



Covering The Drift

Volume 7, Number 1

September, 2002

President's Message

By Bob Shirley

I would like to thank Jerry McBride for his leadership and guidance over the past three years as President of the Washington State Council Federation of Fly Fishers. Jerry successfully lead us through a total change in the way we raise money for the council, got rules changed at the state level in support of fly fishing, and attended every club meeting, event, and show he could while in office. He displayed dedication to fly fishing, total support of the Council (which IS the Federation of Fly Fishers in Washington), and has gained the respect of everyone involved. Mr. McBride has agreed to

stay on in the Council as Vice President East and, along with John Calhoun, he will be representing us as a joint Vice President of Conservation. Again, thank you Jerry.

My name is Bob Shirley and I live in Lakewood, Washington. For the past four years I served on the Council as Vice President of Conservation, twice as Nation Director, as West - Vice President for a year, and will serve as Council President for the coming year. I'm president of Puget Sound Fly Fishers in Tacoma, a member of South Sound Fly Fishers in Olympia, Alpine Fly Fishers in Puyallup/Sumner and have been a proud member of the Federation for many years. As a representative of the council I belong to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition and serve as a member of their Board of Directors.

or as a participant in the games.

We feel that a new day has dawned for the FFF with the hiring of Jim Rainey as Executive Director. I met Mr. Rainey and was convinced he will be a key to growing the Federation, and helping to spread the FFF message. During the next year, we in the Council hope to find ways to better serve the FFF members of Washington by improving communication, increasing membership, and encouraging volunteerism in the state. The only way we can accomplish these goals is by a solicitation of your input. Therefore, you are invited and encouraged to comment, volunteer and participate in any way you choose. We will be open to your suggestions and will facilitate and support your involvement. Means of communication to all Board members is given in each edition of this publication.

Several years ago, the Federation went from being a club based organization to being member based. The purpose of this Council is to represent the Federation in Washington and so should reflect that commitment. In fact, at a recent meeting, it was suggested that the Councils change their names to have the FFF first (Federation of Fly Fishers Washington State Council). That suggestion was not adopted, but should remind us that we are the Federation, and the Federation represents Fly Fishers, and supports Fly Fishing, and is the voice of Fly Fishing and Fly Fishers.

Please, get involved. There is tremendous need for you to join in at the local, state or national level. If fly

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The most important event coming up this fall is the Northwest Casting Exposition in September. You will witness outstanding demonstrations of casting by FFF Certified Master Casting Instructors, casting competition by teams of casters and individuals, and have fun yourself casting in the various casting games set up for everyone. Meals including an evening BBQ are available to those who register. Prizes will be awarded in every category and will include a Trip to Weigh West in Tofino B.C. to fly fish for salmon and other saltwater fish. Many Fly Clubs and Fly Shops sponsor annual trips to Weigh West - the fishing can be that good. The fishing at Weigh West was outstanding for members of the Puget Sound Club who were there earlier this year. You are invited to attend the Exposition as an observer, competitor,

FEDERATION OF
FLY FISHERS



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Dave Whitlock

(Continued from page 1)

fishing is important to you as it is to us, you must help. We cannot just take and enjoy anymore. We must increase our giving back to the resource and the sport. Make a commitment to represent the sport in a positive and ethical manner.

Hole 6 Fishing

By Larry Gibbs, Treasurer

A CALL FOR ARMS:

Actually, a plea for helping hands, volunteers' hands, to help out at the Hole 6 fishing competition on September 21. There will be seven competition stations plus the two people needed at the main scoring tent. People will be competing from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM. I need to have each station staffed with one person starting at 9:00 AM (to set up). This works out to needing 9 volunteers for about 4 hours in the morning and 9 more for 4 hours in the afternoon.

Last year almost all of the volunteers were from the Puget Sound Flyfishers Club. This year, I would like to spread that out to include other clubs.

I need to know very soon if I can count on other clubs to assist us at Hole Six. Please call me or email me to let me know.

Thanks, Larry Gibbs. 253-863-4910 or flytier01@foxinternet.com

Emergency Angler Warning

Federation of Fly Fishers Issues Emergency Angler Warning

The Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF) is warning all anglers and water users about the risks of transporting New Zealand Mud Snails "We are calling on all anglers to immediately take action to insure that they do not spread New Zealand Mud Snails" says Verne Lehmborg, FFF Conservation Vice President. "New Zealand Mud Snails are rapidly being spread to waters across the west and each of us must insure that we are not part of the problem."

