

TIGHTLINES



Lone Lake 2011

Olympic Fly Fishers of Edmonds
April Outing by Steve Murray

The annual April OFF outing to Lone Lake was reasonably well attended with about twelve members, Spring did not show up, but with no wind no one seemed to mind. Much like every other weekend of 2011 so far, the sky was gray and rainy most everywhere some of the time, the sun kept its proper distance just a few miles away, which left us with an open lake for a full day of fishing all to ourselves!

All in all, it was a really nice day for our April outing:

Lake water was at that magic Washington lowland lake ground water temp of 51°F, perfect for all things trout love to feed on. With swallows winging and working all over the lake it was no surprise to find plenty of fish that were eager to take our chironimids.

It was apparent that the lake had been recently planted since the fish caught near the dock were eight to ten inches on average, but in the quality habitat areas of the lake the trout were much larger with some going 20" and many good fighters in between.

As the fishing progressed however, most trout were caught on leech patterns and still water nymphs. That combination was really the ticket all day long.

Lunch at Camp Lone Lake: *BBQ Ribs, Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Coffee with Baileys and beer.* We all had a great time.



OFF Outings Chairman William Scott's commentary: Lone Lake was a fun day. Steve whipped up BBQ ribs and Baileys while Joe Conner dished up Wild Turkey in Glass. I think everyone caught fish. Mike Bunney and I shared one net while we both fought a nice fish. This was rather interesting as we tried to stay out of each others way but also stay close enough to pass the net back and forth, all the time our fish darting off in all directions. Mike beat me with an 18 incher while I tried to stretch mine on the scale but could only come up with 17.5 inches. Damn, I've always been about a half inch too short.

Fishing Montana's Clark Fork

by Dick Simmons

On July 2nd the Doghouse Saloon, in St. Regis, Montana, is sponsoring the first annual St. Regis Bathtub Regatta on the Clark Fork. OFF has a personal invitation from the saloon's owner to participate. "If it floats and has the perception of being something you could conceivably take a bath in, you qualify," says the saloon's owner.

The entry fee is only \$25 and that comes with two lunch tickets and two drinks. Pitchfork and BBQ steaks will be on the menu throughout the day. A "Pitchfork" is a deep fried sirloin. So far, two teams have entered and there are five judging categories. If OFF decides to enter there's a pretty sure bet we'll have a winning entry.

The Doghouse is a local's tavern in St. Regis and features the only "Viagra" clock in town. The company that makes Viagra had a promotional clock designed for bars that had the slogan "When the time is right" featured prominently. The time on Doghouse's Viagra clock is usually wrong. Much like real life as well as the two days Keith Stamm and I spent fishing the famed Clark Fork in early April.

When it was good, it was really good. We caught some absolutely beautiful big Browns and Rainbows. And Keith scored a Clark Fork Grand Slam: Rainbow, Cutthroat, Cutbow, Brown and the fabled Montana Bonefish. But when it was bad, no matter how hard we tried, in the best water you could imagine, the fish simply weren't moving for anything.

Even though there were March Brown mayflies in decent numbers on the water in the afternoon of our first day, the fish were still focusing on what has become the classic nymph rig for early season and fluctuating CFS rates whether it's on the Clark Fork or the Yakima. From the top:

A bubble indicator, followed by an arm's length or so of 3# or 4# tippet with enough weight above the knot to get it down fast, followed by two feet or less of 4# or 5# tippet with a Stonefly Nymph or flashy streamer with a 5# length of tippet tied off the hook bend and a San Juan Worm, or nymph du jour as a dropper.

The San Juan Worm is effective if the water levels have been fluctuating and worms are being washed out of the banks into the river. The appropriate nymph should be used to match what ever you might see rising. A size 16 or 18 Pheasant Tail would have been appropriate for the March Browns we saw.

However, all that works just fine if the barometric pressure and water temperatures are rising. If they're going in the opposite direction, as they often do in March and April, it will definitely affect fish behavior. When it was going up we caught fish. When it was going down we didn't.

