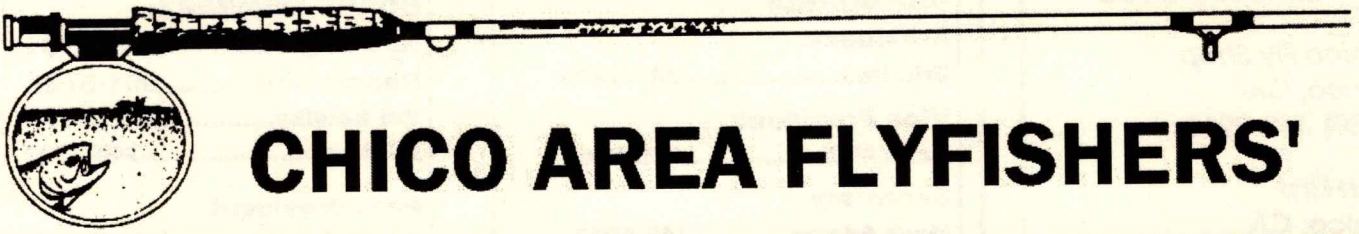


May 2003



CHICO AREA FLYFISHERS'

short casts



THE LINE

Eric See, CAF President

The one sure-fire way to end a drought is to plan the Chico Area Flyfishers Spring Tune-up. It can be dry as a bone all spring, then wham-o 2 inches of rain! Which is a good thing considering the state of our water resources, but it's darn inconvenient when you want to get outside and wet a line. Oh well, the dozen or so people who did show up enjoyed the coffee, cocoa, and donuts, swapped some great stories, and couple of kids got some excellent instruction in the art of fly-tying from Randy McKean, and I went through a few essential knots. Although we didn't get to utilize Press Powell's considerable expertise with fly casting, Press did promise to offer his services at some later, dryer time of the year.

March 21st traditionally marks the end of winter and the beginning of spring, but this year it seems the other way around. I'll take it any way we can get it, Lake Oroville, (where I work) is rising fast, I haven't seen the updated forecasts yet but would assume we might get close to filling this year. Not only are we getting significant rain in the Lake Oroville area, but a lot of snow in the upper watershed as well. We were already preparing for another dry water year, which is particularly bad since we were so dry last year and the year before, those back to back dry years are what really hurt us. Whew!

Enough about the weather. Hope you were able to get out for the Opening Day of Trout Season. Although several dropped out with the weather situation, a few CAF members still managed to make it up to Hat Creek for the opener. Christiane and I had planned to go up Friday afternoon, and follow the CAF tradition of camping at Burney Falls Campground. Bob Smith and Roger Bevers had gone up early on Friday with Bob's trailer, to reserve a couple of campsites. The brunt of the storm came in Friday afternoon, and driving east into the middle of a snowstorm didn't make much sense to me, so we decided to wait it out and go up Saturday morning. This is another one of the great things about living in Chico, Hat Creek is less than 2 1/2 hours from home, close enough to head out at a reasonable hour and still be there mid-morning. Some folks will even go up for the day; we ran into Paul Hendricks (your newsletter editor) on Saturday and that's what he decided to do. I took a photo of Paul landing a nice fish that had his reel screaming on several runs, this could be a good one for the webpage. I was on the other side of the river, but it seemed like there was something different about the fish, it didn't have the typical spots of a trout and its mouth seemed strangely shaped, I think they call it subterminal. Anyway, I'll need to check the photo.

The fishing pressure was relatively light for opening day, we went to the Powerhouse Riffle which I knew would be a good place for Christiane to learn indicator nymph fishing. The weather had kept most people away, so we had plenty of room to fish all day (on Sunday we had the riffle to ourselves for over an hour!). The weather was not too bad, although it sprinkled from time to time, the sun would often break through and the water was as clear as ever. It felt like spring in the mountains, the air was

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FLY TYING – May 15 – 7:00 PM This month the folks at the Chico Fly shop will be tying Damsel, & dragonflies patterns . Don't miss this one!

