



John Day Super Float, June 2014 – Mark Connor

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## President's Message Wayne Balsiger

**The presentation this month is by Phil Rowley. Meetings now start at 7:00 PM. We have Changed the Order of Activities:**

After introducing visitors, members not seen for a while, new members initiations. Then we will go straight to the main presentation by 7:15 PM. Then break, the RAFFLE (optional), upcoming programs, outings, and other business of the meeting. If you can arrive a bit early and help set up that is greatly appreciated.

**The presentation this month is by Phil Rowley: "Tactics for Tough Days"**. Phil is one of the most highly respected authorities on still water trout fishing. A British Columbia and now Alberta still water fishing author and fly tier. Several of his



books are **The Orvis Guide to Stillwater Trout Fishing, Fly Patterns for Stillwaters** a study of trout, entomology and tying, and **Stillwater Flies with Phil Rowley & Friends**. Phil Rowley will be joining us at Haller Lake by Zoom. This is an opportune time to **invite your friends to a meeting**. Invite them to join the club.

**RAFFLE: The raffle went great last month. We need you to volunteer and be at the table to sell tickets.**

**2024 NFA Budget:** The budget was passed by the membership at the April meeting.

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**July 18<sup>th</sup> Picnic** – The Picnic is at the Shoreline Salt-Water Park. We need several members to step up and help with tasks for the picnic.

**The 2024 Outings** are posted now on the website. We have several of our favorite outings on the calendar. **But We Need you to Step up NOW** because we are going to have to cancel some outings unless we get hosts and co-hosts. **For example: Chopaka Lake or Methow River.** To simplify being a host/co-host, we are open to the number and timing of dinner(s) and breakfasts. Common now is dinner Friday (option to have or not), breakfast Saturday and Sunday, dinner Saturday. We are also always open to modifications that make it simpler to host. Let Russ and me know. It's a good time to volunteer!

**Assistant webmaster, Flypaper layout.** Brett is not leaving but we are talking about succession planning and Brett has said, he would like an assistant to learn about the website. One aspect is laying out the Flypaper each month on the website. Let us know if you are interested in learning more about websites.

**Put together an article for the Flypaper.** You have knowledge about many topics. Write up a quick article for the Flypaper and send it to Nick Sherman. It is easy to become a published author at NFA.

**The club** was founded in 1972 as a family friendly club and it still is. This is our 52<sup>nd</sup> year. We are looking for new members. You enjoy the club and the camaraderie, outings, meetings, and fishing. Invite your friends to a meeting. Invite them to join the club. Our activities and dues are a bargain. You can spend more on a dinner out than one year of dues.

Tight Lines,

Wayne

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## Membership Susanne Staats

At the April meeting, Bob Scoverski and Joel Thiel were welcomed into the club. Bob's profile was featured in the April Flypaper, so this month's report will focus on Joel.

Joel saw an article in a local online newspaper describing NFA's fly tying class held in February. Joel had tied flies in the past but signed up for the class because he was interested in learning more. From the classes, Joel learned about NFA, and the various outings offered by the club. By the end of the class, Joel decided to join and hopefully find a community where he could do some fly fishing and not just fly tying.



Joel was introduced to fly fishing, tying, and rod building by a co-worker in the early 90s. Life got busy, so Joel had to shelve his fly-fishing hobby for many years. Now he's back and hopes to learn from others how to fish, where to fish, and different options for fishing. He has only fished for trout in the past and would love to expand his fishing to bass and salmon.

In addition to fly fishing, Joel likes to tinker and learn new things. Over the years, he has done wood working, blacksmithing and metal work, ceramics, and jewelry making. Joel likes making stuff and using tools, the smaller the better. It's no wonder he enjoys tying flies.

Joel is an enthusiastic club member. He attended the Lone Lake and the Upper Yakima outings in April. Please welcome Joel when you see him at club meetings or on outings.