Since their discovery in Idaho's Snake River New Zealand Mud Snails have spread to surrounding areas where they have flourished. These small brown snails measure no more than 1/8 inch. An individual snail is no problem but New Zealand Mud Snails easily reach densities that cause significant problems. Snail numbers as high as 750,000 per square yard have been recorded in some areas. At these levels the snails consume most available food leaving little for native snails and aquatic insects to feed on. This leads to a reduction or elimination of these creatures, which can result in a significant impact on fish populations.

Anglers easily overlook the small snails which can be found clinging to waders, boats, tackle and other fishing accessories. The snails have the ability to close off their shell opening allowing them to live for significant lengths of time without being in water. Anglers unknowingly transfer the snails to new

waters when they are lodged in their equipment. It is likely that transport by anglers is the most significant cause of mud snail spread.

"In recent weeks the snails have been discovered in the Colorado River at Lee's Ferry, and in Montana's Beaverhead and Upper Missouri Rivers" reports Lehmborg. "All of these are popular angling destinations and there is compelling evidence that these introductions are angler caused. The FFF knows that anglers are interested in protecting our waters, not hurting them, and the only reason snails are spread is because people don't know about them."

The FFF is asking every angler and water user to take a few simple precautions to help control the spread of NZMS. 1. Thoroughly clean and rinse your equipment before you leave a fishing site. 2. Completely dry all equipment before using again. 3. Hot temperatures kill NZMS - 113 degrees for 60 seconds will kill 100%. 4. Never release fish or any other living creature into any water it did not originate in.

The Federation of Fly Fishers, a non-profit membership organization, conducts a variety of programs designed to help counter the threat of invasive species. For more information contact the FFF at 406-585-7592 or www.fedflyfishers.org.

This article and additional information is on the WSCFFF website:

www.washingtoncouncilfff.org

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Dave Whitlock

Fluorocarbon

By Bob Shirley, President

Several years ago, the guys at the Hatch in Tacoma told me about a new material being used for tapered leaders - it was called fluorocarbon, it was expensive, but almost invisible in water. Since I was planning a trip to one of my favorite nymphing rivers in Montana, I bought some and took them with me. I firmly believe those leaders helped me hook up to vastly more fish and to land more because of my ability to use larger diameter tip sections and still be invisible to the fish. This was happening UNDERWATER since fluorocarbon sinks many times faster than nylon unless greased - making it a bad choice for dries.

So it seemed the answer to a fisherman's prayer, but there was a down side. Fluoro should not be straightened with a commercial leader straightener made with the two pieces of black rubber. The rubber generates heat in the leader and curly layers of material are stripped off as if you were using a tiny wood plane on it rather than a rubber pad. Fluoro is slippery - an improved clinch knot needs to be wrapped 6 to 8 times not 3 or 4 like nylon. Hence, any knot needs to be modified in order to allow for the

slickness of the material. Fluorocarbon does not degrade as easily in nature as nylon. Be careful where or if you throw it away.

Some more good news, fluorocarbon will not degrade with exposure to UV which means you can keep it year after year without losing tensile strength. Fluoro does not mar or scuff like nylon and is more resistant to abrasion. I use it to good effect by tying on any wet dropper with fluoro tippet material. The tiniest wd-40, Copper John, Lightning Bug or other dropper WILL sink thanks to the higher sink rate of fluoro. Now the commercial - Rio has come up with 'Fluoroflex (reg. trademark) Plus.' 'Plus' is strong stuff. 3x tippet material is 9.4 lb test, 5x is 5 lb! It would seem that this product, in the proper application, could make a world of difference in nymphing and in the use of a dropper. Higher test and no increase in visibility screams for use against large fish in lakes using intermediate lines, and in rivers as tippet to your first nymph, your trailer nymph, and to any sinking dropper when they are tied to large dries used as attractors.

I have used this new generation of fluorocarbon on Rocky Ford, Park

Lake, Blue Lake, and Lake Minterwood. No failures, no slipped knots, no complaints. We are going to Montana for a week on the Missouri, so that to me will be the real test. If it fools big fish in big water using heavier diameter tippet with increased tensile strength and less abrasion, it may have found a home with me. Hopefully my opinions about fluorocarbon will help you make correct choices in the specific applications where it can make a difference. You know, I have even been hearing tales of bill fish accepting fluoro in the highest test weights, and large spools of it are showing up at Sportco in Fife claiming it won't spook bass, pike, perch.

