

Say what is right regardless of what people want to hear: do what is right regardless of what they want you to do.

Believe in yourself, be true to yourself and be willing to lead. If your path is true, others will follow. ...£\_\$\mathcal{L}\$\mathcal{T}\$\mathcal{T}\$

### President's message

Hi folks,

As I'm sure you are aware, the club is in much like some of our furry friends, in hibernation mode. As the Pandemic continues to ravage our state, we will attempt to remain safe and practice the CDC guidelines. Hopefully we will have better news by December but I'm not betting on it.

All of that said, the fishing has been good on the Bitterroot of late. It's not dry fly fishing but there is an occasional hatch of Blue Winged Olives, and Mahogany's. The fish will also take an October Caddis. Some of my friends fish with streamers, but I have had more success with nymphs. My go to bug is a Root Beer colored rubber legs (Effluvia Brewski) and either a Spanish Bullet, or a Perdigon. Both of those last two on jig hooks.

This cold weather should end soon at least for a while as the prediction is that we'll be in the high forties and maybe fifties next week. The water's been high, but it's clearing up. I've been over to Yellowstone Park a few times with a modicum of success, catching the fish running up the Madison into the Park from Hebgen Lake. Went to the North Fork of the Salmon this last weekend to fish for Steelhead. The word is that the count this year is very good in comparison to previous years so that may be a good destination soon. At least as soon as the weather warms up. That said, we got skunked. We caught a few Suckers, some "Pike Minnows" and I hooked up with three trout. That's it!!! Tough fishing, but I'm willing to go back. A friend of Peg Miskin got a nice Steelhead on her Spey rod near Riggins Idaho. As long as the count is up, I'll spend some time over there and give it a shot.

We're really fortunate to have this skill as our outlet. We automatically "social distance" on the river and we don't have to wear a mask out there. If you had the good fortune to be out on the river during the color change, that's an additional bonus. Hard to beat.

# October 2020 Program was cancelled, but I want you all to see what it would have been.....maybe next year???



**SPEAKER: Denver Holt** 

Topic: Montana Owls: Identification and Natural History.



Denver Holt is a wildlife researcher and graduate of the University of Montana. He is founder and president of the Owl Research Institute and the Ninepipes Wildlife Research Center, a nonprofit organization located in Charlo, Montana. As a dedicated field researcher, Holt believes that long-term field studies are the primary means to understanding trends in wildlife populations.

Since 1978, Holt's research focus has been owls and their ecology. He has published over 100 papers and technical documents, including four species accounts for the *Birds of North America* project. He was team leader for the Strigidae Family owl species accounts for *The Handbook of the Birds of the World*, volume 5, covering 189 species of the world's owls. In collaboration with elementary school teachers, he has co-authored two children's science books on owls: *Owls Whoo Are They*, and *Snowy Owls Whoo Are They*. In 2006, he was a chapter author on owls for the book; *Arctic Wings*, highlighting the birds of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska. The forward was written by former United States President, Jimmy Carter.

In 2000, he was named Montana's "Wildlife Biologist of the Year", by the Wildlife Society of North America. Holt's research was the cover story for National Geographic Magazine in December 2002. His work has been the subject of many television bites on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, and Disney, as well as featured on Audubon's Up-Close Series, PBS's Bird Watch, and David Attenborough's Life of Birds, among others. His research on Snowy Owls has been showcased on documentaries for National Geographic Explorer, NHK Natural History Unit of Japan, and the Norwegian Broadcasting Company Natural History Unit. His Snowy Owl research has been the focus of the British Broadcasting Company's (BBC) documentary series called Frozen Earth, a sequel to the Planet Earth series. In May 2011, Holt's research was featured in the New York Times (www.newyorktimes.com). In 2011, Holt has worked closely with a PBS Documentary film crew featuring the breeding ecology of the Snowy Owl at his research site in Barrow, Alaska. The film, 'The Magic of the Snowy Owl' aired in 2012. The New York Times again cited Holt's research in January 2012 highlighting the 2012 Snowy Owl Irruption Migration to the United States. Also, in 2012, he was inducted into the World Owl Hall of Fame. In 2014 Holt advised and assisted on BBC Natural History film looking at predator prey relationships in Snowy Owls. In March 2015 GEO Magazine of Germany (considered the National Geographic of Europe) featured Holt's Snowy Owl research. In April 2015, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology featured Holt's research on Snowy Owl in their prestigious Living Bird Magazine. In December 2015, Holt's research was featured in The Financial Times, London. In October 2018, Holt's research was featured in Smithsonian Magazine. And in 2018, Holt was the recipient of the prestigious Chandler S. Robbins Award, given by the American Bird Association, for his life-long dedication to owl conservation, education, and research. Holt also has been the keynote speaker for several major bird festivals in the United States, and abroad.

