



February 2017 Newsletter

*Tuesday February 7 at 6pm
BJ's Restaurant – Hamilton*

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Hi Everyone

I have heard rumors of people fishing and fish being caught, but haven't heard much about any flies being flung! It has been a tough winter so far for fly fishing. Seems like only the diehard fishermen are out embracing the elements. The recent change of weather from the minus degrees to spring like conditions constitutes the "January thaw", I think. Here's to hoping the cold temperatures return and we retain our snow pack for a runoff in late spring.

I am proud to announce that the club now has an official Mission Statement. Thank you to everyone who contributed, even if you thought it didn't matter. All input is important, no matter how small for how else will we move forward and grow?

Our Mission Statement:

"Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot is a nonprofit club dedicated to sharing our passion for fly fishing by promoting fellowship, education and stewardship of our fishing resources."

I have been keeping the Board busy with other things as well. We want to try and get the dates for outings, special events and other programs pertinent to our members on our

website calendar and in the newsletter as early as possible. This will give all of you time to plan your own calendars and to participate in club functions. The Missouri river, Georgetown Lake and Annual picnic event dates have been chosen, as well as the Dave Hughes/ Rick Hefele work shop. TU's Little Buggers program starts soon and don't forget about the May adult fly fishing clinic. We still need a FFB representative(s) for this program and you can contact Greg Chester if you would like to participate. The club as an organization is apolitical, meaning we don't take sides in a potentially political discussion. However as individual members we have the right to express our views via *FFB notice*- just keep it civil and relevant to our mission statement. Your Board will be most productive for the club with support from you, the members. The more each person is willing to do, the more that will get done. If you are of the nature to want to help with something, let one of us know.

So, until the river thaws out enough for me to fish, or next months' "message" is due, I am leaving ya all with this thought- "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery and today is a gift; that is why they call it the present"*Eleanor Roosevelt*.

Tight lines,
Estelle

The Program

Andy Carlson, owner of Bitterroot Anglers, has been an international fly fishing outfitter and educator/teacher for over 42 years; including 11 years orchestrating and outfitting the fly fishing programs at the Stock Farm, Hamilton , Montana, a Charles Schwab venture .

He is the inventor of many fly patterns including his most famous the "Purple Haze". Andy has been a trout activist since his college years at Colorado University, Boulder (1972-76). He has also earned the award of Montana Trout Unlimited, Fly Fisherman of the year. Andy and a small group of activists helped create minimum flow waters in the Bitterroot River via the acquisition of stored waters at Painted Rocks Reservoir up the West Fork of the Bitterroot River, instrumental in managing the River's wild trout populations.



Andy has been involved in trout/water politics since 1972. At that time, he lead a successful political and biological science campaign with the help of Colorado Environmental Water Quality Division. He assisted in saving a small mountain stream (Coon Trail Creek) in front of his cabin in the mountain high country, west of Boulder, Colorado.

In 1979, Andy helped spear-head Western Montana's move to a "wild trout" fishery. He sat on the board of directors of the Montana Trout Foundation with fly-fishing luminaries Dan Bailey and Bud Lilly. Andy also published the MTF newsletter and Trout Unlimited's "Troutline", the state newspaper for TU.

The Montana Trout Foundation funded many trout/water conservation projects throughout the state of Montana in the early 1980's throughout the mid 1990's. His passionate concern for the river environment of the Bitterroot helped to revivify the stream of this day.

Andy has taught fly-fishing schools and guide schools for the past 27 years in Montana and more recently , California. He helped in writing, lobbying and passing the Montana Stream Access Law for all fishermen and women.

The professionalism exhibited by Bitterroot Anglers and its owner, Andy Carlson is unmatched in Western Montana. Please come to join us in a guided float trip and/or enjoy casting one of Andy's fly patterns over hungry rising trout on your favorite river.



Missoula, MT January 28

Tickets

<https://events.ticketprinting.com/event/22145>

Volunteer Wanted

FFB member as

Representative for FFB May Clinic

Involves four meetings in May and help with flyer and other support duties

Montana Rivers links

VIDEO: Wild Trout: A Montana Fish Story

<https://vimeo.com/195860643>

Fly of the Month

Skwalla Nymph *by Greg Chester*

Spring is just around the corner and the sight of trout eagerly rising to a dry fly won't come too soon. We saw a few sporadic rises early in February but it's still a sub-surface, bottom bouncing presentation that draws the most strikes at the moment.

