



DESERT FLY CASTERS *Forward Casts*

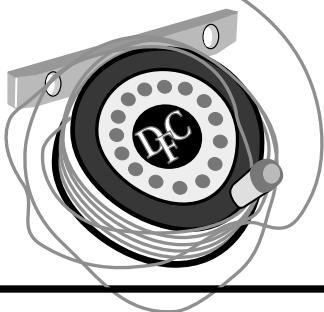
DESERT FLY CASTERS A BARBLESS CLUB



MAY MEETING:

Wednesday, May 12, 2004
Dinner- 6:00 PM
Meeting- 7:00 PM
American Legion Post #2
2125 S. Industrial Park Ave.
in Tempe

"In the lexicon of the fly-fishermen, the words rise and hooked connote the successful and desirable climax; landing a fish is purely anticlimax."
Vincent C. Marinaro-1950



Presidents Report- May 2004

This past weekend was our first big outing of the year. We had around 30 people attend. Some of us arrived at Seneca and camped for 2 nights, others arrived on Saturday and camped one night and still others came out for one day. It was a lot of fun and I think that almost everyone caught fish. Doc cooked up some great burgers and we all sat and talked around the fire on Saturday night. It was a fantastic outing!

Our May outing will be to Chevelon Lake and will be another camping trip. The club went there 2 years ago and we fished the stream side one day and the dam side the next. There were some decent size fish caught. You can expect to catch some fat rainbows and if you are lucky you might hook into a big brown. Brown leach patterns seemed to be the ticket and I have been reading recent reports that say the same thing. There will be more information with dates, where to meet and a map further in the newsletter.

Another big outing is our June White Mountain Extravaganza. This will take place the weekend of Father's Day (June 18th-20th). If you plan to go you will need to pay for you camping spot. You can either pay it at the May meeting or mail in a check to the club post office box. The cost is \$10 per vehicle. Some of our members will be fishing the X Diamond on Friday and we also rented Christmas Tree Lake for Saturday. Also, there will be other arranged trips to local lakes for people that want to fish together.

The San Juan outing had been set in motion and there are still a few spots left. If you plan to go and haven't signed up, please see me at the meeting. The cost is \$315 and it requires a \$100 deposit to hold your spot. This outing will be September 25th through 28th.

As far as fishing reports go, it sounds like the White Mountain lakes are still a little slow and the streams are high and muddy. Things should start settling in May and the fishing should really turn on soon. I have only heard of one fish kill and that was at Crescent. It is unfortunate because there were some big fish in there. Game & Fish has already re-stocked it and the fish seem to grow very fast in that lake. Also, Lee Valley is close to full again and it has already been stocked with "catchable" Apaches. If you recall, it was drained in the fall and all of the non-native fish were removed from the stream and lake.

On to club business, the board voted to extend money and manpower to the Canyon Creek Project. Game & Fish was looking for funds to help with an elk fence. We decided to give them \$1,000 and then to give them an additional \$1,000 each year for 3 years to help with the maintenance of the fence. They will also be looking for us to attend work outings to help with various projects. Look for more information once the dates for the outings have been determined. This month Jim Warneke will be our guest speaker and he will be updating us on where they are with this project.

Don't forget that the club purchased crayfish nets for the members to use. If you are planning a trip to the mountains, call Doc or Eric and arrange to pick them up. Trapping them will help control the population and they make a great meal! There were crayfish recipes in previous newsletters. Please remember that you can no longer transport them alive. You will need to put them in a cooler with ice. Also, look for upcoming crayfish trapping outings.

I want to include a special thank you to the board for all of their hard work. See you at the meeting!

Cinda Howard, DFC President

May Meeting • JIM WARNEKE/Arizona Fish and Game

The speaker for our May meeting is Jim Warneke from Arizona Game and Fish. He will be speaking about Canyon Creek and its recovery process. The presentation will give a run down of the recovery efforts and timetables to restore this fishery. This will be a great opportunity to find out what we can do as a club to help in this effort.

CHEVELON CANYON LAKE

by Vince Deadmond

Chevelon is one of those places that is still an adventure. You will get your vehicle dirty getting into and out of this little gem. Not all fishing destinations need to be paved to the waters edge. The level of difficulty in access may be one reason this has been a good fishery for years, and not overfished. After you get past the drive in, you have a 1 mile hike in with your float tube, 4-6 rod, floating line, sinking line, swim fins, waders, a good assortment of flies, and enough food and water to keep you going all day long. The hike out seems much longer than the trip into the canyon. Check your pack before you go in, you don't want to make a trip back to the truck for some forgotten item.

The most positive thing about this fishery is the possibility of really large brown and rainbow trout. If you are looking for a solitude you can find it here. I don't want to beat it to death, but it is a tough hike out with all your gear.

