



DESERT FLY CASTERS *Forward Casts*

DESERT FLY CASTERS A BARBLESS CLUB

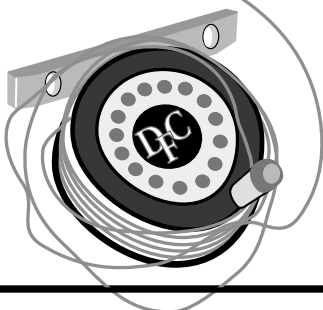


SEPTEMBER MEETING:

Wednesday, October 9, 2002
Dinner- 6:00 PM
Meeting- 7:00 PM
American Legion Post #2
2125 S. Industrial Park Ave.
in Tempe

"It is just possible that nice guys
don't catch the most fish.
But they find far more pleasure
in those they do get."

Roderick Haig-Brown- 1960



President's Report-October 2002

Bob Harrison

We are getting ready to wrap up the year. Ted has arranged two great programs for October and November. In October Scottsdale Fly Fishing will present a year of fishing in Arizona. This should be a great program for those of you new to Arizona or to fly fishing. It will also provide an opportunity to find a location or method for the experienced anglers. It will also be the debut for the new sound system. Ken has located a portable system that should overcome the chatter that seems to always compete with the speaker.

We also have a little club business to attend to. Nominations for the 2003 board. I will be contacting those that have noted an interest in being on the board with their membership forms. I have prepared an overview of the duties of various board positions if any are interested but concerned about what might be required. If you are interested in being more active in the club send an email to President@desertflycasters.com or call the club hotline. I will get back with anyone that is interested.

By the time this gets to you, those that signed up for the San Juan trip should be stretching lines on the big fish reported to be lurking in those waters. For those that have fished the San Juan and or want to in the future, I suggest they take a look at the website at Sandstoneanglers.com. There is information on it regarding manipulation of flows. There was also an article in the paper today (Sunday) regarding water flows into the Rio Grande.

A reminder that the club has its annual trek to Rocky Point in November. The newsletter should have maps and information on lodging and Mexican insurance. An 8 wt rod is recommended but you can fish it with a 6wt if you are careful. Treating your equipment for salt water in advance is recommended. Ask some of the members that travel to the salt regularly on use of Boeshield to coat rods and reels for added protection.

Also would like to give you a heads up on the December Christmas banquet. Roy Baker is organizing the raffle prizes. He would appreciate any donations that you would like to provide. Consider asking businesses that you frequent on a regular basis for a certificate for discounted or free service. Experienced members could consider donating a certificate for a day at the river or tying bench that is likely be f interest to less experienced members. We are a non profit organization and will provide a tax deduction form along with the Thank You notes for any donations.

I hope you are all getting in your share of fishing. The fall is reported to be a great time to get out. The fish are more active as the water cools down and they try to get their fill before cold weather sets in.

Tightlines.

Bob Harrison

October Program:

A year in the Life of an Arizona Fly Fisherman Presented by Dylan Kennedy

Our guest speaker for October 9th will be Dylan Kennedy, owner of Scottsdale Fly Fishing Company. Dylan will have a slide show and presentation on the angling opportunities that are available to fly fishermen in Arizona on a month to month basis. This will be an informative and entertaining program presented by one of the top pro fishermen in the state. This will help us all to prepare our fishing calendars for the rest of this year as well as next years. Dylan is one of the most knowledgeable and enthusiastic people in our sport, and will be glad to answer questions about equipment, techniques, and anything else you would like to know about fly fishing.

October will also be the debut of our new sound system. This should make it easier to hear the speakers, especially if your hearing could be a little better like mine and most of the other people in my age group (i.e. Old) Thanks to Ken Durning and Bob Harrison for taking the time and making the effort to get the new sound system for us. *Hope to see you all at the October 9th meeting.*

Ted Bounds, Program Chairman

Up date on Anglers Round Table

By Ted Bounds

A quick up date on the Commission order 40 items that I wrote about in last month's newsletter. John Rohmer and I attended a meeting at the Pinetop Game and Fish office on Friday, September 6th. The items that were discussed were the proposed rule changes by the Game and Fish Department that will be considered by the Game and Fish Commission in October. The two topics that were of concern to fly fishermen were the proposed rule changes to Lees Ferry and the fishing closure that was proposed on the West Fork of the Black River. This meeting was attended by Larry Riley, Fisheries Branch Chief and the regional director from Pinetop, whose name I cannot recall. I apologize for this omission. It was also attended by a few interested anglers from the Valley, and damn near the whole White Mountain Fly Fishing Club, and a lot of other resident fly fishermen. This proves that there is strength in numbers. The angler's round table that Cinda Howard and I attended in August at the G&F building at the State Fairgrounds had five fly fishermen in attendance. The proposed rule changes for Lees Ferry were discussed by the group and generally agreed upon that these should go to the Commission with out any major changes. The proposed changes at the West fork were a different matter. The G&F Department had proposed that the West Fork of the Black River be closed to fishing from the uppermost fish barrier to the confluence with Stinky Creek, approximately 1.5 miles downstream. The thinking behind this was that the Brown trout that keep showing up between the two fish barriers and above the upper fish barrier are being placed there by humans. G&F have never seen any one committing this act, they just suspect that this is happening. Their rationale is that it would be more difficult to get a live fish from 1.5 miles downstream than it would to

