



# Rx Fly Fishing!

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Jerry Neuburger, Editor

Stockton, California

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## Calendar

March 5, Trout Bout

March 9, General Membership meeting

March 16, BOD meeting

March 19, Stanislaus River drift

March 23, Fly of the month fly tying.

Possible guided outing to Pyramid Lake, date to be set once six anglers sign up.

**March Fly of the Month tying session  
Wednesday,  
March 23,  
6:30pm. Oak Grove Park Nature Center.**

## Rain, outings, fly tying and the board

El Niño where are you! More rain due next weekend. We slipped as a city on our conservation efforts and fell below our goal number of 25% to 24%, not a big deal, because 24 is still a really good number but maybe a sign we are relaxing our efforts to conserve. My message is don't stop. Let's keep the full court press on! Our woods, lakes, rivers, streams, and mostly our snow pack needs it! This is still February a winter month acting like it wants to be Spring! Our fishing waters desperately needs our help.

On the Horizon, we need volunteers for the Bob McMillan Trout bout, Saturday, March 5th, at approximately 6:30 AM at Oak Grove Park in Stockton. This is a fun morning and we need help with the set up and cart sales. The day is over by 1:00 PM. Look forward to seeing you out there.

We have scheduled a drift or float on the Stanislaus River on the 19th. Mike Nicolson is your fishmeister contact and more info will be sent via email. Last year we had a pretty decent turn out, and was the basis of a really fun day. As we get closer all trips are subject to changing water conditions so stay tuned for more info to follow.

On another note, Mike is also leading the fly tying sessions on the fourth Wednesday night, every month, this month March 23rd, 6:00 to about 7:30 PM. Beginners are welcomed as well as seasoned tiers! If your seeking some greater knowledge of both fishing and fly tying, as well as an opportunity to meet some of our membership this is an excellent place to do it! Mike is forthcoming with his experience and his tying abilities and conducting some very worth while classes on flies that produce results. I encourage you to check it out! A fee of \$5. Is charged for materials which are provided. We also have

extra vises but if you have your own vise bring it. The class is becoming very popular with the membership.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the next General Meeting, March 9th. We have long time board member, and local guide, Jerry Neuburger, making a presentation on Stillwater fishing. I was fortunate enough two or three years ago to attend Jerry's class and I can tell you this session will be in depth and very informative? The discovery of information will help you the next time your in your pontoon in the middle of the lake and trying to figure things out! But if I don't see you at our next meeting, maybe at the next outing. See you on the water.

The Board and officers are working on 2016 goals to make our club the best it can be. Get to know our Board members and officers, and please thank them for their efforts. We still have VP vacancy that needs filling as well as a communication manager, to handle our Web site and Newsletter beginning 2017. If necessary we will entertain a separate person for just the web site and a second person for the newsletter. Most materials and articles on these two jobs are provided and need not be generated by the communication manager. The Manager will primarily do the computer input. If you're able and willing I encourage you to step up, we need you? Please remember club positions are not as burdensome as their titles might make them sound, in reality, they are mostly about pitching in when a job needs doing. We have enough experience to help anyone do any job we might have! Step up ..... you will probably enrich your life more than you know!

President Gil Parker

Sent from my I-pad.

# A primer on still water fishing the focus of this month's general meeting

.by Jerry Neuburger

I was lucky enough to join the Delta Fly Fishers when there were a great group of guys that liked to focus on trophy Stillwater fisheries like Manzanita Lake, Martis Reservoir, Milton Reservoir and Eagle Lake.

In order to fish these waters effectively, especially to find fish and figure out what they were eating, one had to become a student of lakes, their various seasons, and the bugs that inhabited them.

Sometimes rather than fish from a boat or tube, it was more effective

to fish from the shore. A delicate cast to a cruising trout, the take and hookup definitely got the blood pumping. And then there were those exciting times such as the motorboat caddis hatch on Manzanita Lake when the brown trout struck the flies with such fierceness, one prayed that the 3x tippet would be strong enough to take the initial shock.

This month's program will cover the four seasons of a lake, from ice out to freeze up, how the lake "turns over" at certain times of the year, the zones to find cruising and feeding fish and the bugs they feed on.

The presentation is designed for the beginner fly fisher with the idea of getting them started on a more intellectual approach to Stillwater fishing, including when, where and what to fish with.

