



FLY FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL

Washington State Council

Covering the Drift

Volume 23 Issue 2 March 2019

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Prime Lies

Spring Ahead

It's March and I have 3-foot-high plowed banks of snow on my driveway, a good excuse to not get my trailer out of the garage to take it to Albany, Ore. for the Northwest Fly Tyer and Fly Fishing Expo. I got a hotel room instead. High school sophomore Maxine McCormick, multi-time world fly casting champion, demonstrated casting at the Expo this year. I have seen her cast before and she was remarkable. I hope you made it to the Albany Expo this year and I hope you join Washington State Council's Fly Fishing Fair in Ellensburg May 3rd and 4th. Online registration is up and running and we have collected a great group of tyers and casters, as well as our Celebrity Fly Fisher, Gary Borger. By the way, I stole the title of my column, Prime Lies, from him.

Our volunteers have put a huge amount of work into this

endeavor. Please come out and join the fun and learning. If you are coming and have some free time, consider volunteering for such things as making the coffee, helping with the raffles, setting up the tables on Thursday, and a thousand other things. Contact Carl Johnson or me if you can help.

There will be a few changes this year in the Fair with a Fly Tying Theater, tying lessons and demonstrations by Gary Borger. In addition, we will be holding a Continuing Education (CE) program Saturday afternoon for all casting instructors, whether they are FFI certified or not. We just want to improve fly casting instruction for everyone and we know there are lots of people teaching fly casting through clubs and shops who have been excluded from CE events in the past. All those people are now welcome to attend this Saturday afternoon program. Everyone is better off if we can *continued on page 8*

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Special points of interest

- Registration is open for the Washington Fly Fishing Fair May 3-4 in Ellensburg. To register online go to www.wsccfi.org/2019-registration
- Jack Whitney catalogs some of the largest fish conservation groups at work in the Pacific Northwest in his conversation column, page 3.
- Gary Borger will provide a variety of expert casting, fly tying and fishing knowledge at the Ellensburg Fair. Stories on pages 3 and 4 preview some of what he will be speaking about.
- On the cover a native coastal steelhead and the blue/green intruder that fooled him.

Academy Open

The deadline for the 2019 Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy is April 15. Boys and girls must be 12-16 years of age to apply. Those that are accepted, will be notified by the middle of May. The Academy this year is June 23-29, 2019 on Hicks Lake in Lacey, WA. Applicants must submit a written essay explaining why “they” would like to attend and a letter of recommendation from their school counselor, science teacher or responsible adult. Cost is \$300 and there are sponsorships available. No one will be turned away because of lack of money.

The support from the fly fishing community again this year is nothing short of spectacular. Applications are coming from all over the State. We will need volunteers again this year as guides to take the kids fishing in the mornings and evenings. We will be fishing a local pond and the Deschutes River in Thurston County. The Academy has a Facebook page loaded with pictures from past years and our website

www.nwycffa.com You may download the application off the website or call Mike Clancy @253-278-0061 or Jim Brosio @ 360-943-9947.

Conservation

The Business of Fighting for Threatened Salmon

By Jack Whitney

During a recent TU meeting I was having a conversation with a recently retired local WDFW fish biologist. He said to me “You know Jack, we have created quite a large business fighting for Salmon.” Later I reflected on what he said and thought of all the fish conservation organizations in the NW and the number of people connected with them. So, I started looking into the different salmon and steelhead conservation players and thought that I would pass on some of what I learned.

Wild Salmon Center – This organization scientifically identifies and protects the strongest rivers suitable for wild salmon. These areas of focus included Northern California, Oregon, Washington (there are two river systems), British Columbia, Alaska, Russia and Japan. They work with communities, agencies, tribes, and local conservation groups providing them with scientific, political, legal, fund raising and communication expertise. The Wild Salmon Center’s home office is Portland and they have a staff of 20 paid employees of which 4 are Phd’s, 8 have their MS and 6 are BS/BA degreed. The average annual revenue over the last five years is \$5.8 million dollars a year. See

www.wildsalmoncenter.org/

Wild Fish Conservancy

– This organization use to be called Washington Trout. Their emphasis is on science, education and advocacy. They have a staff of 16 professionals of which a sizable number of them have degrees in fish related science. Dr. Richard Williams is on their board as well as on the FFI board. Their current high-profile project is the Columbia River Pound Net Project which is also referred to as a fish trap. This project is being supported by NOAA, Wildlife Departments of the three NW states, University of Washington, Wild Salmon Center and a host of other conservation groups and private business. They have initiated or been a part of various law suits and have been listed as an “extremist organization” by the Costal Conservation Association (CCA). They are located in Duvall, and more can be discovered about them at www.wildfishconservancy.org/

