



SANTA CLARITA
CASTING CLUB
FLYFISHING



Casting Times

September 2017 Volume 11, Issue 5

Calendar of Events

- Sunday, September 24, 2017**
Casting Clinic, Almendra Park, 8 am
- Sunday, October 8, 2017**
Casting Clinic, Almendra Park, 8 am
- Thursday, October 12, 2017**
Fly Tying Class, 7-9pm
- Wednesday, October 18, 2017**
SCCC Monthly Meeting, 7-9 pm
- Sunday, October 22, 2017**
Casting Clinic, Almendra Park, 8 am
- Sunday, November 5, 2017**
Casting Clinic, Almendra Park, 9 am
Note: Winter hours for Clinics Nov.-March
- Thursday, November 9, 2017**
Fly Tying Class, 7-9pm
- Wednesday, November 15, 2017**
SCCC Monthly Meeting, 7-9 pm

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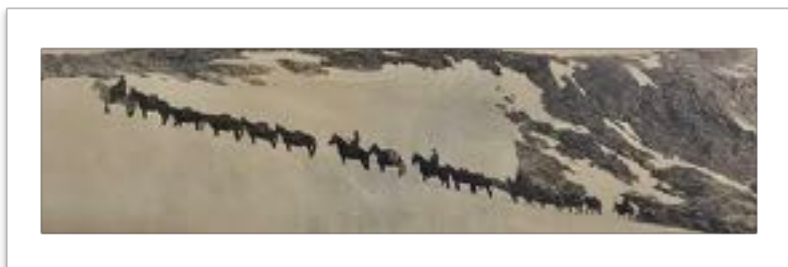
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The Riffle

California State Fish

In the last issue of Casting Times, I wrote a bit about the history and current state of the three key species of trout—rainbow, brown, and brook. Recently, I was heading back from some Yosemite fishing with Editor John Parmenter and we stopped at the Mount Whitney Fish Hatchery located just north of Independence.

When in its prime, the hatchery produced over 2,000,000 fry a year and placed them in small lakes and creeks through the Sierras. These were golden trout and were packed in large metal containers and delivered by 20-mule team trains to lakes in the Sierra Nevadas. This continued until the 1950s when high elevation stocking commenced using aircraft.



Officers

President: Jon Simle

Vice President: Rudy Arechiga

Treasurer: Judy McLean

Correspondence: Bill Creitz

Senior Director: Dick Harris

Member at Large: Chris Taylor

Member at Large: Gary Thomas

Club Committees

Casting Clinic: Paul Riegert

Outings Coordinator: Chris Taylor

Fly Tying: Rotating Members

Newsletter Editor: John Parmenter

SWCFFF Rep: Jon Simle

Rod Building: Chris Holm

Merchandise: Gary Haselbusch

Website Admin.: Greg LaPolla

Conservation: Dick Harris

Social Media (Facebook, etc.):

Rudy Arechiga

Our Value Promise

To bring together people of all ages who share a passion to develop their knowledge and skills in the wonderful sport of fly fishing, through education, conservation, and fishing events, while serving as a proud steward of our community, our local waters and wildlife areas.

In 2007, a major fire swept through the Mt Whitney area followed the next year by a massive mudslide that wiped out the hatchery ponds and all but obliterated Oak Creek that fed the hatchery. It now survives as a museum and showcases the beautiful golden trout.



The museum explains how the high elevation ponds and creeks in the Sierra Mountains that had been fish less until the mid 1800s when prospectors and others began transplanting the hearty little golden trout to these waters where they have thrived.

Today the Mount Whitley Fish Hatchery still showcases a wonderful history, how it has survived, and even displays several working original tanks used to raise the goldens that are still stocked in selected waters of the State. Seeing these incredible little red/gold trout, one can understand why this strain is revered as our state fish . . . and not the carp!





Membership Matters Membership Matters

By Bill Cretz

By now, it's pretty well known among our club members that Chuck Hoffman—based upon his fishing prowess during the recent southern Utah fishing trip—is the new Trout Whisperer of Santa Clarita.

Just how well did Chuck do in Utah this past July? How does 60 fish sound? You read that correctly: 60 fish. And mind you, that was over a five-day period. All told, the four of us—Chris Taylor, Gary Haselbusch, Chuck, and me—brought 109 fish to the net while float tubing Manning Meadows and Pine Lakes not far from our base in Circleville.