The presentation will take place at the John R Williams school, Don Avenue, Stockton, on March 9th at 7:00pm. The meeting is open to the general public. Members are encouraged to bring a friend.

Hats and other club logo wear will be available at the meeting as well as coffee and cookies.

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## February Yuba Outing: Big Turn Out, Turbid Waters

By Bob Fujimura

Although the original January 30th outing date was cancelled due to El Nino related storm event and weekly rain fronts threatened to ruin the rescheduled outing on February 13<sup>th</sup>, this popular DFF outing was held with 20 members participating. A mixed group of past and new attendees met at 7:00 am in front of entrance gate to the road to the covered picnic area overlooking the Lower Yuba River approximately two miles upstream of the Highway 20 Bridge. Most of the members got their fishing gear in order and got their final advice or answers to their initial question before they left to fish or explore the several miles of relatively private water. Hosts Jean and Bob Fujimura worked on either helping novice fly fishers or preparing the lunch of bacon cheeseburgers. The river flows

were stable around 1,000 cfs although the water clarity was still cloudy from the earlier runoff into the upstream reservoirs. Those fly fishers who concentrated on nymphing seemed to do the best. Compared to previous years the catch numbers and size of the trout landed were disappointing according to David O'Donnell. The Lower Yuba River is a challenging river to fish for wild resident rainbows or the occasional steelhead in the best conditions. Here are some of the reports, comments and photos from the attendees.

New member John Walsh praised his outing mentor "...The water turned out to be in great shape for fishing, the weather was perfect, a super lunch and I caught fish. Could not have asked for more. Thanks also for setting me up with Mike Nicholson as a mentor. He really is a good teacher and very

generous with his time...." Here is a photo of John holding his catch taken by Mike...



Veteran Lower Yuba fisher Mike Nicholson landed the most fish. The Lower Yuba River is Mike's home waters and his high catch rates showed his awesome experience with this fishery. Thank you for sharing your fishing advice with the other attendees and doing a great fly tying session just before this outing. Mike's first photo is showing Mark Delabarre getting his fly fishing gear ready. The second photo shows first-timer Cliff Hoover holding a rare wild brown trout that he caught.

Gary Teckenburg and Cliff Hoover came the outing and fished together. They had previously fished together on the American River and live close to each other in Lodi. Cliff is very eager new fly fisher would is already accomplished conventional spin fisher. Gary thank you for taking Cliff under your wings. Here is Gary holding the same brown trout. Cliff said that catching of this fish was a team effort.

Larry Dextraze who is experienced fly fisher said "...It was a well-balanced trip, great weather, great people, a great river and fish caught! It was a privilege to ex-

perience water I have never had the opportunity to see. Far too often, if you are not connected with the right people, you don't get to see all sides of an experience especially here in California where many resources are not accessible to the general public. Access to this stretch was fun and I am glad the Delta FlyFishers has the foresight to access and enjoy it..." Here is photo of one of the fish that Larry caught.

Beginning fly fisher Bill Hogan was glad that he hooked and played a few fish with the help by John and Karen Keagy. Thank you for offering to partner with Bill on this challenging river. Here is John helping Bill get his flies set up.

The other DFF members who attended were Carlo Proto, Ron Forbes, Barry O'Regan, Dan Crist, Tim Castello, Sam Thompson, and Liam Keane. Although we have seen better fishing, Jean and Bob enjoyed greatly hosting this group and hearing the many stories from this year's outing. Hopefully next year's outing will be even better than this year.



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Fishing Mentor Program	
Membership	
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Trout Bout (November)	
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# More Yuba photos



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# The Bob McMillan Trout Bout: A great way to meet your fellow DFFers and serve your community at the same time

By Steve VonBerg

**The Bob McMillan Trout Bout** will be on **Saturday, March 5 at Oak Grove Park** at the boathouse. John and Karen Keagy have agreed to lead this event, but they need volunteers to help set up, serve

food, sign up participants and weigh their fish. As a volunteer you will be able to enter the park at **6:30 AM**. President Gil recommends entering at the service entrance, which is east of the main entrance. For those volunteers arriving later in the day, identify yourself as a DFF

member at the main gate. This is a great way to get involved with fellow club members and to support your club. The day winds up around **1:00 PM**. Also, by helping with the Trout Bout, the club is saying thanks to SJ County for the use of its facilities during the year.

