



SOUTH SOUND FLY FISHERS

THE GARDEN HACKLE

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LEADER'S LINE By President Randy Allen



Is anyone having any fun with fishing? Maybe the question is *who* is having the *most* fun? Do you prefer to fish alone? Or do you participate in the outings for the social interaction? I recently fished with a couple of good-friend members, Justin Johnson and Kevin Angevine. Our conversations closely paralleled, and it was very gratifying to consider how they both feel about fishing with friends.

Justin and Kevin are both crazy about stream fishing, and they are both crazy-*good* stream fishers. My experience on our recent outing to the North Fork Skokomish River got me thinking. The fishing that day was superb. Blue skies with puffy clouds. Mountains rising majestically above the riverbed. The gin-clear water we read about in the fishing mags. Perfect air temperature. It was just a lovely fishing day.

The fishing was outstanding. The *catching* was a little slow. Our fishers who normally would have found the fish - weren't. There are some days you have the best gear, the best experience, the best cast, and the fish just aren't there. This was one of those days.

Justin has been Euro-nymphing for a few years, and he's having real success with it. I enjoyed riding with him and learning what he had to tell me. Now we're on the river and Justin's upstream of me. His euro style is to cast a few times into a likely spot, catching not every last fish but catching several, then move upstream to another spot to catch several more.

I catch up with him. He's caught one when he should have caught a dozen. We walk upstream to an area he'd already fished discussing different fly types he uses. And Justin hands me a fly - a fly I wouldn't have given a second look. But he confidently instructs me to tie it on and give it a go. I'm skeptical, but I really trust his experience.

On my first cast below the rocks, a quick mend, and the indicator jolts sideways. Oh emm gee! The fly *really worked!* And Justin had just covered this water a little while earlier with no luck.

It's *sizeable!* All I can think is, "don't screw this up.... *don't break him off!*" And who's whooping it up? Justin. You'd think he was holding the rod. After an eternity (people on the bridge had gathered to observe the excitement like I needed *that* pressure!) We bring the fish in three times, and the fish was having no part of it. At last the fish let Justin reach out with the net and land the 20 incher. He and I were both whooping like kids. The fish was just amazing. Neither he nor I knew who was more excited, who was the happiest. I looked up at the spectators and said sheepishly, "It was Justin's fly that did it ya' know, I was just holding the rod!"

And this brings me back to the original point. Social fishing is a joy. When our buddy catches a fish and we can help with the net, it's just as great as if we had caught the fish ourselves. And when you're working with someone on a new technique, it's incredibly joyous. You select the fly, the location, the cast. . . and they catch the fish. It's really you who caught the fish while they were handling the rod. Some might argue, where is the justice in that? Others think it was unbelievable. That certainly was the case with Justin that day. Both of us grinning ear to ear not sure how to contain the excitement that fish deserved. Social fishing - it can be even more fun than fishing alone.

Tight lines and stay well! And, join us on an outing!

Randy Allen



September 21, 2021

Our September program “Spiny Ray Fishing in Washington State” will be presented by Jessica Pease via Zoom.

Jessica Pease is the lead biologist for the Warmwater fish team in Region 6. Jessica’s extensive warmwater background started with her research in central Texas focused on the effects of changing flow regimes and land-use patterns on an endemic black bass population throughout the Colorado River Basin. Jessica has been working with WDFW biologists and exploring the region for the past year. She is excited to share the warmwater fishing opportunities in Western Washington and the agencies plans for future enhancement in the area.



Membership

Randy Allen, Chair



SSFF Welcomes new members-

Robert Layton joins us recently from Olympia. Appears that Max's outing to the Cowlitz / Blue Creek was an attractor pattern for Robert. No sooner did he join when he signed in to attend the Sept 9 outing. Welcome, Robert! Hope the Cowlitz is a great first outing for you!

Randy Allen



WSCFFI-FFI-ACADEMY UPDATES by Mike Clancy, WSCFFI Rep.

FFI Virtual Expo 2021 - November 5-7, 2021 - EVERYONE INVITED!

Check out the incredible offerings of fly fishing workshops and choose which ones inspire you! The registration form only displays our excellent FEE-based workshops, but your registration fee gives you access to over 100 FREE live demonstrations and seminars. All times are scheduled in the US Eastern time zone. Plus there are going to be auction items available to bid on.

Go to www.flyfishersinternational.org to register and learn all about the auctions and events.

NW YOUTH CONSERVATION AND FLY FISHING ACADEMY - Our goal is to open registration for 2022 on January 1. We will keep our hopes up that can happen. Most camps that exist today are day camps. Our camp goes for the whole week at Grinwood Christian Center in Lacey, WA. at Hicks Lake the last full week of June. The kids and staff stay in cabins.