When not researching owls, Holt is involved in wildlife watching tourism as a natural history tour guide and co-owner of Wild Planet Nature Tours (<a href="www.wildplanetnaturetours.com">www.wildplanetnaturetours.com</a>). He also guides private natural history tours, and is a part-time trip leader for Victor Emanuel Nature Tour Company (<a href="www.ventbird.com">www.ventbird.com</a>), one of the largest nature tour company in the world. To learn more about Holt and his efforts in wildlife research, education, and conservation, visit <a href="www.owlinstitute.org">www.owlinstitute.org</a>.

#### THE WAY IT WAS: OCTOBER 2020-LEWIS B. FRANCE

The Grand River mentioned in this early book on fly fishing on Colorado is the Colorado River. In 1921 was renamed by joint resolution of Congress. Previously the Colorado River began at the junction of the Grand and the Green near Moab.

By the time I had reached the Grand I had about seven pounds of fair-sized trout, besides having returned with all possible gentleness to the water a number of small-fry. I did not consider it much of a catch, as upon more than one occasion over the same ground I had filled my fourteen-pound creel in the same time. The Grand looked tempting as I waded out into the deep, clear current at the confluence of the streams, and dropped the peacock as far out in the deep pool as I could. I took that fly out in a hurry as I saw the gaping mouth of a leviathan, to my imagination, about to take it off. I speedily had the fly changed to one upon which I could rely, and commissioned it to that pool on business of moment. It had no sooner touched the surface than the glistening sides of my muchcoveted triumph shone in the brilliant sun- light, clear of the water, as he darted for the fly and--missed. I thought the fish a little nervous, and I sent the falsehood over into the pool again; as soon as it touched the tiny wavelets that roofed the haunt of his excellency, he was again visible, shooting from out the depths straight to his destiny. He reached it, and for a second lay poised as if in inquiry, and then, realizing that he had "struck it," disappeared as suddenly as he had come. I realized, too that I had struck it. There was music in the air--the music of the reel--and that trout danced to the measure with fifty feet of line before he allowed an inch of slack. He was nervous; there was plenty of water, a hundred feet at least, to the opposite bank, and miles up or downstream; there was no reason whatever for uneasiness--on the part of the fish I mean. But he seemed as much disturbed as ever when the slack was all in, and I, quietly and in as dignified but determined a manner as smooth stones and rubber boots would permit, backed up to the dry beach. Exhibiting the utmost reluctance to being thus led by the nose, he suddenly took it into his head to come voluntarily, started my way, but as suddenly changed his mind; the reel accommodated his whim and played a waltz; the old fellow. however, soon got giddy and asked for a rest; there could be no bar to so reasonable a request, paradoxical as it may seem; I immediately relieved him of the weight of the loose silk and gave him the privilege of a closer inspection of the gentleman at my end of the line. Had any other man been in my place, I should have concluded that the fellow on the fly was not favorably impressed, as he started wilh celerity on another zip across the Grand. Being myself a man of benignant appearance, I concluded, of course, that he had become enamored of the sound of the reel and was delighted that I had taken a hand in the revelry. Humanity, however, has not the monopoly on making mistake, and as the reel was evidently taking a turn--this time at a dead march--I towed the gentleman around and gently drew him out on the clean gravel. He measured just nineteen inches; when I first saw him I thought he was "a yard long," but even with his nineteen inches his capacity for conferring happiness was immeasurable.

