

FINNY FACTS

FEBRUARY 2002

San Diego



Fly Fishers

Volume 7, No. 2

February Speaker

Cleaner Water. Brighter Streams. Better Fishing.

This article submitted by member Steve McGowen. Reprinted with permission by the author.

Hugh Marx to Speak at February Meeting

My son and I recently decided on the spur of the moment to do a little trout fishing. We hopped in the car and in forty minutes were wetting a line in San Diego's beautiful back country at the most consistent fishery in San Diego County, Lake Cuyamaca. Year-in and year-out, Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall, you can count on a good day of fishing at the lake. In fact, it is the lake of choice for the Wednesday Bunch. The man most responsible for Lake Cuyamaca being what it is today is our February speaker.

Hugh Marx has been the Ranger in charge of the lake for as long as I can remember. Not only does Hugh run the lake, he is very approachable and you can always count on him giving you good advice as to what is on and what is not, each time you fish the lake. Hugh is also an avid fly fisher and has run a fly fishing class for youngsters at the lake for several years.

Come join us and get an update as to what is in store for the best lake in San Diego County this season and beyond.

REMINDER

Volunteer hosts for the
February meeting
(report at 6:15 PM):

**Ken Weimer &
Gary Strawn**

Thank you, Mona Morebello

By Richard Jacobsen

To the southern California saltwater fly angler, corbina are probably the most elusive, frustrating and most prized fish along our coast. Many consider them a greater challenge on fly than the flats permit.

Three and one half pounds of solid muscle, my first corbina came in late 1997, while fishing for bass and halibut. At that moment, I thought I had been blessed by the fly fishing Gods.

It took about six weeks before the next fish had pity on me and sucked up my offering. Corbina, AKA "Ultra Spookus Maximus", are found in open surf and marine back waters, along the majority of our southern California/Baja coast. Their primary diet consists of mole crabs, blood worms, small octopi, ghost shrimp, smelt, grunion and least of all, artificial flies. My biggest fish was twenty six inches long and weighed just under six pounds. I have heard of nine pound fish being caught and have seen some real monsters in the surf that would exceed ten pounds.

After my first fish I sought out anyone who

These shadows in the surf are even more challenging than the elusive flats permit...



had information on corbina. Some said they will take sand crab flies. One article I read stated that sight casting was the only way to be successful since these fish feed using their incredible sense of smell and the fly needs to be presented very close so the fish could see it and that casting blindly, was useless. About the only thing everyone agreed upon was that this species was very difficult to catch on a fly.

Since that first one, I have caught and released eighty four corbina. Eighteen of those fish were caught in three days. On one of those days, three fish were caught

MEETING NOTICE

Monday, February 4th, 2002
7:30 PM
Sequoia Elementary School
4690 Limerick Ave.
(See map on back page)

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Home Waters. Mas Okui redefined the concept of home waters for me. The turnout for our first meeting of 2002 was nothing short of sensational. I got up to 140 before the lights dimmed and Mas began his superb presentation on Hot Creek.. In this man's search for the meaning of the high attendance I rationalized

that we had a recognized speaker (featured in the February 2002 issue of *California Fly Fisher*), the New Year's resolution effect, no Monday Night Football, and one of our club's favorite fishing destinations.



JIM TENUTO

Technical.

That's a word I usually hear when anglers make excuses for not catching fish. I've done...well, O.K. on Hot Creek. On some days the "O.K.'s" are better than others. I've always had luck with a small caddis or a Royal Wulff. Hot Creek also featured in one of my short stories, *Points of View*, which recounts one of my favorite fishing memories: my son catching an eighteen inch rainbow on a dry fly.

He caught that fish, and one other, at a place in the river that Mas described in great detail. He described that particular run as "technical". It is. Difficult to approach and quite unforgiving. You get one shot to lay a fly in the slot.

Imagine fishing one river for at least sixty days a year for sixty years. If you fish for an honest eight hours a day that equates to about three and a quarter years spent on the water! If God truly does not count the days we spend fishing against us, Mas will live well beyond the allotted three score and five.

Soft spoken, a gentleman, a superb angler, Mas learned his angling skills while he and his family was imprisoned at the Manzanar relocation camp, his first outfit string and a safety pin. Only a

few physical reminders of that camp remain on Highway 395. I always intend to stop and visit the camp whenever I drive to the eastern Sierra and I have always rationalized passing it on my way to the waters or home.

I will stop in 2002.