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## The battle for the wealth of the delta goes on and on and on... Jeff Dehnam's strategy is to wear us down. We're not tired yet!

*Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to tie flies and he will pick up all the roadkill.*

--- Troutguy

Once you become active in conservation issues concerning the Delta and California's fisheries, you immediately become aware of how little concern our opponents have for the truth. In Dan Bacher's blog this month, Dan wrote an article about Congressman Jeff Denham (R-Turlock) introducing a bill that will eliminate the federal law requiring doubling the striped bass population. In 1992, The Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) requires the doubling of all anadromous fish that are naturally-spawning. These fish include both green and white sturgeon, steelhead, striped bass, Central Valley Chinook salmon, and American Shad. By federal law, this was to be accomplished by 2002. As you know, this hasn't happened. The fish populations, in many cases however, are moving closer to extinction.

This is the third bill that Denham is attempting to get through the

House of Representatives that would destroy the Delta's fisheries. Let's look at the proposed "logic" that he uses to advocate the bills' passage. To quote Denham, "Our devastating drought has been made worse annually by the Obama administration in conjunction with environmental extremists who prioritize fish over families. Yet they push out millions of acre-feet (to the ocean) and fail to address the predator species, which their own estimates have shown eat 98 percent of the endangered fish species. We must stop the crazy cycle of spending money on fish we want to save and the fish that kill them."

Mr. Denham's short statement is filled with blatant misrepresentations. Let look at them:

- 1) First, the Obama administration has had nothing to do with the lack of rain and snow in California. Nor has it had anything to do with the horrific, illegal misuse of the state's water given to south valley agriculture .
- 2) Environmental "extremist" is a buzz word used by Denham and his colleagues to evoke a reaction to issues that do not exist in real-

ity. Those working to save our fisheries from extinction are hardly extremist. I would suggest that those, like Denham, who are working to destroy the Delta, destroy our fisheries are radical extremists. Those who are actively working to steal the Lower Sacramento, River via the "Water Fix", are radical extremists. Both need to be stopped.

3) Denham's reference to pushing out "millions of acre feet" of water, though poorly written, is in reference to the historic need to prevent salt intrusion in the Delta. As we know, salt intrusion will destroy the Delta's ability to be farmed and we will lose \$5.3 billion annually in agriculture, along with a \$1.4 billion loss from our fishing industry. Either Mr. Denham is ignorant of reality or he is just following orders from his employers in corporate agriculture. Probably both.

4) The old "fish over families" ploy. Frankly I'm getting really, really tired of this ploy. Science has shown time and time again that if the state via the Dept. of Water Resources (DWR), the US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), and the State Water Board (SWB) didn't consistently violate both

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state and federal water law's there would not be an issue, and there would be water for all. However, the SWB has abrogated its' responsibilities to the people of California to the advantage of the politically powerful water interests and we are now confronted with those devastating consequences.

5) Denham's comments that "by our own estimates" we realize that 98% of our endangered species are eaten by predator species. What??? That is NOT our statement.

Actually it has been shown again and again, there is a direct 1 to 1 correlation between taking water from the Delta and the loss of our fisheries. The loss of our fish is directly due to corporate greed, not predation. Jeff Denham and his corporate employers have always blamed predation for the loss of the fish and never addressed or mentioned water exports. It's an integral part of their "smoke and mirrors illusion" they keep feeding the public.

One of the things about Bacher's articles I appreciate is his use of the best science available. In the current article he quotes both Dr. Peter Moyle and William Bennett from UC Davis. Moyle is a well-known fish biologist, and Bennett is a well known fish ecologist. Boyle and Bennett are both well-respected in the scientific community. In recent article, they point out that "If striped bass is indeed a dominant predator of the other fishes (the reason for a control program) then their decrease should have the most impact on the species they most frequently consume. The release from predation by the striped bass is highly likely to benefit many other

alien fish that are also known predators and competitors of endangered fishes. Reducing the striped bass population will quite likely have a negative rather than a positive effect on the species control problem is supposed to protect."