Lewis B. France, With Rod & Line in Colorado Waters, 1884

#### SUMMER & FALL FISH REPORTS AND "WHAT I DID ON MY EXTENDED VACATION...."

Here's a surprise- Caught three Konkani Salmon like this over at Georgetown in Spawning colors -Phil R



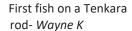


Doing a selfie of a 20-inch Brooke requires longer arms. Fishing Georgetown- Wayne Kaim



Floating the Bitterroot from Florence to Lolo. Caught a couple of these fish. Thought I was back in Minnesota. *Jim K* 

Bass were biting on Kicking Horse Lake on the res. Problem was that the lake was so low that to launch and retrieve our personal inflatables, we had to wade thru mud to our knees. Took a couple hours the next day to wash the rafts. Jim K









A trio of early Valley residents. I wonder if Father Pierre Jean DeSmet had any trout fishing tales from nearly 200 years ago? He is flanked by Chiefs Big Face (left) and Victor (right). I met them on a walk last night behind the St. Mary's Mission. *Jim K* 



#### Silver Creek, Idaho

"Jay Melzer and Peg Miskin made their way to Ketchum, ID late September for a few days on the Silver creek Preserve near Bellevue, ID. Floating a section of the Creek outside the Preserve near Picabo proved to be productive and fun in small inflatable boats and a canoe. Wading in the preserve was good as well and as is the norm there, stealth and patience was the key. The big ones were smart and the little ones were frisky! Silver creek is about fishing but the beauty of the Preserve is a big part of the experience."











Finally visited Glacier National Park. It was amazing. My wife and I plan to return often. One is a shoreline shot of Lake McDonald. The other is a creek alongside Going to the Sun Road. We were there the final weekend of September. So were thousands of others, seemingly from every state in the union-. Jim Kalkofen



Quake Lake—Hebgen outing



















Not sure many fish were caught but I think everyone had a good time......

"Prospecting for places to fish that everyone and his brother doesn't already know about doesn't take anything except curiosity and time, but when it's done well it's an art form."

John Gierach, At the Grave of the Unknown Fisherman, 2003

On October 8<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, Sally Roberst & Estelle Shuttleworth floated the Bitterroot with Guide, friend & club member Jenny West. I can say we nearly had every possible type of weather, except snow... thank goodness! Thursday was an absolutwely beautiful fall day with clear skies, minimal wind and of course fish! Saturday started out nicely, no wind, a bit of sun..... it progressed to a lot of wind—blew us upstean, then downstream ,then around the stream! But we still caught fish—(I just wasn't as eager to get the phone out for pictures though.) Things shut down when the steady rain continued 7 the temp dropped.













Here is a sampling of our beautiful Bitterroot River fish!





"The little fly floated lonely as an asteroid, and a brookie appeared in the magical way of its kind, coming from nowhere, pulled by some celestial gravity. It orbited for a light year, fins quivering. When it took the fly, the movement was so quick that I saw only an aurora of light and color. I was grateful to whoever let me watch this all by myself. Perhaps I would just keep on fishing forever."

Datus Proper, Running Waters, 2001









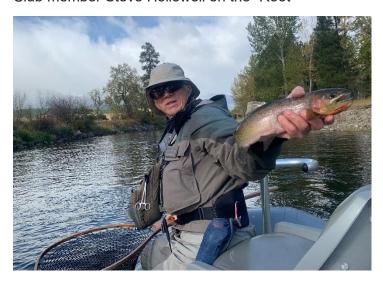
Yellowstone area



This is a picture of my friend Dennis Swing in Idaho where we got stuck behind an overturned potato Truck on our way to fish. Those are all potatoes to his right!