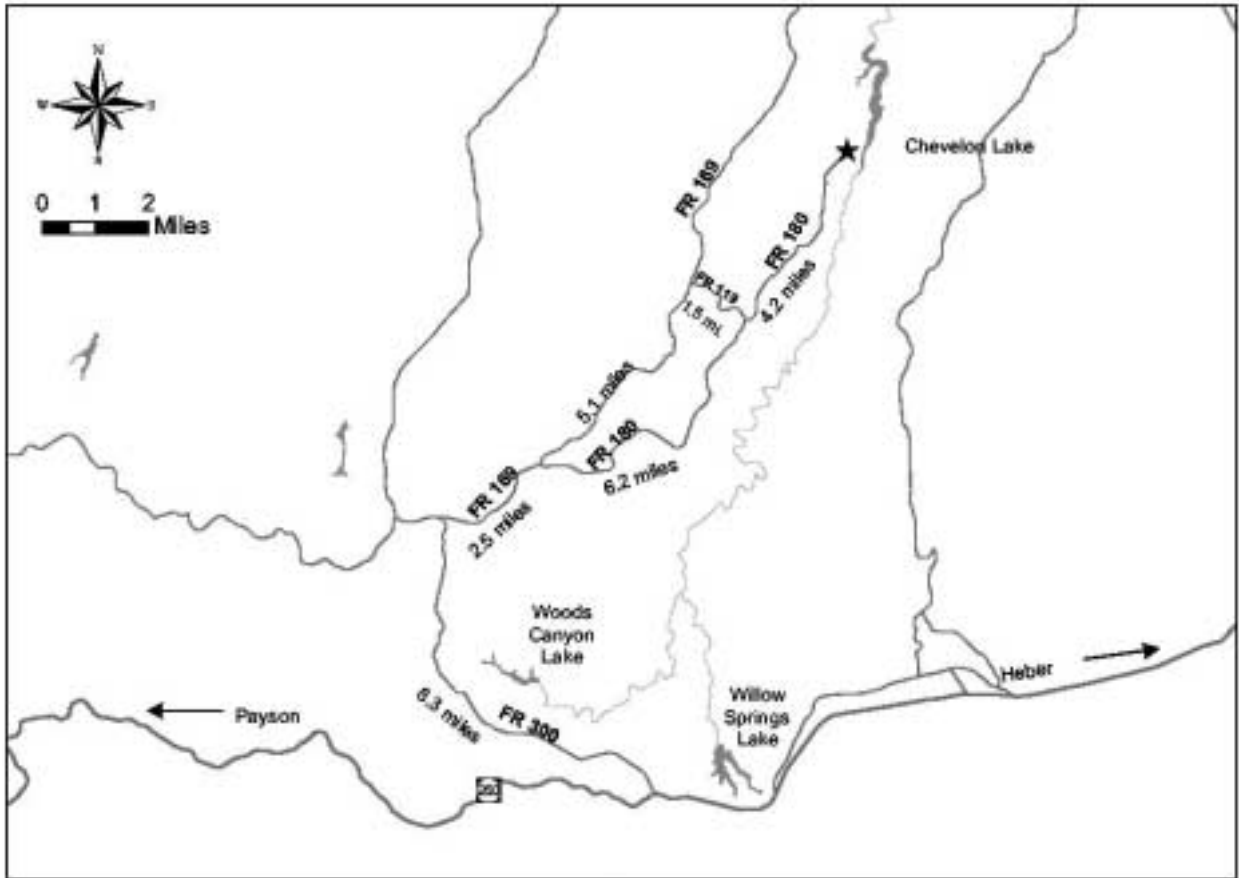
I would bring a good assortment of flies, but if you are just getting started you can't go wrong with big wooly buggers in brown. You may get a caddis hatch, but the folks who have hit the cicada hatch can't stop talking about it.

Chevelon is in the Sitgreaves National Forest about 60 miles from Payson. Take AZ 260 east of Payson to Forest Road FR 300 (Woods Canyon Lake turn off). Take FR 300 to FR 169, and turn north. Take FR 169 to FR 119, then take FR 119 to FR 180.

Follow FR 180 to the primitive campgrounds at the south end of the lake. This is where the club has had success before.

Mark Evans will be hosting this event and is looking forward to fishing Chevelon again.

