

FINNY FACTS

April 2021

San Diego Fly Fishers

Cleaner Water, Brighter Streams, Better Fishing

Volume 44 No. 04

Club Meeting April 5, 7:30 pm

Rick Hafele

Professional aquatic entomologist and an internationally known fly-fishing author, speaker, and photographer.

Fishing Emergers



Club Meeting: [Zoom Link](#)

Follow all the action on the Club's [Facebook page](#)

Access the Club Calendar: [SDFP Calendar](#)

Renew your membership with
San Diego Fly Fishers for 2021

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Please send submissions to
editor@sandiegoflyfishers.com

President's Message



Jim Castelluzzo
April 1, 2021

president@sandiegoflyfishers.com

We have emerged from a very dark winter into a bright and hopeful spring. In spite of quarantines and forced isolation, our club members have remained engaged in weekly outings, forays into the Sierras, local lakes, and the San Diego and Colorado Rivers in search of Trout Bass and Stripers. Kai's March outing to Glorietta Bay had the largest club turnout to date. Our members and friends are excited about getting out on the water, meeting, and reconnecting with fellow anglers.

This fishing season will have a turnout like no other. I feel the excitement. Everyone is eager to get out and wet a line this season. Anglers and their families will be out in force, eager to get back to the great outdoors. My suggestion is to pick your destinations well to avoid combat fishing. Also be hyper-vigilant on the roads this season. I've been seeing many angry, chaotic, and reckless drivers on the road this year, more than usual. Be careful out there.

We have a dedicated group of volunteers that always show up when called on for our outreach programs. Gary Strawn has another work trip planned for the Golden Trout Wilderness in June. I look forward to seeing that meadow.

I will be discussing reopening meetings at the SWYC with Bruce Harris and our BOD. We will discuss our earliest estimate for safe reopening and perhaps ideas for outdoor meeting venues until the SWYC officially opens for group events. Stay tuned for updates in the Indicator.

Trout season officially opens on April 24 for waters without special regulations.

Excerpts:

"Trout are among those creatures who are one hell of a lot prettier than they need to be. They can get you to wondering about the hidden workings of reality...."

"There are people in my life who sometimes worry about me when I go off into the fields and streams, not realizing that the country is a calm, gracious, forgiving place and that the real dangers are found in the civilization you have to pass through to get there."

— **John Gierach, Trout Bum**

"And never fall into that statistical macho trap that's so prevalent in fly-fishing these days. If you keep score, you can be beaten, but if you refuse to compete you can leave the impression that you have long since risen above that kind of crap. When someone says to you, "I caught forty-eight trout and ten of them were twenty inches or better. How'd you do?" say, "Yeah, we got some. Couple nice ones, too."

— **John Gierach, Death, Taxes, and Leaky Waders: A John Gierach Fly-Fishing Treasury.**

Join us!

Speaker Programs

Zoom!

Monday, April 5, 7:30 pm

Rick Hafele

Fishing Emergers

Emerging insects provide some of the most exciting and productive fly-fishing opportunities. But you have to have the right fly and present it the right way. This program explains the in's and out's of choosing the right fly for the right emerger and how to fish them.

Wednesday, April 21, 7:30 pm

James Garrettson

Fly Fishing Northern New Mexico

"A Guide's Approach to the Water"

Join Zoom Meeting : <https://www.sandiegoflyfishers.com/zoom-directory>

A few ground rules so that this call will be enjoyable, Please review the following before you login:

- Everyone who connects to the call will have their audio muted by default. The moderator will control the audio and unmute your microphone when you are going to ask a question or make a comment.
- If you wish to ask a question please send a message to the moderator using the chat function or raise your hand using the participants function (this can be done at any time). The Speaker and moderator will coordinate on responding to anyone who wishes to ask a question.
- We will wait until the end of the presentation to allow people to ask questions and comment. We will call on you and allow you to speak.

Know of someone who would be a good candidate for speaking to the club?
contact either [Jim Castelluzzo](#) or [Tim Huckaby](#)

Happenings



General regs trout season begins April 24. Check out the regulations on you favorite waters.

<https://wildlife.ca.gov/>

The SDFF Board of Directors supports the following proposed change to the California fishing license regulations.

<https://ccacalifornia.org/california-assemblymember-jim-wood-introduces-ab-817-to-establish-a-365-day-state-fishing-license/>

The board will discuss plans for reopening monthly club meetings. At last discussion, the SWYC site was not yet available for gatherings. The time and location will be posted here and in The Indicator. We are almost there!