As exceptional as the fish count was, what exceeded our casting success was the extent of our camaraderie. We breakfasted our way across southern Utah (all four of us count breakfast as our favorite meal), and there wasn't a dinner stop where we missed sampling the homemade pies (I even had pie for breakfast at



one diner). At night, over bags of Carmel Corn, we watched the Dodgers extend their amazing 13-game win streak. One hundred nine fish, five pounds (gained per person), and five days later, we reluctantly turned our vehicles south toward Santa Clarita fueled by some great photos of trout between eight and 18 inches (primarily rainbows and browns)

and, better still, some terrific memories.

If you've followed this column for the last few years, you know that I often write about our great membership, our enviable esprit de corps, and the friendships that are cultivated in the club. This outing was no exception. I learned some interesting things about my fellow fly fishers; additionally, I observed, firsthand, skills and tricks I didn't know they possessed, as well as a level of passion and commitment to fly fishing that was both contagious and instructive. That's what comes from spending time with like-minded fly fishers simply trading stories, advice, tips, and techniques, or maybe debating the merits of adding flash to streamers to help attract bigger fish.

We tend to learn by watching, listening, experimenting, and emulating. In keeping with that learning mindset, I tied on a number 12 Hornberg trailing my olive Wooley Bugger on



Day One at Pine Lake just to see what would happen. And believe it or not, that streamer—more often associated with the waters around Mammoth Lakes—was the second best producer of the trip next to the dependable Wooley Buggers. Go figure. I shared my initial success with the rest of the group and they too benefitted from dragging that baitfish representation through the weed beds.

Later in the week, Chris saw that I was paddling my float tube too fast (Chris mentioned something about water skiing behind my tube) and suggested that I slow down a bit. I took his advice and almost immediately hooked two 14-inch rainbows—all because a buddy shared his observations and advice with me. That's camaraderie at its finest.

So, while we, collectively, caught a ton of fish—and lost a ton more—and experimented with a few successful variations on techniques and flies, it was hanging out with fellow fly fishing enthusiasts over breakfast, pie, prime rib, and fly patterns that helped to cement relationships and create memories of our week in Utah. And, other than the photos, that's what you end up taking back home with you.



By the way, if you're going to meet up in Southern Utah in October for this fall's trout bonanza, don't forget to tie or buy a few Hornbergs—you might be pleasantly surprised.

I'll see you at the next meeting.

Club News

CHRIS TAYLOR

Come October 9-15 I'll be fishing Southern Utah again with members Jon Simle, Gary Haselbusch, Harold Maxham, and Stan Houlberg an upcoming member. Anyone else interested in joining us, please contact Butch Cassidy's Hideout Motel, in Circleville, Utah for reservations. Just a note, Butch Cassidy's actual cabin is located at the southern edge of town and is in the process of being restored.

THE "SHOP"

Bob McCall

A quick look behind the scenes with a master bamboo rod maker.

Whether artist or craftsman, hobbyist or professional, there are two undeniable grails—time and space. Juggling the two can become frustrating. I built a number of early bamboo rods moving Cheryl's car out, setting up saw horses and a plywood workbench, gathering tools and supplies and finally getting started only to work awhile and reverse the process.

Fast forward and today I am blessed that I possess both time and space. A year or so ago, with the help of some friends, I built a workshop. My fishing/



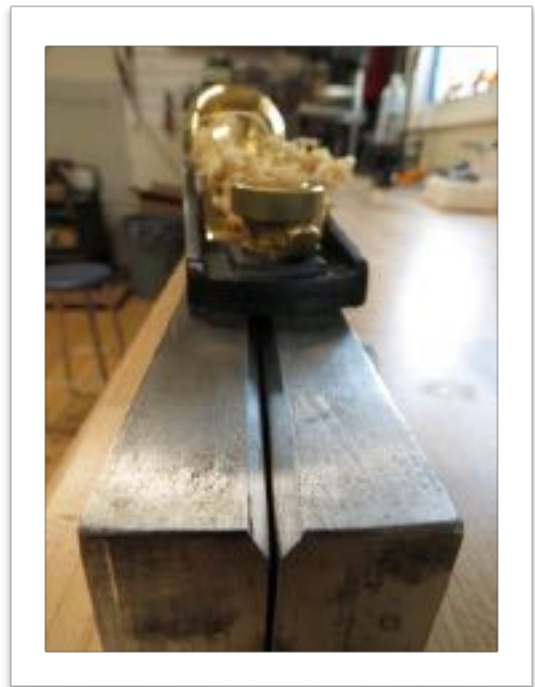
hunting buddy Mark helped build the shop itself and our own Roger K. helped with the electrical. Oh yeah...I also retired a while back!

