



## SOUTH SOUND FLY FISHERS

# THE GARDEN HACKLE

Volume 22 Issue 3

March 2022

Page 5. We welcome two new members to SSFF.

Page 12. The Club's first outing of the year. Lost Lake in Mason Co.

Page 15. Brian Chan's Marabou Micro Leech pattern.

## LEADER'S LINE

## President Lee Yeager



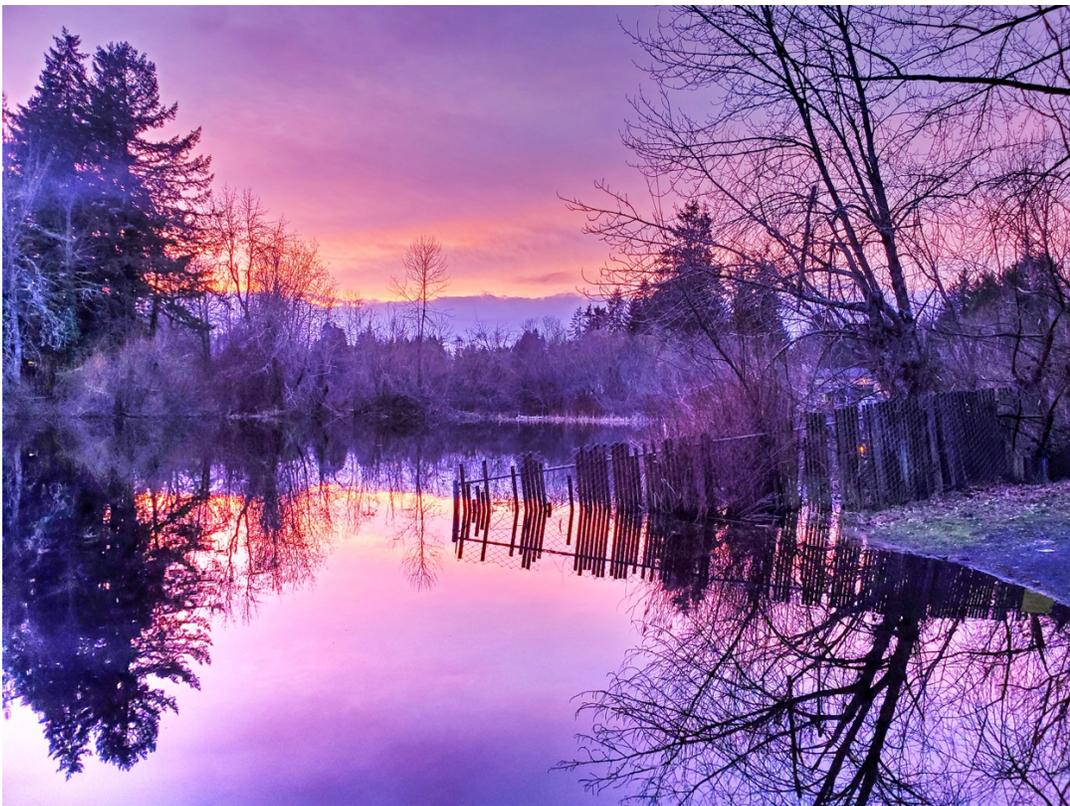
Wow, here we are in March already, nearly one quarter of the year gone by, but the longer days present the opportunity for more outdoor activities. I am excited about the chance to use (and lose) all of the new patterns I worked on this past winter. Thanks for reading the *Garden Hackle*; I know you will find some useful information this month. Last month we sent out a survey to all club members. We asked if members were comfortable with returning to in-person meetings and how likely you would be to attending them. The responses were evenly split between being definitely willing to attend in-person meetings and those who might be, but were not sure just yet. The majority of responders wanted the club to provide the option of in-person meetings or to attend via Zoom.

To that end I am glad to announce that in April we will return to in-person meetings. This year we will be meeting at a new location; the Griffin Fire Station on Steamboat Island Rd. I will include more information as well as directions in the April *Garden Hackle*. If you cannot make the meeting in person, we will provide a link to the meeting so that you can see the meeting via Zoom. As we move through 2022, we will explore ways of improving the on-line presentations.