Alan Thomson is hopeful that the Sunday casting instruction will resume at Lake Murry soon. Details are being worked out and we should have the probable starting date listed here next month.

Gretchen Yearous posted some notes on the local lakes: Barrett opens in May with boats available. Tickets available from Ticketmaster to be scheduled in April. Sutherland opened in March "I arrived Sunday afternoon. Water was really cold but same level as last year in July. Reports of catching bass off a dock Saturday late. Kayaker said his friends caught a nice bass Sunday afternoon. Was darn cold at 4:30 p.m. Fridays—shoreline, tubers, kayaks; but no boats."

Please send news, updates, reports, suggestions to be shared on this page. We want this media to serve the club in any way it can.

Editor: editor@sandiegoflyfishers.com

Happenings

Club Outing March 7, Glorietta, San Diego Bay

The largest club outing post pandemic, more pictures than can fit and don't have everyone's name. Great to see some new and familiar faces, and, a few fish were caught too!



Mel



Don



Raine and Tim



Gary, aka Lawrence of Arabia



Did these guys come to eat or fish?



Mehl, Bob, and Sheri



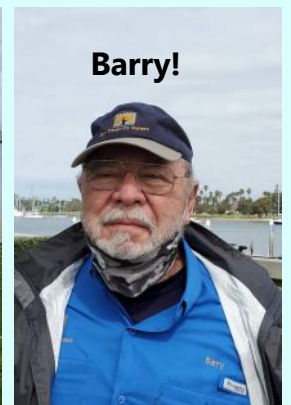
Alan



Alex on the water

As always, thanks to Kai for organizing the outing and feeding the fisherman, and a double thumbs up to the people who brought the delicious chocolate cupcakes! (Mehl & Sheri?)

To Jim's left is Tim and Raine, to his right is Kai, and... maybe we need name tags next time!



Barry!

Feature Article

Fishing Hat Creek By Erik Helgeson



Hat Creek as a Wild Trout Fishery. The state approved. The effort began by shocking the fish, picking out the trout, and storing them in the local hatchery. A fish barrier was constructed to keep the non-game fish from swimming up from Lake Britton. The river was then poisoned, killing the non-game fish. After the poison was neutralized, the native trout were put back, and the state designated Hat Creek as California's first "Wild Trout Stream". The regulations are basically Catch and Release, artificials only, single barbless hooks. The Lower Hat contains three main sections, Power House Riffle, The Flats, and The Freestone.

The Powerhouse Riffle (PHR)

The Powerhouse Riffle is about 450 yards of fast and heavy pocket water that flows from the outflow of Hat Powerhouse #2. The water flows through a small canyon, through a deep run, and then opens up into the Flats Section. PHR is a prolific bug factory, turn over a rock and you apt to find a dozen different aquatic insects. So, there are a lot of fish in PHR, but there are also a lot of fisherman at times, and when the guides are out, this is where they bring their clients to ensure they catch a fish or two. There are many smaller fish in PHR as it is also the upstream spawning grounds. There are a lot of big fish also, the largest fish I've ever caught on Hat, a twenty something inch Brown, was on a dry stonefly in the PHR section.

PHR Techniques

The fast and heavy pocket water is mostly high stick nymphing country. There are basically fish everywhere, but the typical areas, the edges, behind and in front of rocks, the seams between currents, etc. is where you'll find them. Be careful wading, use a staff, there are holes that you wouldn't expect and rocks you can't see. In the spring, when the Salmon Flies are around, it's great fun to slap a big Sofa Pillow near the edges and the eddies behind the bigger rocks. If you get lucky, a small surface explosion will occur and your fly will disappear in the mouth of a large trout who couldn't resist a huge meal.

History

Hat Creek is the "Mecca" of California Fly Fishing. Its waters originate as snow melt off Mount Lassen, some directly, but most of the water percolates through volcanic rock for about twenty miles and erupts in a big spring that flows into the fledging Hat Creek. This forms "Upper Hat".

Upper Hat runs parallel to Highway 89 and is a small stream that presents both fast pocket water, and a few smooth glides. It is essentially a put-and-take fishery with a lot of angling pressure during the summer. It's a place to go with kids and salmon eggs or "Trout Crack" (Powerbait, term courtesy of Mike Copp), where there are usually plenty of fish that you can keep and cook for dinner. There are many turnouts along the highway as well as a few parks and campgrounds.

