

# GARDEN HACKLE

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 4

APRIL 2015

## PROGRAM

THIS MONTHS PROGRAM WILL BE BY BOB TRIGGS. DON'T MISS THIS OUTSTANDING SPEAKER!!

Pages 3 & 5

## LANDING FISH

HOW TO LAND A FISH WITHOUT A NET. THANKS TO DON HAROLD FOR THIS ARTICLE.

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## TREASURER'S CREEL

DAVE FIELD'S CREEL IS WELL WORTH READING. THANK YOU DAVE.

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## LEADERS LINE

BY TOM BOLENDER



As I'm typing this looking out the window at yet another beautiful day I'm reminded it would be a great day to be on the water. Too bad I'm locked into chores and a trip to the grocery store. If you're more fortunate than I over the next few weeks, you should be getting ready for what looks like will be an excellent fishing season. For that matter, don't waste time getting ready for the season, just get ready for a trip next weekend. Weather permitting I'll be fishing the Westport jetty on the 26<sup>th</sup> for some black rockfish and maybe a ling cod. There are plenty of lakes in Thurston County. Many are open year round. DFW is stocking them early for the season opener on April 25<sup>th</sup>. I spoke with our regional biologist last week and he told me they've planted a huge number of fish in Black lake but nobody is fishing it. There's also a plant scheduled this week for Munn that consists of some large rainbow and some large cutthroat. If they can swing it there may be some browns planted as well. Another spot to remember is the Deschutes. It couldn't be in better shape for this time of year. It's clear and due to all our mild weather the water temp should be right for fish to be motivated. Then of course there's always sea run cutthroat in the Sound. Whatever your favorite quarry is, it's time to get out there and wet a line.

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Searun cutthroat

Photo by Gene Rivers

### Bolender continued

There are many causes to choose from when it comes to improving fishing. Our club financially supports a few local salmon enhancement groups who do incredible work in the South Sound and Hood Canal. The two biggest expenditures our club has are for Munn Lake and sea run cutthroat research/conservation. A few months back we were approached by DFW to make a donation to a genetic sampling study of cutthroat. The information they were seeking involved catching cutthroat, taking scale samples and having them analyzed to figure out what home river the fish came from. Their budget was a little short and we agreed to help out. Some of the preliminary information they've gathered is not what we might think. It seems likely that if you catch a fish at Evergreen Beach they probably come from McLane or Perry creeks. Is that what they've found? The study is not complete but we'll get the answers when it is. It is likely we'll have James Losee (an excellent speaker) give us a presentation this fall to let us know all they've found. I'm excited to hear the results and hope you are too. James told me due to our club, Larry Phillips, himself and others who are excited about research, data on cutthroat in the South Sound is becoming some of the most comprehensive from California to Alaska. Thank you all for being a part of it.

Tom

## April 2015 Program Bob Triggs

Bob Triggs will present: *A new look at the wild sea-run Coastal Cutthroat trout.*

We will discuss sea-run Cutthroat habitat, life history and behavior, estuarine, marine and terrestrial forage species, tides and currents, reading a beach, using marine charts and topographic maps, flies and presentations, sea-run Cutthroat conservation, and more. Lots of observations and useful tips, gleaned from over fourteen years of guiding flyfishers for sea-run Cutthroat on Puget Sound, Hood Canal and Olympic Peninsula beaches.

### Bio for Bob Triggs

I moved to the Olympic Peninsula from New England in the fall of 2000. I had lived in New York and New England for most of my life, where I was an outdoorsman, fly fisherman and boatman. I began fly fishing in 1980 and I never looked back. In later years I became a Guide on the Catskill and Adirondack waters, and in New England. In the 1990's I was invited to guide at the prestigious *Iliaska Lodge* on Lake Iliamna, in southwest Alaska. As Yukon poet Robert Service once said: "The North has got him". And so it is with me, and Alaska, and the Pacific Northwest. After moving to Port Townsend and the Olympic Peninsula, I still guided in Alaska, and then on Kamchatka Russia, for Rudy Steele's *Kamchatka Expeditions*. I have been exploring here - fly fishing for wild sea-run Coastal Cutthroat trout, wild Rainforest Steelhead and Pacific Salmon, river and lake trout and char, and beyond. I have been teaching flycasting and guiding fly fishers on the Washington Olympic Peninsula waters ever since. I am active in many conservation efforts and regional fisheries enhancement projects. I donate my time to the organizations who are working to restore, conserve and protect our wild fisheries and aquatic and marine habitats. My articles and essays have been published in numerous outdoor journals and magazines.