This was a meeting that I wished

could have gone on for another hour. Mas discussed his tackle, his 16-foot leaders, his unusual techniques (including a method of releasing pan sized trout that knocked most of us for a loop) and his tactics. He also tied a number of his "Killer" flies before his presentation.

In a world where fly-fishers brag about their "chops" and extol each other with their visits to exotic fishing locales it is refreshing to hear and learn from a man who has devoted his life to understanding a single river. If fly-fishing is truly the thinking person's sport, the contemplative field sport, then Mas gave us something profound to think about. Kamchatka, Christmas Island, Costa Rica, Argentina, New Zealand, the legendary salmon runs of New Brunswick...these are all wonderful places to wet a line. But truly, how well do any of us come to know those exotic waters?

Home waters, especially the moving water of trout streams, are a bit tough to come by here in San Diego County. We need the assistance of our fossil fuel steeds to carry us to any promised land of this particular flavor.

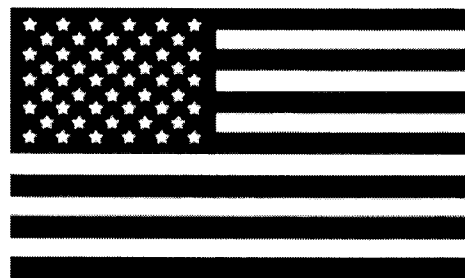
Mas, thank you.

Home Waters Redux. Ask the Wednesday Bunch about their home waters and more than likely you'll hear them talk about Lake Cuyamaca. This water is a jewel, an alpine lake that is teeming with trout, bass and blue gill. Our speaker for our February meeting is none other than **Hugh Marx**, Lake Cuyamaca's head ranger. We are looking forward to another exciting and informative presentation.

If we had 140 for Hot Creek should we get a bigger hall for Lake Cuyamaca?

Fame. By the time this reaches your mailbox, **Conway Bowman** will have already had 6 times his allotted "15 minutes of fame" on ESPN 2. He appeared on the Deuce's *Sportsman's Quest* on January 20th at 7:00 a.m. and on January 22nd at 7:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Armchair Angling. This is the time of year when most brothers and sisters of the angle are tying flies, drooling over the new gear they received for holiday presents, and enjoy their angling in the armchair, reading one of the many books about fly fishing. My favorites for 2001 were: *Fly Fishing for Sharks* by **Richard Louv**, *Mist on the River* by **Michael Checchio** and *River Music* by **James R. Babb**. I hope that the "paper hatch" in 2002 contains a few books of equal caliber. 🐟



Water Shortage and Global Warming

WATERS WATER! EVERYWHERE BUT NO A DROP TO

DRINK—in some places. Or, it's too thick to drink or too thin to plow. These are old yaks on water that now must be taken quite seriously - very seriously, in fact. We are running out of water suitable for food and drink, and for irrigation and sanitation: The State of the

World Report 2000 stated that by 2050 nearly half the world population of 4.2 billion people will be living in countries where water use is below the internationally accepted daily requirements of 13.2 gallons per day per person minimum for drinking, cooking, bathing and sanitation. The report states that at present 2.1 billion people in 61 countries are using less than that amount. Two thirds of all the fresh water goes to irrigate crops. Our Colorado no longer flows to the sea on a regular basis. It's either dry, or only muddy, in the Mexican desert areas. Many other countries dependent on large rivers are in serious trouble. China's mighty Yangtze now goes dry most summers in most regions.

People are in trouble, certainly, but how about the fish and other aquatic forms - and our fishing? Fly fishing depends greatly on adequate supplies of clear and flowing water to provide a growth medium for life processes. In short, no growth of plankton, no food for growing fishes. Eventually, forms for flyfishing are largely confined to waters smaller than the major rivers of the world. However, even the smaller ones flow into the larger ones, and

even smaller ones flow to larger ones ad nauseum. Perhaps we'll see our lovely little trout stream flow to the larger - and larger ones, while we search for some nice lawns on which to practice flinging bits of yarn. **PRAY LONG AND HARD FOR RAIN WORLD WIDE.**



BOB WISNER

GLOBAL EARTH WARMING AND US: I recently wrote on global warming and fish. This time I'll tell of some animals that may not survive and extended period of warming, namely the polar bear and various seals - and the Eskimo. There's so much more than our sport fish involved.

There's lots of polar ice melting away each summer - from top to bottom. Over 3 feet of shelf ice has been melting from the bottom up. Large floes break away and drift to melt, dunking whatever animals remain on it.