More snowmelt from Lassen percolates further north through the volcanic rock and emerges at about 200 CFM into Rising River Lake. Rising River flows out of the lake and joins Hat Creek in the town of Cassel. Unfortunately, Rising River is completely on private property, Clint Eastwood own a large chunk of it, so if you know Clint, you might be very popular in Fly Fishing circles. Hat Creek at this point flows through a power plant, a "Lake" of sorts, through another power plant, and emerges as "Lower Hat Creek". Lower Hat is the "Mecca" of which I spoke.

Lower Hat was not always a great trout stream, it was once overrun with non-game fish. Back in the mid-sixties, a group of anglers lobbied the state to restore

Feature Article, cont.

Below the pocket water is an open weedy section, lots of fish here too and high stick nymphing works well. Run your nymph in the seams between the weeds, you will occasionally find a nice fish hanging there. Below the open section is the "Honey Hole." Basically it is a deep run that many of the bugs dislodged in the pocket water above get funneled into. It's great nymphing water and whether you're a short liner, long liner/indicator, or a dragger, you're likely to catch fish.

The Flats



The Flats below PHR

The Flats run from just below the PHR for about two miles. This is classic spring creek water. The surface is smooth, there are many weeds, subtle currents, and large fish. Stalking the Flats for rising fish is great fun. It can also be extremely frustrating. Your line has to land gently, and your drifts have to be drag free. Matching the hatch is critical, and there are times of year when there are so many different bugs on the water that you may be changing flies constantly as you try to pick off that big fish in a pod of twenty risers. Other times, there will be so many Trico spinner's on the water, yours is likely to get lost in the mix. Keep in mind here that during a hatch, fish are still feeding on nymphs as they rise to the surface, so a dry / dropper rig can be very effective.

The Freestone Section

The last ¾ mile or so is freestone water. There are pockets, riffles, and runs. All the classic freestone bugs are available, and during Salmon Fly season, it can be great fun down here. There are not as many fish, but there are also not as many fishermen. In the few days I've fished here, I was the only one on the water. As my trips to Hat over the years have consisted of one or two weeks each year, I usually spend the short time I have on the PHR

and Flats sections. But as I am able to spend more time on Hat, this is the section I'm most excited about exploring. So, give it a shot if you want some solitude and enjoy classic freestone water.

The Fish

Lower Hat contains Rainbows and Browns. Hat Creek Rainbows are extremely strong, they pull hard! On that first run, it's hard to tell if you've got a 12 incher, or a 20 incher. Occasionally you'll hook a jumper, but mostly it's long, drag screaming runs. The browns also pull hard, but there's something about those Rainbows! This mix of fish is probably 90% Rainbows, but over the last several years, the Browns have become more prolific. At one time catching a brown was extremely rare, but now, I'll catch a few on every trip. The last one was a hooked jawed male about 20 inches, great fun.

Getting there

PHR: Take 299 East to PowerHouse #2 road, about 7 miles East of town. You'll pass Cassel Road, then as you go up the hill, you'll see a Slow Truck sign, a "T" intersection sign, and just before PowerHouse #2 road, you'll see a Deer Crossing sign. Turn right, then make a left, following the paved road, all the way down to the PowerHouse. You find a dirt parking lot, and a primitive bathroom.

The Flats: You can walk downstream from PHR, or come in via Carbon Flat road or Hat Creek Park. Hat Creek Park is a little further East on Highway 299, you go down the hill and the park is on your left. The park has primitive bathrooms, picnic tables, fire grills, and fire pits. Carbon Flat road is a little further, cross over Hat Creek bridge is a dirt road on your right. You'll go through a cattle gate (be sure to close it!), and follow the road around to the parking lot.

The Freestone: About halfway down the hill toward the park, you'll see a road leading off to the left. Take it, if the gate is closed open and close it behind you. Follow the road all the way down the hill, there are a couple parking areas and a clear trail to the creek.

Other places for Hat Creek Info

The "Fly Fishing Guide to Northern California" has a great section on Hat Creek, it can be found [here](#). Dick Galland was once Hat Creek's "River Keeper."