WSCFFI - The Council is making plans for an event in 2022 on Mercer Island.

The Purpose of the event - To reintroduce our members to what the FFI is about and how improving their cast can improve fishing enjoyment and success.

Walk in casting clinic to show those unfamiliar with FFI of fly fishing what the sport has to offer. To show FFI members and the public the scope of FFI tying, casting and fishing expertise and welcome them into FFI membership.

Reach out to women in Puget Sound clubs to participate at all levels from casting instruction to the membership.

Events - Fly Tying Demonstrations

One - on - one casting help

Operating the casting challenge course

And many more events, it's still early

OPB - Oregon to close large stretches of the Deschutes, Umatilla, John Day and Walla Walla Rivers to limit to historically small runs. Starting September 1, the rivers will be closed though the end of the year.



Dear Bristol Bay supporters,

Today, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that it would move to vacate its 2019 decision to withdraw proposed protections for Bristol Bay. The EPA will reinstate the 2014 Proposed Determination for Bristol Bay, which, if finalized, will be a critical component of the effort to permanently safeguard Bristol Bay.

The announcement comes in the wake of a lawsuit brought by Trout Unlimited against the withdrawal decision and recent ruling in favor of TU by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

This is a massive step forward towards ensuring that the people, fish and fish-based businesses of Bristol Bay can continue to thrive. Take action to help finalize protections for Bristol Bay.

We will work with EPA to ensure the proposed protections are finalized, but even once finalized, they alone will not secure the world's most prolific salmon fishery. While these protections put up a strong safeguard against Pebble, we also know that we need Congressional legislation to durably and permanently protect the resource and the people that depend on it. Join us in telling elected officials in Congress to support permanent protections for Bristol Bay next.

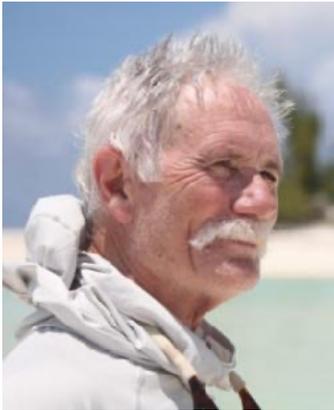
Today, we are celebrating another win when it comes to protecting pristine fish and wildlife habitat. Tomorrow, we're getting back to work to ensure that we don't have to fight Pebble- or other mining companies- in the years to come.

Thank you for your continued support in this effort and stay tuned for the next place to plug in for Bristol Bay.

Sincerely,

Meghan and Trout Unlimited's Save Bristol Bay campaign





THE SOAPBOX

Greetings Anglers,

Let's think about what we can do to promote safe handling of our catch under the prolonged high temperatures we have been experiencing this summer. From all the dire predictions we hear, this may be the new norm for our region. We still want to go fishing, and we don't want to contribute to the declining numbers of virtually all of our target species. While there's little that we can do to reverse the warming trend, there are several ways to reduce catch and release mortality.

Temperatures over 68 degrees Fahrenheit are very stressful for trout. You may have heard that this summer many areas have instituted "Hoot Owl" restrictions on trout streams. This has been a practice in forest work for generations and is a plan to time activities in the early mornings before temperatures rise to dangerous numbers. In Montana and Yellowstone Park, fishing is closed after 2:00 PM each afternoon until the next morning. This is painting with a wide brush; we can be more effective by using common sense in judging how hot each day may be and applying the principle to our angling regardless of local regulations. You don't need a waterproof thermometer to tell when you start feeling too warm to be comfortable, so plan your day around quitting early when conditions indicate. In logging, Hoot Owl regs allow resuming activities in the evening when air temperatures drop again. But, due to the high specific heat of water, lakes and streams cool much more slowly so we are stuck with waiting until the next morning so the water cools overnight when the solar gain has gone and air temperatures drop.

There are also many ways we can reduce the stress on our catch while fishing. First is to reduce the amount of time that we "play" our catch. It's fun for us to use light tippets and prolong the fight, but this greatly increases the stress on the animals. Warm water holds less oxygen than in cooler conditions so the lactic acid that builds up in the fish is not flushed out of their systems efficiently. While it appears that the fish swim off safely after release, the sad fact is that many may later die from the encounter.

The fix is to reduce the time playing the catch and keep them in the water. I know of a guide who never uses less than a 3X fluorocarbon tippet for his clients. Asked how he threads the line through smaller hooks, he says he cuts the line at an angle, 45 degrees or

greater, and threads it through the smaller eyes. He swears that the number of hook ups is not drastically reduced by the heavier line, plus you lose fewer fish and flies.