catch a brown below the downstream barrier and give him a toss over the barrier to the recovery area for the Apache Trout. G&F must have gotten a lot of negative input on this idea, because they came to the meeting ready to listen to anglers (and they were plenty who expressed their opinions, all negative on this idea) and adjust their proposal to something more friendly and workable to the anglers who love this beautiful stretch of wild Brown Trout water. When the meeting was over the G&F department was going to move forward with the proposal to either close to fishing the area between the two barriers or maybe from the uppermost barrier to 100 yards below the downstream barrier. This is a major turn around on the part of G&F and a real victory for all fly fishers. We owe a special thanks to the White Mountain Fly Fishing Club, and especially to Gene Maronde, Dr. Lee Reeck, and Mike Yeager who drafted and sent a letter to Larry Riley before the meeting expressing their concerns and recommending some sensible alternatives.

The area of the West Fork of the Black River that G&F was considering closing to fishing is the only catch and release trout water in Arizona managed by AZ G&F since the fires destroyed the fishery at Canyon Creek. If no one would have stepped forward and made their opinion known, we wouldn't have been allowed to fish there next year without breaking the law. I think this should tell all of us how much of a priority that catch and release is to the AZ G&F department. I know that it is inconvenient to go to meetings. It's bothersome to try and arrange your schedule so you can attend work outings. But these things are important and necessary if you want to continue to have anyplace to fish where you have a chance to catch a trophy wild fish in Arizona. If you can, go to a few meetings. If you can't

send an e-mail or a letter. The work outings are really only a half day of work, you get a free lunch, and it's a great excuse to get away to the mountains for a couple of days. Keep yourself informed and make your opinions known to the people who get to make the rules. If you don't do anything, you don't have any right to grip when changes take place that you don't like. Hope to see some of you at the Anglers Roundtable on October 17th or at a work outing.

Lee's Ferry Trip

By Cinda Howard

I talked to Dave Foster on the phone Tuesday, September 10th and by 5:00 a.m. that following Saturday, there were three of us on our way to Lee's Ferry. Myself, Ted Bounds and Roy Baker made the trip in about 5 hours. Of course that included stopping in Flagstaff for a sit-down breakfast.

When we arrived in Marble Canyon, the first stop was at Dave's house to see the newest additions to his family. They are two four-month old girls named Summer, who goes by Sunny, and Marissa. We sat and talked to the Fosters for a couple of hours and then headed out to fish the walk-in.

I had read reports that the walk-in was fishing very well but that wasn't the case when we got there. Either we hit it on the wrong day or at the wrong time because not one of us got as much as a bite. But as the saying goes, if you were always successful, it would be called 'catchin'', not 'fishin''. We tried our luck there for about three hours and then decided that we had given the fish enough to laugh at for one day.

The next morning we met Dave at the boat dock at 6:00 a.m. for a full day of guided fishing. As usual, the scenery was breathtaking. I hadn't been there in almost a year and had almost forgotten how beautiful this place truly is.

It wasn't a surprise that Ted caught the first fish, the second fish, the third fish and so on. He caught so many at

...continued on page 4



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by Shirley Johnson

FISHING TIPS: This virtually weedless fly will work on bass, walleye, northern pike, musky, trout, catfish, carp, crappie, perch, pan fish and a variety of salt water species.

Rocky Point Pattern-

CLOUSER MINNOW

Baitfish Imitation

INGREDIENTS

Hook: For salt water use a stainless steel 1/0 or 2/0 Hook (for fresh water use a 2 to 8 Streamer Hook)

Thread: Heavy 3/0, Uni Big Fly, Kevlar or similar

Upper Wing: Sparse Dark Color Bucktail or other stiff synthetic hair (rides on top)

Lower Wing: Sparse Light Color Bucktail or other stiff synthetic hair (rides on bottom)

Flashabou: Root Beer color with darker flies, Pearl color with lighter flies

Head: Thread

Weight: Dumbbell or Hourglass Eyes; Red with black pupil is a plus

Color combinations: Chartreuse over White, Red /White, Red / Yellow or Black & White

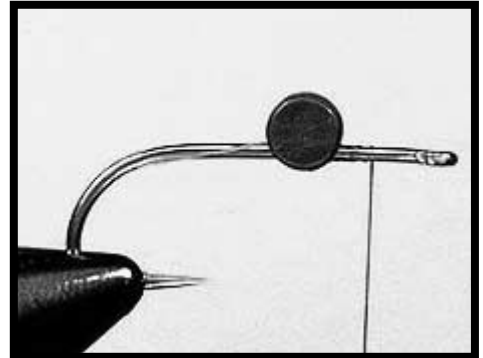
Note: This fly is tied to ride hook-point-up, so the wings are tied on in reverse order - Lower Wing first. It's best to add eyes to a batch of hooks ahead of time and let them dry.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lay down a thread base all along the hook shank.
2. Tie on the eyes 1/3 back from the hook eye using a generous layer of figure 8 or „X% wraps. Coat thread with Zap a Gap or similar super glue and set aside to dry.
3. Place the hook [with eyes already on] in the vise in the usual position and tie about a dozen or so flash fibers just in front of hook bend. Trim the fibers to extend 1/3 to 1/2 the hook shank length beyond the bend of the hook
4. Tie the lower wing bucktail or hair first just behind the hook eye (between the hook eye and the dumbbell eyes) then, pulling the hair straight between the dumbbell eyes, secure it behind the eyes. Advance thread back to behind the hook eye.
5. Flip the hook over in the vise - now with the point up and tie in about a dozen or so flash fibers behind the hook eye.
6. Tie in the upper wing bucktail or hair, creating a smooth head
7. Whip finish and cement. (end)

(You can add more colors if desired, but keep the hair relatively sparse.)