Susanne

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## Meet A Member – Peter Rubenstein

Prior to joining NFA, Peter Rubenstein had gone on numerous river floats organized by Dana Bottcher (NFA member) through Dana's company Swiftwater. When Dana retired, Peter had to find another way to continue his love of fly fishing and floating. Dana introduced Peter to NFA and Peter joined in February 2009. He has been active ever since.



Peter was outings chair from 2015-2019 and has hosted or co-hosted many weekend outings, including the Deschutes and Lake Chopaka, as well as day outings at Langlois Lake, Lone Lake, and the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River.

Peter's appreciation for fly fishing came when he was in his 30's

backpacking in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. He took along his spinning rod and bait but noticed his friend always out fished him using a fly rod and flies. This was enough to convert Peter to fly fishing.

When asked what he most enjoys about the club, Peter said "the outings." Although members are usually scattered along the river or on the lakes, he enjoys the camaraderie of people coming together after fishing to share food and stories.

In addition to fishing, Peter enjoys other interests including cooking, reading, and participating in a weekly walking group. (Susanne Staats)

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## Yakima River, Upper Canyon Outing April 19-21, 2024 – Nick Sherman

Scott Keenholts' stomping ground is the Yakima River and he shared it with NFA members, hosting us at the Whispering Pines RV Campground group site. This site is a very private woodsy stretch all by itself along prime fishing banks. Nineteen people pitched tents or RVs on Friday, fishing mainly the afternoons when it is more productive. Scott's truckload of firewood fed the campfire each night as the temperatures dropped with the setting sun. Peter Maunsell planned and cooked delicious and filling meals, seemingly effortlessly, but we know how much effort went into stuffing everyone to the gills.

Attendees were Scott Keenholts, Peter Maunsell, Bill Gibson, Wes Fullerton, Alan Pilkington, Van Hilgendorf, Phil Friend, Paul Van Every, Joel Thiel, Susanne Staats, Brett Schormann, Nick Sherman, Craig Burgess, Carol Ferrera Johnson, Ron Romeis, Norm Hill, Wayne Balsiger, Joe Martini, and Scott Donahue. Wes floated in his raft Sunday, but otherwise it was wade fishing. The anticipated March brown mayfly hatches occurred, but only briefly. At other times, people used stonefly nymphs with pheasant tail type droppers.

The weather was outstanding, for fishing or just walking the trails or bushwhacking the woods. The ospreys put on a show, along with eagles and herons. Based on my hiking app, I covered 4 miles on Friday, 6 miles on Saturday, and floated the river on Sunday. Surprisingly, there were few other anglers other than our group.

The best and biggest fish I saw straightened the hook on Joe and took a mighty leap in front of Wes and me in the raft. The most amazing cast was Wes with his two-handed Spey rod performing a "snake roll" to shoot line deep into the teeth of a gale wind with no back cast.

We can't express adequately how much the club owes to the hosts of an outing. Scott made this happen, from arranging the site, enthusiastically encouraging participation, and trucking in the cooking equipment. His advice on how to fish,

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options on where to go, and suggestions on flies make the difference on club outing, especially for inexperienced members wanting to learn the ropes. Peter showed how his program (available to hosts) determines the recipes and quantity of food to equal any outfitters meals.

Thanks also to Phil Friend for hiking around to photograph members in action! Most of the following pictures are from Phil.



One of the evening campfires.



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Fourteen of the nineteen campers after a day of fishing.

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Cohost Peter Maunsell with host Scott Keenholts discussing flies.

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Craig and Carol with her incredible fly organization.

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Craig landing a nice one at the drop-off.

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Norm and Ron.