Another way to reduce mortality is to control how many of the bites end up inside the fish's mouth or throat rather than in the corner of their "lips." This last week my friends and I enjoyed an unusually good dry fly feeding frenzy on our own Munn Lake. Using common attractor flies we were hooking bluegill on nearly every cast resulting in several dozen successful hookups each. Unfortunately, at least half of the bites resulted in the fish swallowing the flies deeply. To release these unfortunates, we had to use forceps and disgorging tools to reach deep into their gullets and, doubtless, injured or even killed a lot of fish. I finally had a eureka moment and switched my pattern to a larger foam body fly that they could not get clear into their mouths. I continued to get just as many hits, and although hooking fewer, the fish that did stick on were larger and were much easier to release.

Using strong tippetts and a hook releasing tool I am able to release most of my catches without removing them from the water or even touching the animals. I use a tool that I first found left on the ramp at Merrill Lake and have since used from trout to tarpon. The pictures I will paste here are of a homemade model, but a similar version is sold as the Jim Teeny Hook Puller. There are two loops to the tool opposite each other. The inside loop can be used to capture the tippet and bring it close for releasing. With one hand holding the line in place, the tool is slid into the gap of the hook. Then, by lifting up with the tool and pulling down with the line, the hook points upside down and the weight of the fish pulls it off. Kersplash!

The outside "U" is used to remove hooks stuck in the roof of the mouth. Using the tippet as a guide slip the tool down until once again the tool is tight inside the gap of the hook. Pinching the line onto the handle with your thumb you can push the hook toward the throat so it comes loose. Keeping the line tight, guide the fly out of the mouth. In a few tries this becomes routine and usually affects a release without drawing a drop of blood. The description will make more sense when you study the double "U" shape of the tool.

In the photo the tool is shown with my favorite chum salmon rig. I use a very large circle hook with the tube fly, but the same hook can be used for a conventional pattern. When casting to schools of milling chum it is very common to foul hook one of these beasts. They resent this treatment and go into a frenzy that breaks more rods than any other situation I know of. The circle hook is virtually snag free. I can feel the line sliding over the fishes' backs until one bites. The other side of the coin is how well the circle hook holds the fish which are hooked securely in the corner of the mouth.

These are just a few suggestions on reducing stress on our catch, especially in our current warm water conditions. Try some of my tricks and you will surely develop techniques of your own once you start prioritizing safe releases.



Photo ® Don Freeman

The tip of the tool has two loops that form a backward “S”



Photo ® Don Freeman

Tube fly is slid up the line which exposes hook in cutthroat's lip



Photo ® Don Freeman

Next I'll hook the tippet below my left hand and lift until tool clicks into gap of hook. Cutthroat falls back into the water without being touched by hand or net



Photo ® Don Freeman

So here I pull up with the right hand and down with the left so the hook points out of the mouth while avoiding the nasty teeth.



Are you new to fly fishing? Many seek the SSFF to learn to fly fish or to improve their skills. New fly fishers accelerate their learning curves by joining a club and attending qualified classes.

Of course COVID-19 benched your skilled instructors. We'll post more details as we open up following guidance from the Department of Health.

SSFF offers three formal classes.

Introduction to Fly Fishing taught in spring, five weeks, once per week. After this course you'll understand what you gear you'll need like rods, reels, lines, waders and boots, floatation devices for still-water fishing. We cover locating fish in rivers, lakes, and the salt water, and discuss local fish species you'll encounter. We also study the flies you'll use in our section on entomology.

Fly Casting taught spring-early summer, seven weeks, once per week. This class is for single-handed rod casting, not spey rods. Through this course you will cast a fly line for different situations including the wind. You'll also experience how to overcome the effects of moving river water upon your line.

Introduction to Fly Tying taught in the fall - winter, six weeks, once per week. Students tie a new fly each week. As homework students tie that fly at home and bring their work to the next class. The instructor-to-student ratio ensures students receive a lot of individual attention. We teach a variety of flies useful anywhere including nymphs, streamers, and dry flies. After completing the course students' skills can be applied to other flies similar to those taught.

Please contact me with questions; my email is on the last page of the newsletter.

Thanks for your patience as we all navigate COVID-19.

Wash your hands, wear a mask, and maintain your distance in parking lots and streamside!

Randy Allen

Outings

SSFF 2021 OUTINGS

For 2021 President Randy Allen has appointed the Board of Directors as the Outings committee. Suggest any outings to Randy or any board members. Emails are on the last page of the newsletter.

Directions to all fishing outings can be found on the WDFW website if you are not familiar with a particular lake, stream, saltwater park or other outing location. The Ghillies email contact info is on the last page of the newsletter if you have questions about a specific outing.

