



South Sound Fly Fishers

The Garden Hackle

Volume 26 Issue 9

September 2026

[Intro Fly Tying course
seats still available](#)

[2nd Annual Casting Skills
Development Course](#)

[Schafer State Park
Outing - Satsop river](#)

Leader's Line

Bruce Lincoln, Club President



Which way does the wind blow?

And better question: does it matter to me watching a bobbing grasshopper imitation on this lake? Can the fish actually tell which way the wind blows? And why am I thinking about this?

You see, I have convinced myself that under certain circumstances the wind creates a slight current at this spot in the shallows of this lake that pushes terrestrials out to somewhat deeper water where I can fool fish. Today the fish do not seem to be clustered in an area that I have found them before. It is kinda slow today and, to me, I am trying to use my mammalian brain to run simulations to figure out what a fish brain is thinking.

Are the fish just wandering about because of the primitive calculations that food is available but the light is too bright and the water is too shallow here? These fish are the offspring of fish that found bright lights and shallow water creepy. As a result, they survived the winged terror to have offspring.

Similarly, I find darkness and two shiny eyes in the darkness really creepy. I do not need an encounter with a shiny eyed predator in the night to know that is not good. Not good at all. Our terror leads to horror films where the soon-to-be-dead character insists on going down into that dark cellar. If fish could make horror films, I could just hear the fish audience cry, "Don't go into the sunny shallows you idiot."

I digressed. Sorry.

Is the small current that I perceive not enough for the fish's brain to calculate that cruising here in the moderate shallows is worth the risk?

Am I being foolish thinking that my human brain can predict what a fish is thinking? Do they even think in the way we do? The answer is no we don't think the same way. I am in a book club that reads nerdy books. The last book was about the development of human intelligence from a primitive worm to my overthinking brain.

There were experiments on fish, testing their capacity for learning. By trial and error, they can learn and retain how to find and use a hole in a clear wall to avoid the light. But what they fail to do is to decide to use that learned information to get to food when first exposed to a test with the food on the other side of that clear barrier. They bump into the wall repeatedly all over again to find the hole. They do however make risk and reward calculations based on previous experiences. Like food: good, danger: bad calculations. And painful hopper imitation.

Mammals have an additional more complicated “thinking.” Planning if you will. The book calls this process running simulations. Many simulations at one time. Lots of brain cells running simultaneous educated guesses on future events. Then simulations of possible good or bad outcomes. In rats you see this with a slow rhythmic head tilting when they encounter a new twist to a maze that they have previously learned. They are “daydreaming” about which course would be more likely to get them through the maze. Some people rub their chins. I just have a blank stare. At least that is the excuse for my episodic blank stare.

Right at that moment my blank stare was focused on a bobbing grasshopper fly. Do I need to change to a slightly different color? Bigger fly, smaller fly? Do I move over to the shade on the other side of the lake? Do I just move off this spot and go out into deeper water in the hope of running into a random wandering hungry trout?

Still a blank stare.

Eventually, I decide to take my blank stare and randomly wander about into deeper water just bobbing about with my bobbing terrestrial hoping to run into a randomly wandering hungry trout. Good news, I did run into an occasional wandering hungry trout. Now I will have to put my blank stare into sorting out how to change the hook or hook position on that hopper to keep those fish “hooked.”

Next month, I might muse about misperceiving things visually. Humans misperceive what they see, and I try to get fish to do it. Not well enough for the most part though.

What you probably already know is that you don’t want to be inside my overthinking brain while I am bobbing around on a lake.

[Here is a brief outline of things to do this month with more information in the rest of the newsletter.](#)

[Introduction to Fly Tying class.](#) Classes meet Mondays, Oct. 5-Dec. 7, 6:00-8:00 PM (except Columbus Day), with optional Thursday labs on Oct. 22, Nov. 5, 19, and Dec. 3. Classes held at Olympia Center, at 222 Columbia St. NW. Class size is limited to 15. Volunteers needed. See page 5.

Win a Lifetime Membership!

Try your luck in our \$10 grid raffle for a lifetime SSFF membership. Purchase one or more of the 100 squares. Once the grid is filled, one square will be drawn at a general membership meeting. See page 9.

