Laurie**

538-0399 blaurie120@att.net

Outings Co-Chairman: **Ken Magoon**

527-8376 magoon5294@aol.com

Secretary: **Greg Jacobs**

823-7341 gjacobs48@gmail.com

Treasurer & Webmaster: **Mike Spurlock**

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

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

765-1787 steve@kresky.com

Program Chairman: **Joe Banovich**

526-6015 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 michaelskast@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 ggwris@gmail.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**

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

575-5709 demackay@sonic.net

Casting Pond Monitor: **Binky Castleberry**

527-9607 fsh2xsbc@earthlink.net

Newsletter: **Lorrin Ngum**

762-4652 lorrinn@aol.com

