



DESERT FLY CASTERS *Forward Casts*

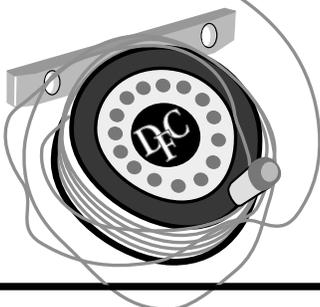
DESERT FLY CASTERS A BARBLESS CLUB



FEBRUARY MEETING:
Wednesday, February 13, 2002
Dinner- 6:00 PM
Meeting- 7:00 PM
American Legion Post #2
2125 S. Industrial Park Ave.
in Tempe

"Rainbow trout fishing is as different from brook fishing as prize fighting is from boxing."

Ernest Hemingway- 1920



President's Report-February 2002

Bob Harrison

Another month already. I hope you are getting more fishing in than I am. Reports are that Butcher Jones Beach and the Salt River are providing an easy morning or afternoon of fishing. The guys at the shops are saying that the lakes will be turning up bass and crappie in a short time if the weather stays as warm as it has been. The club is gearing up for another busy year of activities. Vince put together a great plan for outings. You should see the tentative calendar later in the newsletter (he promised to have it in there this time). The group should be returning from Rocky Point as I am writing this. Check the web site to see if anyone has sent in a report.

A quick run down of the upcoming events. Ted has arranged another great program this month with Dave Foster of Marble Canyon Lodge coming down to tell us the 25 things not to do with a fly rod. The meeting is February 13th. As we have in past years there will be a number of non fishing prizes for you to get out of trouble for forgetting the ever important holiday the next day. Next is a Ladies outing on the Salt River for Sunday, February 17th. It will be at Pebble Beach (up river side of Blue Point Bridge on the Salt River). Breakfast will be served to the ladies starting at 9:00 a.m. The other half can attend if they are willing to help prepare and serve. Later in February (27th thru Mar 3rd) we have the International Sportsman's Exposition held at the Fairgrounds. The club will have a booth and needs tyers and greeters for all of the days. Shirley Johnson has the sign up list. We will also have our annual Fly Fishing 101 clinic (most likely on Salt River at Water Users Parking area) on March 9th. Looking a little farther out, the outing for March (23rd and 24th) is Apache Lake at Burnt Corral campgrounds. While the program on conservation projects around the state last month is fresh on everyone's mind, we have been asked to help out with a work outing on Silver Creek in late February. Peter Klemens has agreed to coordinate between the White Mountain Fly Fishing club and DFC. If you are interested in helping out with cutting and planting willows or moving rocks to build up a couple of diversion wings get in touch with him. They would like to have a dozen or more people to help out for a day.

We have had a few changes in board duties to take care of schedule conflicts. Jeff Fox will be returning to the Treasurer's position so Neal can teach school this spring. Dale has transferred the video library to Ken Durning so that the tax season doesn't get in the way of checking them out from the meetings. And George Gohegan has volunteered to take over the book library. Make it worth their while to haul it all to the meeting. Both libraries contain a lot of information for all of you that are new to the sport and want to learn it.

As several of you noticed, we didn't have a meal at the January meeting. We will make arrangements to have dinners available at the February meeting. Doc will be talking to the Legion hall about menus for future meetings. If you have a preference give him a call.

Happy fishing.

February guest speaker- Dave Foster Of Marble Canyon Guides on fishing Lees Ferry *And 25 things not to do with a fly rod*

Dave Foster will be with us at our February 13th meeting to speak on fishing techniques for Lees Ferry and also on some of the things that he sees client's do wrong with a fly rod every day. Dave has been guiding at Lees Ferry since 1986 and spends about 300 days a year on the Colorado River. He has mastered techniques that work on Lees Ferry and is an excellent teacher. Come on out and ask a professional some questions to improve your fly fishing techniques as well as some tips that will help you no matter where you're fishing. Hope to see you there.

Winter on the San Juan

By Ted Bounds

Winter on the San Juan River in northern New Mexico can be a great fly fishing experience. The crowds that the river is famous for are not nearly as large as during the warmer months, but the big Rainbows and Browns that the river is equally famous for stay all year and eat every day.