I encourage everyone to visit the [FFI website](#). If you have not looked at this site lately or ever, I think you will be impressed. There is a large cache of casting, tying and general fly fishing information for everyone. Each week the FFI presents Zoom meetings with tying lessons for a specific pattern. These can be viewed live or recorded. If you are a member of Fly Fishers International there is even more information available. This year I hope that the South Sound Fly Fishers can provide opportunities to improve casting skills and hold fly tying events to observe and practice tying with experienced fly tyers. All of these efforts are designed to make our monthly outings more productive and enjoyable for everyone.

This month will mark the return of club outings. Our first trip of 2022 will be at Lost Lake in Mason County. Further information is available in this newsletter. Thanks for being a part of the South Sound Fly Fishers, and feel free to let me (or any board member) know if you have ideas for improvement.  
Go catch a fish!

Lee Yeager - President



Sunset at Munn Lake courtesy of Howard Nanto

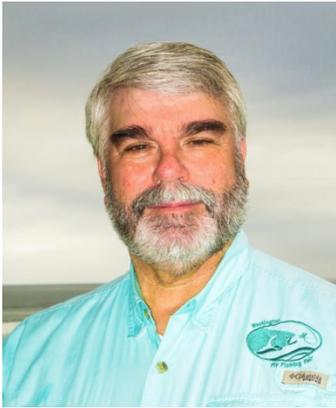


**March 15, 2022  
Video Presentations**

Our scheduled program on the steelhead enhancement efforts in Hood Canal had to be canceled. In its place we have selected a few fly fishing videos that I think you will find inspirational, informational, and entertaining. Hope to see you on-line.



Munn Bow courtesy of Howard Nanto



## **Treasurer's Report – 2022 Dues are Due!**

Hi everyone. Thank you for continuing to support SSFF. I hope you and your families are safe and well.

It's that time of year again. If you haven't already done so, please pay your 2022 dues as soon as possible. Dues for 2022 are \$40.00 for returning members. There are two convenient ways to pay:

1. You can make your Dues payment by Check. Please mail the check to:

Sound Fly Fishers  
PO Box 2792  
Olympia, WA 98507

2. You can make your Dues payment using PayPal or a debit/credit card. Please use the link below:

[https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted\\_button\\_id=NRE77ZFCKLF32](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=NRE77ZFCKLF32)

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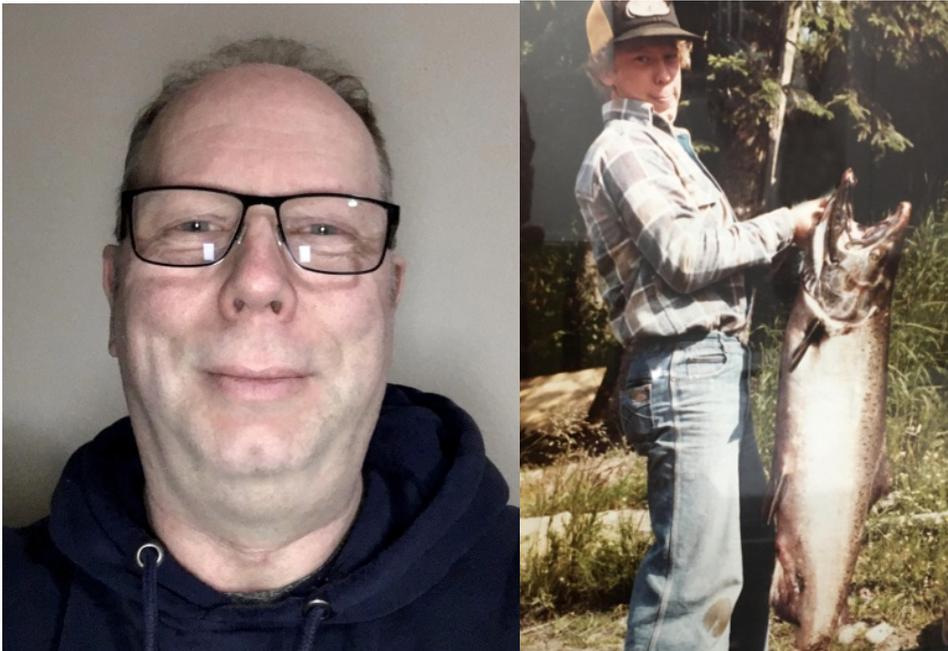
## Membership

Randy Allen, Chair



We're catching up on some members who needed an intro. We're especially looking forward to new members participating in our upcoming outings. I hope your schedules will allow you to join us at Lost Lake on the 26<sup>th</sup> of this month. See the Outing article in this newsletter.