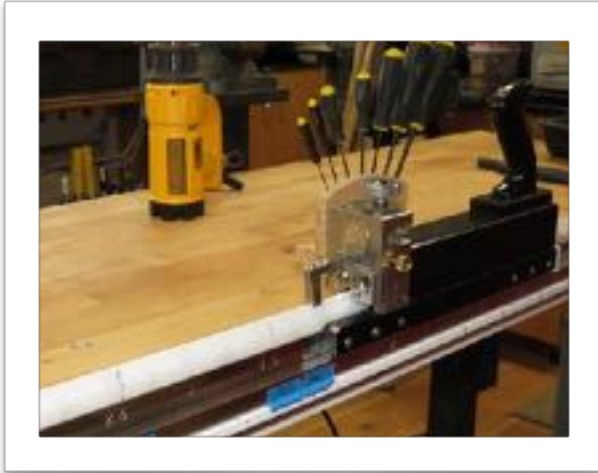
Some of the tools and space are general 'workshop'. Other tools are dedicated bamboo rod making setups. With a lathe I can turn nickel silver bar-stock into reel seat hardware, and exotic woods into reel seat inserts.



A planing form with a 60 deg. groove, adjustable for depth, helps turn a strip of bamboo into a perfect triangle that can taper down much smaller than a toothpick! Glue the six strips together and you have a hexagonal bamboo rod section. Below is a Morgan Hand Mill, another dedicated bamboo rod tool that also produces finished tapered strips.

Sometimes having the tools sitting there begging to be played with leads you down other rabbit holes. I read an article in 'PowerFibers', a





bamboo rod making publication about making a jig to twist your own snake guides. Buy some brass bar stock, nickel silver wire, and away I go.

I can make snakes for next to nothing...I wonder how many thousands of dollars I spent to do that! Of course that's not the point. It's kinda' like tying flies to save money right?



If you're ever interested in a visit to see how a twelve foot bamboo culm turns into a fly rod, or how a block of wood and a bar of metal becomes a reel seat, give me a call. I really enjoy sharing the process.



Ed. Note: Another gem currently on Bob's workbench...



UTAH ROADTRIP

BEN FRANKEN

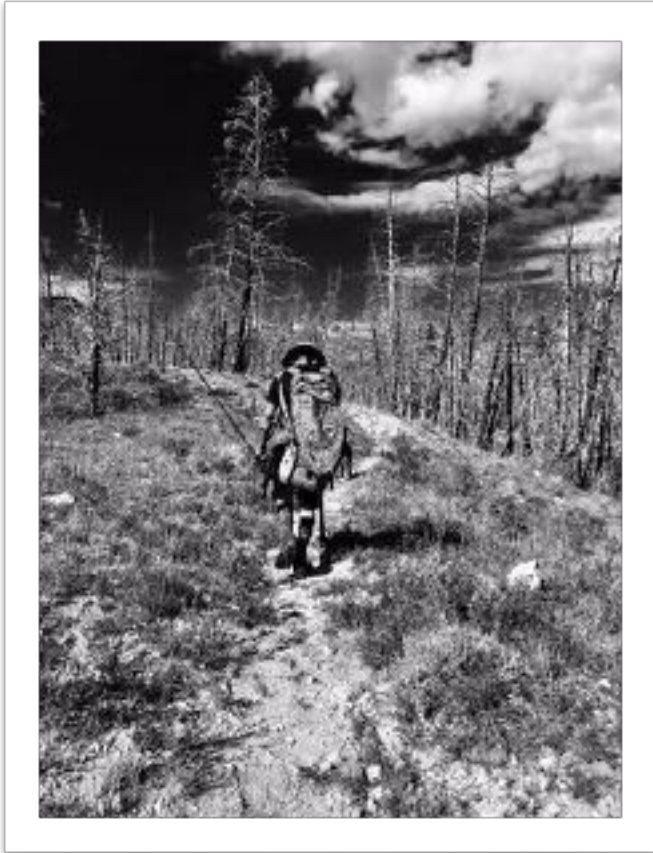


The mission: tiger trout, big brookies, and grayling in Utah.