Pay attention to the driving instructions, and if you don't have a Sitgreaves National Forest map this would be a good time to pick one up. **Mark can be reached at 480 345 4219 (H) or 480 577 9900 (B)**



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...from Eric Larsen's flybox
**Renee Harrop's BWO CDC
 Biot Emerger**



Pattern

Hook: TMC 100 #16-#20 (Dry Fly hook)

Thread: Gudebrod 8/0 Olive

Tail: Barred Wood Duck Flank

Body: Turkey biot dyed light olive (tan, brown, dun would work too); wrap so biot is smooth on the hook

Wing: White CDC (tied in behind the thorax)

Thorax: Golden yellow rabbit dubbing (alter the thorax with a lighter color and shade than the body)

Cast as a dry fly (don't use floatant false cast to dry CDC wing)

What makes this fly my fly of the month

Seneca Lake, April 2004—Seneca is known as a good lake for beginners. Predominate way to fish Seneca is with a sinking line and some sort of nymph or wet fly: Semi-Seal leech, Karl Larsen's Green Weenie, damsel patterns in gold & olive, peacock ladies, etc. Seneca has an abundance of insects which, when conditions are right, offers a whole different level of fishing. A good cast (both in distance and accuracy) is very helpful. Use of the right pattern (or close). A reasonable presentation. In essence, what every (or at least most) fly fishers consider the pinnacle of fly fishing: fishing a dry fly and having the fish rise. This month's fly of the month gave me one of the best days of dry fly fishing that I have experienced in a long time.

Stray Thoughts

by Vince Deadmond

Here I set at one of the world's slowest stop lights, again. I let my eyes scan the far side of the intersection and I see the blinking neon sign of Lucky Bob's Liquors, check cashing, and fish bait. I have enough time to ponder the meaning of life, heck I have enough time to tie a dozen tricos. While I set, my mind has some stray thoughts . . .

It's Spring time in Arizona, it's light enough to sneak down to the Salt River and fish for an hour or two after work. The fishing is not spectacular, but it's close, and catching one pound bass on poppers and minnow patterns is better than trying to survive watching any of the TV reality shows. If you have not fished the Salt and need some help give me a call, I won't tell you that you're fired if you miss one.

The youth of today have gone fishing. My nephew Ryan and his buddies frequently are trying to arrange some fishing time. It's the same conversation I have heard at many DFC meetings. Someone has heard that fishing at certain lake is good, and you don't want to be in the way of these guys going to the lake. If some of the fishing involves sneaking on to a golf course or two after dark to do a little fishing, so be it. (I am still waiting for an invitation, where is my get out of jail card?)

My youngest daughter Suzi has been fly fishing in Mexico, the Rim, the White Mountains, and several locations in Wisconsin. She has landed some large Trigger, and she usually takes some of

her mall princess friends with her on her fishing adventures. Our own Loyal was at the last DFC meeting and very pregnant, but she was talking about fishing the X Diamond, and Salmon fishing later with child in a back pack. My cousin Ric's son Trevor has been fly fishing in Wisconsin his home state, and Florida and is a natural. Yeah, this fly fishing thing may continue even after the current bunch of fishermen are long gone. The X-Diamond is sold out for the White Mountain Spectacular, but you can still make arrangements with Wink to fish the Little Colorado on your own, some time this summer. 520 333 2286. Some of the best small stream fishing in the state. The trip to the Mulcock Ranch in New Mexico is full, and we hope to have some wild fish stories to tell when we return.

The presentation that Dr. Larry Allen gave last month at the DFC meeting was very informative. He had more than a few stray thoughts, he had several good ideas, that I am going to put to use the next time I go out.

I even changed the backing on one of my reels that I use for saltwater. The reel only had 100 yards of backing, the reel would hold 100 more yards. After tangling with some big fish my last trip I am convinced that more backing is a good thing for saltwater fish. I wonder how many fly fishermen have never had a fish take them deep into the backing? Saltwater fish can solve that problem for you.

Well the light has finally changed, I hope to see you out fishing soon!



DFC NOTICE
 IF YOU ARE NOT PAID UP WITH
 YOUR 2004 DUES YOU WILL NOT
 RECEIVE A NEWSLETTER
 IN THE MAIL.

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SPECIAL DFC MAY FUND RAISER

May Dinner Meeting Menu

DFC pays for the rent of the meeting hall by selling dinners before each meeting.

By buying a dinner at the meeting, you can help the club pay for the meeting hall.

The price of each Dinner is \$8.00, which includes gratuity. This month's menu will be: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes & gravy, a veggie, and salad Come early and enjoy dinner with your DFC friends!

Dinner is served from 6pm to 7pm.

Join in with our DFC members for a *Special Fund Raiser- DFC CONSERVATION 2004* Robert McKeon has donated one of his illustrated wooden canoe paddles for this festive occasion. A canvas print from a selected collection of original art hand crafted and sealed on a canoe paddle. The paddle shaft has a cork strip to pin notes, favorite flys or pictures making this a functional collectible for personal memorabilia- brackets on the back...ready to hang.



Tickets for the **DFC CONSERVATION 2004 Raffle**
\$5.00 each • 3 FOR \$10.00

Drawing will be held at our DFC monthly meeting in May 2004

All monies from this raffle will go towards our

DFC Conservation efforts in Arizona

Tickets on sale during DFC March, April and May monthly meetings.