Club member Steve Hollowell on the "Root"



"You can be gung-ho, season after season, with the fishing so fast and frequent that it's easy to think that a full net is where the joy of fishing comes from. For a while, maybe it does. But all of that dries up, when the travel seems too long, when the dawn comes too early and when chasing a bunch of foot-long trout seems like something you've already done, then what's left-always--is the river. What draws you back to the alluring loneliness of standing against waves and water, until there's only your thoughts--final and pure against the backdrop of a canyon wind." Domenick Swentosky, Troutbitten

#### SUMMER, WHAT I DID & DIDN'T DO

Dam Covid-19! by Leon Powell

I didn't get to fish and visit with my good friends Dick and Ken. No time at all was spent sitting with them in a café over lunch or in the John Deer waiting for the next indicator take down or the next Damsel grab. One of the deciding factors in this situation was the relative age (experience) of the participants, and the other major factor was that nasty microbe that no one can see or feel until it grabs you and takes you to promised land. Dam Covid-19

I did get to fish with my nephew Mike (& son) and friend Dale, a couple of times. They are both younger and less experienced as Dick and Ken. Dam Covid-19

I didn't get to any general meetings because again, experience and caution were in play. Dam Covid-19

I did attend only one club board meeting. Dam Covid-19

I didn't attend various club outings, mainly because most of the folks involved are, how you say, experienced and very cautious. *Dam Covid-19* 

I did get to spend lots of quality time with Linda and myself. Dam Covid-19

I didn't get to see my good friend from CA, because, you guessed it, Dam Covid-19

I didn't get to float the river again this year, but then, I'm Chicken or is it smart enough to know what I can and can't do, but what the h..., I wouldn't have gone anyway because of Dam Covid-19

I didn't get to do many things, but then I suppose that I don't do most things that other folks do, because of experience, caution, and general savvy. Dam Covid-19

If I didn't get to do all of these things again next summer, I hope it is not due to that Dam Covid-19

Looks like the dint's bested the dids, Go away Dam Covid-19

Look what I found in Cottonwood Campground, Idaho—decorated outhouses!-- now, wouldn't thast be cool in some of ours here in Montana?......just saying....







We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate. *President Thomas Jefferson* 

#### NEWS AND NOTES







We are partnering with the City of Hamilton to collect branches and logs for an upcoming restoration project.

- 10'-20' long x 3"-12" in diameter
- Prefer limbed if possible
- Not looking for small brush/twigs or leaves
- Do not need to be native or good quality

Drop-off at City Street Shop, 119 St Mary's Ave, Hamilton 8am - 4:30pm weekdays - follow the sandwich boards.



#### Watershed Wellness: Bitter Root Water Forum

The Water Forum has begun a monthly column in the Ravalli Republic coined "Watershed Wellness".

The column will bring you the latest on watershed health and wellness, tips for living near streams, and more.

Let us know what topics are of interest to you for us to feature in the future columns.

#### **SALMON RIVER, NEW YORK**

The Salmon River flows out of the Tug Hill Plateau on the west side of the Adirondack Mountains and enters Lake Ontario between Watertown on the north and Syracuse. It is an important fishing destination and is the most heavily fished tributary of Lake Ontario in New York. It was named for landlocked Atlantic salmon, which were important to local Indian tribes such as the Iroquois Confederacy and to early settlers, but the river and lake were overfished, and the salmon were gone from the river by 1872 and from Lake Ontario by 1898.

State officials made intermittent efforts to stock chinook salmon in the 19th century and again in the 1940s and 1950s but without success. By the 1960s New York biologists realized that they needed a large predator in Lake Ontario because the elimination of Lake Trout from the Great Lakes brought an explosion of alewives and smelt in the lakes which then died in great numbers, fouling beaches and chasing off tourists. Great Lakes states turned to salmon as a solution. In 1968 New York began a serious stocking program that continues to this day, introducing chinook, Coho and Atlantic salmon, steelhead, brown and some brook trout. The result has been the development of an important sport fishery.

In 2020 parts of the northeast, including the eastern shore of Lake Ontario, are approaching drought designation. Therefore on Sept. 19, the N.Y. Dept. of Environmental Conservation closed a major section of the Salmon River (the fly fishing only section) to all fishing until further notice because of low water and high-water temperatures.