I had the good fortune to spend a few days on the river Jan. 2nd through Jan. 5th this year. Fellow DFC'er Dale Thorson and I were joined by two members of the Arizona Fly Casters and stayed at Rainbow Lodge on the river. Dale and I left Mesa at 1:30 am on Jan. 2nd and arrived at the river about 8:30 am. We got our licenses, a little advice and a few flies from the local fly shop and headed for the river. We waded all day in the area between Texas hole and the upper flats and caught several nice fish on nymphs and a few on dries. O J's and RS2's were the order of the day for nymphs, and a very small black midge was the fly of choice for dry's.

The San Juan is a tailwater fishery, so the water temperature near the dam remains fairly constant all year. However, Navajo Lake is affected by a thermal inversion in the winter and again in the spring. This means that the water on the surface of the lake becomes colder in the winter than the water on the bottom of the lake. The colder water is denser and heavier than the water on the bottom of the lake, so the lake turns over. The water on the top of the lake sinks and the warmer water on the bottom of the lake rises to the surface. This makes the discharge water that comes out of the dam into the river murky and visibility is poor. This makes wading a little tricky because you can't see the river bottom like you can in the summer. It also means that you can't see the fish like you can in the summer-and also that the fish can't see you, so I guess that it's about a wash. The fish still have to eat every day. The main food source on the upper San Juan is midges. There are also some scuds, leeches, may flies and aquatic worms, but midges are the main menu. The aquatic worms play a bigger role in the winter than at other times of the year; maybe because they are more visible-lots of them are orange or red. The midge hatches are prolific and go on year round. It has been estimated that a 16 or 17 inch fish (the average size on the San Juan) has to eat 2000 midges a day to maintain it's body. If you can locate a good feeding lane and get a decent drift with a fly that is close in size and color to whatever is hatching, your chances of getting hooked up are excellent.

The second day of our trip found Dale and I at the fly shop at 8:30 am to meet our guide for the day, a gentleman named Bear Goode (honest). Bear was an excellent guide and handled the drift boat with authority and dexterity. Bear is one of the few people I meet who makes me feel dainty. Bear was a first round draft pick of the Cincinnati Bengals when he graduated from college as an offensive lineman. His playing career was cut short by and injury, so he became a fishing guide, and no, I don't think anyone teases him about his name very much.

We spent the day with Bear fishing mostly deeper slow water with spun bunny leeches and OJ's and various midge imitations as point flies. I had never fished this way before, usually fishing the riffles and drop offs and learned a lot. Bear had an excellent knowledge of the river and the aquatic insects, leeches, and worms that are found in various sections of the river. If you go with a guide, this knowledge is a lot of what you pay for, not just knot tying and a boat ride. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

This was Dale's first trip to the San Juan, and he promptly caught several of the largest fish he has ever landed on a fly rod, with his best of the day being a 21" rainbow. Not a bad start for a beginning fly fisher.

We spent the next day and a half wading and fishing various places on the river. We fished some areas of the river that were new to me, below the quality water and caught some really nice rainbows and browns. It was very enjoyable for me to watch Dale ask questions, put the answers that I gave him to use and land some nice fish on his own.

If you plan to go to the San Juan in the winter take plenty of warm layered clothing and check the weather on the Internet before you go and try and plan your trip between winter storms. Lodging is less expensive on the river in the winter, the crowds are sparser, but the fish are still there eating every day.



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It's a Tough World

by Vince Deadmond

Like many Americans the events of September, 11, and after have had an effect on me. Even though I didn't know any of those folks in the towers, the plane that went down, or the Pentagon I felt a deep sense of loss and uncertainty. The President has asked us to 1) go about our normal business and 2) be vigilant for any thing unusual.

Normal business for those of us that fly fish would be to go fishing. I know I have spent too much time watching CNN and other news from this event. Even my dog Fritz has watched enough TV news. He now writes on the windows of my truck, with his nose, in what looks like Arabic, I had never noticed the similarity before. I need to work on this vigilant thing. Someone asks me if I thought my dog was a terrorist. "No, I think the only thing he will terrorize is a chunk of summer sausage around the camp fire," I replied.