[FlyFest 2026](#)

Sept. 24-26 in Redding, CA. Registration is open for three days of fly-fishing presentations, tying and casting demos, a trade show, fishing, food, fellowship, and a community dinner and auction. See page 10.

General meeting this Month

South Bay Station 81 at 7 pm, **Tuesday September 15th**. See page 4.

[2nd Annual Casting Skills Development Course](#)

Tumwater Historical Park, **Saturday September 12th** - Don't miss it! See page 12.

This month's outing

[Schafer State Park / Satsop River Outing](#), Saturday, September 26. We will be meeting at the Schafer State Park, about 12 miles north of Elma. We will wade the river and fish primarily for sea-run cutthroat and trout. See page 13.

And don't forget the [Fly Tying Get Together at the River's Edge Restaurant](#) September 22nd. See page 14.

 South Sound Fly Fishers - Remaining 2026 Meeting Dates	
Board Of Directors Meetings	Club Membership Meetings
Sept 8 - South Bay Fire Station 81	Sep 15 - South Bay Fire Station 81
Oct 13 - North Olympia Fire Station	Oct 20 - North Olympia Fire Station
Nov 10 - North Olympia Fire Station	Nov 17 - North Olympia Fire Station
Dec 8 - North Olympia Fire Station	No meeting this month

Board of Directors meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month starting at 6:30 PM.

General membership meetings begin at 7:00 pm on the third Tuesday of every month, except December when there is no meeting. The physical meeting location will open at 6:30 pm if you want to visit and talk fly fishing.

Bruce Lincoln

SSFF President

president@southsoundflyfishers.org



Chester Allen will be our speaker this month.

His presentation will be on finding success on the Metolius and Lower Deschutes rivers in Central Oregon.

Chester started fly fishing when he was 8 years old. It's been 56 years of happy obsession and countless hours of joy since then. Chester was the outdoor columnist for The Olympian newspaper from 2003 until 2010, when he left to become editor of a car collector magazine. Being the outdoor columnist in South Sound was the best job of his life. He published "Fly Fishing for Sea-Run Cutthroat" in 2010 and "Yellowstone Runners" in 2016. He is currently finishing a third fly fishing book. The working title is "Four Miles of River." Chester retired from journalism in 2024, but he still publishes freelance stories and photos.



I'm bugging you again - not pestering, just bugging you. **We have openings in our Intro to Fly Tying course.** Yes, you can learn this. And you will catch fish using your flies! We will meet Mondays, October 5 through December 7, from 6:00 - 8:00 PM. (Exception: we don't meet Monday Oct 12, Columbus Day.) We offer additional tips on Thursday night "lab" sessions Oct 22, Nov 5, Nov 19, and Dec 3, also 6:00 - 8:00 PM. Classes are held at the Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St NW, Olympia.

We can accommodate about 15 students, limited by the room size. We like to offer a good ratio of instructors to students because we all remember learning to tie. Our instructors are very patient. Yes, we can teach you these skills. You'll be surprised how much you learn.

Cost for instruction and all materials to tie ten each of eight different flies is only \$130. That's 1.62 per fly. "But I can buy flies on-line from the buck-a-fly.com place..." Yes, yes you can. But where's your buddy, Bucko, when you need something different because the fish are selective for something a little different?

Prices for our class increased because of increased material costs, and now printing costs for the handouts. Add a little sales tax the city must collect. I suppose we could teach without printed handouts, but this would be like our class that was taught by a professional tyer. One morning a fellow student called to ask me when we tie in the wing for last-night's pattern? My answer? "I don't remember. . . what does the handout say??" There were no handouts.

Our class uses videos showing how to tie the fly, and handouts with the same steps and photos of each step. And about a dozen instructors to help you.

These eight patterns may be applied to numerous similar fly patterns. You will learn to use a variety of materials. This is a very good starting course. Yes, we're really proud of this class. It produces fly tyers. Oh yeah - and the flies catch fish. Tell your friends!

Click to [Enroll through the Olympia department of Parks, Arts, and Recreation Course #14905.](#)

Here is our annual education program:

Introduction to Fly Fishing - Taught February - March.

What is fly fishing all about? Is this something I want to try?