Placement of the eyes is key: Move them forward toward the hook eye and it swims more like a jig. Move them back toward the hook bend, and it glides through the water.



Clouser- Finished

Cinda Howard/Lee's Ferry Trip

our first stop that I asked Dave to tie Ted up in the boat. Every time I looked over at him, his rod was bent. That was ok because it wasn't too long before Roy and I were hooked up also. The fish were fat, healthy and fought hard. We had a blast and caught fish all day long.

Most of the fish were caught on gray RS-2's, orange scuds and small gray midges. Roy caught his largest fish with a leach pattern on the upswing.

The Ferry fished better than it has in probably over a year. The flows have been reduced and should stay that way for the next month or two. It's a great time to get up there and enjoy the beautiful scenery and some good fishing. Give the guides up there all call and go fish!

New Videos are In

In an effort improve the club's video collection, we recently purchased 11 new titles for the video library. I tried to shop for videos that would help both novice and experienced fly-casters alike, in their fishing endeavors here in Arizona. Some of the subjects include casting, float-tubing, entry-level fly tying, and tying patterns particular to our region. The videos also include a variety of fly-fishing celebrities such as John Gierach A.K. Best, and Jack Dennis.

On behalf of the club, I would like to thank John, Bob, and all the guys at Arizona Flyfishing for helping us out with the purchase of these new videos. These guys were very supportive, and special-ordered the videos for us in only a matter of couple of days. So stop on in and give them your business.

Be sure to stop on by the video library at the next meeting and check one of the new titles out. There is a \$20 refundable deposit for all videos, and you can keep em' all month.

Ken Durning

Lower Salt River Fly Fishing Adventure

By Vince Deadmond

Party! The first thought of many who use the Salt, but there is a large quiet crowd that likes to bike, hike, bird watch, and even fly fish this gem, right here in our own back yard. Early one Saturday morning in September, I stopped at the new Starbucks grabbed a hot black coffee and headed north up Power Road. Before my coffee was cool enough to drink I was surveying the river just past the Granite Reef pull off. Here is one of the last places you can park on the river for free. I guess I have enough Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn left in me to get some pleasure in avoiding to pay for fishing.

I would like to introduce you to the joys of Largemouth bass fishing on the Salt River.

First thing, scale back your expectations, or forget any normal story you have ever read about fishing for ol' bucket mouth, with fish hitting a fly hard enough to pull your shoulder out of it's socket, I don't want to lead you astray. These fish are small, eight or nine inches, a twelve inch fish would be a trophy in this part of the river. The best thing about these fish is they will take a fly, and if you are geared light enough you can still have some fun.

I put my gear together, a 3 weight, three piece St. Croix fly rod, matched with a double taper floating line carefully wound on my old Lamson reel. This is my favorite set up for most of my stream trout fishing anywhere in the state. In a regular Largemouth bass story one would be using much larger gear. It was still warm enough to wet wade, so swim trunks were in order. And my box of homemade flies fit neatly into my long sleeved fishing shirt. I like to use Tevas on my feet and

a baseball cap on my head. One key piece of equipment is polarized sunglasses. The look won't be featured on the cover of GQ Magazine.

After a short walk through the willow trees, I step into the water, refreshing on a warm morning. I put my first cast with a homemade popper near some cattails where I caught a nice Bluegill the last time I fished. Pop! Pop! Kersploosh! Bluegill on the line, and I am thinking what great color he has on his throat. I release my trophy and cast again. Pop! Pop! Bam! Another Bluegill and I have hardly entered the water. This is too easy! I turn and move up stream, I see nervous water, lots of my finny friends are moving around. I get into position and make a cast. Before I have a chance to move the popper, a small Largemouth bass inhales it. After catching several more small bass, I put a Clouser Minnow on the menu. The bass don't seem to mind, and they are still willing to play.

I spot an old friend, one of the best fishermen on the river, a Blue Heron. Looks like ol' Blue is catching fish too. I navigate across the river and try the brush on the far side. Because of the current the bass are close to the bank. It is a little more demanding to get your cast in the right spot, but the fish still like the Clouser. I do a bit of exploring and notice a guy fishing out of a kayak. Now that is a stealthy way to fish, and enjoy the river. I head back to my truck and while I am stowing away my gear, bicycles race by, and someone else has just finished their morning hike. I check my watch and it is about 9 AM, it has already been a good day, I think I'll stop for that second cup of coffee on the way home.

To start your own fly fishing adventures stop by a Desert Fly Casters meeting. Second Wednesday of every month at the American Legion Post #2 2125 S. Industrial Park Ave. in Tempe. Dinner 6:00 PM Meeting 7:00 PM. Vince a Thunder Mountain resident and past DFC president can be reached at Vddeadmond@aol.com or you can visit any of the fine fly shops in the valley. Arizona Flyfishing in Tempe 480 730 6808, Don's Sport Shop in Scottsdale 480 946 5313, Scottsdale Flyfishing Company 480 368 9280, the Orvis Company Store in Scottsdale 480 905 1400, or Alta Vista Classic Anglers in Phoenix 602 241-1548.