Pleasure in the Pines -

by Gerry Wiemelt

On Saturday, April 10th, I met with Cinda Howard and Bill Thyng around 5am for a trip to Point of Pines Lake, on the San Carlos reservation.

Point of Pines Lake is around 6000' elevation and located off of San Carlos HW 8, 50 or so miles north of

HW 70. The trip involves several changes of scenery, ending up in the cool pine country. On the way up we saw several antelope and deer, almost hit a small hawk, and due to Bill's driving skills, managed to miss several quail. Bill said that steering towards the running quail is the best way to avoid them, and since we didn't see any feathers in the rearview mirror, we decided he was right.

When we got to the lake, it had turned breezy, with the temperature around 55 degrees. Don't forget your fleece just because it is nice in the valley. The lake is located in sort of a hollow, and is surrounded by pines and scenic rock formations.

We hit the water and immediately caught fish, with Cinda's brown damsel being the hot fly. Bill and Cinda headed for the 'honey hole' at the shallow end and I worked the steep shore in search of browns. Whenever I watched Cinda and Bill they always seemed to have a fish on. Bill even tried to cast a rainbow that he'd caught on his backcast. I accused him of trying to fish with 'live bait', but he denied it!

We had numerous waterfowl, heron and osprey around all day, and Cinda thought she had seen the eagle. Once, while we were on shore waiting out one of the numerous lightning encounters, we saw an osprey dive, hit the water and grab a fish. Another osprey dove at the same

time and appeared to be trying to take away the fish. Seconds later we were all surprised to see that both ospreys had caught fish at the same time!

While we didn't break the previous weeks record of 103 fish caught in one day, we did catch too many to keep track of. Cinda caught her goal of a nice brown with a 14 1/2" fish.

We finally called it quits around 6 pm during a lightning, rain, snow and hail storm. The thermometer on Bill's truck read 34 degrees by then. During the trip down we enjoyed the snow covered hill-sides.

This was a most enjoyable trip for me, with lots of fish and loads of laughs.

Seneca Lake....aMAZEing

by Eric Larsen

My drive to Seneca Lake on Saturday started out to be one those trips where I was beginning have serious doubts if I was going to make it all. I overcame a broken valve in my float tube and my lost air pump to arrive at Seneca around 11:00 am. More like banker's hours than a person who whips a fly rod in the air.

The day was absolutely tremendous. A light breeze to keep things cool but nothing to put the fishing off. I finally got my fishing gear together and got out on the lake. I started off with a soft hackle and got a couple of "tickles" but not a serious strike. Gerry Wiemelt was talking about damsel nymphs and sure enough there were damsel flies in the air. I put on an olive damsel nymph dropper off the soft hackle and immediately started to picking up fish using a sinking line.

While all this was happening, Dave Weaver bumps into Vince Deadmond out on the water. Dave says, "I thought that was you!" and Vince says, "Can I offer you a 'cold one'?" Dave and Vince paddle along sipping beer, talking about salt water fishing in Belize or some such place while all the time catching fish. I don't care what you say; it doesn't get any better than that.

I continued fishing for awhile trading out flies to see what flies were getting hits and those that weren't. I like to test out my patterns on Seneca. After a couple of hours my stomach and bladder told me it was time to take a break. I rested and ate lunch and decided to rig up for dry fly fishing for the rest of the afternoon. There had been some occasional risers earlier in the day.

Some clouds overhead made the weather more pleasant but caused the wind to kick up enough to put a ripple on the water to make dry fly fishing a little tough. I kept my Royal Wulff on and started putting various droppers to see if I could get some takers. The fishing was sort of slow for me because I couldn't quite get the fly deep enough. Gerry had switched to a "golden" damsel nymph. I thought the fish might bite on gold damselfly but I have never seen a golden damselfly, they are blue. The thought no more crossed my mind and I saw a golden colored damselfly go past me. Golden damselfly were not the only thing in the air. The tiny flying bugs, I'll call midges, were buzzing all over the place and, YES!, a mayfly dun. I'm not into entomology very much. Flies that have wings like sailboats are mayflies. Flies where the wings are folded like tents



are caddis. Anything else, where the wings are flat on the back are midges. I did see a water boatman in the water. The insect reminds me of a Volkswagen beetle with oars.