Fly fishing buddy, Frank Vargas, and I arrived in Loa, Utah at sunrise on a Tuesday morning. The Quiet Fly Fisher was our destination. The lights were on in the main house, but the little fly shop was dark and closed. I'd called earlier to confirm that the website was correct, double checking to be sure that they opened at sunrise and to see if they could point us in the right direction for our mission. Mike, the owner, said, "Yes" and "yes".

So while we waited we drove to a local market and got Frank a license; when we returned it was open. I had printed out 10 or so pages from the DFG with names of lakes with species information that we wanted to target. I just didn't have maps or any experience in this area. So I showed them to Mike and asked for a half day guide or if I could buy a map with directions on it.

Well, he was going to guide later in the day and suggested that we text him the next day if we're having a tough time to set up a guide. He told us there were a few more guides than himself.



There were no maps available and after a long conversation I learned that the information I got from DFG was wrong. I was left with some crude directions drawn on paper, with markings like: at the a-frame turn right...and if you passed the bridge you've gone too far...and stay right at the forks on the dirt roads.

All the access to these lakes is by side by sides, quads, or 4x4s. So we set off about 10 am, much later than we were hoping, and got to Bicknell Bottoms, a spring creek running through farm land. We were assured the average fish in there were 22". So yeah,

Frank and I were excited! We spotted a few big ones that were indeed that big, but they were also very spooky. It was tough technical fishing to say the least. After a few hours I was just trying to catch an 8" dink to break the ice, but with no luck. So we moved on to the steep dirt roads to get to our first area and base camp, Colman Reservoir.

We arrived to a completely green, moss-covered lake. Mike mentioned something called duckweed that might be covering the lakes. I shrugged and decided to clear a path with my float tube. Frank headed down to fish from shore while I got my tube ready. I



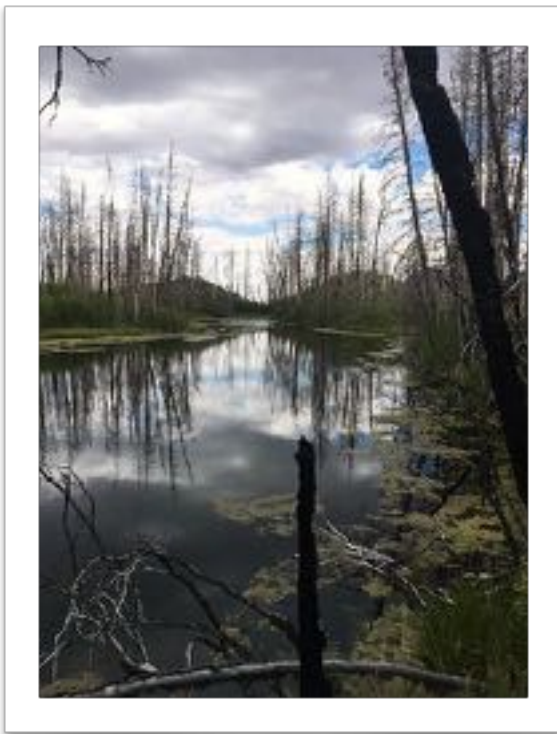


rigged two rods—one with a sinking line and one with a floating bobber set up with midges.

I soon learned that the inverter for the pump wasn't working, but no problem I thought, I had a hand pump. I got my set up and hiked 1/4 mile to launch. As I was backing in while wearing my fins, I noticed my tube was

soft. Shit, there's a leak I figured! No problem I have another tube. I hiked back and blew up my second tube and got ready to launch again. Soft again! So I started blowing it up by mouth hoping I could just do that every 10 minutes out there while fishing. But it was leaking too fast. So I hiked back again,

deflated my first tube, took out the bladder, found the leak, and quickly patched it with some gaffers' tape. Finally I was back again, excited, and launching.



As I kicked away from the shoreline, my fish finder was reading 10' of water and then, ding! A fish! I cast my sinking line with a black and orange Deebugger and was ready for a strike. Nothing happened. Meanwhile my fish finder was showing big fish, and little fish 5 of them, then 10 of them, then 20. No hits. WTF? Something was wrong. I fished callibaetis, caddis, midges, steamers in every color. I tried dries. Nothing. I noticed scuds in the water. So I



matched the color and size and tried different retrieval techniques. Nothing. After a few hours I got out and was kind of getting pissed at this point. It was around 5 and Frank was going to kick back, but I said screw this and decided to go scout the next lake on our plan.