#### **ANIMAS RIVER, COLORADO**

The Animas River heads high in the San Juan Mountains and flows south through the town of Durango for about 125 miles before entering the San Juan in northern New Mexico. Named the Rio de las Animas (River of Souls) in 1765 by a Spanish explorer, the Animas is no stranger to drought. Archeologists believe that some 30 years of drought caused the abandonment of Mesa Verde and other ancestral Puebloan sites in the Four Corners, and drought conditions have returned to the region in recent years. That has been exacerbated by events such as the Gold King mine spill of 2015, which dumped some 3 million gallons of mine waste containing arsenic, cadmium, lead and other heavy metals into the river and turned it orange. That was followed in 2019 by ash filled runoff from a wildfire that killed an estimated 80% of the fish in the river. The Animas had been designated a Gold Medal trout stream and had produced brown trout up to 36 inches in length.

The year 2020 has been a drought year despite ample winter snow. The snowpack melted fast and early, and the normal summer monsoon did not occur for the fourth year in a row. All of La Plata County is listed in the "extreme" or

"exceptional" drought categories, and Vallecito Reservoir is listed at 24% of capacity and Lemon Reservoir at 27% of capacity. In October the gauge station in Durango, installed 107 years ago, recorded a record low of 117 cfs compared to an average of 447 cfs for that date. The Gold Medal designation most probably is a thing of the past.

#### DROUGHT IN COLORADO

Perhaps we should cover the 2020 wildfire season in California, but the number of fires and acreage involved makes that difficult. Colorado provides a simpler example to assess the impact of drought on wildfires. Western Colorado, especially southwestern Colorado, has been extremely dry for a number of years, and that also is true for much of Utah, New Mexico and Arizona. The summer monsoon has been missing, and even good snow years have failed to help because of early snow melt and ground so dry that it sucks up the moisture. Right now in late October 2020, Colorado is on fire, and some of those fires started in the last week. It is unprecedented to have wildfire starts this late in the year.

Until this year the largest wildfire in Colorado in recorded history was a little over 137,000 acres. That was surpassed this summer by the Pine Gulch fire north of Grand Junction that burned about 139,000 acres, and that was surpassed by the Cameron Peak fire west of Fort Collins that has consumed some 207,000 acres and still is burning. A google search of the largest fires in Colorado shows that the ten largest fires date from 2002 and that number ten occurred in 2002 and consumed 44,000 acres. Colorado wildfires have increased in size in recent years. And predictions that there will be something of a La Nina winter means that the Southwest should have below average snowpack.

#### **COLORADO WILDFIRE UPDATE**

On Oct. 20 the US Drought Monitor listed virtually all of Colorado in drought with most of the state in Extreme Drought or Exceptional Drought. As of today, Oct. 23, <a href="inciweb.nwcg.gov">inciweb.nwcg.gov</a> lists the Cameron Peak fire at about 207,000 acres, the largest fire in recorded Colorado history, and the East Troublesome fire at 170,000 acres. The latter began on Oct. 14 and now is the second largest fire in state history. The latter fire has crossed the continental divide and is burning in Rocky Mountain National Park, causing mandatory evacuation orders for the town of Estes Park. The fires are about ten miles apart, but 50 and 60 mph winds raise the concern that the two fires will merge.

#### **MONTANA'S SHIELDS RIVER**

The Shields River begins in the Crazy Mountains and flows south for about 65 miles past the little towns of Wilsall and Clyde Park to join the Yellowstone a few miles east of Livingston. It is a trout stream that historically was populated with Yellowstone cutthroats and mountain whitefish although browns, rainbows and brookies were stocked in later years. Fish, Wildlife and Parks considers the Shields to be one of the most important remaining strongholds of Yellowstone cutthroats and has undertaken a number of programs to protect that species, often in concert with other agencies and with nonprofits. Fish barriers were placed in some headwaters of streams where brookies and other non-native species were removed. Also, the Chadbourne diversion dam was improved to prevent non-natives from moving upstream. Therefore, it was a shock when smallmouth bass were discovered this spring in Cottonwood reservoir, an irrigation impoundment on a tributary of the Shields, and in the river miles downstream from the reservoir, the latter indicating that bass have been in the Shields for some time. FW & P suspects that this was the work of a bucket biologist. Otoliths bones, which are in a fishes' ears, are being tested to identify where the bass came from.

FW & P is proposing new regulations for the Shields River and will discuss them in its October 22 meeting of the Fish and Wildlife Commission. FW & P would require the removal of all bass caught along with notification to the agency within 24 hours. The agency also intends to work with irrigators to develop a plan for the removal of bass from Cottonwood reservoir.