### Landing Fish Without a Net – 6 Tips

The ability to ‘tail’ a fish, that is, the ability to land fish safely and effectively without a net is a skill every angler should possess. After all, we’ve all been on a trip where the net didn’t make it into the back of the pickup. Regardless, the old adage reigns true; if you want to catch the biggest trout of your life, leave the net and camera at home. Many steelhead and salmon anglers actually prefer to fish without a net. A net worthy of landing large anadromous species, particularly those that are few and far between, can be a bit cumbersome while wading and some would argue that they’re also worse on the fish.

Regardless of what you fish for, tailing fish is a worthwhile skill and the following tips will help you land more fish, safely release more fish, and protect your gear in the process.

1. **The Honorable Foot.** The old days of ‘beaching’ fish are gone. If keeping fish is your prerogative, then playing fish into inches of water is surely a quick and effective method of landing them. However, if your goal is to release fish, beaching fish is a sure-fire way to increase the chance of mortality upon release. So, if you plan on releasing your fish, please please please land it in **at least** a foot of water. We call this the [Honorable Foot](#), and it’s a pretty solid rule to fish by.
2. **Get the Fish Upstream.** A common mistake made when tailing fish is grabbing at the leader with the fish directly below the angler. Doing so allows the current to put maximum strain on the leader and fly usually ending in an unexpected head shake causing the fly to slip, the hook to bend out, or the leader the break. Instead, try not to grab the leader until you have coaxed the fish to a position directly in front or upstream of you. This results in less strain on the leader and a better angle between your leader and fly as you make your approach.
3. **Let it Slip.** Whether fishing a single hand or two handed rod, any 9 to 15 foot rod doesn’t make grabbing the leader particularly easy on a big fish. However, the easiest method for getting a hold of the leader before tailing a fish is as follows. Once you have tired out (not exhausted) your fish and have brought it to within a rod’s length away from you, pinch your line against the cork with your rod hand and use your line hand to strip excess line off the reel. Once you are comfortable with your position of the fish, raise your rod high and slightly behind you while allowing the excess line to slip through the guides. This will cause the line to fall close in front of you, allowing you to grab the fly line. Then simply hand over hand the line as you approach to tail your quarry. Many steelhead anglers utilize the minimal drag of classic click-pawl reels to create a similar effect by allowing the reel to ‘free-spool’ in order to grab the line as well.
4. **Keep Your Leader Out of the Guides.** A simple but common mistake made when performing the tip above is reeling past the leader-fly line connection. Be cautious that the loop to loop or nail knot between your leader and fly line is not in the guides when performing ‘the slip,’ as the subtle catch of the connection in the guides could cause just enough force for a break off.
5. **Make the Grab Count.** In attempts to be gentle to a prized fish, some anglers attempt to grab the wrist of the caudal softly. We understand that there are good intentions here, but this usually results in a sudden burst of energy, causing the fish to slip free of the grasp and prolong the fight further. Time is the biggest threat to the wellbeing of a fish, so make your grab count in order to send the fish on its way as quickly as possible. Still having trouble holding on? Consider a landing glove for a quicker, safer, and more effective ‘grip.’
6. **Lay Your Rod Downstream.** Once you have control of the leader and/or the tail of the fish, make sure your rod is **pointing downstream**. Many anglers, when caught up in the excitement of a well fought battle, drop their rod in the most convenient direction the moment they get their hands on their fish. However, laying the rod down pointed upstream often causes the fly line to wrap around the rod tip. Should the fish slip free with an unexpected burst of energy, this all too often results in a broken rod tip. Make sure your rod tip is pointed downstream and the current will aid in straightening out the fly line while you tend to your fish, greatly reducing the chance of a broken rod.

# *A Saltchuck Spring*

## **By Bob Triggs**

<http://olympicpeninsulaflyfishing.blogspot.com>

### **Spring sea-run Coastal Cutthroat trout**

*We have been getting out a few times a week*, scouting our North Puget Sound region beaches for signs of life. March here was very quiet for trout, which came as no surprise. For one thing we had record rainfall this March. And we also know that many of the trout are spawning then. And we have heard that in some streams that are being monitored here they are seeing the chum fry coming out about a week or two later than normal. And this would concentrate the trout and the fry in the lower reaches of many streams. So through March we have seen “a fish here and a fish there”, and generally slow fishing. But things are changing now. Every single day. April Magic.



Continued next page

## Triggs continued

***April is seeping spring into life here in a gradual awakening .*** You begin to notice that the air is heavier with the scent of things like soil, low tide, pollen, grasses and flowers. That earthly richness is coming back with the sun's warmth. One favorite harbinger of spring for me is the trillium blooming in late March. By April the Red Winged Black Birds are back. And they are out in fully singing force here now.