CHRISTMAS BANQUET IS COMING!

The Club Needs Your Help

The date for this year's Christmas Banquet & Raffle is Wednesday, December 11th. We are holding it in the same location as last year: The Knights of Columbus Hall on Chandler Blvd. in Chandler. Directions will be in a later newsletter.

The letters to prospective donors have been mailed. Now we are asking the membership for help in gathering up additional items. These can be of any value, and don't have to pertain to fly fishing. This is the time to hit up relatives, friends and neighbors for anything they are willing to donate.

For those of you that wish to donate flies, the club will provide fly boxes. Every donation will be greatly appreciated.

If you have anything you need to drop off early, you can do so. My home phone number is: 480/917-7630. Evenings and weekends are the best time to call.

Last year's raffle was a great success, but it required the help of many people. Please help the club make this year's raffle equally successful.

*Thank You-
Roy Baker*

August Work Outing

In August, there was a workday on the West Fork of the Black River. Old Pueblo Trout Unlimited and Arizona Game & Fish sponsored this event. Cinda Howard and Roy Baker represented Desert Flycasters. On the agenda for this trip was shocking the fish above the barriers and reinforcing the upper barrier.

We were on one of the teams that did the shocking. If you haven't had the opportunity to do that, here is what takes place. The Game & Fish biologist shocks the water and then there are two or three people behind her to net the fish. After the fish are collected, they are weighed and measured. This information is documented along with what types of fish are found.

Apache trout, brown trout and Speckled Dace were found between the upper and lower barriers. Above the upper barrier, they found Apache trout, Speckled Dace and only one brown trout.

There will be another work outing that will take place on September 28th. I hope to see you there. It is a great feeling to know that you are making a difference in what happens with the fisheries.

Cinda Howard

What is a decent Saltwater Reel?

Notes from Federation of Fly Fishers

FFF generally will not recommend a particular manufacturer, but there are certain things to consider in buying a quality saltwater reel.

When you go after bigger fish, be it tarpon in salt water, northern pike in warmwater, steelhead in big rivers or tailwater trout, your reel has to be more than just a line holder. The first problem we run into with an inexpensive reel is the quality of the drag system. Remember, drag is intended offer resistance so as to slow down or tire a hard running or strong fish, while giving way very smoothly and with just enough resistance to protect the weakest point in your terminal tackle, the tippet. Too much resistance and the tippet breaks, too little resistance and the fish never tires. Even with a 2X or 3X tippet for a steelhead, after nicks and scratches on logs and rocks, is likely to break when the pressure is on. So to minimize break-off, when the hooked fish really takes off, the optimal drag is smooth as silk (without variations in resistance as line goes out), with minimal start-up resistance. But, this kind of ideal drag tends to cost more money. If you suffer a break-off on a trophy tarpon, saving a little money may not be worth it.

Another factor (to some maybe the most important) is reel weight. Everything else being equal, the lighter the reel (and the rod) the better. If you are going to make long distance casts all day, a few ounces can make a difference. A heavy reel is just like wearing too-heavy hiking boots on a long trail. Now-a-days, with wonderful alloys, a large reel can weigh as light as a smaller reel of lower price and poorer engineering. Also, on a bigger rod a heavier reel is more acceptable. Here the goal is to have the reel weight balance the weight of the rod. This balance is because the weight of the rod is mostly forward of your hand, while the weight of the reel is behind. A longer (or heavier) rod (because of the lever-fulcrum effect) will offset a heavier reel. So if you hold the rod properly,

the reel does not tip the rod back, or vice versa. The only sure way to determine rod-reel balance is to try them together and see how they feel.

A final factor is reel arbor diameter. Diameter influences how much line your reel holds and how fast you can retrieve the line. With a deeper reel, you can carry more backing for those far-running, hard fighting fish, certainly a consideration. However, a factor that is also worth considering is the size of the arbor (inner core of the spool). The size of the arbor determines how fast you can bring in line. It takes about 400 turns of the average reel to bring in 100 yards of backing. With some of the new large arbor (or loop) reels, this is reduced by as much as 25%. With a big fish coming right at you, some feel this difference is significant. But, there is a trade-off here as well; faster retrieve reels carry less backing.

So in buying a saltwater reel, take a look at all the critical factors: Weight, drag, line capacity and line retrieval rate. The selection is very impressive and you will find that these high performance reels are more than a place to store your line. (comments by Jim Abbs)



SOMETHING NEW
WILL BE ADDED
IN 2003 FOR
FOR DFC MEMBERS



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2002 Desert Fly Casters Events

November 8-11 Rocky Point, Mexico. *Doc Nickel will host.* Camping, condos, or motels are available. Equipment 6-8 weight rods, sinking lines, Clouser and deceiver patterns work well. One can wet wade, use a float tube, or just set back and eat and drink on the beach. Good food, good friends, and good fishing are the trademarks of this outing. Drive time 4-5 hours.