Please welcome these new members-



Welcome **Mark Eldridge** of Lacey. Mark has fished for some time, but only started fly fishing about five years ago. He caught that 50 lb king years ago on the Kenai River.

Like many of us, Mark grew up bait fishing. Until he got to that point when he didn't want to kill any more fish. That's easily solved - just stop fishing for a few years. Until surfing the TV channels when a fly-fishing program caught his attention. What Mark noticed were the *barbless* hooks the fishers used. "*That would work for me!*" thought Mark. He bought himself a beginner's fly-fishing kit; it was just the thing to get him addicted.

He prefers lake fishing over rivers, and one of his favorites is our own Munn Lake. Mark, have you been able to take advantage of the recent plants of big fish in Munn?

Welcome to SSFF, Mark!



Dan McNamara joined last year from Olympia. Dan's a local native and has amassed a comprehensive knowledge of our local waters.

He was first active in the SSFF about 1988 when he started fly fishing. He used his grandfather's old bamboo rods to learn. Members Bill Gallaher and Joe Uhlman worked with Dan on his casting. He demonstrated that he was teachable when Bill and he were fishing Offut Lake. Dan pulled up a five-pound trout.

He described a four-year period of fishing 200+ days each year; after that he went on fly-fishing hiatus. Until 2019 when he was beach fishing with his younger brother out of Gig Harbor. Dan got hooked again. Most fishing days you'll find him out in the Sound on his boat. We'll have to talk more about that, Dan. I only hope you won't tell me your favorite spot is the shore with a great view of Mount Rainier. . .

Dan, welcome back! We're glad to have you with us again!

Tight lines!

*Randy Allen*

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## Washington State Council FFI Government Affairs

Mike Clancy, Chair

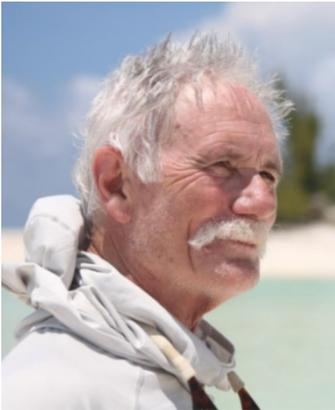


FFI - The FFI Livingston is planning an International Virtual Expo in November 2022. The 2021 event was a wonderful success with programs on fly tying, casting, education, and conservation. To learn more, please go to the FFI website [www.FlyfishersInternational.org](http://www.FlyfishersInternational.org) to review events and view the Learning Center site.

Washington State Council FFI (WSCFFI) - The Council will be conducting a casting and fly tying event August 13<sup>th</sup> at Lake Ballinger, north of Seattle in Mount Lake Terrace. There is good parking and food trucks will be available.

The Council supports many Conservation organizations, e.g., Washington Wild located in Seattle. They successfully prevented a mining company, Imperial Metals, a Canadian organization, in a proposal to pursue a mining permit at the source of the Skagit River. “The Skagit River is saved from Upstream Mining Threat.”

The Academy - The co-directors voted to conduct an Academy this year on the last full week of June. June 19-25, 2022 at Gwinwood Christian Center on Hicks Lake in Lacey. Registration is now open and applications may be available via the Academy website. You may also contact Mike Clancy at [mtclancy39@comcast.net](mailto:mtclancy39@comcast.net) or Jim Brosio at [brosio@q.com](mailto:brosio@q.com). The Academy will be limited to only 12 participants this year.