Editor's Note: Bob didn't know about some of the things that folks around here are doing with fluorocarbon. Several people have been using it for dry fly fishing. In very clear water, with spooky fish and a glassy smooth surface thin fluorocarbon has been used to really hide the leader from the fish. Sometimes the floating flies are large enough to support it. However, I have used it on size 18 flies with some success. The dead drift isn't as long as I would like, but the "invisible" leader makes up for it. Bob Bates

Three Dollar Bridge Saved

THANKS TO THE FFF

River Network wants to pass along our sincere thanks to the members of the Federation of Fly Fishers for their generous support of the Three Dollar Bridge conservation project on Montana's Madison River. I'm very pleased to report that the project has

been successfully completed -- this fantastic stretch of the Madison, with three miles of river front on outstanding fly water, is now under ownership of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, permanently protected and forever open to public access. Your membership should be deservedly

proud of their efforts to help achieve this important conservation outcome.

Best regards,

Hugh Zackheim
Northern Rockies Director, River Network
(From FFF ClubWire)

FFF and WSCFFF Awards

By Jerry McBride Vice President - East

I have made a pilgrimage to Mecca! Vice President of Communications Bob Bates and I went to the 37th annual Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF) International Show in Livingston, Montana August 5 through 10.

For a whole week, we lived and breathed fly fishing. During the week, I had one-on-one conversations with Joan Wulff, Jack Dennis and Al Troth. Where else can people do that? If you love the sport of fly fishing there is no better place to go than the FFF International Show. It will be in Idaho Falls in August 2003. Make plans to attend.

Awards - FFF members in the state of Washington did well in the awards department at the national show.

Vernon Young WSCFFF Past President Vernon Young was awarded the FFF Conservation Award. The nomination summarized why Vernon was nominated for this prestigious award. "For his vision, determination and leadership in protecting our environment through the creation of community-based land trusts and his thoughtful guidance of fish and wildlife policy for the benefit of current and future generations of North American citizens."



Vernon Young and Betty Young with the Conservation Award from the Federation of Fly Fishers, August 2002

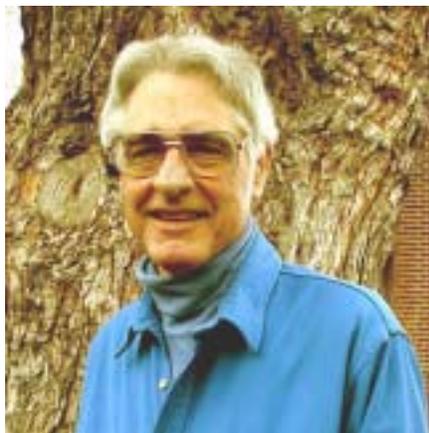
Jim Green Jim was awarded the Lew Jewett Memorial Life Award for his lifetime of contributions and achievements in fly casting and fly

casting equipment. This man is a legend in his own time.



Jim Green at his home along the Grand Ronde river, April 2002

Dave Engerbretson Dave was awarded the Charley E. Brooks Memorial Life Award for his lifetime of contributions and achievement. In an email supporting the nomination of Dave for the Brooks award, John Randolph characterized Dave as "one of fly fishing's Tenth Legion--the men and women who contribute the most to our sport through their expertise in fly fishing and fly tying through their stellar example as humans who possess the values that best represent their sport."



Dave Engerbretson, Spring 2002, Moscow, Idaho

Bob Bates Bob was awarded the Council Award of Excellence. He has served as Director of Communications for the Washington Council for the last four years. Bob has done an outstanding job as editor of our newsletter *Covering the Drift*. In the last few months he has created a new website for the Washington Council and serves as the webmaster. On a national level, Bob has taken on the "Fly of the Month" for the FFF website. Bob is always ready to help any way he can. He is an excellent fly tier and fly fisherman. For all of these reasons, as President of the WSCFFF, I nominated Bob Bates for this award.



Bob Bates with WSCFFF Award, August 2002

I know that we have many other people in the Washington Council who deserve FFF national awards. The nomination process for 2003 awards will start in January. Contact John Calhoun, Chairman of the WSCFFF National FFF Awards committee if you know of someone who you feel deserves an award.