The polar bear, for one, may face extinction in a few years. As the shelf ice melts and open water areas increase in extent, these bears must swim farther to find food - seals and walruses - and not just walk around on ice sniffing for seal dens and to give birth to their young in snow dens. Adults may cope and exist, if not prosper, but the cubs may not be able to swim through great distances of open water barren of even small ice floes. As seal species are the food staple of the bears and they spend long periods on ice floes, the melting of large floes will soon destroy their way of life. When floes melt, pups

may not be strong enough to swim to another one or be able to outswim bears in pursuit. They must either find a large floe to call home until they reach adulthood or they must stay in the water, facing starvation and death.

And not least, ice living and traveling humans may suffer great losses of life, similar to the polar bear. Humans that subsist on seals must hunt on softening and breaking ice, hoping for a strong floe. A fall through soft ice or off a small floe into near-freezing water is deadly. Yet, he must hunt in storm or ice-melt, or starve. Global warming is a very serious threat to ice people and animal.

Bob Wisner ❧

April Meeting Announcement

April's meeting will be our first, and hopefully first annual, "Fly (Tackle) Market". If you have accumulated some rods and reels you never use, have a float tube you cannot fit into, have some flies or fly tying material that you would like to thin out, or if you are looking for that special old reel or rod, this may be your chance.

All Club members will be able to buy, sell or exchange used fly tackle or gear. Non-members may buy tackle only. All sales or exchanges will be between individuals only. The Club will not be an intermediary.

We would like to present a list of used tackle that will be for sale in the FINNY FACTS before the meeting. So if you have gear that you want to part with, or are forced to part with to make room for more gear, please let Jim Reeg know by email at jimreeg@finnyfacts.org or by phone at 800-400-1000.

Rules of the night will be published in the FINNY FACTS before the meeting.



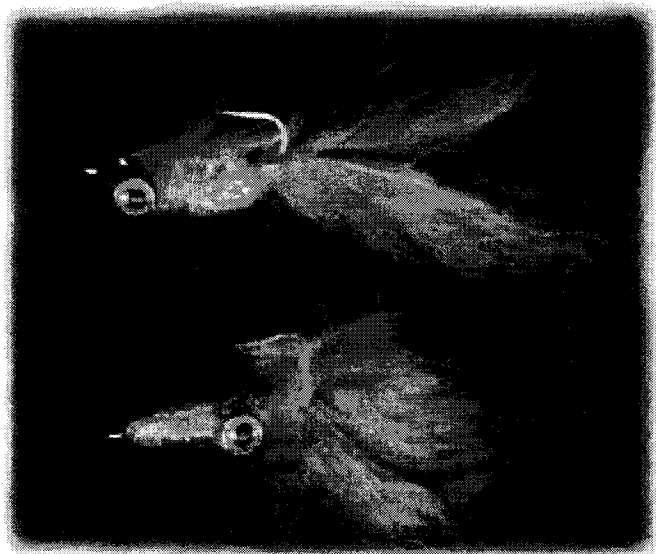
Corbina On the Fly

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on just five casts. On that same day, twenty seven halibut and sand bass were also caught - an added bonus. During one particularly good month, five consecutive trips yielded corbina. There have been numerous two, three and four fish days and many of these were on consecutive trips.

Successful Techniques

I will now attempt to share what I have



Two versions of Boyd's Mimic, a great all-round surf fly for halibut, calico bass and sand bass. The fly is tied with two splayed rabbit strips for a tail, crayfish style.

observed, how I responded to what I saw and why I think I'm successful.

I began by trying to catch the corbina I found cruising up and down the beach. These fish appeared only as light colored, ghost-like shadows gliding over the bottom, hardly revealing their presence until one would change direction. Nearly each time I raised my rod to cast or moved my hand to strip the fly, they flushed to deeper water. They were as nervous as any bonefish can be.

My first attempts resulted in frustration. I couldn't buy a fish. Finding them was no problem. Catching them seemed impossible. But my success rate slowly im-

proved. Wearing light colored clothes helped, since bright fishing apparel seemed to alarm them. Fishing fine and far off using small flies and light leaders and side casting to keep the rod tip low, became the order - anticipating where the fish would be and then leading them, hoping for an intercept.

Important is to start stripping before they get to close to the fly. You don't want the fly to burst out of the sand startling them. Don't let the fish get between you and the fly or they will feel the leader come tight and will spook. Also try to get the fly to gently pass about two feet in front of their nose, keeping the fly between you and the fish so the corbina tracks it toward you. Use your stripping basket to help hide your hand movements. Short, frequent strips, suggest a shrimp or some small sand critter trying to escape and seem to produce the best results. Keep the fly moving or they will lose

interest. If they think

that dinner is getting away it makes them more aggressive.