We're fortunate in the Bitterroot to have such a diverse bug population and even more privileged to have the Skwalla Stonefly to kick off our spring fishing. Before hitting the river most anglers wait for the bugs to surface, but if you're really eager to get started I think you'll be pleased with some nymph fishing until the fish start looking up, plus you'll likely have your special spot all to yourself.

This basic pattern has worked well for me over the years and you can imitate any stonefly nymph by simply changing color and size. You may embellish it with soft hackle or rubber legs, a segmented thorax or a bead but it works quite well as shown. This pattern calls for dark olive but dark brown will likely work as well. I tie it weighted and add split shot when fishing. Work on getting a natural drift - it's just as important when bouncing nymphs along the bottom as it is dead drifting a dry over risers.

Good tying and good fishing!



Recipe

Hook: Size 8 or 10 heavy wire 3XL nymph hook (Dai-Riki #710 e.g.)

Weight: 10 – 15 wraps of .025 diameter lead wire

Thread: 3/0 Dark olive Unithread

Tails: Black or dark brown goose biots, split

Abdomen: Dark olive Hare-Tron dubbing tightly wrapped in a dubbing loop

Ribbing: Black vinyl v-rib, medium

Wing case: Dark olive or dark brown Thin Skin

Thorax: Dark olive Hare-Tron dubbing picked out on sides & trimmed flat on bottom

Head: Tying thread

FFB Merchandise Program

FFB graphically labeled merchandise is available at www.okeefesreef.com Sample merchandise can be seen at <http://www.flyfishersofthebitterroot.org/> page

FFB members can order from the website and have merchandise delivered to their home. We have negotiated a **10% discount** with the vendor on all orders from Club members. Items for ladies also!

Fly Fishing Workshop "Learn from the Best "

Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot are sponsoring a one day workshop on Saturday June 24, 2017. The featured presenters will be Rick Hafele and Dave Hughes. They are the co-authors of **Western Hatches**, which many consider to be the definitive book on this topic

The course will include a presentation followed by streamside collection and identification of insects. This is followed by a session on matching the insects with the best flies. Demonstrations of best fishing techniques for dry fly, wet fly, and nymph fishing will follow. At the end of the day ,one-on-one casting tune-ups will be available from certified IFFF casting instructors.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided. The dinner is a Bar-BQ with beer and wine included. Evening entertainment follows. The event will be held at Steve Lilburn's Hannon House south of Darby. B&B rooms are available through Steve as well as RV spots with electric hook ups. Tent camping is also available and a restroom is on site. For reservations contact Steve at riverresortslc@gmail.com We will be selling Bar-BQ tickets separately so spouses or others can join us for the dinner and entertainment portion.

Participation is limited to the first 25 registrants. Cost is \$150 for FFB members and \$175 for nonmembers. **Sign up by using the registration form on the website of FFB which is www.flyfishersofthebitterroot.org**. A deposit of \$50 insures you a place at the event which is limited to the first 25 who sign up and pay the full program cost. A portion of the Funds over and above the program cost will be earmarked for a Bitter Root Water Forum Project.

Rick Hafele bibliography:

Rick Hafele

Advanced Nymph Fishing (DVD)

Advanced Tactics for Emergers and Dries (DVD)

An Angler's Guide to Aquatic Insects and their Imitations

Anatomy of a Trout Stream

Guide to Pacific Northwest Aquatic Invertebrates (with Steve Hinton)

Fly Fishing Large Western Rivers (DVD)

Nymph Fishing Rivers and Streams: A Biologist's View of Taking Trout Below the Surface

Scientific Anglers Anatomy of a Trout Stream (DVD)

Rick Hafele and Dave Hughes:

-The Complete Book of Western Hatches

-Western Mayfly Hatches

Books authored by Dave Hughes will appear in the March FFB Newsletter.