In an October 6 meeting the Fish and Wildlife Commission also held a public hearing on a proposed rule that would close the Shields River to all motorized watercraft. Currently that part of the river in Park County has a 10-horsepower restriction on watercraft while Meagher County has no restriction. Concerned about safety and the use of high-speed jet boats that endanger swimmers, tubers, fishers and livestock, the commission has proposed closing the Shields River to all motorized watercraft.

The Shields is a small river that largely flows through private land, but there is plenty of access at bridges. If you are in the area, remove some bass and help save the Yellowstone cutthroats.

l don't care what your religion or political beliefs are.

Just use your turn signal.

LOOK OFFICER,
I'M JUST SAYING
IF YOU CAUGHT ME
THEN YOU WERE
OBVIOUSLY
SPEEDING TOO.

Why are the annoying servants staying in my home all day now?

**EXERCISE???** 

I THOUGHT YOU SAID EXTRA FRIES!



It was on Day 4 of the lockdown when Fluffy decided there had been enough family time.





I relabeled all of the jars in my wife's spice rack. I'm not in trouble yet....but the thyme is cumin.





I had a hen who could count her own eggs. She was a mathemachicken.







**Going outdoors** is not cancelled, listening to music is not cancelled, quality time with our families is not cancelled, reading a book is not cancelled, sharing with friends is not cancelled, singing out loud is not cancelled, laughing has not been cancelled, sharing HOPE with others has not been cancelled. Let's EMBRACE what we have. reehouse

"DON'T JUDGE EACH DAY BY THE HARVEST YOU REAP BUT BY THE SEEDS THAT YOU PLANT." ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON"



# One, two three, BREATHE He's dead, Jim



Okay, Ralph .... let me 'splain it you again. You're big, I'm little; BUT!!! you're dog, I'm cat ..... that makes me the boss. Got it ??

#### FIFTY WAYS TO BEAT THIS VIRUS

Stay away from the pack, Jack Don't visit your Gran, Stan Wipe down every toy, Roy To keep virus-free Don't hop on the bus, Gus Don't listen to Don, Ron Don't hoard the TP, Lee Just stay virus free Sneeze into your sleeve, Steve Stop touching your face, Grace Keep back to six feet, Pete **Heed the CDC** Just use the Purell, Mel Keep wipes in your purse, Nurse Take care of your stock, Doc You need PPE This isn't Spring Break, Jake Stay home if you're sick, Dick As COVID leaps, peeps Just follow the rules, fools And stay virus-free

So I was at Walmart earlier

A lady was looking at frozen turkeys, but she couldn't find one big enough.

She asked the stock boy, "do these turkeys get any bigger?"

He replied with a straight face, "No ma'am, they're dead."

Made my week



#### 2020 schedule what a non-year!!!

Dec

Board meeting

#### 2021 schedule—stay tuned!

#### 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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promans@aol.com
psatkowiak@gmail.com
tarq46@gmail.com
bobnsylmiller@msn.com
daneel.kuzaro@hotmail.com
eleonfish@gmail.com
hikemastergk@gmail.com
je@shuttleworthje.com
edandck@gmail.com
ellis\_r@fortlewis.edu
lchthyologist55@yahoo.com
gchester55@aol.com
srmt100@yahoo.com





Hats, watch caps & beanies are available. If you are interested, contact Estelle- 406-381-0474 for what is currently available.

"Remember: A democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide." John Adams

## Our Address:

Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot PO BOX 692

Victor, MT 59875

Name tags and lanyards are ready and are at the check in table. If you need a name tag please contact Estelle at je@shuttleworthje.com

# The club's membership period is January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.

Individual: \$25.00 Family: \$35.00

A Family is 2 people in a domestic relationship and their children under 18 years of age.

Newsletter Editor: Estelle Shuttleworth

je@shuttleworthje.com 406-381-0474



COFFEE IN HAND, SUPPLIES AT THE READY,
ALICE SETTLES IN, WAITING FOR THE
FIRST TELEMARKETER TO CALL.