Planned Trips 2021

April 17-18 Shorepounders Imperial Valley

The April 17/18 outing is going to be a bit different, and a three hour (one way) drive is involved. I've had multiple requests for an outing to the Imperial Valley to fish bass, striper and bluegill, so I've chosen Squaw lake as the destination. This location is a bit farther drive than the canals, but allows the use of float tubes, kayaks and power boats, and there is easy camping right there. The camping is dry (no hookups) but plenty of room for all of us. The fishing out there is rapidly heating up, and we should all be guaranteed to catch fish on this outing, but we will be there before the air temperatures get too hot and miserable.

Email me with any questions, [Kai Schumann](mailto:kai@sandiegoflyfishers.com)

- May 15** Bayside Park, San Diego Bay
- June 5-12** Estero Coyote, Baja Sur
- June 19** Barrett Reservoir (Bass!)
- July 11** Shorepounders, North Torrey Pines Beach
- August 15** Lake Hodges (Carp!)
- Sept 11** Shelter Island, San Diego Bay
- Oct. 3-9** La Ventana, Baja Sur
- Oct. 16** Lake Cuyamaca (Trout!)
- Nov. 14** Tidelands, San Diego Bay
- Dec. 18** San Vicente Reservoir (Cold!)

For more information Please contact **Kai Schumann**

or look for details in *The Indicator*.

Questions? Contact us at outings@sandiegoflyfishers.com



Fly of the Month

CDC Generic Mayfly Emerger

Hook: Mustad C49S # 10
Tying thread: Sheer 14/0 Grey
Tail: Wood duck fibers
Rib: Oval gold tinsel
Abdomen: Hare dub natural
Loop wing: CDC hackle & Wood duck fibers
Thorax: Hare dub Brown olive



thefeatherbender.com

CDC Mayfly Emerger

Hook: #16-20 Tiemco 101
Thread: Pale Yellow UTC 70 Denier
Shuck: Brown Z-Lon
Abdomen: PMD Superfine
Wing: CDC Oiler puff
Thorax: PMD Superfine



tailwaterjunkie.com

Check the websites listed with the photos for directions on tying.

Casting Corner

San Diego Fly Fishers Casting Program 2021

We are pleased to announce our casting instruction program for 2021. 2020 was a challenging year in many respects and as we look forward to this coming year, we appreciate everyone's patience as we have had to make adjustments to our casting programs.

Lake Murray will continue to be on hold, likely through the first half of the year. We will keep everyone updated when we believe we can restart that program safely.

In the meantime, if someone has a question or a trip planned and needs some assistance please email me at the email address below to discuss. I am often able to provide private or semi-private instruction.

Casting Skills Challenge Program: The FFI has reintroduced a program they call the Casting Skills Challenge. It is designed for the experienced beginner caster as well as intermediate and advanced fly fishers. It is meant to be a fun way to study, practice and challenge oneself in a progressive fashion. We will be offering this program to SDFP membership in 2021. More information on the program can be found on the FFI website.

I will be taking indications of interest the next several months and intend to hold an introductory ZOOM meeting in February to kick the program off.

If you have an interest, please email me at the email below.

Intermediate Casting Clinic: I will plan to hold it later in the year. We will limit attendance to ten. Times and dates will be published when determined.

For questions please contact: [John Wylie](#)



Conservation & Education



Trout in the Classroom 2021

Casslyn Fiser's 4th grade class from Warren Walker Elementary School fish release at Lake Murray, March 20th



Casa Vieja Work Crew

I can't confirm anything, but I'm planning for June 24 - 27. Anyone interested should email me. — Gary

Please continue to support SDFF and our conservation, education and outreach programs with your participation and donations at our fundraising events. You make all this possible.

If you know of a good conservation project that needs some support, please share your ideas with the committee.

Gary Strawn
conservation@sandiegoflyfishers.com

Other Programs

Project Healing Waters

Due to current restrictions, program is dark until further notice

Project Healing Waters (PHW) Fly Fishing is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and disabled veterans through fly fishing and associated activities including education and outings. San Diego Fly Fishers (SDFF) is proud to be a local affiliate of PHW. Our San Diego based program, serves veterans locally by providing opportunities to learn fly casting, fly tying and fly fishing. We are a service organization and are pleased to offer opportunities to our veterans to help them find out more about the arts associated with fly fishing. If you are looking for a good way to contribute to our veterans and your Club, please let us know.

Help us find Veterans in Need!