### THE SOAPBOX

I want to remind everyone that your current fishing and hunting licenses expire the end of this month. You can renew by going on line to: [wdfw.wa.gov](http://wdfw.wa.gov) and clicking Licenses and Permits in the blue task bar. Online Sales is the first choice. It's helpful to have your old license in front of you for the process. You can also renew at many commercial outlets, Fred Meyer comes to mind, I don't know about Cabela's. If you have a steelhead, salmon, halibut, or sturgeon catch card, you mail those to WDFW, 600 Capitol Way, Olympia WA 98501-1091. These are due by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

And for this month's topic I'm going to pick a scab that just doesn't show much promise of healing in my lifetime. Already deeply restricted, steelhead fishing on the Washington coast has been closed as of March 1<sup>st</sup> rather than April 1<sup>st</sup>. This is a very contentious move affecting steelhead anglers, guides, State; Federal and Treaty Tribal managers, tackle shops, motels, restaurants, gas stations, and nearly every small business on the coast from Forks to Raymond.

More than just a business, steelhead fishing is a deeply rooted, multi-generational cultural heritage from Alaska to northern California. This is being felt as a personal blow to thousands of north Westerners. This move is significant since even as the population of these iconic anadromous rainbow trout declined across the entire former range, the north coast along the Olympic Peninsula was the spark of hope for wild steelhead. Rivers draining the national park still had what was believed to be the last potential hold-out of healthy runs of native, or at least wild and mixed origin steelhead. Then the egg rolled off the table.

2022 was projected to be the worst (lowest numbers of spawning fish expected) return of steelhead ever. That's ever. Fishing seasons were cut down to be much shorter, fishing from a boat was restricted on many rivers, and some critically low streams were closed for the first time. I can cover some of the process of how these decisions are made in another article, but for brevity's sake just be aware that the historically low numbers of fish expected to return to the rivers from the ocean didn't materialize. Things couldn't be worse, so the highly restricted open season was abruptly closed completely. True to my

habit of droll understatement, I'll inform you that there is some disappointment shared and expressed by avid steelheaders.

Since a good number of our newer club members may have come to the area from places that don't have anadromous fisheries, I am going to provide a little history of steelhead lore in Washington, describe the decline and attempts to address the problems, and show why it's not working. Some of our club members are likely better informed than I so bear with me as I try to simplify the Gordian knot of fishery management. Or you can skip this part.

For the most part steelhead follow the same life cycle of our other anadromous fish population, the various salmon species, with some important differences. Steelhead don't always die after spawning, many return to the ocean, and may even make return trips to spawn again. Steelhead are genetically the same as rainbow trout, *Oncorhynchus mykiss*. Within a given watershed there may occur some fish that migrate to sea and become steelhead, returning as very large adults to spawn, some in summer, others in winter. Some go briefly to sea and return a year later as "half pounders" around 2 feet or less, and some just stay at home to live and breed as rainbow trout.

As I said earlier some steelhead return as summer fish, generally smaller than winter runs, and behaving trout-like residing for a period of time before spawning and feeding actively which makes them good sport for fly and light tackle angling. Others return in the winter, early runs in late November and December have been practically eliminated but once were an important factor in the population. Spawning habits vary. In the short rivers flowing from the Olympic Range and the Coast Range of Oregon returning spawners may spend as little as a few days in the fresh water, swimming a few miles upriver, spawning and booking back to the Pacific. Others were born in Idaho, so they have to pass a gauntlet of dams and gill nets for a return trip of over 750 miles.

The reason I have described the various spawning behaviors of steelhead is to give an idea of how much genetic resilience steelhead enjoy. With all these life cycles to pursue steelhead should have a better chance of surviving all the horrible insults that they have suffered than less flexible species. If a salmon species becomes extinct, they don't have a reserve population of *O. mykiss* in a stream somewhere that might decide to become anadromous if given the opportunity. The Elwha River near Port Townsend is a good example. Denied access to the ocean for a hundred years by two dams, the population persisted as a strong population of resident rainbow trout. With the dams removed the door swung open and some of the resident trout resumed the anadromous lifestyle, and voila! The Elwha has a presumably native run of steelhead.

So now I've painted a rosy picture of how steelhead might escape extinction through their DNA banks, and also said that the species is so declined that we have to stop fishing them immediately or they are all gone. Confused yet? The point I'm trying to make is that given half a chance, steelhead populations can recover. But that isn't happening, why? Because they haven't been given *enough* relief.