I had been fishing a cove with some flat water. I put on a my red glass bead-head PT nymph just for a change of pace and immediately got a fish. That was the only one though. I saw a cloud of bugs over the cat tails knew a hatch was coming off. A few minutes later, a pod of 3-6 fish were swimming just below the surface where the dorsal fin was exposed like a shark's. What makes fly fishing such a great sport is when things come together it is really COOL. I guessed that there was an emergence going on and changed flies to Renee Harrop's biot BWO CDC emerger. The duns were a light tan. I had a light olive color fly. Would it work? I finned my float tube furiously to get into position to make a cast. The adrenaline was pumping and I had to make myself slow down my cast so the rod had time to load. The cast finally came I put the fly in the pod. BAM! FISH ON! This turned out to be the largest fish of the day. He was an easy 12 inches long and fat. He also swallowed the fly. I couldn't even see it down his throat. I snip the fly off and tie on another #18 fly. The next 45 minutes to an hour was heart pumping dry fly fishing. The casts could have been better but I managed to get them there eventually. There was a lot of frantic finning to get my float tube into position as the pod would move and change in numbers of fish. I could get the fish to rise to fly but why? It was a heck of a lot more fun to "hunt" them! The second fly got chewed up and mangled so I put on my third and last fly. The fly was on for awhile when at some point it came off. I was flinging a flyless line at the fish. I thought the fly had lost its magic when I discovered it wasn't there. I put on another dry fly and got a couple of rises from that. It started to get dark so the Chukar Peacock Lady was the fly of choice on the way back in. There were several strikes and landed one more fish before the day was done.

As usual, Doc Nickel and Jim Dixon's hamburger dinner was absolutely fabulous. I couldn't stay the night and had to head back to Mesa. I never have driven around the Seneca Lake campground in the dark. After several wrong turns and dead-ends, I finally got out of the maze of trees and campsites to the main highway. The drive home seemed longer than normal. It was an amazing day of fishing.

CONSERVATION NOTESwith Eric Larsen

I like to read books and one of the books I'm currently reading is *THE LONGEST SILENCE* by Thomas McGuane. Tom McGuane has an elegant writing style and happens to be an avid conservationist. In the opening remarks of this book he states, "We have reached the time in the life of the planet, and humanity's demands upon it, when every fisherman will have to be a riverkeeper, steward of marine shallows, a watchman on the high seas. We are beyond having to put back what we have taken out. We must put back more than we take out." Hopefully, you will find inspiration from these words and the conservation outing opportunities we have going.

Ongoing Projects:

White Mountain Apache Trout Enhancement Project: A decision was made to go with the recommended proposed action. Briefly, this is to repair and build barriers on the Black and Little Colorado River drainages. Essentially, make the whole West Fork of the Black River drainage a native trout fishery plus expanding the amount of native fisheries on the on the WF and SF of the Little Colorado. The appeal period on the AS/NFS expires on 4/26/2004. The part of the plan that is in the designated wilderness the appeal period ends on 5/18/2004.

Canyon Creek: The restoration of the riparian habitat on Canyon Creek is the topic of this month's club meeting. Jim Warnecke of the AZGF will be here to tell us about what is going on. I got a draft copy of the proposal and reviewed it with the DFC Board. We have pledged \$1,000/year for the next 3 years AND the proceeds from the raffle of the hand painted canoe paddles by Bob McKeon will go to support the Canyon Creek restoration!!! BUY RAFFLE TICKETS!!! I don't want to steal Jim's thunder so I will let him tell you more about this at the meeting.

West Fork of Oak Creek Gila Trout Project:

I haven't heard anything new on this project. The feasibility study should be underway. DFC contributed \$1,000 last year to help get this project going.

Wildlife Conservation Council: Due to a death in the family, I wasn't able to attend the March meeting. I plan to attend the April meeting. Stay tuned.

Outings Calendar WITH Conservation Outings:

The conservation outings listed are ones I plan to attend and coordinate. The conservation outing are in italics.

MAY 2004:

14-16 - Chevlon Lake; Hosted by Mark Evans

15 - OPTU West Fork of the Black River---Contact Eric Larsen

24 - AZGF Crayfish Trapping 3 Forks of the Black River 7pm-10pm (This is a Monday. I'm planning to go up for the weekend to fish so if anyone wants to join me let me know).

JUNE 2004:

12 - OPTU Fish Creek - Native Fish Salvage ---Contact Eric Larsen

18-19 - White Mountain Extravaganza - Horseshoe Lake (Crayfish boil anyone?)

JULY 2004:

16-18 - Horseshoe Cienega

19 - AZGF Crayfish Trapping 3 Forks in the Evening (Again, a Monday night. Why not stay another night?—I'm planning to)

AUGUST 2004:

15 - Willow Springs Lake Crayfish Trapping Event. This is on a Sunday. A large group of people (mostly high school kids) descend upon Willow Springs to trap crayfish. More details to follow on this.

Crayfish Traps: I couldn't make the last club meeting due to some unexpected events. Rumor has it someone wants to check out some crayfish traps....I will bring the sign up sheet.