If you know a disabled veteran who would benefit from spending some time with us please contact [Lee McElravy](#)

Please look at our Club's PHW Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/PHWFF.SDFF/>

Rod Building

Stay tuned for when classes will resume

Space will be limited to ensure quality time for each student.
Dates will be announced in the *Finny Facts*.

In the interim, if you are beginning your own project and would like some advice or recommendations, please free to contact [Jack Duncan](#)

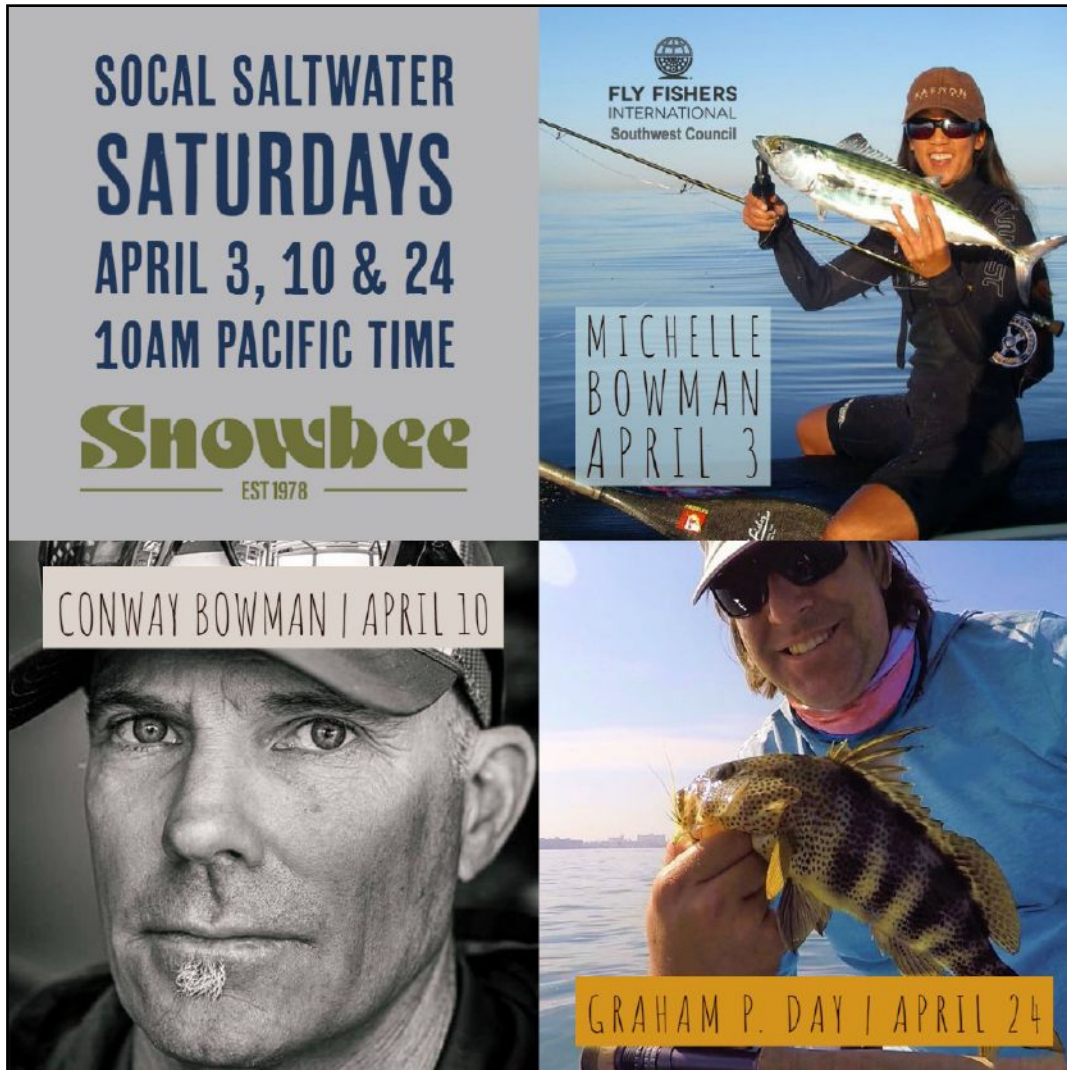
Women's Program

More information about future events as they become available. It will be posted here and on **Facebook** and **The Indicator**.

Contact Brooke Sargent, [Women's Program](#)



FLY FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL



Check out these programs on <https://www.swcffi.org/>

The **San Diego Fly Fishers** is affiliated with the **Southwest Council of Fly Fishers International** (SWCFFI).