Fly tying at Brew Pub highlights

Tony Tomsu, owner of River Road Creations, will be demonstrating several of his foam trout fly patterns, Wednesday evening, February 1, 2017 at the weekly fly tying session at the Bitterroot Brewery. Tony will also have copies for sale of his hot-off-the-press book (to be published in January, 2017), Creations from the River Road: Practical Realism for Tying and Fishing Foam Trout Flies. The book will sell for \$40.00.

Tony is an outstanding fly tier and has developed a number of unique patterns and fly tying techniques. His company is best known for manufacturing the highest quality and largest selection of foam cutters in the world.

The Wednesday evening tying sessions begin around 5:15 pm and everyone is welcome!

Bitterroot Buggers 2017

Buggers dates, all Tuesdays and all at the Keystone facilities in Hamilton;

All 6:30 - 8:00 PM

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Feb 21 | Material bagging * |
| Feb 28 | 1st class - Orientation |
| Mar 7 - Apr 4 | 5 tying classes * |
| Apr 11 | Casting and knots |
| Apr tbd: | Stock Farm picnic * |

NOTICE

This will be your last FFB Newsletter if you have not paid your FFB member dues for 2017.

Hamilton State Senator proposes Barbless Hooks on Designated River

Recently Senator Pat Connell introduced Senate Bill 74, which would require the use of barbless hooks or hook with the barbs crimped down in all state waters that are designated "catch and release." Connell sees this bill as a conservation measure and feels that it will enhance the quality of recreation, which is important in the state economy. Fish, Wildlife and Parks generally supports the bill, but Walleyes Unlimited and the Montana Wildlife Federation oppose the bill. An article on this bill appeared on the front page of the "Ravalli Republic" on January 14. As a non-political organization, FFB will not take a public stand on the bill, but individual members certainly are free to contact their legislators in either support or opposition.

Ravalli Republic article:

http://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_f3da4296-da09-11e6-a6a0-cbc74c5c9dbe.html/

Missouri River Trip

"The FFB has planned their annual outing to the Missouri River for April 17-20. Activities will be centered around the Headhunters Fly shop in Craig, Montana. Club members either bring RV's, or rent one of the limited cabins available, to take advantage of this exciting fishery. Many rent Guides for all, or part of their outing, or reserve one of the "Veteran" drift boats graciously provided by Headhunters. The Fly Shop also has reduced guide rates at this time as well.

Even without a boat, the Missouri around Craig has some excellent bank/wade fishing opportunities, especially towards evening. Nymph-fishing is the center piece of the action, but if a hatch comes off, the dry-fly fishing is wonderful. And, with big Browns all along this section of "the Mo", stripping a Streamer can lead to" the fish of the year"..!

Club members gather every evening for pot-luck food and beverages, and at least one group dinner at Izaaks restaurant right next to the Fly shop. After a long Winter...consider joining other FFB members for the first outing of the year and hopefully some memorable fishing, on the "Big Mo"!!

Make reservations with Headhunters Fly Shop at 406-235-3447

2017 FFB Calendar

(2017 Calendar available also on FFB web site)

- FEB 1st- Special guest Tony Tomsu at the fly tying (bitterroot brewery)
- Feb 7th- CLUB MEETING
- Feb 13th – **Board meeting**
- Feb 21st- Buggers- material bagging 6-8:30 PM
- Feb 28th- Buggers -orientation 6-8:30 PM
- March 7th –CLUB MEETING
- March 7th-Buggers- fly tying class 6-8:30 PM
- March 12th – Mt Fishing film Festival at the Pharoplex
- March 13th – **Board meeting** March 14th- Buggers- fly tying class 6-8:30 PM
- March 21st-Buggers- fly tying class 6-8:30 PM
- March 28th- buggers- fly tying class 6-8:30 PM
- April 4th – CLUB MEETING
- April 4th – Buggers- fly tying class 6-8:30 PM
- April 10th – **Board meeting**
- April 11th – Buggers- casting & knots 6-8:30 PM
- **April 17th – 20th FFB Missouri Trip**

Fly Fishing Links

Many of you use internet sites devoted to fly fishing or to fly tying. Dick Ellis has volunteered to collect these links to publish in the FFB Newsletter. If you have useful fly fishing related links you would like to appear in the March FFB Newsletter Please send your links to ellis_r@fortlewis.edu by February 21.