PLEASE NOTE: *First time trip to Mexico* - travel with someone who has made the trip before. Get your Mexico car insurance. I get mine from Phillips Insurance in Ajo, AZ. You can call ahead give a credit card number and they can fax or send out your insurance, or you can stop and pick it up on the way. The food is good in Mexico, the water is good, and they speak English. *If you have any questions give me a call- 480 984 4698 Vince Deadmond.*

December 11 DFC Banquet. Social Event of the Year! -More details to follow in DFC future newsletter.

JOHN ROHMER
 31 W. Baseline
 Tempe, AZ 85283

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 Sincerely, Your Hostess and Host,
 Wink and Gerald

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Head South Fly People!

W.R. Nickel (480)857*0381

I know the old saying is Head west young man, but that won't work NO more for this club. Neat!

It's Mexico time again. As I said at the meeting, well use the same format as the past several years.

Friday evening get together at the condos east of Playa Elegante 7p.m.-10p.m. munchies available & B.Y.O.B. (blenders available for building Margaritas & other concoctions.) If you have a favorite hors d'oeuvre (munchie) you would like us to taste or critique bring it along.

Saturday we will have an informal banquet at the Boja Cantina at 7:30p.m. More informal stuff, an informal raffle! Ha Ha. Prime rib for dinner (chicken if needed) let me know. The best part is the banquet is free!

Now to the important stuff, Salt Water Fishing! It's a ball, 'cause #1. The fish are super tough. #2. You never know what species you are going to latch onto. Most popular are the Sea Trout, lots of Pompano, Triggers, Sand Bass, & a few Sea of Cortez Bonafish (they're a hoot, and becoming more frequent.) Don't forget those crazy Needlefish also.

Fly's: Lefty's deceiver, integration and any kind of clouser minnows, all of these in silver, green or blue.

You will need mexican insurance, which is available in Ajo & at the border.

Border crossing must be done between the hours of 12 midnight & 6:00a.m. Never any problems unless you try to be a big shot & bring a weapon or ammunition across; then look out, you'll be there awhile. So don't! Be courteous!

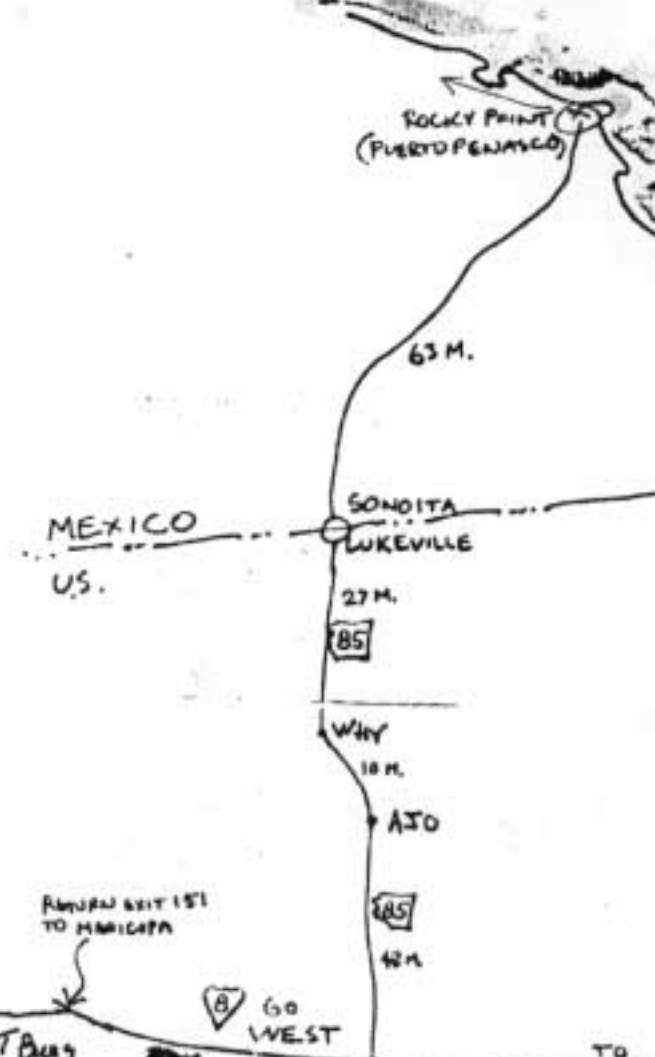
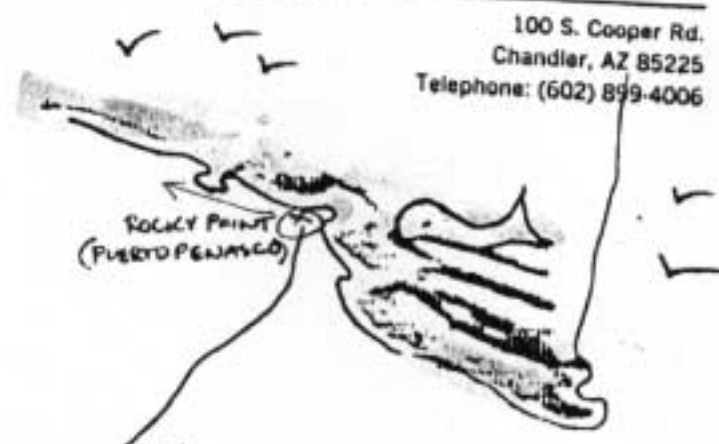
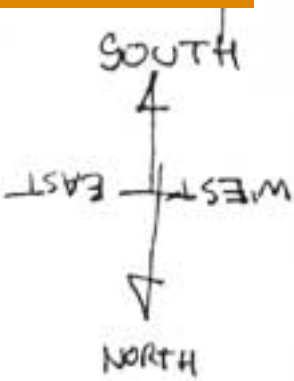
Accommodations run from camping in R.V. parks, to condos & hotels. All of these vary in price ranges. Rather than list all of the above with phone numbers, just call me at (480)857-0381 and I'll relay the information to you, (there is an answer machine.)