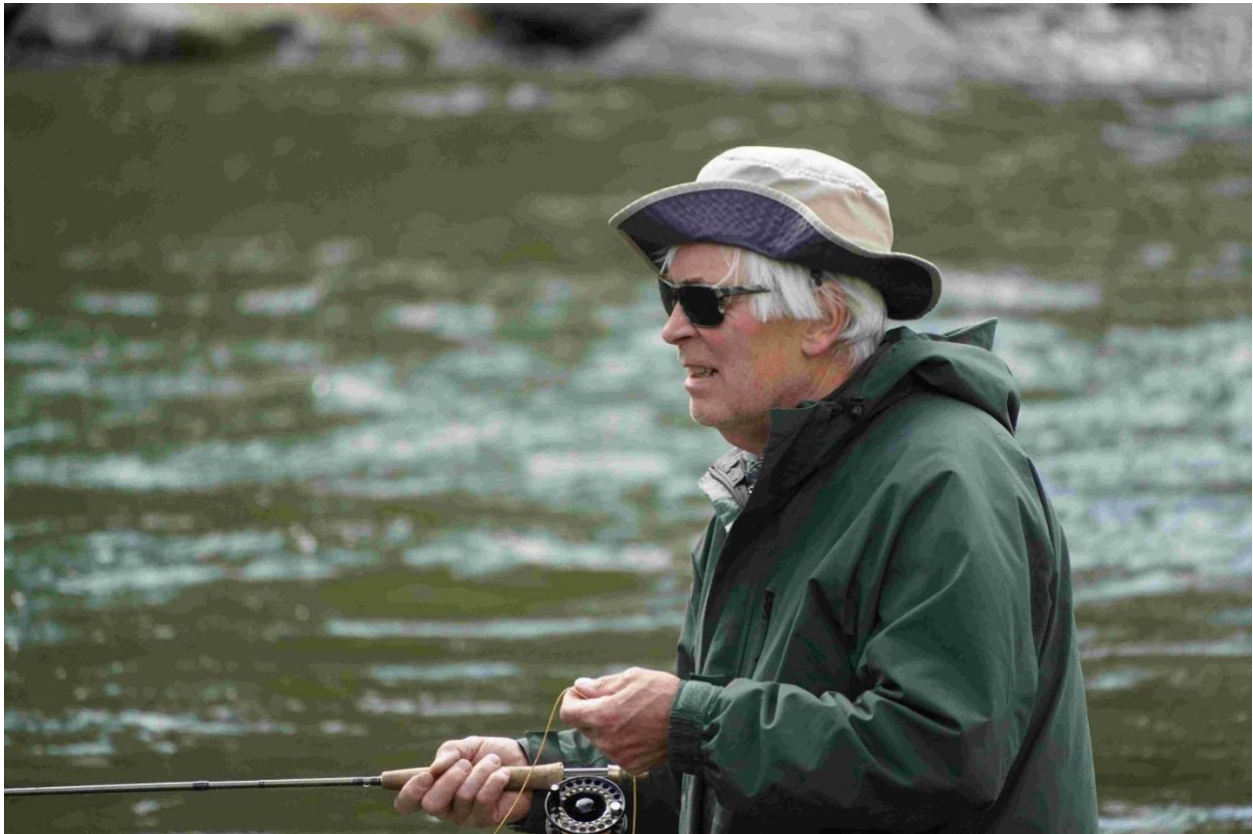
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Norm concentrating on the drift.

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Joel heading out for the day.

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Bill with the Winston rod from the NFA raffle board.

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Scott ready for some wind and sun.

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Junior High buddies still fishing together.

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Craig and Nick comparing notes on the trail.

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Wes navigating the drop-off with Nick and Joe.

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Craig, Susanne, Carol, and Brett soaking up the sun after a chilly morning.

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## Yakima River, Upper Canyon Outing - Alan Pilkington

I took two fish on Saturday afternoon, after getting a strong take (which I missed) on Friday. They came up to the closest thing in my fly box to a #14 march brown, which were emerging around 2.30pm in mixed sun. They were above the water for a half hour or so, then the wind came up and they were gone. One was a nice 16" cutbow, the other a 12" rainbow. Both the photos are of the cutbow. I was in a nice pool with a backwater about 1/2 mile below camp, and the fish were feeding on the far edge of a foam line where different currents met.