The Conservation Angler – The Conservation Angler advocates for wild fisheries, which includes steelhead, salmon, trout and char, throughout the Pacific Range. They see themselves as a watch dog organization that holds public agencies and nations accountable for protecting wild fish, by use of administrative, political and legal

Continued on page 8

In Ellensburg

Gary Borger Makes Nymph Fishing Visual

Everybody likes dry fly fishing because it's such a visual process. You see the fly. You see the fish take the fly. It's an exciting process. It's possible to experience the same visual link nymph fishing if you develop the right technique, says Gary Borger.

"Whether you're fishing at the surface, or at the bottom you can make it a process that is totally visual to the angler," he says. But the process works only if you understand where in the water column your fly is moving, he says. "If you're not on the bottom, you're not doing what needs to be done and you will not catch fish. Period."

The problem with getting flies to the bottom of a river is that the fastest current is always on the top. A weighted fly can drop through that current, but the faster current at the top will always be creating drag on the line. Borger works around that by using split shot not weighted flies.

"The split shot has more purpose than just sinking the fly to the bottom. Everybody thinks that's the only purpose but it's not. The job of the split shot is to anchor the fly against line drag that is pulling the line



Gary's Schedule

Friday May 3

8:30—Nymphing

Top to Bottom

10:30-The Perfect Cast

1:30-Tying Demonstration, Down and Dirty Flies

3-Tying Demonstration, Unique Hackling Techniques

Saturday May 4

8:30-The Angler as Predator workshop

10:30-Tying Demonstration, Down and Dirty Flies

1-Continuing Education for Casting Instructors

and fly back to the surface. Because if the fly line is on top of the water going at X speed and the fly is on the bottom going at one-half X, the line will pull the fly back to the top."

"I put the split shot, 8 to 12 inches above the fly. The split shot anchors that fly at the bottom. Then I put an indicator about 3 to 5 feet above the fly. If the anchor works on the bottom, the indicator will be going one-half to two-thirds the speed of the water around it on the top," says Borger. If the indicator is moving at the same speed as the surrounding surface water, then he advises adding more weight until the indicator slows down.

"Another thing the shot does is help set the hook. The split shot continues to move after the fish picks up the hook, so the shot then pulls the hook and helps make the set. The hook is set by the shot and then the indicator goes under. If you pull every time the indicator stops, you're just pulling your fly off the bottom. But if you wait for the indicator to go under there is a fish there."

Borger is indifferent to what indicator a fisher uses. It can be a fly such as a Chubby Chernobyl, a tuft of wool or synthetic yarn, or one of dozens of commercial indicator products. Regardless, it's the weight that makes the indicator work. Combining the right weight with the indicator makes nymph fishing a truly visual process.

In Ellensburg Universal Nymph Designs for Any Opportunity

Gary Borger is a noted fly tier,

but he isn't a fly purist. "There are literally hundreds of thousands of fly patterns and every one of them catches fish," he says. Only the patterns that work have survived in the literature or the re-telling between fishers after a day on the water. The huge variety of patterns also proves a basic fact about fish behavior, he says. Fish aren't always selective.

"During non-hatch periods fish are basically sampling the drift," says Borger. "Anything that comes along and looks tasty they will eat it. Obviously in a hatch you want to find a fly that matches what they are taking. Even then there are some nymph designs, what I would call universal nymph designs, that are exceptional in being able to catch fish."

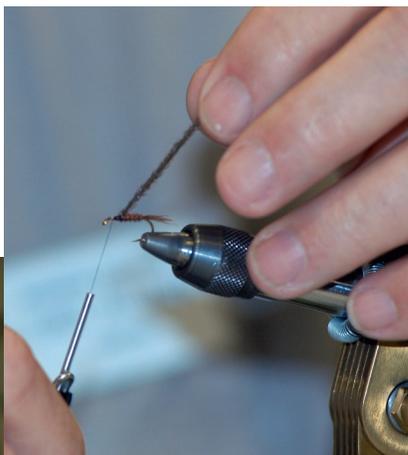
The pheasant tail, for example. In just about any river tie on a pheasant tail nymph in a size 14 and smaller and "I don't care where you are you are going to catch something," says Borger, which means something since he has fished about everywhere.