For more information contact [John Wylie](#) our Representative for FFI.

For more information or to join FFI visit: <https://flyfishersinternational.org/>

Membership

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

**Ready to renew your membership with San Diego Fly Fishers?
Please support your club by planning to renew for 2021**

Regardless of current conditions we still plan an active year with monthly outings
zoom meetings talking about fishing and having fun.

Don't miss out! Join or renew!

You can renew your membership on-line through the SDFF website, or you can renew in person at
our monthly programs; or you can download an application on our website and mail a check to

**SAN DIEGO FLY FISHERS
C/O Stroud Tackle
1457 Morena Blvd
San Diego, CA 92110**

[Renew online](#)

Contact: [Alan Thompson](#)

Or Renew at the next Monthly SDFF Meeting

SDFF has four membership levels

Individual.....\$40

Family.....\$50

Individual Military.....FREE (Active Duty Only)

Renew your membership (or your family's). It's simple.

On-line at sandiegoflyfishers.com then follow the instructions.

Thank you,
Alan Thompson
Membership

Volunteers are needed

San Diego Fly Fishers is a service organization.
So please ask yourself...

“What service can I provide to my Club”?

Service Opportunities

Fishing Outings

This is a chance to help run a fishing outing for Club members. We are seeking volunteers to organize a day of fishing on our local waters. It's fun and easy. Pick your favorite water and contact [Kai Schumann](#) and we will help you get started.

- ◆ Pick a local lake
- ◆ Pick a location for the bay
- ◆ Pick a location for the surf

The whole idea is to involve more members in creating fishing events and get us on the water monthly.

Fundraising

- ◆ We need 2 or 3 more volunteers to help serve on the committee
- ◆ Contact: Warren Lew [fundraising](#)

Greeters are needed at our Monthly meetings!

We are planning to have 2 or 3 greeters at each event to help new people into our Club. It's a great way to serve the Club and meet new Flyfishers.

Please contact [Jim Castelluzzo](#)

Project Healing Waters

- ◆ Help with this important program that serves Veterans in need.
- ◆ If you know of a Veteran in need Please let us know!
- ◆ Contact: [Lee McElravy](#) to learn how you can contribute.

Women's Program

- ◆ Please contact Brooke Sargent [Women's Programs](#) for information and way to get involved.

Fishing!



First bonefish for Richard!



First corbina for Mel!



First snook for Jennifer!



First fish on the fly for Eric!



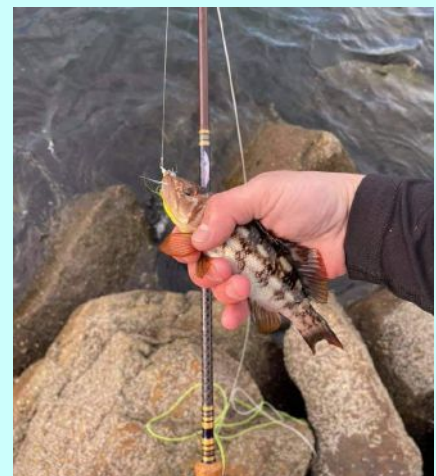
Kim coaches Nicole on the water



Bass master Garcia!



Brooke nails a spottie!



First fish on the fly for Hunter!

Guides and Resources

San Diego Fly Fishers does not endorse or recommend any particular Guide or Business. This Information is intended to provide the reader with known providers of services related to fly fishing in our local area and in California. This is not intended to be a complete list of available services.

Guides

Eastern Sierra:

[Sierra Drifters](#)

[Sierra Troutdoorsman](#)

[Pat Jaeger Fly Fishing](#)

[Kern River Fly Shop](#)

Northern California:

[Acosta Fly Fishing](#) (Steelhead)

[Fine and Far Fly Fishing](#) (Steelhead/Spey Trips)

[Baiocchi's Troutfitters](#)

San Diego Bay/Surf/Lakes:

[Conway Bowman](#)

[Alex Cady @ Fly Stop](#)

Fly Fishing Equipment:

[STROUD TACKLE](#)

[THE FLY STOP](#)

[Flies by Favorite](#)

River Flows and Reports

[Dreamflows](#)