I was with my guest, Van Hilgendorf, a 17-year-old neighbor I'm instructing. He is in the photo with Scott. The 5th picture is Wesley his raft with Joe and Nick. I'd like to thank Scott and Peter for their work in making this a great outing, and all who attended. A terrific time!



A cutbow from right near camp.

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Guest Van Hilgendorf with Scott.

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Wes piloting his raft over the drop-off with Nick and Joe.

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## My Favorite Fly ..... And Why – Dave Campbell

Bob Clouser, a Pennsylvania fly shop owner, and guide fished the Susquehanna River and other local streams for Smallmouth Bass. He and his fishing buddy Lefty Kreh were tying patterns to imitate injured bait fish. They were using bead chain eyes, but they were not heavy enough. One of their fishing cohorts said, “I can fix that.” He took the bead eyes, made a mold, and cast lead eyes. Shortly thereafter, Bob tied his first bucktail deer hair streamer pattern and placed the lead eyes at the forward part of the hook. This fly presents with hook point up, which reduces snags. With the proper retrieve, it darts and dances, imitating an escaping minnow. The fly didn’t have a name, but Lefty soon named it the ‘Clouser Minnow’. Lefty went on to catch over 100 species of fish on the fly. Bob estimates over 60 but qualifies by saying he does not count.

This fly was developed for Smallmouth Bass fly fishing, but proved so effective that it was soon used in the east coast salt waters. Its popularity has spread around the world and one can occasionally see references to it in the Pacific Northwest.

Why is the Clouser Minnow “my favorite’ fly? My fishing buddy Jim Watson and I spend a lot of time knee deep in the “S” rivers: Skykomish, Stillaguamish, Sauk and Skagit. These rivers headwaters are in the high Cascade Mountain range and empty into Puget Sound. They all accommodate major runs of Pacific salmon, Steelhead, Searun Cutthroat Trout, Bull Trout, Rainbow Trout and Mountain Whitefish. The Pink and Chum Salmon return to spawn in the rivers and their offspring will migrate to the salt about 3 to 4 months following emergence from the fertilized egg. Coho, Chinook, Sockeye and Steelhead fry will remain in the river system for two or more years. Bull Trout fry will stay in the system as well as Whitefish. This results in lots of little fishes using these rivers as home. In addition, these river systems accommodate lots of critters including sculpins and crayfish.

The ‘S’ rivers are classified as high gradient, meaning the rivers don’t meander, they crash!

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This significant elevation changes and frequent winter storms results in near flood or flood stage river rises, much tumbling of rocky stream beds, shifting sand bars and frequent erosion. This is not a healthy environment for Blue Wing Olives and Yellow Sallys. For these resident fish to survive, they 'must' be very opportunistic! I have caught a 16" CT with 8" fish in its gullet, 14' RB with 6" fish in its gullet. While the resident fish population do include insects in their diet, they must go for the bigger entrees. The Clouser Minnow seems to represent the multitude of smaller fish that reside in these river systems.

The Clouser is also effective for migrating salmon. It has been a very effective pattern for Pinks, Coho, Chum, Steelhead, and I think, Chinook, although it is a rare occurrence to bring a Chinook to hand with my 6-weight rod.

The Clouser was originality tied with bucktail. See Bob Clouser tying it on YouTube. Craft fur variations are very popular. Jim and I have been successful with both materials.

If you are a Puget Sound beach fisher, give it a try. You won't be disappointed.

I have included some photos of my ties and fish.

Tight lines all.