"Of course, we've gone to flash-backs (flash-back pheasant tail) and so on, but they don't necessarily work any better than a plain old pheasant tail."

The pheasant tail is a universal nymph, says Borger. The Prince Nymph is another. Another universal pattern Borger likes is a hair-leg worm. It can be tied to imitate small may flies, stone flies or dragon fly nymphs. With a brisk retrieve it can also imitate bait fish like sculpin.

Woolly buggers are also a universal design. In fly fishing, we classify nymphs as any sub-aquatic invertebrate, including leaches which a woolly buggie imitates. Borger regularly fished the pattern like nymphs below shot with an indicator to target large brown trout and steelhead around his Wisconsin home. Add rubber legs to the pattern and the possibilities expand again.

"For some reason, fish love rubber legs. You can put them on any way you want, as tail, as legs, have them sticking out the middle of the body, wind them on at the front—gosh dang they just work."



Chet Allison at work on a Pheasant Tail with the finished product at center right. At top a Prince Nymph. Clockwise from lower right, a woolly buggie, the hair leg and at bottom the rubber legged Woolly Buggie.



Young Tiers at Work in Lynnwood



Adrian Mead (at left) was one of dozens of kids introduced to the art of fly tying during the Fly Fishing Show in Lynnwood in February. Overlake Fly Fishing Club members Bill Reisbick and Howard Levens provided patient instruction.

UW Fishery Sciences Celebrating Centennial

Fish and oceans have been part of the life blood of Washington since before statehood and part of a long-running research and education program at one of its leading universities. The University of Washington School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences is celebrating 100 years of science April 16-18. The school is making its annual Bevan Symposium on aquatic sciences a celebration of that effort by telling Centennial Stories of the school's first 100

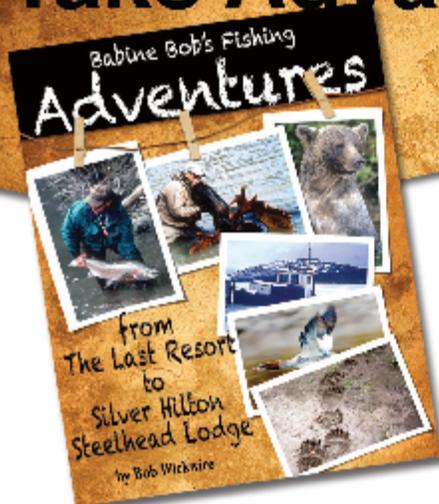
years of discovery. From Professor Bud Burgner's studies of sockeye in Lake Aleknagik, Alaska to Prof. Amanda Bradford's work studying Western gray whales in the Russian far east the program has played an important role in our understanding of oceans, rivers and species that inhabit them. Go to www.fish.uw.edu/news-events/100-year-celebration-and-2019-bevan-symposium for more information and registration materials.



Pioneering scientists including Bud Burgner at work in 1946 and Amanda Bradford in 2002, have made the UW program a world leader in aquatic science .



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In misty, forest covered, Northern British Columbia flows the legendary Babine River, long known for its magnificent large steelhead to over 30 pounds. This all color, 200 plus page, 8 1/2 by 11 inch volume is truly a classic. Author Bob Wickwire and his wife Jerri Lou created several lodges known for offering the finest steelhead fishing in the world.

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I have known Bob since the 1960s and can only say: "What a guy!" He has lived to become the classic steelhead river pioneer. This is his wonderful story. . . Frank Amato, Clackamas and Babine steelheader, too.

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Prime Lies

From page 2

improve fly casting instruction. If you can't commit a full afternoon to CE, Don Simonson and Robert Gerlach will be doing a workshop for club casting instructors.