So I started out on my way up a 1.2 mile trail towards the Bullberry Lakes. This is where I saw a bear country warning sign. Frank had the .45, but I brought my bear spray. I continued up the steep trail, and about a half mile in I heard something big moving in the bushes about 10 yards ahead at 11 o'clock. So I stopped and stood still. Then

again there was movement. A big black animal that I couldn't make out was stepping closer. I pointed my rod tips out while slowly walking backwards. I slid my sling pack around and got out the bear spray and stopped.

Now I was looking at where I stood and where I needed to be. I hiked up to higher clear ground on my right side and started hearing noises to my right. I was going to be in a crossfire! Even worse I noticed the wind is blowing right at me—this was not good for bear spray. So I stood my ground for about 5 minutes which seemed like an hour. Finally movement came on the left again and I could see an orange tag on a big black silhouette. Tagged bear I thought? I waited and shouted, "Back! Back!" About that time two cow calfs jumped out to my right. The big momma appeared on the left a minute later. OMG that was intense! All that excitement for just some cattle.

Relieved, I lit a cigarette and started hiking again. As I reached the third hill top I spotted some risers down below on my right in a small clearing of moss. Yeah! I can physically see fish. As I continued down the trail I arrived to what was Bullberry Lake #1...think. It was about the length of a football field and half the width. I stayed high and watched for a minute. There were risers

everywhere in clear water. I also spotted the first tigers I'd ever seen. They were as cool as I thought they would be. Most were about 12" with the occasional one going 18"-20".



They had black and white tips on their anal fins, with a combination of spots and squiggles on their sides, almost like a green and yellow camouflage pattern.

I fished for about 45 minutes with a lot of followers and no takers. Finally I caught a small one and was excited to see my first tiger, but to my surprise it was a beautiful little Colorado River cutthroat.

I started on my way back before it got too dark. I was just thinking of the next day going back with Frank. I got to base camp and told him all about the lake and how things were looking up. We had fresh pork chops from my brother—just whacked three days before—and saffron rice for dinner.

The next morning we strung up our rods, hung the foodie trash from a tree, and headed out. Lady, Frank's chocolate lab, led the way. With our heads down and hiking with a purpose I looked up after a half hour and something looked different. We had taken a wrong turn somewhere and had to back track. So we bushwhacked over one ridge then another and finally arrived at the lake.

We split up and got to work. Frank was throwing big meaty streamers, while I went with chironomids and small dries. We both had interests on every cast but only a few takers. Finally Frank landed one; it was another beautiful cutthroat. I kept working on this tiger that was about 16" with no luck. I threw everything at him. That's when I grabbed the Sexy Times Damsel out of my box and added a small dropper. I'd tried everything else; what the hell I thought? Suddenly a fish came up and grabbed it! Well, cool! After a 30-second fight and it was off. Shi*t! F*cking barbless hooks! Half the day was gone, thunder heads were forming and we started getting wet. Frank had another fish on and I raced over to see. This time it was a tiger. It was an eight incher, but a tiger! I hugged Frank and congratulated him. So I grabbed my rods and said,



"I'm going to find these other lakes. I'll turn back if I don't see anything in 45 minutes."

I started off, and within 15 minutes I saw a dirty, tiny moss covered pond. Out in the center of it was an owl perched on a burned tree trunk staring right at me. This place was weird. I'd never seen an owl midday before, and I thought to myself, if someone had