For instance I use our own Nisqually River as an example. The Nisqually formerly boasted a robust run of steelhead in pre-pioneer days. The exact numbers aren't known because they didn't really count returns until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but there were many, certainly tens of thousands annually. When I first moved to Olympia from Oregon in 1988 harvest of steelhead by sport fishers and tribal gill netters was allowed, but the regulations were changed shortly after. Around 1990 all steelhead retention was banned. The population was

protected as a gene bank. Now, thirty years later with the terminal fishery removed to protect spawning, there should be tens of thousands of wild steelhead in the Nisqually, right? Nope, the banner year of redds counted in the Nisqually was 2,000 spawning adults. So, what the heck? Why haven't the numbers come back?

Well, consider what a fish has to go through to swim from Nisqually Reach to someplace close to Russia, feed until fat (should ocean conditions allow and they're not scooped up by a drift net a mile long), then start to feel amorous two or three years later and head for the boudoir somewhere near Eatonville. Then they just have to make it past commercial fishers along Alaska and British Columbia, head into the Strait of Juan de Fuca, then Puget Sound with water polluted by urban run-off and teeming with the seals and sea lions they avoided on the way out a couple of years ago, find Nisqually Reach again, and slip past the tribal gill nets which aren't supposed to be in the river when steelhead return (but mistakes are made). But now, a few do make it back and enjoy the relative safety of the upper Nisqually and the feeder streams they were hatched in. Time to spawn and hopefully not be fertilized by resident rainbow with less imperative to anadromize. Then, if feeling frisky, fish head back out to sea.

Mercifully for you readers I will skip the whole mess of the Columbia River runs; that is a book in itself. What I've hoped to do here is give some insight on how it is that we've come to a point in the decline of steelhead population that we've always dreaded, but knew was inevitable. That point is the end of "steelheading" as we know it. I apologize for running at the mouth for so long, but these are hard times, and we have arrived at a watershed moment in Northwest culture.

I will check to see what kind of interest there is in my ramblings on this subject. I have an outline for another article in which I describe how these management decisions are made and define the jargon that is used in forming management decisions and practices. If this was too much already, I can always find another subject that impacts me as much as this one. "As if..."

Don Freeman

Conservation and Political Chair



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 learn details about the opening of the Olympia Center where we conduct classroom training.

SSFF offers three formal classes. (And we're as anxious as you!)

***Introduction to Fly Fishing*** taught in spring, five weeks, once per week. After this course you'll understand the gear you'll need like rods, reels, lines, waders and boots, floatation devices for still-water fishing, and more. We cover locating fish in rivers, lakes, and the salt water, and discuss local fish species you'll catch. 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*

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# Outings

## SSFF 2022 MARCH OUTING

Saturday, March 26 will be the date of the first club outing of 2022. We will be fishing Lost Lake in Mason County. We will meet at the Wal-Mart on Wallace Kneeland Rd (off 101) in Shelton at 8:30 AM. If you prefer you can meet up at the boat launch at the lake at 9:00. Bank fishing is very limited, especially fly fishing. It is recommended to have a boat, kayak, or float tube. The lake contains rainbow, kokanee, smallmouth and largemouth bass. In front of Camp Bishop, the lake reaches 60 feet deep, while most other areas are 20 - 30 feet. For more information:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/locations/lowland-lakes/lost-lake-mason>

To get to the lake:

1. From 101 North, merge onto WA-3 N toward Bremerton/Shelton.
2. Approx 1.6 miles, Turn left onto E Arcadia Ave. (E Arcadia Ave is 0.4 miles past E Delanty Rd. If you reach Bellevue Ave you've gone a little too far)
3. After 0.5 miles, Turn left onto Lake Blvd.
4. Lake Blvd becomes W Cloquallum Rd.
5. After mile post 9, turn right onto W Lost Lake Rd. W Lost Lake Rd is 0.2 miles past W Taylor Hill Rd. If you reach W Lakeside Dr you've gone about 0.4 miles too far
6. Follow the signs to Camp Bishop. The boat launch will be on the left about .5 miles before reaching the camp.



Lost Lake courtesy of WDFW

Part two of this series will discuss caddisflies. There are many different types of caddisflies, but they basically fall into two categories, those where the larva builds a case and those that do not build a case.