MAY 2004 COUPON

\$5.00 off on Denim shirts

*Present this MAY coupon and tell 'em
that your dues are all paid up
an' you're a good guy!*

Manistee Chrome - fly fishing for Steelhead on the Manistee River with Schmidt Outfitters

by Ric Allen (DFC member from Wisconsin)

April 19, 2004

Last week, was a hectic week for me at work. I stopped by Pat Ehler's fly shop Friday night before I set out on my long drive to Wellston, Michigan. The guys thought I was crazy for driving seven hours to only fish a day and a half. I was starting to second guess myself for the impulsive trip to fish for Steelhead while I was dealing with all the Chicago traffic. I didn't get to my destination until 1:00am. I stopped for a beer in town, and strung my rods before I hit the hay at about 2:30am. It's hard to fall asleep right away after a seven hour drive at night. I only slept about three hours before I went to the fly shop at 7:00am to meet my Guide for the day.

I met my Guide, Chris Martin, at Schmidt Outfitters Fly Shop, and said hello to Ray Schmidt, the owner. I asked Ray if he could wind the new shooting line I had ordered from him onto my Ross Canyon reel. It is a .030 mono core shooting line that Ray developed with SA fly line designer Bruce Richards. I had called Ray earlier in the week and asked him to whip a loop on the backing end of the fly line so I could attach it to the bimini twist on my backing. I needed a cup of coffee and a Michigan fishing license, so I walked next door to the gas station/hardware store/tackle shop, got my license, and the biggest cup of coffee they had. When I returned to the fly shop, Ray had my line spooled and had tied on a fifteen foot leader of 15# Maxima. Chris was anxious to get going, so we put my rods in his drift boat, my gear in the back of his Jeep, and took off for the local diner for breakfast. The early morning rain had stopped and it looked like we were in for a perfect cloudy and mild weather fishing day.

We had a great breakfast, and I had lots of coffee. A couple of the other Guides from Schmidt Outfitters were there with their clients for the day. It was getting me fired up listening to the Guides compare notes from the previous day. Over breakfast, I explained to Chris that it was my first time fishing the area, and my main goal for the day was to learn some new techniques for fishing for Steelhead. I wanted to go home with information that I could share with my kids, so we could all catch those special fish back in Wisconsin. I told him he could just relax today and have some fun on the water. I wasn't concerned with how many fish we might catch. The waitress was a doll, had a great smile, and kept my coffee cup full. Not a bad start to the day.

We launched at Tippy Dam on the Manistee River. It was only a ten minute drive from the fly shop and diner. The Steelhead were in the river, it had rained the night before, and it was a Saturday. That meant a lot of people lining the banks chucking spawn sacks. Chris has been guiding for Ray for 4 years, and he knew everyone with a boat at the launch. We threw on our waders, launched the drift boat, and drifted downstream away from the crowd before we anchored at our first spot. Chris then rigged me up with a stonefly nymph and an egg dropper. The Manistee is a big river with a swift current, so Chris had me set up with a big chunk of lead to get down to bounce along the bottom. He then showed me the seams to work, how to chuck that much lead on a fly rod, and how the rod tip quivers as the lead skips along the bottom of the gravel. I had the cast down by my second try. But I was worried I wouldn't be able to tell the difference between a strike and the bottom. But shortly I felt a take and set the hook, it was a good fight, but not a wild one like a Steelhead would put up. I had my first Michigan Bonefish, a four pound Redhorse. It is a colorful sucker with a red stripe and a black stripe down the lateral line. Not what we were after, but it helped my confidence. I told Chris: "Well, it looks like I am getting down." A few drifts later, I was hooked up again and happy to land a 20 inch Skipper, a two year Steelhead. Off to a good start. A guy on shore, and later a guy in a boat hooked up with "Steelies." The hooked fish were hot. They were everywhere. They did their acrobatics and zig-zag runs, and soon were free to search for a mate as neither were landed. After a half hour with no action; okay, I missed a couple hits, we drifted down and tried another spot.

At our next "bucket" to fish, Chris pointed out where a big tree was submerged, and demonstrated how to hold the rod high as you drift over the snag and then drop the fly right after you clear it. A few casts later, and my rod was bent hard. Something heavy was pulling back and putting up a good battle. It didn't fight like what we were after, it fought like the 10 pound carp that it was. I wasn't disappointed at all. It bent my rod, and I have been known to fly fish for carp on purpose. A few minutes later, I landed about a three pound walleye out of the same hole.

A lot of boats were heading downstream, so Chris decided to go back upstream to where a boat had been anchored near us earlier. Just before we dropped anchor, we passed some of Chris' clients that shouted "Hey Chris" as we went by. It was late morning by now and the sun was out with clearing skies. I was having a ball, and feeling relaxed and confident.