Dave Campbell

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## Good Memories! June 2014 Trip John Day River Solstice Super Float



Trip photo from John Day Solstice Super Float, June 2014. Left to right: Eric Olson, Tom Benner,Carolynn Sells, Peter Maunsell (back row,) Sasha Conner, Kelly Maunsell, Ron Romeis, Dexter Prescott (Mark's Grandson,) Harvey Richman, Bill Gibson, Jay Winter, Mark Conner, David Williams, Wytold Lebing



## April Fishing in WY and MT: North Platte, Bighorn, Big Hole Rivers - Colene McKee

Pack lots of warm layers and be ready for wildly variable weather. But it's a small price to pay for so much fun. April is a great month to fish in Wyoming and Montana. No crowds, lots of choices, and the fishing is productive. Three other excellent April reasons for me: no mosquitos, ticks, or rattlesnakes!

Bill and I had never really seen much of Wyoming - just a lot of Yellowstone NP. But this winter in a fishing depression, I'd read that there was a lot of good fly fishing there in the spring. So, in early April we set off on a road trip to circumnavigate Wyoming. We hauled our teardrop trailer for camping and planned for fishing, hiking, and birdwatching.

I scheduled guided fishing trips on the North Platte (June 11) and on the Bighorn Rivers (June 17). The rest of the time in Wyoming we enjoyed exploring the country and made notes about other good fishing spots for a return trip. On Susanne Staats' recommendation we fished the Big Hole River (June 19, 20) in Montana on our way home.

First stop was Casper, WY, where we did a guided float on the Grey Reef section of the North Platte River arranged through Platte River Fly Shop. The folks there were incredibly friendly and helpful. They even let us park the trailer behind their shop overnight and we drank coffee and warmed by their stove in the morning.

Float day started out quite cold (20 degrees) but soon turned sunny and warm. We caught Rainbows and Cutthroats all day long. Most were fat 18-20" and a lot of fun to catch! We were fishing tiny (18/20) nymphs below a red/pink annelid below a yellow egg (no hook) under an indicator. Our guide "Bean" rowed us upriver to fish through many hot spots again and again.



Colene and Bill McKee on the North Platte.

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Big cut on the North Platte.

Our next fishing destination was the Bighorn River outside of Thermopolis, WY. John Schwalbe of Wyoming Adventures has written some articles about the great year-around fishing available on the “other” Bighorn and arranged our guided float with guide Josh Wright. This time we were fishing in a sleet and snowstorm! It didn’t slow the fishing though. With sowbugs or a sowbug and nymph under an indicator we caught a lot of active, 17-20” Rainbows and Cutthroats. Bill caught 2 nice big Browns. Then we went straight to the Thermopolis Hot Springs bath house and steeped our sorry, cold bodies in a 102-degree heaven.

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Bill and a brown on the Bighorn.

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Cold hands, warm inside!

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Releasing a cut on the Big Horn.

Seedskafee National Wildlife Refuge is a long, skinny area protecting many miles of the Green River and wetlands in SW Wyoming. Although we did not fish there, we had a long talk with a fly-fishing ranger and heard about excellent fishing during April. He and a partner had gotten 50 fish to the boat a couple days before. The walk-and-wade access is quite easy and only 2 boats a day are allowed to float the protected length of river. The refuge holds a very healthy trout population and lunkers lurk. October brings a huge run of Kokanee. We may return later this year for that treat.

Last stop was at the Big Hole River in SW Montana. We bought a “deal” for three nights lodging and two days fishing from Sunrise Fly Fishing in Melrose, MT. Lodging was a very nice apartment right next to the shop and a restaurant/pub.

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Both days we floated the river through gorgeous canyon country. Our guide Andy Barkley had us fishing 2 worms or worm and rubber legs under an indicator catching Rainbows and Browns - about 50/50 - plus a few feisty, big whitefish. My big prize was a 23" very fat Brown at around 4 pounds! A real thrill for a beginning fly fisher.