Oh yeah, I forgot to mention, there is an occasional bit of partying (sometimes) at the local watering holes and a rare dance or two at the same.

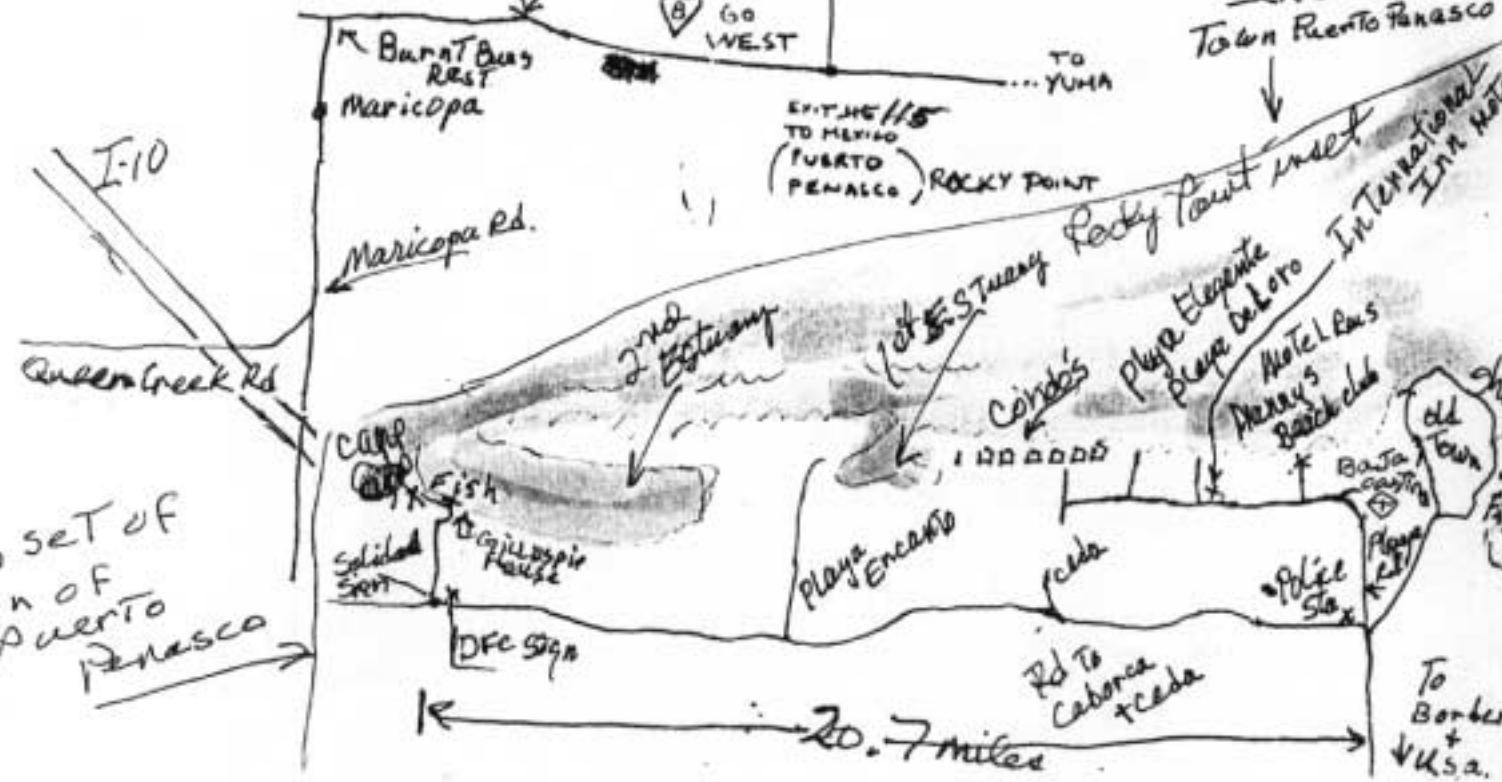
Sign up sheet will be at the October meeting. See you there.

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Director:
Dario Travaini

Greetings from the President

Hello Fellow Fly Fishers

The conclave in Livingston Montana was great although the attendance was down from prior years. The Presidents meeting on Monday was chaired by Nathan Joyner the Northern California President. I felt Nathan did a great job of keeping the meeting interesting and on track. Greg Pitts our national President and our new Executive Director Jim Rainey also attended this meeting. It is felt that a new day has dawned for the FFF. I'm convinced that Jim's leadership will be the key to growing our Federation.

We spent a considerable amount of time discussing the merits of being organized as State councils rather than regional councils. As you know ERM is composed of Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado. I'm not convinced yet that State councils are the way to go.