Students learn fly fishing gear: rods, reels, lines and leaders, waders, boots, and floatation devices (boats). We discuss locating fish in rivers, lakes, and the salt water, as well as local fish species you'll encounter. Our evening on entomology teaches about the life cycles of various insects, and which artificial flies imitate them.

Students also learn three useful fly-fishing knots.

We include two Saturday mornings to introduce you to the basics of casting a fly rod.

Fly Casting - Taught in the spring, seven weeks. This class is for single-handed rod casting (not two-handed spey rods). You will cast a fly line for different situations including the wind. You'll also learn to "mend" your line to overcome the effect of moving river water on your line.

Introduction to Fly Tying - Taught weekly in the fall. Students receive plenty of individual attention as they learn to tie eight flies. After completing their homework, students will have tied 80 flies for their fly-boxes.

We teach a variety of flies useful anywhere including nymphs, streamers, and dry flies. After completion students can apply their skills to numerous other, similar fly patterns.

Thanks are due to **Kevin Angevine** for hosting our fly tying kit-assembly day. He laid out all the materials our team needed to assemble the kits we provide each student nightly.

Thank you to **Bert French, Tim Mettier, Bruce Decker, Veronica Smolen, Chris Tilton, and Lee Yeager** for showing up.

Consider the undertaking. They assembled 188 kits... with 1,440 hooks, and all the materials needed for students to tie 10 each of the 8 flies. **THANK YOU, TEAM!!!**

Please contact Randy with questions. <https://southsoundflyfishers.org/contact/>



2026 Fly Tying Class Prep – Chris & Veronica



2026 Fly Tying Class Prep - Bruce & Bert



South Sound Fly Fishers! I hope you all enjoyed the cool summer and are beginning to prepare your winter gear as fall approaches. Summer chum and fall Chinook salmon are moving into South Sound!

🐟 This is a great time to volunteer at the chum trap—an experience that is both unique and fun for kids. Volunteer opportunities run through October 15. Contact the Salmon Center to sign up. Slots fill quickly, but last-minute shift openings may also be available. Learn more at: <https://www.pnwsalmoncenter.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

🌊 This month, we are highlighting a project involving the Salmon Center. Tribes, nonprofit organizations, local communities, state and federal agencies, and NOAA habitat resource specialists are nearing completion of a major restoration project on the Big Quilcene River.

🌱 The Moon Valley Habitat Restoration Project on Washington's Big Quilcene River is designed to restore natural river processes, improve habitat for salmon and other native fish, and reconnect the river to the floodplain that supports a healthy watershed.

🌊 For many years, this section of the river was artificially straightened and confined, limiting its ability to slow down, spread out, and create the pools, side channels, and gravel beds fish need to survive.

🌊 A major recent milestone occurred during the rerouting of the Big Quilcene River, when crews rescued and relocated 6,426 fish from areas affected by construction. This effort helped protect fish from becoming trapped in isolated pools or disturbed sections of the former river channel. Fish were carefully collected and moved to safer habitat while restoration work continued, demonstrating that the project's goal is not only to improve the river in the future, but also to protect the fish living there now.

🪵 The new river system is intended to be much more natural than the former channel. Instead of one confined, fast-moving river course, the restoration will create a network of channels connected to the surrounding floodplain. These channels will include pools, large wood, log jams, side channels, and spawning gravel—providing places for fish to rest, feed, hide from predators, and rear during their early life stages.

💧 Reconnecting the Big Quilcene River to its floodplain also benefits the broader community and ecosystem. When a river has room to spread into its floodplain, high water can slow down and sediment can settle naturally. This can improve water quality, reduce erosion, and help lessen flood risk in downstream areas. The Moon Valley project is expected to reconnect approximately 140 acres of floodplain and create additional habitat throughout the restored reach.

🐟 The restoration is especially significant for salmon and steelhead populations that depend on the Big Quilcene River. The project is intended to improve spawning and rearing conditions. By restoring the river's natural complexity, the project will give these fish more opportunities to complete their life cycles and return to the watershed in future years.

🌍 Ultimately, the rescue and relocation of 6,426 fish represents only one step in a much larger restoration effort. The Moon Valley Habitat Restoration Project demonstrates how conservation work can protect wildlife during construction while creating long-term environmental benefits. As the new channels develop and the floodplain becomes connected again, the Big Quilcene River will be better prepared to support fish, wildlife, and people for generations to come.