Marilyn and Tony Vitale Casting Demonstration

"The ABCs of Fly Casting" is a must see demonstration. 1:00-1:30 PM at the 2002 Fly Casting Expo. Tony captivated us with the description of their new interactive teaching system. You will be a willing participant. See WSCFFF website for other fly casting demonstration times

Northwest Fly Casting Exposition, 2002

By Vernon Young
Salmon & Searun Cutthroat Chair

Would you like to improve your fly fishing experience? We all like doing things we are good at, and shun those we are not. Fly-fishing is a combination of many skills. If we improve some of these skills we will enjoy the sport even more. What skills, of yours, need the most improvement? For many of us the answer is our casting skills.

We all know that practice is necessary. But practice without knowledge, guidance or incentives is very difficult. That is one reason for the Northwest Fly Casting Exposition. It is designed to bring knowledgeable and lay people together. Give those that wish to teach casting an opportunity to teach and for others an opportunity to practice and learn how to improve their casting. For some it will be their first cast ever attempted.

The incentives are the wonderful prizes you can win just by attempting a cast. It does not matter how good you are. All that matters is that you try. You could win a fabulous fishing package at Weigh West Marine Resort in British Columbia or a box full of flies. And of course, the real pay off is the enjoyment you will have fishing because of the things you learned at the expo.

So please join us September 21, 2002 at Trophy Lake Golf and Casting near Port Orchard, Washington. \$10 at the gate will give you access to the event. A \$50 advance registration will get you a lunch and evening meal plus a chance to play the fun casting games. Advance registration by September 3rd for \$75 will get you into the individual competitive games. For more information, go to <http://www.washingtoncouncilfff.org/> or call Vernon Young at (253) 265-6162.

Fly Fishing's "Lightning Bug," Its History

By Aaron Culley
WSCFF Director at Large

A very successful trout fly pattern, the "Lightning Bug" has become more widely recognized in the past few of years. The fly's originator, Larry Graham of Kirkland Washington, developed the pattern in the 1992 season, with the final version emerging in 1993.

The introduction of bead head nymphs was married with the classic flash back "pheasant tail nymph" and quickly became favored by guides and clients across the country. To this day, the flashback pheasant tail is still very popular. The bead head enabled the fly to be presented into the fishes' feeding zone much more quickly. The flashy characteristics of the pearlescent Mylar used for the back on the bead-head pheasant tail, incubated the design process for Larry.

Larry Graham is a noted northwest fly tier and Yakima River guide. His very fine flies are exquisitely prepared. The flash back evolved to using the pearlescent Mylar material as a ribbing. The flashy material worked well, but not so durable. The Mylar rib definitely increased the effectiveness, but needed some protection to increase the life of the fly. Guide flies must be easy and quick to tie yet be able to put fish on for customers.

Larry eliminated the abdomen dubbing and simply wrapped the pearlescent Mylar from head to tail and back then ribbed with the copper wire. This proved much more durable and immediately led to very productive fishing results. The peacock thorax remained and complemented the greenish color the Mylar took after tying. Feathers from hen back hackles trimmed and tied in as legs above the peacock and were covered with the Mylar as a shellback. The result was a

pattern that produced consistently and quickly became Larry's favorite fish producer.

The following season, other local trout fishing guides began fishing the pattern. The Lightning Bug became popular pretty early in the season. Introduction of holographic Mylar added a new visual dimension. A fishing partner shared some Flashabou material, which was silver holographic one side and gold holographic on the other. The pattern with the holographic colors had proven effective when the pearlescent was less effective. The pearlescent was still the better producer overall.

The pattern became more widely used and was published in spring 1998 in *Fly Tying*. An article by the publication staff titled "Picks of the Pros - 25 sizzling Patterns for Fresh and Saltwater" was the formal national introduction of the Lightning Bug. Larry shared the fly pattern with clients, guides and friends through out the northwest area. The pattern has made its way to the heartland of trout fishing, Montana and is widely used there.

The most commonly used size by Larry is the #14 2x long. Larry prefers this longer shank to allow for the width of the bead head. Originally the beads used were made of brass. When tungsten beads were introduced, Larry experimented with replacing the brass beads. The tungsten beads became a hit right away. They were able to get to the fish in the heavier summer flows in the Yakima River. The problem with the tungsten beads in low flows is their propensity to hang up on rocks and boulders. As a result the brass beads are still used in lower water conditions.