Thursday evening will be a free dinner for volunteers and the famous dessert auction to raise money for groups like Project Healing Water. Friday evening is the Awards Banquet and Live Auction. Be sure to attend and help recognize some of the great people who have worked so hard for the Council and help raise money for other deserving organizations. Both events will have a no host bar. Will Godfrey will be the auctioneer again this year for the live auction. That man knows how to run an auction. It's always a blast.

Finally, Saturday evening the Yakima River Headwaters TU Chapter is sponsor the Fly Fishing Film Tour right in the main hall in the armory.

To register, go to the Washington State Council website www.wscffi.org then go to Fly Fishing Fair in the black banner and then to the bottom of that page. I'm registered, are you?

Hope to see you there.
Bill

Conservation

From page 3

means. One of their major initiatives is hatchery reform. They have a staff of 5 employees which include Bill McMillan and Bill Bakke. Their home is located in Edmonds and go to www.theconservationangler.com/ for addition information on them.

Native Fish Society – This organization advocates for native fish and promotes the stewardship of the habitats that sustain them. One of their achievements is publishing the River Steward Handbook which you can download from their website. They have a staff of 7 and their revenue in 2017 was \$509,676.00. Their headquarters is in Oregon City and you can find out more about them at <https://nativefishsociety.org/>

In addition to these wild fish advocacy organizations there are fishermen's groups such as CCA and Trout Unlimited, both of which have chapters in Oregon and Washington. And there are many local organizations such as the NW Steelheaders, Skeena Wild Conservancy Trust, Friends of the East Fork, Wild Fish Rescue, Snake River Waterkeeper, Idaho Rivers United and Save Our Wild Salmon to name just a few. And the list goes on and on.

Jack

Address

Washington Fly Fishing Fair Schedule for Friday May 3

Register at:

www.wscffi.org/2019-registration

Time	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5
Fly Tying	Session 1 8:30 - 10:30			Session 2 11:30 - 1:30			Session 3 2:30 - 4:30		
Gary Borger	Nymphing from Top to Bottom Workshop		Casting Demo: The Perfect Cast			Tying Demo: Down & Dirty Flies	Unusual and Unique Hacking Techniques Workshop		
Fly Tying Theater		9:30-10:30		Noon - 1:00			3:00 - 4:00		
Casting Workshops	Casting Area 1 Begining Fly Casting Jim Higgins Casting Area 2 Double Haul Chris Madison Casting Area 3 Casts that Catch Fish Don Simonson Casting Area 4 Practice For Improvement Pat Blackwell				Casting Area 1 Teaching Casting at Club Level Don Simonson & Chris Madison Casting Area 2 The Art of the Roll Cast Len Zickler Casting Area 3 Improving your Overhead Cast T Cammarata Casting Area 4 Pick up and Laydown Chuck Tye	Casting Area 1 What to Expect on the CI Test Don Simonson & T Cammarata Casting Area 2 The Importance of the Backcast and how to Improve it Ruben Bretkreutz Casting Area 3 Casting in Adverse Conditions Chris Madison			
Silent Auction		Silent Auction Closes @ Noon			Silent Auction Closes @ 3PM				
Raffle		Closes @ 11		Closes @ 1		Closes @ 3			

Washington Fly Fishing Fair Schedule for Saturday May 4

Register at:

www.wscffi.org/2019-registration

Time	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	
Fly Tying	Session 1 8:30 - 10:30			Session 2 11:30 - 1:30			Session 3 2:30 - 4:30			
Gary Borger	Angler as a Predator Workshop		Down & Dirty Flies		Continuing Education					
Fly Tying Theater		9:30-10:30		Noon - 1:00			3:00 - 4:00			
Casting Workshops	Casting Area 1 Beginning Fly Casting Aaron Culley		Casting Area 1 The Stop Thomas Cammarata	Casting Area 2 Controlling the Fly Line Don Simonson		Continuing Education for CI's and Club instructors				
	Casting Area 2 Accuracy Bill Wheeler		Casting Area 2 Controlling the Fly Line Don Simonson	Casting Area 3 Presentation Cast Len Zickler						
	Casting Area 3 Get more Distance with your cast Chris Madison		Casting Area 3 Presentation Cast Len Zickler							
	Casting Area 4 Improving your Roll Cast T Cammarata									
Silent Auction	Silent Auction Closes @ Noon			Silent Auction Closes @ 3PM						
Raffle	Closes @ 11		Closes @ 1		Closes @ 3					