blindfolded me and dropped me off here I would imagine I was in a southern bayou. It was definitely not 9,000 foot elevation in Utah. Around the next bend I saw it. Was it Bullberry #2 or #3? I still don't know. It was split in two by a trail between the two lakes. It had lots of shoreline moss with limited access points. I followed the trail down to an obvious fishing spot for bait and lures. The scene was tough, with heavy trees behind so there would be no back casting, and heavy moss in front of me. As I stared into the clear water beyond the moss I spotted a monster, cruising slowly about 50' out. As I looked closely I could tell it was a tiger and a big one weighing 7-10 lbs. I grabbed my 5wt. with floating line, rigged with the Sexy Times Damsel and a dropper. So I wiggle fed out about 30' of line and prepared for a big roll cast. I knew I had maybe one shot at it. So I got my first roll out to the right, and the second throw right at the fish. It landed a good 10' short, but the fish turned around and headed towards my fly fast with great commitment. I was ready and with its velocity it breached close to my fly. What happened? I brought my fly in and revealed a moss covered dropper and moss underneath my dry. I must have picked it up on the roll cast. I bush whacked around the whole lake looking for access and cruising fish. I spotted another one in the 5 lb. range and flip cast my type 3 sinking line at him, but he spooked. So I regrouped tied a new 4x tippet on my floating line, removed the dropper, and headed back to the first spot. Cloud cover dampened my vision now, even with my polarized glasses, I cast in the same spot blindly. I waited then twitched my fly gently and waited. I made another roll cast to around 40' and twitched. Then swoosh, big rings and my fly was gone. I set the hook firmly but not too fast. Wow! Adrenaline was pumping my thoughts were racing! Keep pressure on him; let him run if he needs to go, and f*ck that fly's barbless! I was also worried about the big log in

front of me and all the moss. So I tired her out got her close and let her go for one last run. With steady pressure I steered her around the obstacles and into the net. I couldn't believe it! I was shaking. I caught a tiger! It was a really big one at 25.5" and about 6 lbs. I kept her in the water, in the net while fumbling for my phone. I set her on my lap got a few pictures and a video as she flopped back into the water. I



got her back into the net. I regrouped, got a few more pictures and released the giant. I was so stoked! I grabbed my rods and headed back towards Frank briskly but with purpose. When he came in view I told him I caught a tiger,

playing it way down. He then told me he got a random text from Gurdie that my son Hunter had a medical emergency.



My phone hadn't worked for a hundred miles with Sprint, but luckily Frank's Verizon service worked. I called Hunter's mom with 9% battery left on the phone and found out that he had surgery the night before because his appendix ruptured. I was told he was

okay but he was asking for me. So I said we will be on our way. Being 12-14 hours from home I told Frank let's spend no more than an hour and get another fish.

We ran down the trail, and I showed Frank the spot. He decided to start 100' or so away. I tied on a Burgundy Dee Bugger with a tungsten cone in the



thorax area. I scrambled to find one because I tied almost all of them unweighted. I roll cast it out there and within a few strips in I was on again. We both couldn't believe it. Frank ran over and got some pictures. I insisted on him taking my spot and my fly. He reluctantly agreed, and what a good

decision he made! He proceeded to catch three beautiful fish in 20 minutes.



We called it quits and raced back to the truck. I frantically threw all my gear in the truck and we set off for home. We drove in shifts and made it back the next day. I got to the hospital and Hunter was happy to see me. I spent the night with him and he is doing great!

fantastic experience! There were too many photos to print in the newsletter, but I bet with a little arm twisting, he'd be happy to show the rest of them to you...

Ed. Note: Many thanks to Ben for sharing this

SOUTHWEST COUNCIL IFFF NEWS



WHAT : A FREE for-fun surf fly fishing "tournament"

WHEN : October 21, 2017

WHERE : Rincon Beach Park, Carpinteria

Riptide Rendezvous is a non-profit fundraising event for the Southwest Council of Fly Fishers International.

*No entry fee All Catch-and-Release BBQ & Raffle
"Early-bird" casting clinic*

More info at: <http://riptide-derendezvous.com>

Register at:
<https://ianglertournament.com/riptide-derendezvous-2017>

Calling all fly anglers! On Saturday, October 21, 2017, the SWCIIFF will hold its first annual "Riptide Rendezvous," a fly fishing-only surf-fishing contest. The event will be held at Rincon Beach Park in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara County.

There is no cost to enter the event, which will follow a format similar to Al Quattrocchi's previous One Surf Fly events. Anglers are restricted to the use of just one fly during the allotted fishing time, and all fish will be measured, photographed, and released. In addition to awards for first, largest and most fish caught, there will be a great raffle of fly fishing and outdoor gear, with all



proceeds benefiting the Southwest Council, International Federation of Fly Fishers and their related outreach programs.

Past surf fly fishing events have been a great place to see old friends, make new friends, and share a tale or two, on top of helping raise money for a worthy cause. Make sure you mark the date on your calendar!

**John Loo
Rendezvous Director**