Caddisflies begin life as an egg on the river bottom and have three additional life stages: larva, pupa, and adult. The eggs hatch into a small worm (the larva) which is the longest-lasting part of the life cycle and often exists for a year or more. Larva have 6 legs; a fleshy, worm-like body consisting of 10 segments; gills may be present on the underside of the body; and a body color of olive, tan or yellow.

Case building larva build their cases from sticks or sand and pebbles on the stream bottom. They are normally cemented to the rocks, but become important when there is a dramatic flush of water that churns the river and they become dislodged.

Free-ranging caddisfly larva are sometimes referred to as green rock worms. They look like tiny inch worms (about 1/4" to 3/4" long) with black or dark brown heads. They frequently wash into the water column and are often more important to trout than the cased variety.

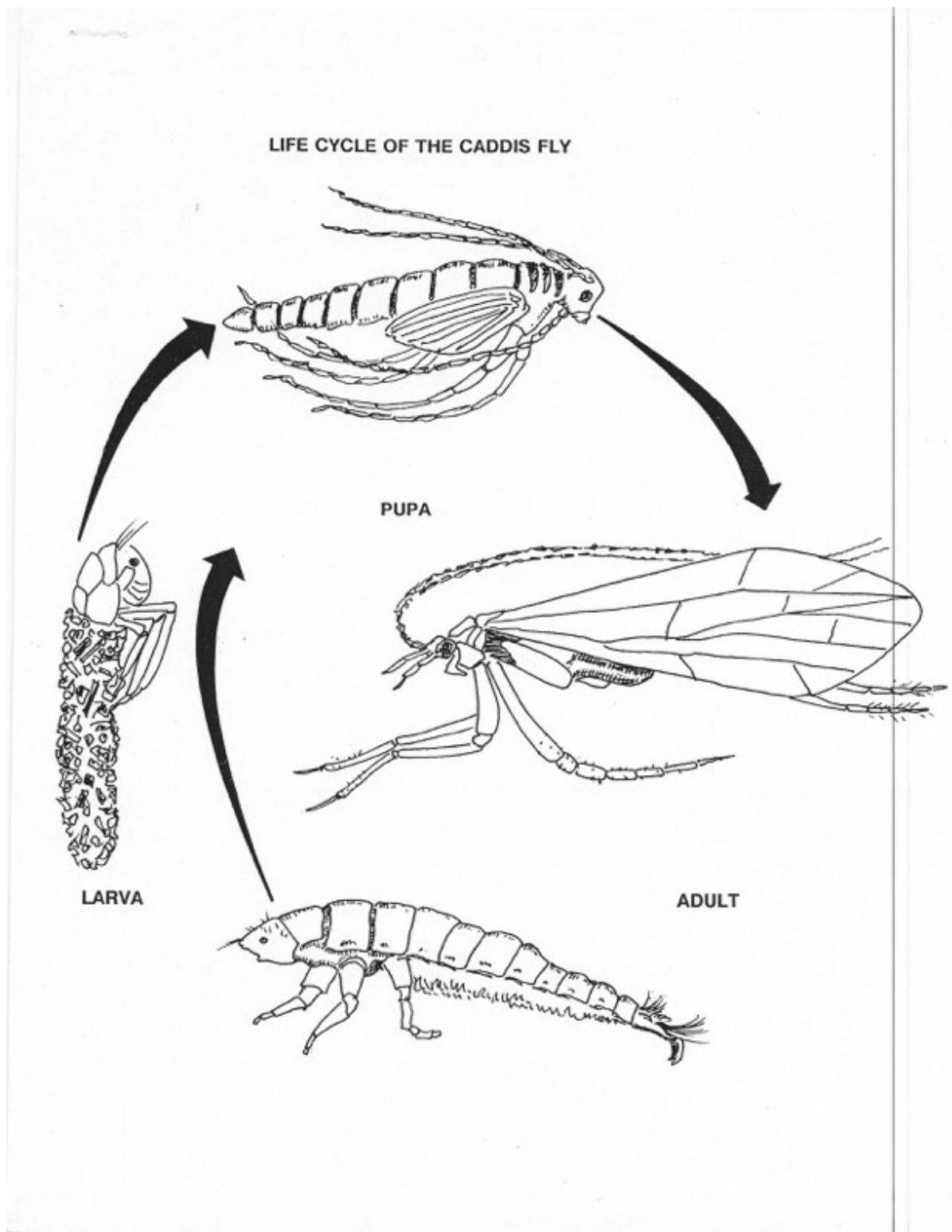
When the larva matures, it makes an underwater cocoon where it changes into a pupa. The pupa is the transition stage and when it is ready, it emerges from the cocoon and rises to the surface. It is similar looking to the larva, but it has a distinct wingpad present on the underside of the thorax. The pupa drifts in the surface film while its back splits open, and the adult insect crawls out onto the surface, and eventually flies away.