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## Big Hole Canyon, Montana

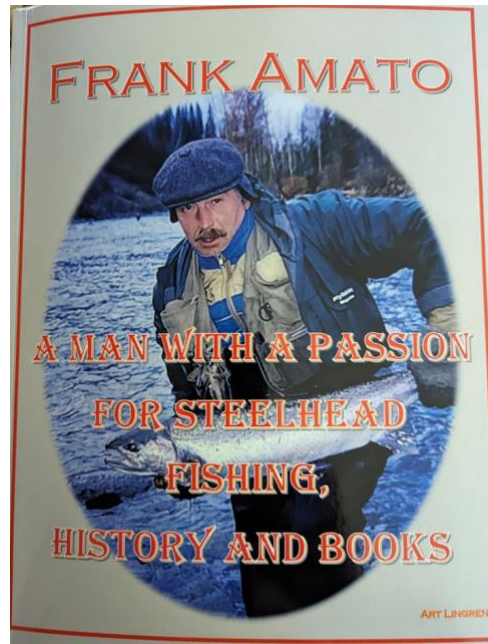
Almost home we camped our last night at the Seep Lakes - wide open basalt columns and sagebrush country - near the Potholes in Eastern Washington. In the morning we sipped our coffee while watching some truly big fish jumping in the lake below. A good next destination . . . ?



Seeps Lakes in Washington.



*“Frank Amato—A Man with a Passion for Steelhead Fishing, History, and Books” - A Book Review by Carol Ferrera Johnson*



In the most recent edition of the Flypaper, Nick Sherman recounted our exhilarating steelhead expedition on the Sauk River. As a fortunate participant, I gleaned valuable insights from our leader, Dave Campbell, and relished a delightful day on the river, despite our collective lack of fish-catching success. Steelhead, long revered by fly fishermen, have faced a gradual decline over the years, intensifying the challenge of pursuing these prized fish.

Recently I received my copy of ‘*Frank Amato—A Man with a Passion for Steelhead Fishing, History, and Books.*’ My bookshelves overflow with fly-fishing literature, and it is evident that a substantial portion of my collection bears the imprint of Frank Amato. Frank, a prolific publisher of fly-fishing books, has left an indelible mark on the angling community.

This book, authored by Art Lingren, is closely connected to both Frank Amato’s publishing legacy and Art’s own self-published works. Their personal friendship and numerous fishing escapades further enrich the context. Art, an esteemed icon

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in British Columbia's steelhead, fly-fishing, and fly-tying circles, is someone I deeply admire. While a comprehensive article could delve into Art's significant contributions to the fly-fishing world, I'll keep it brief: his influence is immeasurable. For those unacquainted with Art's fly-fishing reputation in BC, I invite you to explore this link:

<https://www.steelheadermag.com/pics/artlingren.html>

**Frank Amato's story held particular significance for me,** given Les' extensive years of professional collaboration with him. All of Les' books were published by Frank Amato. It was during the late 1960's that Les and Frank began their respective careers devoted to fishing. Les became the Washington Field Editor for Frank's new magazine, *Salmon, Trout, Steelheader*, and soon thereafter, the founding editor of Frank's second new magazine, *Western Fly Tying*. (Les Johnson's books published by Amato Publications: *Fishing the Sea-Run Cutthroat* in 1971; new edition titled *Sea-Run* in 1979; Les Johnson, Bruce Ferguson and Pat Trotter, *Fly Fishing for Pacific Salmon* in 1985; Les Johnson *Fly-Fishing Coastal Cutthroat: Flies, Techniques, Conservation* in 2004. Les published *Fly Fishing for Pacific Salmon II* with Bruce Ferguson and Pat Trotter in 2008 and his last book the next year with Mark Mandell was *Tube Flies: A Tying, Fishing, and Historical Guide*).

In "Frank Amato—A Man with a Passion for Steelhead Fishing, History, and Books", Art writes "I have fished quite a lot during my life, but Frank has fished far more than I ever could have dreamed of. There have been very few weeks during the past 70 years that Frank has not been around a stream, or fishing. The cover picture is of him about to release a Morice River steelhead in 1988. That river was one of his favorite British Columbia fishing destinations, but in addition to fishing many Oregon, Washington, and Alaska rivers he has ventured far afield fishing rivers in South America and Europe. Many of my generation of fly-fishing writing colleagues such as Bill McMillan, Trey Combs, Les Johnson, John Shewey, Skip Morris, and many others, were first published by Frank Amato.