Over the years I have written conservation articles regarding the successful coexistence of both the striped bass and salmon populations. Stripers were introduced to the Bay-Delta from New Jersey's Navesink River in 1879. Their population exploded to the point where they were commercially harvested in the Delta until the California Dept. of Fish and Game (CDG) declared them to be a sport fish only. In the years between the late 1800's and early 1900's the CDG did not have the technical ability to accurately count fish populations. However, they estimated both the salmon and striped bass populations to exceed well over 1 million fish each and possibly more than 2 million fish. Today we read article after article of that our salmon populations may soon be come extinct. Since the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) began studying the striped bass population in the late 1960's, the striper's population has dropped to a net loss of 99.8% of the fish in 2015. How can a species that has lost 99.8% of its' population be considered a viable predator?

When one works on environmental issues for a long time, it is easy to not give other issues the attention they deserve. Not only are the fish species in the Delta at great risk, so are the San Francisco Bay's

fisheries. The continued state and federal misuse of our water ways is now also threatening the San Francisco Bay's halibut, leopard sharks, seven gill sharks, six gill sharks, soup fin sharks, Dungeness crabs, starry flounder, Pacific anchovies, Pacific herring and Pacific sardines.

Rep. Denham and his corporate agribusiness cronies are once again trying their smoke and mirrors gambit. It is imperative we continue to stop them again. Denham's bill has yet to be assigned a number. When it has been listed, I will post it so Delta Fly Fishers can actively oppose the bill.

## Irreversible Changes

The men and woman who fly fish share memories that will never be lost. Among my favorite memories are the times I have hooked (but many times not landed) wild trout and steelhead. I have hooked wild fish, made mistakes handling my rod or reel and lost the fish. Other times I have played the fish relatively well, but the fish has run me up and down the river and I still lost the fish. Anyone who has caught a wild steelhead knows the difference between a wild and hatchery fish. Those memories still bring me great joy. But things are about to change.

Several years ago I was at a meeting with Jose Sitka, one of EB-MUD's supervising biologists, talking about the upcoming salmon run. I was interested in what per-

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centage of returning salmon were wild as opposed to hatchery fish. Jose said that EBMUD had done studies showing that all returning Moke fish genetically were hatchery fish. There are NO WILD FISH left in the Mokelumne River.

On TV, radio, in our newspapers, and in this newsletter, we constantly learn how the state's water and our fisheries are being mismanaged. We may have forced our salmon and steelhead populations into extinction. Last year we lost over 95% of two salmon runs. California's Fish and Wildlife, EBMUD, and others trucked hatchery fish around the Delta to San Pablo Bay and other locations to salvage what they could of the salmon population. There is a high probability that no wild fish have survived the last 4 years of water mismanagement. That is the problem.

Oregon State University, working with Oregon's Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, has found that salmon hatcheries rapidly cause overwhelming, irreversible genetic changes to our salmon populations. These changes have long been suspected but have now been scientifically shown. A concrete box filled with thousands of other fish and fed artificial foods is a different environment than a wild river or stream and natural selection is vastly different. The study shows that in just one generation, 736 genes changed! They observed that a large number of these genes are involved with pathways involved with metabolism, wound healing, and immunity. The heads of the research project say that these changes are the first step to domestication. Michael Blouin, author of the work said, "What is important in this work is a step toward what traits are under strong selection at the hatchery, and what hatchery conditions exacerbate that selection". Hatcheries

and fish farms are breeding grounds for pathology and contamination. This will be a problem for wild fish as a source of infection. When hatchery fish are released into the wild, they have a harder time reproducing.

Mankind has used selection processes to domesticate plant and animals to our benefit for hundreds of generations. This may not be true for our salmon fisheries. The exact opposite may be occurring. This study is truly remarkable in that it has shown that in a single generation, 736 salmon genes have been irreversibly altered. With all the problems our salmon face, the genetic changes occurring at the hatcheries may destroy California's wild salmon population forever.

Ron Forbes  
Conservation Chair

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## It's time...

While the Sierra streams are still closed to fishing, most of our lakes allow for fishing year round. And now is prime time for those Stillwater bodies. In some cases, in the higher Sierra, the lakes are just icing out while in the lower foothills, the lake surfaces are still cool enough to bring fish to the top, looking for those early spring hatches when the bugs are the biggest of the year.

Load the gear in the car or truck and head for the hills. You'll be surprised how well the state's Stillwater fisheries fish in the early spring. Now's the time.

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