The adult caddisfly has an erratic moth-like flight. It has 6 legs; when at rest, the wings are folded back in a horizontal position that looks like an A-frame tent with minute hairs; 2 long antennae. The wings and body can be mottled tan, gray, or brown.

When caddis hatch—and also when they lay eggs—they often skitter along the surface of the water. This causes the trout to slash at them and causes a splash, rather than the slow steady feeding you see with mayfly duns and spinners. When you see trout making splashy rises in the middle of the river, you can guess caddis are hatching.

After adult caddisflies mate, the females return to the water to lay their eggs. This is most often done by dipping their abdomens into the water and using water tension to release the eggs. Another method of laying eggs is to dive into the water and swim to the bottom where the eggs will be directly released onto rocks and debris. These egg-laying females die in or on the water and create another excellent feeding opportunity for trout.

Some suggested patterns are green weenies, green serendipities and green rockworms (sizes #12-18) to imitate the larval stage; LaFontaine's deep sparkle pupa or emergent Sparkle Pupa, and Fox's caddis Poopah (sizes #10-16) are popular patterns to imitate the pupal stage; an elk-hair caddis (sizes #10-16) is good for imitating the adult in faster water, while in slower currents Craig Mathews's X-Caddis, a Henryville Special, or a CDC and Elk caddis (sizes #10-16) are good choices. To imitate the spent females Mike Lawson's Spent Caddis (sizes #10-16) is a good fly choice.



Disclaimer: The majority of this information was taken from an online article on flyfisherman.com, January 12, 2016.

Tune in next month for part three of this four-part series.

**Marabou Micro Leech**

Brian Chan



**Materials:**

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Hook:   | Dai-Riki #135 or Tiemco #2457, #12           |
| Thread: | UTC 70 (color of preference)                 |
| Head:   | 3/32" Gold Bead                              |
| Rib:    | Sm or X-Sm Copper Wire (color of preference) |
| Tail:   | Marabou fibers                               |
| Body:   | Twisted Marabou fibers                       |

**Directions:**

1. Place hook in vice and slide 3/32" bead up to eye with small tapered end facing forward.
2. Start thread and tie in a pinch of marabou feathers with the tips facing towards the back of the hook. This will form the tail which should be roughly 1 ½ times the length of the shank of the hook. Once you've made a couple wraps to secure the tail section, fold the stems of the marabou fibers back and make one wrap. This keeps the messy fibers out of your way.
3. Tie in a length of copper wire and bring your thread forward.
4. Twist the marabou fibers clockwise and wrap forward to form the body with no spaces. The fibers will naturally palmer themselves, tie off and trim excess.
5. Wrap copper wire forward to form segmentation. Marabou is not an overly durable material; the wire helps the body last a few more fish.
6. Whip finish, cut thread & repeat!

**Notes/Variations:**

This is a great pattern by one of the best lake fly fishermen I know, Brian Chan. It is one of my favorite early season lake flies. This fly can be tied in a variety of colors. I think the fish take it for an immature damselfly nymph. Damselfly nymphs come in a wide variety of colors. I have had success with watery olive, light olive, olive, highlander green, chartreuse, and yellow. Sometimes the same pattern in a slightly different shade can make a big difference.

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](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** – 2022 Officers, Directors, Chairs

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Club Meetings are conducted by Zoom at 7:00 pm the third Tuesday of every month except August and December. Zoom is open at 6:30 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](http://southsoundflyfishers.org)

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

SSFF Garden Hackle Newsletter  
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