Tough Economic Times

The current economy reminds me of my youth back in the "Poverty Pockets" of Southern Illinois. Times were tough, people fished seriously for meat, and kept everything. I had one neighbor who went as far as making Carp Sausage. I have talked to others my age who remember other wild game sausages. Anyone had Raccoon Sausage? Things are not that bad, yet, but the economy is weakened, and this is bound to affect our local fly shops, and fishing destinations like Lee's Ferry. You may not have any big trips on the horizon, but you really ought to get back to normal, and fish.

And if possible I suggest you make a trip to Lee's Ferry and book a day with your favorite guide, there is a good chance they will be able to work you in for a little fishing. If you fish the Salt River enough you will eventually need more tippet, split shot, fly tying materials, and maybe you ought to replace that old clunker reel you have been limping along with. The more fishing you do you are liable to stimulate some of the local fly shops, and this is not a bad thing.

You probably have given up on some of your New Year's Resolutions, but here are some things you can do to improve your fishing in 2002.

FISH MORE. Increase your fishing time, even if is only fishing locally. Call up old friends, make some new friends and plan an outing.

MENTOR A NEW FLY FISHER. Anyone who has achieved anything in the sport has had lots of help along the way. Encourage new fly fishers to fish, offer suggestions on where to fish, and when to fish, and go fish with them.

HAVE FUN. This is the best way I know to make a tough world a little nicer.

Ladies tell'em your are going fishing!

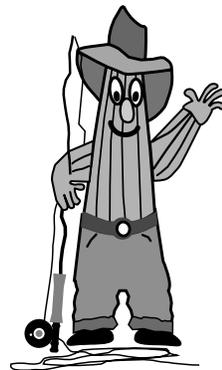
Studies have shown that not going fly fishing is hard on your mental health. You don't have to be a muttering malcontent or a psychotic to blow up.

Before you explode from the overwhelming responsibilities you have, take a break and go fly fish the Salt River. Sign up at the next DFC Meeting for the **Sunday, February 17 Brunch/Fly Fishing Ladies Day, 9 AM-1 PM.** If you can't sign up at the meeting call **Vince at 480-982-7461 (business) or 480-984-4698 (Home)** to make your reservations. Dave Weaver and Vince Deadmond will be serving a light, healthy, delicious brunch for the ladies attending.

Meet at the Pebble Beach Parking Area just up stream from the Blue Point Bridge. Bring your rod (3-6 weight), floating line, strike indicator, 9 foot leader and some 4 or 5 x tippet material. You will want to have some BB split shot to attach 12 inches above your first fly. If this sounds a lot like fishing Lee's Ferry you are right on track.



SAGUARO SAM SAYS....



De-barbing tool: Needle-Nosed Pliers - Pinch down the hook barb BEFORE tying the fly. Standard, short pliers with a fine, smooth tip will do fine. No need to spend a lot on this tool. RadioShack.com stores have some easy to squeeze ones for about \$4.00 that have spring-loaded handles, and are very easy to use.

As soon as you have a grip on the hook barb with the pliers, reduce your grip pressure on the fly or hook and then pinch down the barb. Otherwise you could break the fragile hook.

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2002 Desert Fly Casters Events

February 17 Sunday Brunch for the Lady DFC'ers. Fishing at Saguaro Lake, this is a nice easy day trip for most members with less than an hour driving time. **NOTE: Providing that we still have water in the river we will meet at Pebble Beach (Blue Point Bridge up stream) for the Sunday Brunch for the Lady DFC'ers.** If no water in Salt we will be back at Saguaro Lake. Target fish trout and bass. Equipment needed 3-6 weight rod, with floating line, waders, polarized sun glasses, and layers of clothing depending on the weather. Hosts Dave Weaver and Vince Deadmond will be serving breakfast/brunch.

February 27-March 3 Sportsman's Show. A chance to tie some flies and talk to people about the great sport of fly fishing. We will need lots of volunteers for this event. Shirley Johnson is the coordinator for this event.

March 9 Fly Fishing 101. This event is a chance to get those people we talked to at the Sportsman's Show on the water and thinking about fly fishing. We will use the Salt River as our class room and we will need volunteers to help with this introduction. This is a good event if you have limited equipment the club has rods and reels to use, and members have been generous with their equipment in the show and tell portion. For most people it is a 45 minute drive or less. *More information in future newsletter.*

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Al, our river keeper, is here to enhance and protect the fishery. He welcomes your questions and suggestions.
 Sincerely, Your Hostess and Host,
 Wink and Gerald

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