There is a tremendous need for you to join in at the local, council and national level. If you would like to help get this council moving please contact me at ksts8701@aol.com or 520 663 0877.

The national executive board met on Tuesday August 6. Everything from cold, warm and saltwater issues were discussed. All the national vice presidents gave their reports. Two items I found very interesting were the Boy Scout merit badge program, see article by Pat Oglesby and the new member slide program. More on the new member program when we receive the slide program from the national office.

Tight Lines & Screaming Reels
Ken Sylvia

Gunnison Gorge Anglers
Delta / Montrose, Colorado

By Pat Oglesby, National Director

Gunnison Gorge Anglers is located in Western Colorado and rotates meetings between Montrose and Delta. Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, beginning at 6:30. For more information contact President Gale Doudy at 970-835-3993 or donnasgallery@mail.tds.net.

Gunnison Gorge Anglers co-hosted a highly successful Western Colorado Fly Fishing Exposition this past March in Grand Junction, Colorado. Part of the proceeds from the fund raising activities allowed us to donate \$500 to the Federation of Fly Fishers Youth Educational Fund and \$1500 towards whirling disease research.

Planning is underway for the 5th Annual Western Colorado Fly Fishing Exposition to be held in Grand Junction on March 28th and 29th 2003. 50-100 of the best fly tiers from several states will demonstrate their skills at this popular event. It is open to the public and attendees will have the opportunity to view slide shows, visit vendors, take fly tying classes, receive fly casting instruction, attend the fly tying theater, participate in raffles and attend the evening's banquet and auction. Negotiations are underway to have a fly fishing personality provide the evening's program at the banquet. If you are interested in demonstrating your fly tying skills please contact Carol Oglesby for details. She can be reached at 970-434-3912, oglesby@gj.net, or pcoglesby@attbi.com.

— CONSERVATION NEWS —

The past years lack of precipitation has delayed some of ERMC on-the-ground conservation projects but did not stop us from making significant contributions to conservation.

Mesilla Valley Fly Fishers in Las Cruces, NM received a \$2000 FFF grant for researchers at New Mexico State University to determine the distribution of native fish, including Rio Grande Cutthroat in Northern New Mexico.

New Mexico Trout in Albuquerque, New Mexico received a \$2000 FFF grant for stream habitat monitoring and morphology studies on Comanche Creek in Northern New Mexico. This is FFF's part in a public-private partnership effort to restore watershed health to the 30,000 acre Sangre de Cristo mountain basin. The goal is to improve habitat for the native Rio Grande Cutthroat. New Mexico Trout has done an excellent job for many years toward the recovery of Rio Grande Cutthroat.

For Several years ERMC has had a Native Trout Task Force made up of FFF clubs from Arizona and New Mexico. Our goal is to work with other groups and various government agencies toward reintroduction and de-listing our three native trout species. In August we presented a check for \$6000 to The Arizona Game and Fish Commission to be used for reintroduction of Apache Trout. Arizona Flycasters of Phoenix, Desert Flycasters of Mesa, Northern Arizona Flycasters of Flagstaff, ERMC and FFF all contributed to this effort.

FFF promotes reintroduction of Native species where appropriate. I encourage all clubs to have some level of involvement with native species. FFF has grant funds for natives as well as other club conservation projects, Forms and instructions are available on the FFF web site at www.fedflyfishers.org.

Dick Brown

VP Conservation

(928) 525-1579 – E-Mail: rjmabrown@aol.com

Boy Scout Fly Fishing Merit Badge

By Pat Oglesby, National Director

The Boy Scouts of America now have a Fly Fishing Merit Badge. Bob Sousa, FFF member and employee of the US Fish and Wildlife, was instrumental in this becoming a reality. It took several years of hard work to get the program approved and to write a handbook. Your local Boy Scout Council needs volunteers to become Merit Badge Counselors and if we (FFF) don't get involved someone else will. This is a unique opportunity for FFF Clubs and members to reach out to our youth. I don't know of any other way to be able to get our message to as many young boys as this program. Clubs could have several members become Counselors and the Scouts would then have a pool to draw from. To become a Counselor, contact your local Boy Scout Council and they will have the necessary form to complete and submit. The contact information, the badge requirements, and the teaching guide for this badge are now available on the FFF website - www.fedflyfishers.org, The Boy Scout website is - bsa.scouting.org Thanks to Bob for his dedication and hard work.

Carol Oglesby, VP of Women's Education, recently met with Bob Sousa and others at the Denver Fly Fishing Retailer Show to start the process of getting the same merit badge for the Girl Scouts. A meeting in New York City with the Girl Scouts of America is scheduled for later this year. It will probably be just as long a process for the girls as it was for the boys.

Selecting a Fly Rod

By Dusty Sprague and Dick Rock

The purchase of a fly rod can be a daunting experience. There are hundreds of rods on the market, from different manufacturers with different models, lengths, line weights, materials, actions, reel seats, pack lengths, grips, warranties, and prices. The person new to the sport can be overwhelmed with the choices. By following a logical process you can pick a rod best suited to your needs and casting style. First, determine how the fly rod will be used then consider how best to shop for that rod.