October

10/9 **Saturday** Lake Kokanee, also known as Lower Lake Cushman. A 150-acre reservoir on the North Fork of the Skokomish River in Mason County, Washington. The lake is stocked to coincide with summer holidays with larger catchable-size (11"-13") rainbow trout and again in the fall with good numbers of larger rainbow trout to provide a fishery through the winter. Its deepest is 480 feet. The lake is fishable by boat but has limited shore access at the boat launch.

Second trip TBD.

November

Date TBD. Hoodsport Hatchery. This is combat fishing for chum salmon. WDFW is reporting low predicted chum return in 2021. Details to follow. This is if you don't know better places to fish for chum when the Fall run comes in, but there are better and easier to reach locations.

December

12/10

Twanoh State Park on Hood Canal. Big Fjord Project. 10 club members will fish with WDFW biologists and Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group. All slots are currently filled but if any vacancies open up club members will be notified

Outings Recap

Our August 28 outing to the Skokomish brought 11 fishers out. Fishing was slow, but everyone agreed the scenery and river were spectacular. It's always better when you catch fish, but it was thoroughly enjoyable just being in such a beautiful place. Not pictured was Todd Parker. It was good to bump into him on the river.

Left to right are Phil Parody, Jay Paulson, Gordon Forsha, Justin Johnson, David Brenna, Bruce Baker, and Lee Yeager.



Photo © Randy Allen

A 20 incher.



Photo © Randy Allen

Bruce Baker, Kevin Angevine, and Justin Johnson enjoying a rest after a day's workout.



Photo © Randy Allen

When you're injured and just cannot go into work...



Photo © Randy Allen

Kevin Angevine and Max Doerge



Photo © Randy Allen

Greetings Fly Fishers:

Here is a book on fishing for one of the most iconic fish in Puget Sound:

“FLY FISHING FOR SEARUN CUTTHROAT IN SOUTH PUGET SOUND”

Mel Hurd, past President and a longtime member of SSFF, is the author of this incredible booklet. Mel originally wrote the booklet in 1993 and revised it in 2006. The 20 page booklet is one of the most informative references for the South Sound area with locations, tactics, etc. This booklet comes highly recommended by many members of our club who have had success by following Mel’s tips.

It is a wonderful booklet referencing everything you can think of regarding “FLY FISHING FOR SEARUN CUTTHROAT IN SOUTH PUGET SOUND.” It’s very informative and an easy read. Fishing the salt is great in our area, and there are references to areas for easy access for fishing for searuns, plus recommendations on equipment and fishing techniques.

With Mel’s permission SSFF is offering his booklet to interested members and non-members. We are asking for a minimum donation of \$10 which includes shipping via U.S. Mail (U.S. addresses only). All proceeds go into our Conservation donation fund. Some members have donated more than the minimum. For your extra donations *we thank you!*

Either send a check to Jim Maus Treasurer SSFF PO Box 2792, Olympia WA 98507 or use PayPal/credit card/debit card:

https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=GYWE6RQWY2CF4

As soon as Jim receives your donation he will notify me with your address, and I will get the booklet to you.

If you pay electronically you will receive your booklet sooner than sending your check to the PO Box.

South Sound Fly Fishers Growler Sales

Are you thirsty? The SSFF would like to help you. For a \$10 donation, you can become the proud owner of a South Sound Fly Fishers beverage growler. The brown glass container is ideally suited for beer and ale. Several local breweries are happy to fill the growler with your choice of their products.



Once payment is received, the growler can be picked up from club members Randy Allen (in West Olympia) or Vic Andrade (in Lacey). These fine containers are available to anyone, member or not. Hurry while supplies last! Click on the link [here](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=FD6FPL3SKN2D2) [https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=FD6FPL3SKN2D2] or send a check to South Sound Fly Fishers, PO Box 2792, Olympia WA 98507.



SOUTH SOUND FLY FISHERS – 2021 Officers, Directors, Chairs

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Director at Large, Kevin Angevine grcaulder777@gmail.com

Club Meetings are conducted by Zoom at 7:00pm the third Tuesday of every month except August and December. Zoom is open at 6:45 if you want to visit and talk fly fishing.

Board of Directors Zoom meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month starting at 7:00 pm.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and until further notice, all scheduled meetings are conducted on-line. The North Olympia Fire Department is closed to meetings until further notice.

The meeting announcement and meeting Zoom code are sent to members and friends about a day ahead of the meeting by email. Website: southsoundflyfishers.org

USPS Mail Address: SSFF, PO BOX 2792, Olympia WA 98507

SSFF Garden Hackle Newsletter
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