Of course there is always the exception. And when you're fishing with a guide like Tim Linehan, the exception can be the rule.

Years ago, Tim and his wife Joanne moved from New Hampshire to Montana because they wanted to enjoy the best fishing and hunting still available in the lower 48. They settled in the Yaak Valley, of Northern Montana, a three hour drive from St. Regis, which is on I-90.



Tim began guiding on the Kootenai, Clark Fork, Bitterroot and Missouri Rivers. Over the years, his love for fly fishing and his unbridled enthusiasm have made him one of the top ten guides in Montana (if there is such a rating). He's a joy to fish with and his knowledge of the rivers he guides is remarkable. And the Clark Fork is definitely a daunting river to fish.

It's approximately 310 miles long and the largest river by volume in Montana. It's in the watershed of the Columbia and drains an extensive region of the Rocky Mountains in western Montana and northern Idaho. It flows northwest through a long mountain valley and empties into Lake Pend Oreille in northern Idaho.

If you include the Pend Oreille River, which drains the lake to the Columbia, the Clark Fork is 479 miles long and has a drainage area of 25,820 square miles.

So, with a river more than twice as wide as the Yakima in most places, where to you begin to fish it? The best answer is from a drift boat with someone as good as Tim Linehan.

Like most experienced guides, Tim focuses on the edges. Whether it's midstream where current streams converge or deep slow slots along the banks, he will put you on good water.

On the Clark Fork, we landed our best and biggest fish in the morning before 10:30. Cold fronts began moving in after that and the rest of the day was usually slow (that barometric thing again). However, Tim put us into some major eddies that yielded many typical Clark Fork Rainbow and Cutthroat. All the fish we caught were healthy and bright. Our biggest Brown definitely had the most beautiful gold I've ever seen on a Brown.

On our last afternoon, Keith was fed up with nymphing and decided to switch to streamers. After he landed a couple of good Rainbows, I followed suite and tied on a streamer as well. It was a great relief to be casting again and not hassling with an awkward nymphing rig, no matter how effective it might be. We ended the day in great spirits and headed back to St. Regis for a healthy dinner at one of St. Regis's three restaurants.

Note: Fishing the Clark Fork with a drift boat with/or without a guide is the best way to go before and just after runoff. In the late season, there are wading opportunities but access can be difficult, and the best waters are still far apart and the river is wide.

For more information, you can contact Linehan Outfitters at 800-596-0034 or Clark Fork Outfitters in St. Regis at 800-745-3933.

INTRUDER Type Steelhead Flies by Scott McCracken



Allow me to “intrude” on your conventional bias toward traditional Steelhead fly patterns by tempting you to try an Intruder. These patterns are characterized by articulated trailing hooks attached to a shank and wrapped with very light materials. Feathers such as marabou ostrich and schlappen create a very realistic pulsating effect when wet. **The originator of the Intruder was guide Ed Ward, a well known fly tyer and spey caster. As with many popular Steelhead patterns, Intruders are not immune to modifications, as tyers attempt to improve on the original.** Some of the better known Intruder variations are the Pick-Your-Pocket, Fish Taco, Hoh Bo Spey, Jumbo Critter as well as tube fly versions.

The key factor that attracts steelheaders to the Intruder over traditional patterns is its unique design. The trailing hook helps to cut down on “short strikes“, those “bumps” steelheaders feel when Steelhead nip just the trailing tip of the fly without connecting with the hook barb. ***The first point of contact on an Intruder is the hook and it isn’t just any hook.*** Intruder hooks are typically Gmakatsu chemically sharpened Octopus style hooks, made of carbon steel and designed to penetrate deep into bony mouths of large salmon.

A bane of Steelheading is the need to carry a file and periodically sharpen the hook. After repeated sharpening a nagging thought begins to develop in Steelheaders minds as to whether the barb has lost its point and it’s time to replace the fly. While Intruder hooks also need periodic sharpening, hook replacement is relatively easy. The old hook can be slid off the trailing loop and a new hook put on without having to replace the fly itself.