After several drifts, Chris changed up flies again and relaxed in the back seat of the drift boat. We just hit it off right away in the morning, and were talking and joking like we were old friends. As he leaned back with his feet over the gunwale and put his hands across the back of his head he said: "You can go ahead and hook one now Ric." I made my cast, turned to him, and cockily said: "Okay, are you ready?" No sooner had I said that, and my line tightened up and I set the hook. I was on. This was no rough fish this time. Chris could tell it was a Steelhead right away and frantically pulled up the anchor so we could chase the fish down. I pulled my rod to the side to exert the most pressure on the fish that the rod could give. I had to steer him away from a fallen tree along shore. I had the drag set firm, and I was amazed at how much pressure the 6# tippet could take without breaking. When the fish turned direction, I changed the direction I was pulling to the opposite side that the fish was heading. I must have done it rather quickly, because Chris warned me to be careful when doing that because it could free the hook. By now we had drifted right next to Chris' client's boat and landed a nice chrome fish in front of them. After a picture, and the release, we went back up river and tried that spot again.

Chris and I thought that it would be neat to hook up again in front of everyone. Especially because no one seemed to be catching anything, and someone had just been fishing that spot. We laughed about how cocky we were right before we caught that fish. About five minutes later, I was feeling confident and cocky. At first I wasn't going to say anything, but I just felt it. So I cast to the seam, and told Chris to be ready, that here comes another one. I actually wasn't surprised when I hooked up again on that very cast. Now we were getting cocky. Chris pulled up the anchor again and we drifted over towards his clients again with another fish on. This fish was HOT. It boiled, and then bulldogged. It was a heavy fish and I really put the screws to her. I had the 8wt Sage XP bent to the cork. I just about had her to the boat, and she made a run to the stern. I gently lifted my rod to try and turn her, and my line went slack. I got a glimpse of that chrome beauty, and I'd guess her to be in the 12 to 15 pound class. "Thank you fish for the battle. You got the best of me today." It's weird that I wasn't that disappointed. I think I just respected that fish and tipped my hat to her. There is nothing like the fight of a wild Steelhead. I would compare it to a cross between the wildness of a Smallmouth, and the runs of a Bonefish. Simply spectacular.

Back to the Honey Hole. Fifteen minutes later, I was hooked up again and we were chasing another chrome Steelhead



downstream in front of you know who. Another acrobatic fish of good size, but Chris noticed she was acting strange. When I got her to the boat, we could see she was foul hooked, and Chris got the hook out of her while she was still in the water. He did a nice job on that. As we headed back to our spot, we were getting giddy like a couple of school girls. We were on a roll. Not long and I was hooked up again, but it got off before Chris could get the anchor up. A while later, and I was hauling in a nice four pound walleye. The walleye skipped across the surface with its mouth open like a Crappie as I stripped it in. As Chris leaned over to net the fish, the line slipped between my finger and the handle, and the fish slid back just out of Chris' reach. I stripped more line in again to get the fish closer, and just as Chris dipped the net, the line slipped through my finger again, and the fish was just out of reach.... again. As I chuckled at myself, I simply asked: "Fish much?" After he landed the fish and released it, Chris had a good laugh over the "fish much?" comment. After fishing for a while longer and missing a bump, we tried another spot. Chris made a comment about the different fish I had caught, and said I needed a Brown Trout for the Manistee River Grand Slam.

After another Michigan Bonefish, we headed to an elevated mesa along the river and stopped for lunch. It was about 1:30. One of Ray's other Guides, Jay was there with his clients for lunch. At Schmidt's Outfitters, the Guides provide you with a nice hot lunch on a roll up picnic table they keep in their boats. Chris made Cajun chicken breasts on a grill, along with potato salad, beans, and fruit. It was a nice touch.

After lunch, it didn't take long and I had the Grand Slam by landing a 16 inch Brown Trout. What a day! I hooked a couple more Steelhead in the afternoon, one got off right away, the other busted off after it got in some wood. That last fish was a cooperative fish, at least as far as getting hooked. I was making the drift, and the rod tip was bouncing as the lead was going over gravel. I was day dreaming, and enjoying the beautiful river, when my rod started bouncing again at the swing. Chris said: "Are you going to set the hook?". I woke up startled and said: "What the hell am I doing?" I set the hook, the fish was still there, and made a run for cover in a snag. Fish off. I didn't deserve to land that one. We fished right up to a little after 5:00. That is a long day for a Guide. And that is a deal for a client.

I had a perfect day. Chris and I got along great. We just clicked. I was glad I made that long drive the night before. During the day, Chris had a lot of stories about Fall fishing for turbo charged

Chromers. He said the fish in the river then are really strong and hot. When we got back to the fly shop, I booked Chris for two days the end of October. They are the Saturday and Sunday of Halloween weekend and he said that is prime time. It works for me being on a weekend, and it just happened to be the only days that month he still had open.

Later that night, I picked up Chris and we met his girlfriend Diane at the Supper Club she works at in Cadillac. It was a great place with a great atmosphere. The bar area had Ernest Hemingway's birch bark canoe hanging from the ceiling. Chris and I ate dinner after Diane left to go shopping, and we went out for a couple beers afterwards. Even met a couple beautiful ladies. It was the perfect ending to a perfect day. Glad I made the trip.