🌟 Enjoy! Learn more about the project at: <https://www.pnwsalmoncenter.org/MOON-VALLEY/>



South Sound Fly Fishers

Membership Report - August 2026

Total membership as of this date: 84

Total new members in 2026: 18

Please welcome the following new member.

Mark Holt: Mark is from Tumwater. Mark is a returning member who originally joined in March 2024. Welcome back, Mark.

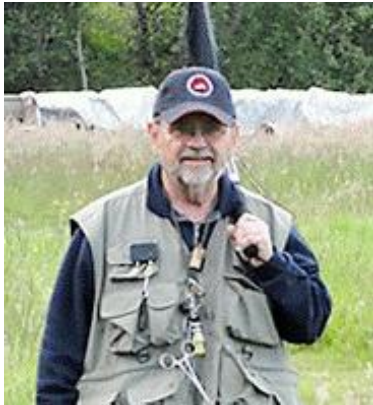
Welcome to our South Sound Fly Fishers organization. We look forward to your membership and participation in our club events.

Lifetime Membership:

The SSFF is currently conducting a Lifetime Membership Raffle. It will be done via a grid raffle where you may purchase one, or multiple squares. Each square will cost \$10.00. The grid will consist of 100 squares (10 x 10). Once all squares have been purchased, one of the squares will be chosen randomly. This will take place at one of general membership meetings. The person who purchased the selected square will have a lifetime membership to the SSFF. You need not be present at the meeting to win. The grid board will be available at our regular monthly meetings and at most club events. We ask you to support our fund-raising event. Thank you.

Washington State Council of Fly Fishers International (WSCFFI) & Government Affairs

Mike Clancy, Chair



***The Fly Shop - Presents FFI FlyFest 2026
Sept. 24-26, 2026, Redding, CA***

[Registration](#) is now open. FlyFest offers 3 full days of educational presentations, fly tying, casting demos, a trade show, and time set aside for fly fishing, food, and fellowship. It's all under one roof and covered by a single registration fee. Go to the FFI website to register for this event.

Fly Fishing for Searun Cutthroat in South Puget Sound **By Mel Hurd, longtime member of SSFF**

We request a donation of only \$10 or more to cover the postage and printing. My labor is free.

To order your copy go to the Donation page of our club's website,

[Sea Run Cutthroat Fishing Guide](#), fill out the form, and submit your payment.

Payment can be made via the PayPal link below the form. If you prefer you may mail a check to our treasurer at:

SSFF
P.O. Box 2792
Olympia WA 98507

It's a wonderful booklet, easy reading 20 pages, on where and when to fish for Searun Cutthroat in South Puget Sound. It also recommends what equipment to use.

Future and Past Events

Clark-Skamania Fly Fishing Club of Vancouver, WA are planning a casting fair for Fall 2027.

Women Connect had an event on the Missouri River from May 22-24. It was reported as being very successful.

SSFF will host our second annual fly casting skills development course at Tumwater Historical Park, 802 Deschutes Way SW, Tumwater, WA on Sept. 12, 2026, 9 am - 3 pm. There will be testing for the bronze, silver, and gold casting levels.

Fantastic Fly Fishing Event on the Missouri River - Mike Clancy reporting.

We fished out of Craig, MT by Halder Dam. Our leader for this military service veteran's fly fishing event was Jared Wood. We drove about 10 hours from Olympia to Craig. For the next two days we fly fished.

Catch report - ZERO for all nine of us. No one caught anything the whole two days. WHY? Seaweed and grass. Every time we would cast, you could feel tiny tugs on the line. It was loading up with grass. I think I got one strike. We were told that it was the time of the year for this kind of fishing. There were other folks fishing as well. I've included a few pictures below. I have experienced wonderful fishing there before. So, I'll go back at a different time. You could actually see the fish in the river. A *lot* of fish. . .



Director at Large

Murray Boulware, Chair



Greetings Everyone,
Well, it's time once again to invite the members of the South Sound Fly Fishers to our End of Summer
2nd Annual Casting Skills Development Course
hosted by the South Sound Fly Fishers of Olympia

Saturday, September 12, 2026 at the
[Tumwater Historical Park](#), 802 Deschutes Way, Tumwater, WA 98501

Set-up: from 7:00 AM - 9:30 AM ... Help needed !

