



# CHICO AREA FLYFISHERS'

short casts - May 2004



## THE LINE

Dana Miller, CAF President

Trout season is finally here, and now we have no excuses for not going out! The weather is good and the water is cold but very fishable. We probably had one of the best openers in years, at least with the weather. Reports very depending on who you talk to, and in this newsletter you'll see two stories which represent "The Good" and "The Bad & Ugly"!

Opening weekend, instead of fighting the crowds, I figured I'd head north toward Alturas and hit a lake that's been open for a while, and just maybe miss all the people. Having two 15 year old boys with me, I could let them run wild, well sort of.

We arrived at Bailey Reservoir after sundown and found a semi-flat, rockless, spot to pitch the tents. No one around. The next morning we awoke to the sounds of Honkers, Mallards and Sprig, it's going to be a great day! Bailey is the color of the Sacramento River....at flood stage! Muddy brown. I let the boys off on an island and the first thing my son found was a "Goose Egg", not a good omen! I motored up towards the inlet creek and ran aground in 6" of water, and I still couldn't see the bottom!

The boys fished for a couple of hours and then lost interest, I, being hardcore, fished all day without a bite! At one point there was a prolific hatch of a large midge species. I could watch them wiggle around and then pop through the surface film and fly away. In a normal lake the fish would be all over these bugs! Just as I figured the lake was dead, a swirl 20' from me. Was that a fish....bird....gas bubble or what? I assume it was a fish, because I saw just one more the rest of the weekend. I walked around the entire lake hoping to spot something fishy. All I saw was Junipers, Sagebrush, Rocks, dirt and more rocks, hot and dry, I thought I saw a flower

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## Hat Creek Opening Day Fishout

Well it was the best opening day weather that I can remember. Sunny, warm, light breeze every now and then, perfect for a mid-afternoon nap on a grassy bank. Several varieties of flowers were blooming all over the place (it was great that Val Bowlby pointed this out because although I saw that there were flowers around, I hadn't stopped long enough to actually look at them). The evenings were even nice, a sweatshirt was all that was necessary; clear, starlit nights with almost no wind at all. I never had to move my chair to avoid the campfire smoke!

You're probably thinking, "uh-oh, he's talking about the weather and the flowers so the fishing wasn't any good." You're mostly right. We fished Hat Creek and the Pit River above Britton on Saturday, "we" being Christiane, Val Bowlby, myself, as well as Jim Gaumer and Dick Murrill, current holders of the Golden Zipper Award. Hat Creek was pretty slow in the morning, we caught a few fish down by the barrier dam in the 11-13 inch range, and Dick Murrill landed a beautiful 16" rainbow before we headed over to the Pit River. We caught a few more on the Pit, but nothing over 15" along with some big suckers and squawfish, errr pikeminnows. The evening hatches that often occur on Hat Creek did not happen, so most of the fish caught were on nymphs in the Powerhouse Riffle. Christiane caught a couple on dries. On Sunday, Val, Christiane, and I when down and fished Burney Creek below the falls which is a designated wild trout stream with special regulations (artificial lures, barbless hooks, etc.). It's nice when you can walk right out of camp to the stream! Big caddis hatch going on, and lots of stoneflies on the rocks in the stream. We only caught small fish though, lots of wild rainbows to 9 inches long on nymphs and dries. After that, Val headed back to Hat Creek and Christiane and I went down to the special regulations section of the Pit River below Britton. Christiane napped for a while in the afternoon shade, it was so warm I was quite comfortable wading wet. On the first cast I caught a fat 12-inch rainbow, and proceeded to catch and release 15 fish in an hour and a half of fishing. Of course the wading was brutal, Christiane eventually gave it a try but wasn't

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■ **GENERAL MEETING - May 12 - 7:30 PM At**  
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#### New Zealand Mud Snail (NZMS) Info:

- 1) Snails range in size from a grain of sand to 1/8 inch in length and are black or brown in color. They are difficult to detect because of their small size, and because they will often hide within the laces of your wading boots
- 2) Never transport live fish or other aquatic animals or plants from one water to another
- 3) Best way to kill NZMS:
  - a) Freeze waders and other gear overnight (best method)
  - b) Completely dry out gear for several days (not as good)
  - c) Use an extra set of wading gear in infested waters. Store them separately
  - d) Always inspect waders, boots, float tubes, boats/trailers-any gear used in the water, kill any snails found
- 4) For more information, refer to DFG Website: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/fishing/html/Administration/MudsnailLinks.htm>