**Presented below are additional excerpts from the book.**

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From the Author's "Preface:" Frank Amato is a man with a passion for all salmonids with steelhead his favorite, and a passion for fly-fishing, fly-tying, and fly-fishing related history. He, with the aid of his staff at Amato Publishing, in the books and magazines they published has done more than any other organization to chronicle the art and craft of Pacific Northwest fly-tying and steelhead fly fishing in the late 20th and early 21st century. The fly fishers and fly tiers of the Pacific Northwest and in other parts of North America owe Frank their heartfelt thanks. Merci, my friend!

From Bill McMillan's "Foreword:" Art Lingren recently indicated he was beginning a new book about the legacy of Frank Amato and his contributions to steelhead fly-fishing on the West Coast of North America. Art also wondered if I might consider providing reflections on the importance Frank had on me, and the broader perspective of Frank's large contribution to the literature of steelhead fly fishing. In my own case, Frank became the doorway to write and photograph for publication.

From John Shewey's "Afterword:" Frank granted me an audience. He liked my idea, and thereabout came my first book contract, for my 1989 title, Northwest Fly Fishing: Trout and Beyond. The book found an eager audience, sold well and led to further book contracts with Frank Amato. Frank took a chance on a young, enthusiastic fly angler who had only recently earned a college degree in journalism, and he continued to accept my ideas for new books for years to come, to the tune of 11 titles. He provided me the footing—the opportunity—to make my favorite hobby a profession.

If you wish to delve deeper into the individual behind this remarkable literature, I recommend ordering this book directly from Art.

**Frank Amato—A Man with a Passion for Steelhead Fishing, History and Books, 78 pp. 8 ½ x 11.**

**\$30 US per copy includes shipping costs.**

**Contact Art Lingren @ [ajlingren@gmail.com](mailto:ajlingren@gmail.com) or text 1 604 785 3588 to order!**

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## March Membership Meeting Presentation - Puget Sound Bull Trout

Thomas Quinn, member of the Northwest Fly Anglers, and semi-retired professor in the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, University of Washington

At the March NFA meeting, Tom Quinn gave a presentation on bull trout and especially those in the Puget Sound region. What follows is a summary of his talk, and NFA members can get access to the full presentation with photos if they wish.

Talk outline:

- 1) What are bull trout, and what are they related to?
- 2) Where do they spawn (Skagit River system)
- 3) Do they migrate, and how do we study this?
- 4) How long do they stay in Puget Sound?
- 5) Not much about how to catch them...

Bull trout are members of a group of fishes related to Pacific salmon and trout, Atlantic salmon and trout, and others that we collectively call “salmonids.” Bull trout are distinct as a species from Dolly Varden, though the sport fishing regulations do not distinguish them. Bull trout only live in western North America, whereas Dolly Varden are also native to the Asian side of the Pacific Rim (Russia and Japan), and in some drainages of the Arctic Ocean. The closest relative of Dolly Varden is the Arctic char, not bull trout. Arctic char are found in the Pacific Rim in Russia and Alaska, all around the Arctic Rim, and in the Atlantic Ocean as well. There are relict populations in lakes in Maine, Ireland, and England, and they are abundant in Norway, Iceland, etc. North America is also blessed with their relatives, the beautiful brook trout, and the large and long-lived lake trout. All these fishes are in the genus *Salvelinus*, known as char(r). They have light spots against a darker background, whereas Pacific and Atlantic salmon and trout have dark spots against a lighter background. The char spawn in the fall in streams or lakes and spend their lives entirely in fresh water or migrate to sea. Unlike Pacific salmon, they routinely live to spawn in more than one season and have been known to skip a year.