Casting for Score: from 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Scoring Results & Breakdown: from 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM ... Help needed !

Equipment Needed:

- 4, 5, 6, or 7 wt. fly rod
- Floating fly line
- 8' 0X (or 10 lb.) yarn-tipped leader

Featured events will be for participants to earn their Bronze, Silver, or Gold casting skill certificates.

FFI Certified volunteers from the PSFF will be on hand to help score this event.

For those who do not wish to compete for score, there will be several challenging vertical, standard, and half-size casting hoops placed on both sides of the scoring area to hone your skills.

Club members are invited and encouraged to attend, as this will be the last casting skills development course event of 2026.

It promises to be a good time for everyone with a chance to visit with fellow fly fishers from the Puget Sound Fly Fishers and other distinguished fly clubs throughout the greater Puget Sound region.

SSFF will provide a 12'x 12' shade canopy, welcome table, message board / rod rack, and ice chests. Bottled water will be available upon request.

Please make sure to bring a sack lunch, drinks, and your favorite outdoor chair.

Tumwater Historical Park has ample parking, restrooms, walking trails, and abundant shade trees to enjoy and rest under.

That's all for now Fly Fishers.

Hope to see you there!

Outings

Jesse Bakke, Chair

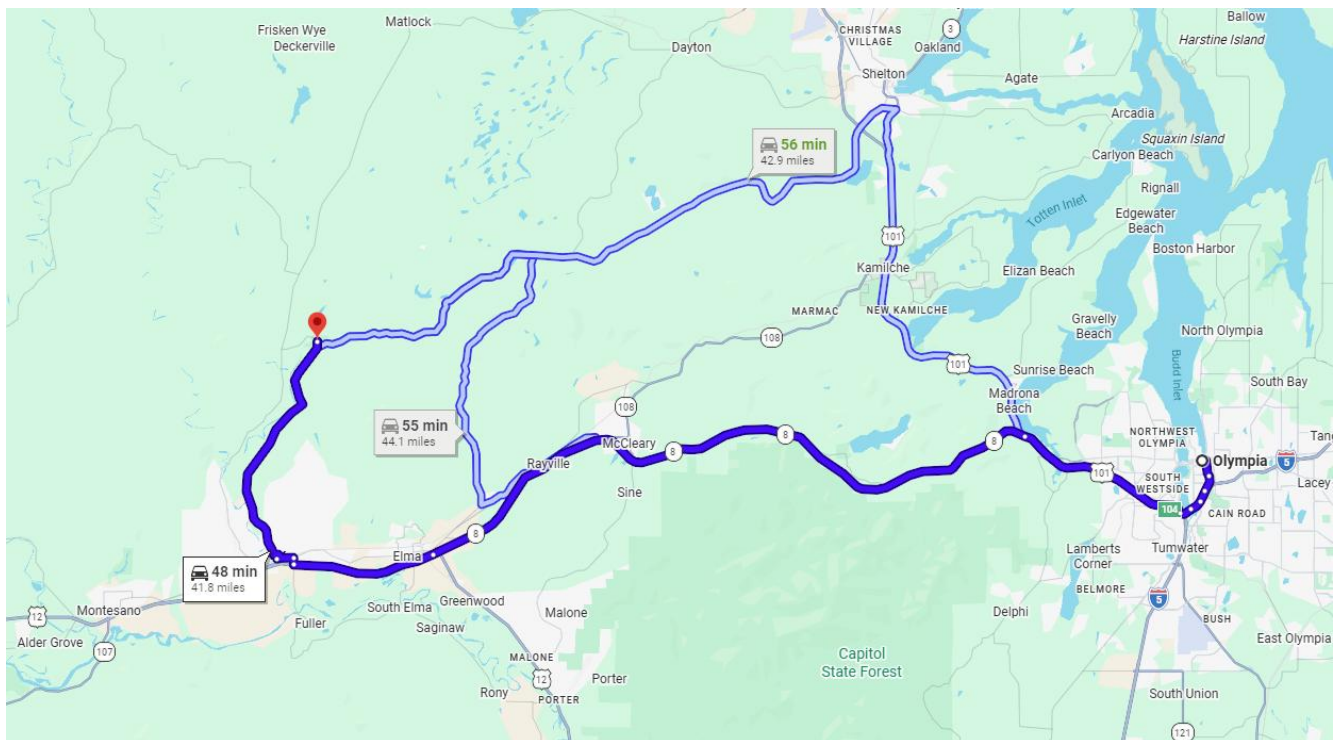


This month we will be fishing the Satsop river. We will meet at [Schafer State Park](#) at 8:00 am.