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I am concerned with the deteriorating condition of Hat Creek's trout habitat. A large amount of sediment has moved into this area and is covering the weed beds, a situation which has been getting worse for several years. The other thing that concerns me was the size of the fish. In the three hours that we were at the Powerhouse Riffle, we

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## LOCAL GUIDES

**Chico Fly Shop**  
Chico, CA  
(530) 345-9983

**Fish First**  
Chico, CA  
(530) 343-8300

**Merganser Outfitters**  
Chico, CA  
(530) 345-4071

**Orland Outfitters**  
Orland, CA  
(530) 865-8545

**Oasis Springs Lodge**  
Paynes Creek, CA  
(530) 642-4150

**Big Bluff Ranch**  
Red Bluff, CA  
(530) 529-2291



**RAPTOR ROD WORKS**  
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### Calendar of Events

**Gen Mtg. - May 12**  
**7:30 PM - Butte County**  
**Library - Jay Fair will be**  
**the Speaker**

### NEWSLETTER

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### CAF BOARD

**President: Dana Miller - 345-3266**  
**Vice President: John Bryan - 345-9983**  
**Secretary: Mark Adams - 345-5042**  
**Treasurer: Dennis Boyd - 891-5760**

### Board Members:

**Ron Leger.....343-5191**  
**Steve Bohnmeyer.....345-1721**  
**Val Bowlby.....891-0706**  
**Lionel Valley.....343-7364**  
**Past President**  
**Eric See.....343-1398**

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but it ended up being an old beer can! A far cry from the Hat creek area!

As we left Sunday afternoon, we ran into some fishermen driving by the lake. They were heading to another lake just a mile away. I questioned them as if I was a pro in this neck of the woods, and soon found out that they don't fish Bailey anymore because they have better luck at Delta Lake. With further prodding I found out the fish they catch there average 2 to 4 pounds, with a 5 3/4 pounder 3 weeks ago! So close yet so far away!

A special thanks goes out to Brad Henman for allowing CAF to fish Clear Creek Sports Club, see the related story. Brad does have Hunting and fishing memberships available, his # is 530-520-9464.

CAF is looking at the idea to obtain a cabin or property to be used by CAF members. It could be a partnership or a lease or whatever. We're looking to see what's available and it's purely investigational at this time. Also we're looking at river and stream access points. Maybe we can maintain a trail or a ramp. If you know of anything let me or a BOD member know. As always "Keep a Tight Line"

*(Continued from page 1) Annual dinner speaker*

saw about 25 trout caught and released, and none were over 12 inches long. Perhaps if a good hatch would have occurred, the bigger fish would have moved-in to feed, but in previous years you would always see some larger trout caught on nymphs. On the bright side, the lower section of Hat Creek, down by the fish barrier dam, was in good shape. This was the first place we fished on Saturday, Christiane, Val and I arrived rather late (about 8:30) and had the entire place to ourselves for a while. Not bad for Opening Day! PG&E has restricted vehicular access to the stream bank in this area to restore the shoreline and grassland area down, so it's a 10-minute walk to the stream, but well worth it if this will reduce the number of anglers. All in all it was a great Opening Weekend trip, and I look forward to some great trout fishing this year!

## CLEAR CREEK FISH OUT

The CAF fishout to Clear Creek Sports Club on April 18<sup>th</sup> was a smash hit! Brad Henman, owner of this new hunting club, invited CAF to fish the 70-acre private lake on his club that is loaded with largemouth bass and some nice bluegills. Some CAF members told me this used to be called Coffee Cup Lake. The weather was windy and cool, but the fishing was great, lots of 10-14 inch bass caught in knee to waist deep water on poppers, the biggest I saw was a 5 pounder by Don Sleeper. His wife Pat must have caught 25 fish, she really had them figured out. About 30 people showed up for the fishing and BBQ lunch, and the consensus was that this should be an annual event. The CAF board will work on this for the future, perhaps more of these 1-day fishouts to local private waters?



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