Smaller sizes are used in Montana tail
(Continued on page 6)

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waters, where small naturals are the word. However, the author has taken Steelhead on a larger version with a cone head replacing the bead head. In addition, one of Larry's clients used a Lightning Bug in Africa to catch Peacock Bass. The pattern continues to be used for other game fish with interesting results.

Why does the Lightning Bug work so well? Does it imitate mayfly nymphs? Is it a good green caddis larvae imitation? Perhaps it's the reflexive reaction from fish that's triggered with the flash and shape comes into vision. Trout are very attracted to the pattern and the results have been outstanding. Larry Graham can be reached by phone at 425-822-3371 for tying details.

If you have not tried the Lightning bug, do yourself a favor.

Lightning Bug Recipe

Hook: Tiemco 5262 2x long or similar, #14

Bead: To fit hook, 1/8th for #14. tungsten for deeper presentation, brass or nickel for skinny water.

Tail: Pheasant tail fibers, 6 or 8.

Abdomen: Pearlescent Mylar wrapped from bead to tail, back to bead.

Rib: Fine copper wire, three turns to thorax. Other colors can be used. Note take several turns up to bead to make sure wire does not come loose.

Wing case: Pearlescent Mylar, medium width or appropriate for size of hook.

Thorax: Peacock herl, 1/3 length body

Wing: Hen back feather, tip trimmed out and tied on with two loose turns behind bead.

Pull wing case over wing and secure with two loose turns of thread, pull wing case tag or portion extending beyond bead to the rear and take two or three firm turns of thread. Trim excess wing feather and wing case material to thorax side of the bead. Whip finish.

Using different color of Mylar and wire have generated some interesting results.

Endangered Fisheries

Press Release 8/8/02 Contact: Bob Molzahn -- 610-524-1911

AMERICA'S MOST ENDANGERED FISHERIES ANNOUNCED

LIVINGSTON, MONTANA - Some of America's finest fisheries are also among its most endangered, according to the Federation of Fly Fishers which today announced its annual list of the nation's most threatened fish habitats.

"A large share of our freshwater and marine fish species are at serious risk of damage and possible extinction," said spokesman Bob Molzahn, FFF's Endangered Fisheries Coordinator. "These

ecosystems not only provide us with recreation, they also sustain our economy. More than that, a fishery is an indicator of how well we manage our water resources for drinking water supply, irrigation, land use and industrial development."

This year, three fisheries stand out among the hundreds of rivers and lakes devastated by human neglect and abuse.

1. Yellowstone Lake, Montana
2. Klamath River, Oregon and California
3. Gulf of Mexico

A description of each endangered fishery is available at www.washingtoncouncilfff.org

Washington People At The FFF Show

There were many Washington FFF members at the FFF Show in Livingston, Montana, August 5 - 10, 2002. Jerry McBride tried to find and photograph every one, an almost insurmountable task. So below and on the next two page are pictures of a few of them. Most of the pictures were taken by Jerry, a couple by Harry Calhoun, Spokane, WA and a four by the Northern California Council FFF.



Gerri and Dick Odell



Larry Gibbs



Dutch Over Cooking Class
Leon Buckles and Harry Karas



Dick Raisler on right: Did he buy the boat?



John Newbury and Gordon Olson



Gloria and John Reid watching a demo tier



Bob Bates, Demo Tier



Scott Fink



Russ and Lelia Brown



Mike Clancy

Federation of Fly Fishers Membership Application

Full Name _____
Address _____
City / State / Zip _____
Phone home / work _____
Club Affiliation _____
Birth Date _____

Referred by: _____

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Canadian memberships add \$5 per year All other countries add \$10 per year

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Jerry McBride, Randy Swisher and Keith Burkhart
Randy is reading Jim Green's thank you for the
Lew Jewett Memorial Life Award



Jim Rainey, Megan Rainey, Joan Wulff, Marty
Seldon, Rhea Topping, and **Ted Rogowski** at the
FFF President's Banquet, Aug 2002



Barbara Wuebber,
Cara Vollmer, and
Julie Nelson
They did a great job
welcoming people to
the Show, and you
might talk to any one of
them when you call the
National office



Display Floor, August 2002



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