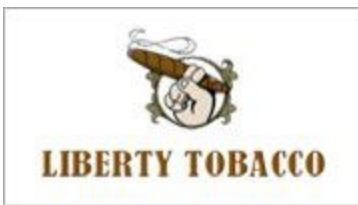
[USGS Flows](#)

[California Data Exchange](#)

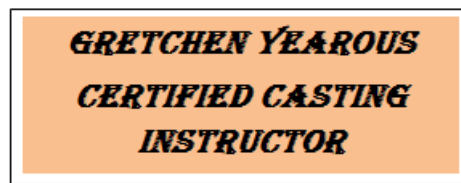
[Lower Owens River](#)



Thanks for supporting San Diego Fly Fishers



Bob Berry Fish Carvings



We need your help getting rid of Carp at Lake Cuyamaca!



CARP ANGLERS WANTED, CONVENTIONAL ROD AND REEL, SPEAR, OR BOW

- KILL A CARP and FISH FOR FREE!

Board of Directors

San Diego Fly Fishers Board of Directors 2021

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Paul Woolery Community Outreach

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The Board meets at 6:30 PM on the last Monday of each month at the San Diego River Park Foundation Office on Pacific Hwy. (Currently held on Zoom.)

For Directions to all Club Meetings, Clinics and Fly tying classes visit our website at:
[Activities Maps](#)

The Indicator

Emailed twice a month
with updates and breaking
news!
Make sure you are on the
list to stay informed.

Follow SDFF adventures
and news our FACEBOOK
page. Post your own
adventures and
pictures.

[San Diego Fly Fishers](#)



Cleaner Water, Brighter Streams, Better Fishing

Tailing Loops

The Editor Learns a Lesson

My dad was a golfer who viewed fishing as a boring sport for people who like to sit for hours holding a beer, and waiting. He was impatient and didn't drink, so when it came to learning to fish, I was on my own, but my evolution to fly fishing was a decades long process.

When I became a father I passed on my bias. Golf may be fun off the tee, where you get to lay into the little ball with a club, but it becomes increasingly tedious the closer you get to the hole, and putting makes grown men wince, cuss, and endlessly shift their balance while staring at the grass as though waiting for the turf to utter a secret.

I figured if I tried to teach Thomas, my sixteen-year-old son, to fly fish he'd resist my every instruction simply on the adolescent principle that all actions conducted by "old people" especially parents, are inherently wrong.

So rather than try to teach him to fly cast, or allow him to take up an abomination such as golf, I decided to hire a guide, Jason Christian, with Sierra Troutdoorsman, out of Mammoth Lakes, to do the work for me, reasoning that with a few pointers and half an hour of practice, we'd be pursuing trout on the Owens River, bonding, as it were, father and son....

My son proved a quick study, if the desired result was to fish like his old man. No amount of coaching could stop him from whipping the rod way past two o'clock on the backcast, then bringing it forward with the grace of a bar fighter, snapping off several flies in the process. After two hours, when his line actually settled on a surface other than branches, my jacket, or the guide's flesh, and a fish dunked the indicator, he executed a magnificent hook set, neglecting to remove any slack, and thus throwing an enormous loop over his shoulder with the rod tip pointed directly at the horizon behind him. While the guide unraveled the line from of my son's neck and the structure of the shoreline, the fish calmly executed a self-release.

I thought, this might be a great time to call it a day and head to the brewery. But the guide had other plans. Seems he relished a challenge and was determined to transform my son into a functioning fly fisher. I decided to remove myself from the situation. Upstream, I found solitude and relief from watching my son's struggles. I even managed to hook a few fish, but this whole plan was looking ill-conceived, at best.

As noon approached, I worked my way back, expecting to see my son in a typical pose, sitting on the bank staring at his phone. But, instead, he was knee deep and lobbing graceful (well, sort of) casts with a dry/dropper.

"Set!" Thomas raised the rod smoothly as a small rainbow cleared the surface shaking its body in defiance. The transformation was impressive. It would be overly dramatic to say that the scene brought a tear to my eye, but I was moved like a little league father who watches his son finally square up a fast ball.

"Nice, you got one!"

"That's my fifth one, dad" he said casually.

"Ready to go?"

My son looked to the guide for the answer.

"Hey dude, you're dialed in. Cast again!"

So I made myself comfortable and congratulated myself on being such an intelligent and insightful father. This was turning out to be a wise decision after all, creating happiness for both of us. And best of all, we get to dress way cooler than golfers.



Jason heroics produce a smile from a rather stoic kid.