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The species of char are generally more tolerant of cold water and less tolerant of warm water compared to rainbow and brown trout, and bull trout are no exception. In the Puget Sound region, they are found in several of the larger rivers, notably the Puyallup, Stillaguamish, Snohomish, Skagit, and Nooksack, and in Olympic Peninsula rivers such as the Hoh, Elwha, and Dungeness. The largest population in Puget Sound is in the Skagit River system, where all eight native salmon and trout of the region occur. Many tributaries of the Skagit River have suitable gravel and flow conditions and thus support spawning populations of salmon and trout, but no bull trout. The spawning areas of bull trout and at the high elevations, often glacier-fed, and cold. Most spawning takes place in the October in streams rather than the Skagit River itself. The little bull trout spend about two years in the streams, and then move into the larger parts of the river system to feed or continue to feed in streams until they are large enough to survive in the main Skagit and Sauk rivers, or they migrate in late spring to Puget Sound to feed. We know their

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timing from traps set in the lower Skagit River by the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and by systematic sampling with seine nets in the estuary and nearshore areas by the Skagit System Cooperative.



Some bull trout in the Skagit and other rivers spend their whole lives in the river and never go to sea, but those that do stay close to their home river and return after only a few months in most cases. We know this from putting acoustic transmitters in the fish and detecting them in Skagit Bay, for example. Most Skagit system bull trout move into Puget Sound in April and are back in the river and migrating up to cool waters by the end of June or early. There is plenty for them to eat later in the summer, but we think they simply cannot tolerate the warm water in the estuary and lower river in August and September, and they need to get near their spawning areas where the water is colder, and they can wait and spawn in October.

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*Flypaper*



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Interestingly, the bull trout that migrate to marine waters might have had parents that did not migrate, and their offspring might or might not migrate. We can determine this by chemical examination of the fish's otoliths (ear stones) that retain aspects of the chemistry of the water where the fish lived. Indeed, these bull trout show a wide range of migration and life history patterns. When they are in Puget Sound, all evidence indicates that they stay near shore in shallow water, and feed on little fish. We might suspect that all they eat would be baby salmon, but evidence indicates that they eat a lot of surf smelt, and also herring and other fishes. No doubt they eat some salmon and can eat a lot in the rivers before they do to Puget Sound, but the current dire status of salmon is not to be blamed on bull trout!

As noted in the presentation, there are many good reasons why fly anglers should like bull trout:

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1. They are in the Skagit, Sauk, etc. year-round (though regulations do not always permit fishing).
2. They are more abundant than steelhead, and not anorexic. They eat little fish and salmon eggs.
3. They will take large and small flies, of all colors. I have caught them on white, pink, green, purple, black, and combinations of these colors, using large and small files. I tend to fish with sinking tips but other people swear by a floating line and a fast strip. They do like a moving fly rather than a dead-drift in my experience, but other fisherman might not agree with me.
4. They are predators and can feed in turbid water. A big black or purple leech will get their attention even when you can hardly see your boots when you are standing in the water.
5. They are found over gravel at moderate speeds, so fishing for them is not life-threatening. The slippery boulders and swift water are to be avoided, as are the muddy “frog-water” areas. Like Goldilocks, you want water that is not too fast, and not too slow. Just right.
6. When they bite, you know it. It’s not a subtle take. Most are 18-20 inches, some bigger than that. Indeed, it is unusual to get one less than 14-16 inches. They get large, but these ones are scarce. Most that we sampled are about 4-6 years old, or a bit more.
7. When fishing for bull trout, there is always a (remote) chance of getting a steelhead, and I have also caught coho salmon, cutthroat, and rainbow trout too using the same fly that catches bull trout. Amazingly, I got a mountain whitefish as well on my favorite bull trout fly.

If you fish for them and catch one, please treat them with the utmost respect. They are federally listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act, which makes it incomprehensible that they are not close to retention. I fought WDFW on that and lost... So, keep them in the water and release them quickly and they will be fine. (Nick Sherman)

*Flypaper*



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