You will need a Discover Pass to park in Washington State parks. The WDFW Vehicle Access Pass that came with your license is not valid for parking in Washington State parks.

We will be fishing the river on foot so bring your waders if you have them. Although the river should be low and slow moving, I still plan to bring my wading stick.

We will be targeting sea-run cutthroat and trout. We have a few members that plan to attend that are familiar with the river. They have agreed to serve as escorts for the rest of us. Depending on the turnout, they will split us up into groups and walk us down/up the river.



As usual, we will have our monthly 4th Tuesday Fly Tying Get Together at the [River's Edge](#) in Tumwater - that's September 22, 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm. Bring your materials for what you'd like to work on or if you have a pattern you'd like to share, maybe bring some extra!

We ask that all attendants order a meal since the space is being provided with no extra cost to the club

 South Sound Fly Fishers - Remaining 2026 Outings			
September 12	SSFF Casting Event	9:30 am - 3:00 pm	Tumwater
September 26	Satsop River Schafer State Park	Sea Run Cutthroat	Mason County
October 24	Wynoochee River	Coho/Chum	Twin Bridges County Park
November 11	Veterans Day Event		Location TBD
November 24	Fly Tying, 2027 Event Planning		River's Edge Tumwater
Reoccurring: 4 th Tuesday of every month	Fly Tying Get Together		River's Edge Tumwater

Fundraising

Kevin Angevine, Chair



Do you have item(s) that you don't use?

Have you considered donating it/them to the club?

SSFF is registered as a not-for-profit corporation with the State of Washington and is an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations to SSFF may be tax deductible.

While SSFF operates in "Good Faith," all sales are considered "As-Is" condition. SSFF assumes no liability and the buyer purchases items at their own risk.

There are two ways that you, as a **PAID member**, may utilize this section of the newsletter.

Donate an item(s) to the club, and we will list it in our classifieds. All money from the sale of the item(s) will be added to the club's general fund. Contact our Fundraising Chair, Kevin Angevine via southsoundflyfishers.org/contact/

Thank you in advance for your donations.

- **Private Sale - available ONLY to current paid members.** List your item(s) in our classified as a private sale. No retail, business, or commercial sales are permitted. This will be a transaction between the seller and purchaser. The club will not act as an arbitrator nor as an agent for either party. The SSFF club will accept no liability in this transaction. Submit the info for this sale to southsoundflyfishers.org/contact/

Once the transaction is complete, a donation to the SSFF club in the amount of 20% of the sale price is suggested. This donation can be completed via the SSFF website [Donations and Support](#).

The SSFF will list the item(s) in both our monthly newsletter and our website southsoundflyfishers.org

The format will include:

- a short description (20 words maximum)
- price
- contact information (list only the contact info that you are comfortable listing.)

No photos will be accepted for a private sale.

Example:

XYZ fly rod & reel (5 wt) - \$100 - Contact John Doe (johndoe@xmail.com) 555-333-4444

Pflueger Summit 9' 9wt 2 piece graphite rod with sock and case
\$45



Trout net
\$15



G-Loomis GL3 9' 8 wt 4 piece rod with sock and case
plus
System2 7/8 reel with 3 extra spools all loaded with various lines, 2 spool carry cases
\$380



Temple Fork Outfitters
9' 8 wt 4 piece rod with sock
\$125



G-Loomis GL3 9' 7 wt 4 piece rod with sock and case
\$180





2026 SOUTH SOUND FLY FISHERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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	Webmaster/Facebook	Vic Andrade

SSFF Club Website: southsoundflyfishers.org

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

SSFF Garden Hackle Newsletter

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