Line Weight

Line weight should be your first consideration. The size and power of the fish you pursue, fly sizes, and fishing conditions will generally determine the line weight best suited for a fishing application. Line weights range from line size 0 to 15 and are based on the weight in grains of the first 30 feet of fly line. The table below provides typical line weights most appropriate for the more common fly-fishing target species. Lighter lines are usually used for smaller fish, casting smaller flies in smaller water with little or no wind. Conversely, when fishing large rivers and lakes and saltwater, heavier lines work better in the wind, over longer distances, and will cast larger flies.

Fish Species/Line-Weight Chart

Line Weight Fish Species	Ultra-Light #0 - #3	Light #4 - #5	Medium #6 - #8	Medium-Heavy #9 - #11	Heavy #12 - #15
Bluegills	X	X			
Trout, Grayling	X	X	X		
Bass, Carp, Pickerel, Walleyes			X	X	
Muskies, Pike, Salmon, Shad, Steelhead			X	X	
Ladyfish, Snapper, Sp.Mackerel, Pompano		X	X		
Albacore, Baby Tarpon, Bonefish, Black Drum, Bluefish, Cobia, Jacks, Snook, Redfish, Stripers			X	X	
Dolphin, King Mackerel, Permit, Trevally				X	
Billfish, Tuna, Giant Tarpon					X

Rod Length

Rod length largely determines line handling characteristics of a rod. Short rods are preferred for close-quarters casting, are good for precision accuracy at short to medium distances and they provide for maximum pressure on the fish to hasten landing, but they are a poor choice for line control after the cast has been made.

Long rods are preferred for line control (reaching and mending) after the cast has been made and they are effective for raising the line to clear obstacles. They are well suited for distance casting and preferred when wading in deep water or float tubing. The longer rod is especially useful for 'high-stick' nymphing in trout streams. The longer rod also facilitates reduction in fly drag when fishing a floating dry fly.

Small streams with low overhanging brush are best fished with a shorter rod that gives you more control in tight spaces. Larger rivers, lakes and saltwater require longer casts and a longer rod. Longer rods also help greatly in situations where reaching and mending line are necessary.

Rod Action

The "action" of a rod is determined by where the rod flexes along the blank. Faster action rods flex mostly near the tip. Moderate action rods flex mostly near the middle of the blank while slow action rods flex down into the butt section.

Fast action rods can produce high line speeds and the tightest casting loops. They are particularly well suited for distance casting and they cast wind-resistant flies better than slow action rods. Delicate presentations are more difficult with stiff, fast action rods but they can produce improved accuracy. Fast action rods are well suited to the aggressive caster.

Medium-fast or medium action rods are a compromise between fast and slow action rods. They cover a wide range of conditions and casting styles. They offer a combination of butt strength for fighting fish, medium flex for casting ease, and an excellent measure of tippet protection.

Slow action rods are preferred for close range, delicate casting. They offer superior 'feel' when fighting a fish. They protect light tippets the best because of shock absorption. Slow action rods are preferred for casting heavily weighted flies since they excel at maintaining an open casting loop for smooth fly delivery. Slow action rods respond well to a gentle casting stroke.

Shopping Considerations

We see too many rod buyers purchasing a rod for the wrong reason and eventually becoming very unhappy with their choice. A primary mistake is buying a rod because their buddy (neighbor, brother-in-law, co-worker, etc.) has a rod that he really likes and they just know that it's the right one for them too. And, it might be, or it might not be. First, the buyer may or may not have the same casting style, stroke, tempo, or power as his buddy. A stiffer or softer rod might be a better choice for our buyer will meet his needs much better and will make casting much easier and more fun. The only way to know what's right for you is to try some rods before you buy. All fly shops have demo rods for casting and even fishing. Failing to demo rods prior to purchasing one is the most common mistakes made. That you are new to the sport and not the greatest caster should not deter you from trying rods. Often you can get a casting lesson while trying the rod or you can cast by yourself with no one watching, and no one really cares if you are just learning anyway.

Another mistake is that many prospective fly fishermen think they will buy an inexpensive rod to try until they decide if they will like the sport. We believe it is better to borrow a rod to make that determination rather than buy a rod based on price alone. There are many moderately priced rods that do a fine job and will make a terrific backup, or hand-me-down, if you decide to move to a more expensive rod. Many cheap rods, however, have terrible actions (we euphemistically call them "Kmart Specials") that are difficult to cast and may even turn a new fisherman away from the sport. It is much better to go to a pro in a fly shop, get some good advice, cast a couple of rods, get the feel of good rods, then shop around. It really doesn't take as much time as you think. In the end you will be sure you are buying the right rod, you will be confident in the rod, and will never question your purchase.

Do not forget to decide in advance what the rod will be used for. For most folks that answer is easy, fishing for trout in Colorado streams and lakes. That makes rod selection easier, a 5 or 6 weight, 8 1/2 to 9 foot rod. Think about all these things prior to shopping, so you can concentrate on those things that are most important to you. Remember, always – without exception – try before you buy! Cast different actions, get help from a pro, and select the rod that feels best to you. And, get casting instruction if you think you need it.

Dusty Sprague is the Casting Program Director for the Pikes Peak Flyfishers and the Lead Casting Instructor for the 5-star rated Broadmoor Resort Hotel. He manages a fly fishing guide service in Colorado Springs and is a certified Master Fly Casting Instructor.

Dick Rock is the Manager of The Peak Fly Shop in Colorado Springs and is a Certified Casting Instructor.