Steelhead are sometime lost during the fight because they are able to use the long shank of a large hook, as a lever to work the barb loose from their bony jaws. ***With Intruders the Octopus hook shank is short and the flexible loop attaching the trailing hook to the longer shank which the fly is tied on, denies the fish any leverage in trying to work the hook loose.***

Winter steelheading often requires fishing high, fast moving off-color water that needs bulky, heavily weighted flies that can get down to where Steelhead are holding. Otherwise known as “chuck-and-duck” fly casting. By lightly dressing with ostrich, marabou and schlappen, Intruders are able to create a fast sinking, large silhouette without the bulk and weight of traditional winter patterns.

Intruder patterns can be either weighted or non-weighted, allowing them to be fished throughout the year. As has always been the case with steelhead flies, there is really no limit to the variety of colors and materials that can be used in creating new patterns.

Next time you are out on a river fishing for Steelhead, resist that urge to tie on your old “tried-and-true” and give an Intruder a shot. **You are likely to be pleasantly surprised that the next tug on your line results in a hook-up, rather than a “what was that?”**

COASTAL CUTTHROAT TROUT PUGET SOUND DISCOVER BAY

by Keith Stamm



Dick Simmons is playing a nice-sized cutthroat he hooked on a muddler while fishing with Port Townsend guide, Bob Triggs, in Discovery Bay near the estuary of Chimacum Creek. Bob had brought Dick and Keith Stamm to this location because the estuary is

major location for emergence of chum salmon fry, a major menu item for sea runs. The chum fry leave the protection of the estuary and the cutthroat are waiting.

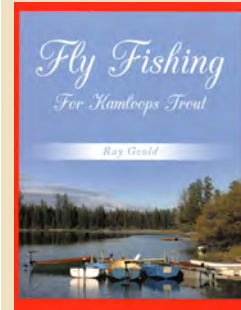
This was Dick's first sea run, a watershed moment. It was a day filled with Bob's in depth understanding of sea run habits and habitat. Bob said, among many other things, "if you want to understand a beach visit it during low tide. Just sit there and observe. Draw a picture of what you see, the structure, the channels, all the little depressions. Take special note of changes in the bottom substrate; it will give you a map of tide flows; the larger the rocks the faster the tide is moving over the bottom during tide changes. Note also the presence of oyster beds. Cutthroat love them." A lot of sea run wisdom from one outing. The chum fry are emerging. Sea runs are on the prowl. It's time to check the tide tables for the next low tide. And by the way, did you know that centuries ago thousands of salmon ran up Chimacum Creek? Enough salmon to support a substantial tribe, and quite a few cutthroat as well.

Olympic Fly Fishers of Edmonds May 2011 Outings Update

Remember - Lake Chopaka fishing will be on 13 May until the end of the month. Big Twin is June 4th and 5th. I am currently flying to Tempe Arizona for Boeing so I will not make this weeks meeting. I plan to arrive at Chopaka on May 23rd, as I have had to make some fine tuning to schedules due to daughter, Boeing and a new/used camper purchase. I will see you guys there, please save some fish.

If you have not been there before, Chopaka and Blue Lake is an experience you do not want to miss. Some in the club can advise detailed directions if you need info.

Olympic Flyfishers of Edmonds May Meeting Guest Speaker Ray Gould



Ray is a long time member of Olympic Fly Fishers of Edmonds, previously President of Northwest Fly Anglers,

member of Evergreen Fly Club, and recipient of the 2006 Letcher Lambuth Angling Craftsman Award (Tightlines Feb. 2006).

As the OFFE May 2011 Invited Speaker, Ray will present his power point program titled "Fly Fishing For Kamloops."



The General meeting is held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the South County Senior Center, 220 Railroad Ave., Edmonds, WA. Social hour: 6:00 p.m. The Business meeting is held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at Alf's, 4820 196th SW, Lynnwood, WA. at 6:00 p.m.

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