***Trillium – Hoh River Valley***

***The trout are moving out of the creeks, along with the salmon fry.*** And with each tide they will gradually spread out into the tidal currents. Soon it will seem as though they are everywhere along our shores. And of course the trout are chasing them like crazy now too. The fry that emerged from their gravel redds in streams far south of us, in South Sound and Hood Canal waters, will be making their way along our beaches in the coming months. And there will be a growing procession of salmon smolt coming through here all summer. This just gets better and better through the season, and this is a big reason that this region is so popular for sea-run Coastal Cutthroat trout fishermen.

***Yes, size does matter. And smaller is better sometimes,*** when it comes to sea-run flies anyway. The fry come out of the streams at about an inch and a quarter to an inch and a half in length. So you should be tying your flies sparse and small—size #6 to size #8, and maybe a few even a bit smaller. But don't think that you need a smaller tippet size now too. Some very big and robust trout come out into the saltchuck to play in the spring. I wouldn't fish for Cutthroat on the beaches with a tippet lighter than a 4X now. Even on a size 10 fly.

***Presentation is everything.*** And if I can share one tip with you on sea-run fishing, it is to work the shallow edges of things very thoroughly. Don't just wade out there thigh deep and bust those long heavy casts. Try to hang back and work the shore a little too. Especially during much stronger tides and currents. Most of the action will be right at your feet. If you don't screw it up by walking into it all. ***It's time to get out there and fish! Bob Triggs***

**Editor's Note: Bob will be our April Program—don't miss this excellent speaker!!! And thank you Bob for sharing the above article with the SSFF.**

## **The 2015 Northwest Youth Conservation & Fly Fishing Academy**

**By Mike Clancy**

Applications are now being accepted until April 15<sup>th</sup> for the 2015 Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy. To qualify for The Academy, the applicant, boy or girl, 12-16 years old, must edit an essay explaining why they want to attend the Academy and a letter of recommendation is required from their school counselor or science teacher. The dates for the WSCIFFF and WCTU supported event are June 21-227, 2015. The Academy will be held at The Gwinwood Conference Center on Hicks Lake in Lacey, WA. To learn more about The Academy, go to [www.nwycffa.org](http://www.nwycffa.org) . The application is available on the website or contact Mike Clancy @ [nwycffa@comcast.net](mailto:nwycffa@comcast.net). This is a life rewarding experience for our youth to learn conservation and the basics of fly fishing. We are also on Facebook. No youth will be turned away because of funding.

## **Raffle Report**

**By John Sabo**

We are doing well with the Raffle, but T-Shirt sales are a little slow; summer is almost here, and now is the time to take advantage of the new sale price of only \$5.00 each. For the first quarter, this year, we had a “profit” of \$100 which was deposited into the Club’s bank account, to help continue the club’s activities.

Thank you; to all the club members who participate in the club’s monthly raffle and to all of you who donate raffle items or fill fly boxes. We are looking forward to even more interesting and useful raffle prizes in the coming months. Be sure to stop by my table in the back of the room to check out the new raffle items, and buy your T-Shirt at the next meeting.

John Sabo



## DAVE FIELD

### Treasurer's Creel

For members that have not yet paid your 2015 dues, please bring a \$40 check or cash to the April club meeting. If you can't make the meeting, just make out a \$40 check and mail to: SSFF, PO Box 2792, Olympia 98507-2792.

For new members the first year dues are now \$45, the extra \$5 bucks is for a name tag and club logo patch. Spouses wishing to join as new members pay \$50 in the first year. The additional \$10 pays for two name tags and two patches. In the second and subsequent years the dues for spouses is now \$40.00 the same amount as individual members.

The club just paid the 2015 dues with the International Federation of Fly Fishers (IFFF). SSFF is a long time affiliate of IFFF and several of our members have served in various posts of this organization over the years. Currently SSFF member Mike Clancy is on the board of directors of the Washington Council of IFFF.

The Washington Council conducts an annual Fly Fishing Fair in Ellensburg. This year's event is scheduled for May 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Fly tying and casting are major components of the fairs. Seminars are usually offered on a wide range of fly fishing topics. Over the years, SSFF fly tiers have participated in the fly tying demonstration and casting events. The Federation is the only organization that offers a Certified Casting Instructor program. One of our own members, Chuck Tye, is an IFFF Certified Caster. If you join the Federation as an individual member, you receive the "Flyfisher" magazine published by IFFF. You can learn more about the great work of the Federation and the Fly Fishing Fair at the new website at:

<http://wsciff.org/>

# SSFF 2015

## OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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**WEB SITE** [www.southsoundflyfishers.org](http://www.southsoundflyfishers.org)

**SSFF** PO BOX 2792, Olympia, WA 98507

General Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month except December, starting at 6:30pm.

Board meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month starting at 6:00 pm.

Meeting are held at the North Olympia Fire Station (Boston Harbor Fire Station)  
5046 Boston Harbor Road NE, Olympia WA