March General Meeting – Butte County Library, 7:30 pm May 7th - Fishing in Russia

The Kamchatka Peninsula, The Last great Stronghold of wild trout and steelhead on the planet is the Russian Kamchatka Peninsula. A 160,000 square mile wilderness that has more rivers than sportsman.

The geography of the Kamchatka Peninsula is not unlike Alaska. Most of the territory is dotted with volcanoes and tundra meadows separating evergreen and birch forests that stretch to the horizon. Kamchatka is far south of the Arctic Circle and blessed with weather similar to western Canadian provinces.

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The geography of the Kamchatka Peninsula is not unlike Alaska. Most of the territory is dotted with volcanoes and tundra meadows separating evergreen and birch forests that stretch to the horizon. Kamchatka is far south of the Arctic Circle and blessed with weather similar to western Canadian provinces. Kamchatka is larger than the combined acreage of California, Washington and Oregon combined. With a population less than that of Toledo Ohio and one road into the interior Kamchatka is certainly pristine.

Heli-flights from the capitol, Petropavlovsk, to recently developed Kamchatka fishing operations pass over dozens of rivers where fisherman have never wet a line. Most are filled with fish that will die of old age without ever having seen a fly or lure. One third of the world's pacific salmon spawn there, enriching the rivers and contributing to a huge biomass. In fact Kamchatka is a giant fish factory where angling is a solitary experience. Access to these rivers is the most important development on the trout fishing scene in the last century. The Kamchatka Peninsula is a short, 5-hour flight from Anchorage dotted with spectacular volcanoes, and more moose, reindeer, and brown bears than people. It is a wilderness larger than California and Oregon combined, with more 14,000-foot peaks than Colorado. The Kamchatka coastline is twice the distance as from Mexico to Canada, and has more than a thousand rivers teeming with trout, char, salmon and wild steelhead.

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Calendar of Events

Gem Mtg. - May 14, 7:30 PM

Fish-Out - May 10 & May 31

Fly Tying - May 15, 7:00 PM
Chico Fly Shop
Damsel, & dragonflies

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FISHOUT SCHEDULE

May 10 – Redding to Anderson Float Trip

May 31 – Modoc

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cool and damp, sweet with the scent of pine and very easy to breathe. The nymph bite was fair to good all day long, and in the evening a decent amount of fish started to work the surface. I switched flies at least a ½ dozen times, trying to figure out what the fish were on though never did, only managing to land a couple. Christiane had figured it out though, catching 3 and missing several others with a size 16 Parachute Adams. There's something to be said about keeping your fly in the water and not wasting time re-tying flies a zillion times. It's The Wet Fly That Fishes.

The most interesting thing I noticed on Saturday was how chatty the other anglers were. Often when you fish the Powerhouse Riffle area, it is pretty quiet with most people keeping to themselves, or speaking in short, hushed tones, similar to the social dynamic of a crowded elevator. Those of you who have fished there know what I'm talking about. Sometimes you will catch 4 or 5 fish before someone breaks the silence and asks you what fly you are using. But not Saturday though, several different guys struck up conversations with Christiane (not me though?) about what fly she was using, how big her fish were, how deep she was fishing, how long she's been fishing, some even went into detail about themselves, where they were from, etc. I've never heard so much conversation at the Powerhouse Riffle. Must've been the weather?

I spoke with 2 guys who fished the Pit #3 section in the morning. They claimed to have landed over 70 fish between the two of them, and were quite upset when they returned after lunch to find that the river was blown out due to cranked up releases from Lake Britton. They said that PG&E did it on purpose to ruin their fishing, but I think it must've been the weather.

Keep your eye on the upcoming fishouts, and by all means call Roger Bevers well in advance. With the weather and other unforeseen circumstances, things can change. When spring finally does arrive, there is a world of fishing awaiting you within an hour's drive, be sure to take advantage. If you want to know where, attend the monthly meetings. The next one is Wednesday, May 14th at 7:30 at the Chico Library, the program will be on flyfishing in Russia. Cool!





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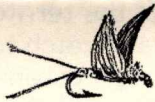
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