That night, a heavy thunderstorm rolled through and dumped about two inches of rain. I asked Ray Sunday morning where I might be able to fish on my own. He gave me a map of the Little Manistee and drew in a couple remote access points. All the rivers were high and dirty after the rain, but the Little Manistee holds her own and stays pretty clear. I only fished a few hours. I explored as much as anything. I headed back to the shop to meet Ray for a casting lesson. He is a great instructor and just the nicest guy. I thought that I should take advantage of being at his place and hire him for a quick lesson. He didn't want to charge me anything though. Anyway, we headed out to his casting pond next to the shop. Boy, is that a nice feature. I was having my usual problem of throwing a tight loop, but having a tailing loop along with it. Yuck! My leader kept catching in the tag end of the fly line at the Albright knot. It made for some dandy wind knots. I need to learn how to cast better, or at least put some glue on that knot so that the tag isn't exposed to catch the tailing loop in the leader as it slides past. Ray watched me for a while and spotted a couple little things right away. He noticed my fly line was filthy, so he went in to his shop to get some supplies, and returned to clean my line and dress it. He explained that I was getting my tailing loop by over powering and shocking the rod tip. That was something I should know, but it is funny how easily I can forget the basics. So he had me slow down a bit and not shock the rod tip. He noticed I had a slight hesitation with my stripping hand at one point in-between hauls that put a little belly in the loop creating slack, and he saw I was curving the rod tip a little behind me after my back cast. In ten minutes I was throwing a beautiful loop a long way. He is a great teacher, at least for me. He explained what and why so that I could understand it, and he wasn't afraid to say something looked ugly if it did.

The drive home went quick as I relived my perfect day. I thought of ways to use the shooting line rig for Smallmouths in Chequamegon Bay when they are deep in the summer. I dreamed about getting back up there for the Fall run. And I thought about trying to pull off a trip to fish with Chris on the Madison in Montana this summer where he also guides at Kelly Galloup's Slide Inn.

Since I've been back from the trip, I've signed up for an advanced casting class with Ray Schmidt and Bruce Richards in June at Schmidt Outfitters, and booked the next day to go trout fishing with one of Ray's capable Guides. The casting class is limited to eight students. It will be the first class to use some new technology Bruce and a University of Michigan Professor developed to analyze a fly fishing cast. I can justify the cost of the casting class if I can get rid of that tailing loop for good. Then maybe I won't need to buy so many leaders to replace the ones that get all wind knotted up.

Editors Notes: Ric Allen is Vince Deadmond's cousin and a DFC member via Wisconsin. Always glad to hear a neat story like this in one's own words...and what makes this so special is I know some of those areas where Ric fished (and of course Ray Schmidt). Some of the Manistee and Little Manistee were some of my "home" waters I fished with my buddies Ron Barch and Dick Nelson when I lived in (Grand Rapids) Michigan and served on the WMTU board. Sounds as though Ric had a great time and I'm looking forward to a return trip story from him. Nice Ric, those long winter nights at the end of the year in Wisconsin will be filled with some warm memories. Stay in touch.

Check out Ray Schmidt and a picture of a Manistee River Steelhead at his web site:
<http://www.schmidoutfitters.com>



Seneca

by Vince Deadmond

Lots & lots of 10 inch rainbows. With the occasional brown, and a few blue gil just for fun. Overhead we were treated to an air show, an eagle and an osprey were trying to convince each other to leave the lake. I counted 30 people at the campfire Saturday night. Doc and Dickson did a great job of hosting and cooking "monster trucker burgers". Several youngsters were out and caught first fish.

For some members this was their first time of really catching lots of fish, and they liked it! Catching 10, 20 or more fish was not unusual for Seneca. Friday fished even better than Saturday. A storm came through Friday night and may have slowed the fishing on Saturday.

I camped out at the Apache Gold Casino. Things were rough, I had to use my Leatherman for the sea food buffet. They didn't have cracking tools for the crab legs. It's always something!

2004 Calendar Events

May 14-16 Chevelon Lake, Miles from nowhere, rough road, rough camping, long hike, Big Fish! No host. we could loose this outing without a host.

June 18-20 White Mountain Spectacular. Many lakes and streams to choose from. Need special permit if you fish on Indian land. We have secured two premium places to fish for this event, but you must sign up, and pay in advance if you wish to fish the X-Diamond, or Christmas Tree. Limited number of slots to fish the premium places. Plenty of other fishing opportunities where your AZ fishing liciense will be all you need. We will be camping at Horseshoe Cienega this year first come first served. You may wish to stay at a lodge or motel, book in advance. Hosts Charlie Rossier, Jim Dickson, Doc Nickel, & Vince Deadmond.



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