Observation Provides Clues

At first, being able to see the fly on the bottom is a big plus. This will enable you to learn how the fish react to it. It will also raise your heart rate when they turn and start to chase it. I found casting from a sea wall like the one at Corona Del Mar State Beach, where from a higher position, I could watch their reactions provided solid clues. Quite often fish in six or eight feet of water wouldn't flush when the fly hit the water, but instead were attracted to its splat and would sometimes intercept the sinking fly. This totally different reaction was the first big clue to catching more fish:

ply areas where you know there are corbina but fish deeper. Fish in that zone where you just can't quite see the bottom. Granted, there is nothing like sight casting to these fish but when they are just too spooky, fish deeper water. The deepest water from which I've taken fish is about eight feet. It makes sense: if you can't see them, they probably can't see you.

Stripping the fly and Setting The Hook

I think it is important to keep the pause between strips to an absolute minimum! A corbina will suck up and reject a fly so quickly you won't even know it ate. Again, my stripping motion is usually very fast but short. Force the fish into thinking it has to nail the fly before it escapes.

If you've gotten the interest of a shallow water fish, you will be tempted to strike when you see the fish rush forward and cover the fly with it's nose. If you strike then odds are you will pull the fly from it. This is the advantage of using a short strip strike. If you miss, the fly won't be jerked out of it's sight, causing it to lose interest. Keep stripping and when it sucks it up (which you won't feel), you will hook it when your line tightens. Sounds easy, but it's hard to do when your hands are shaking and you suddenly realize you haven't taken a breath since the corbina started to pursue the fly.

Unlike bass which usually hit hard, you will seldom feel a take from a corbina. It will usually feel like you snagged a rock on the strip. Everything just stops ...for a very brief moment, then all hell breaks loose. A good fish will take you into your backing.

Often the fish will follow the fly nearly to your rod tip. At this time it's important to remember to breathe, but for God's sake don't blink. I swear they can see your eyelashes move and seeing you they will just explode away in a burst of speed you won't believe.

Corbina Have Personalities

These fish really have different personalities. Fish that meander and occasionally

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Corbina On the Fly

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stop to investigate something on the bottom are usually feeding, providing optimum targets. Fish that are swimming quickly in a straight line are usually not feeding and will ignore all tossed at them. Some can be caught with little effort, while others just don't show interest in any fly. Frequently, I've approached the water, seen a fish, made one cast and was hooked up in less than thirty seconds. Conversely, I've worked a fish for twenty minutes without success.

Proven Flies

Several fly patterns have worked for me but I've had the most success using Clousers, size two, olive over white. These are tied sparsely because if a fly pushes too much water in calm backwaters or gentle surf, corbina will usually run from it. If this happens go to a smaller or a more sparsely tied pattern. However, in our bigger surf, fly size is not usually important. We have caught corbina on flies as large as 3/0. I also use a pattern called "Boys Mimic". It's tied with flame orange chenille body and with rabbit strip claws. It can look like a ghost shrimp, a squid, a crayfish or a pelagic red crab. It's a killer fly on calico bass and halibut too.

This doesn't mean that Clousers will work on fish in all areas. I have fished Clousers at the mouth of the Santa Ana River and in Huntington Beach on several occasions and have not yet caught a corbina there on one. Still, using Clousers provides a good chance at catching a corbina because they resemble a number of small food items they eat. They also catch a lot of halibut. I have had several corbina ready to eat the fly only to have a halibut come from nowhere and take the fly away from them. Hate it when that happens. Grin...

Shallow, calm water corbina will usually spook from a #2 clouser hitting the water unless it lands about ten feet away from them. A #6 can safely land three or four feet away. The deeper the water the less spooky they are, which should give you some insight into catching more of these



Three of the Author's favorite corbina flies:

Top fly is the surf bug with a tan rabbit strip tail, pink chenille body and a wrap or two of grizzly hen hackle in front of lead eyes. Bottom left fly is standard #2 olive and white Clouser and Bottom right fly is a heavy, 1/8 oz. eye Clouser tied with goat hair instead of bucktail. Both Clousers are about 2-1/2 inches long.

fish. Fish in the surf are not as sensitive to fly size and depending on water clarity, larger Clousers to size 2/0 can be used.

If you find the need for heavier flies, tie up some with heavier eyes. The six inch mega Clousers I use for halibut have 1/8 ounce eyes. Don't be tempted to use split shot. It will snag on something and the damage to the leader from the crimp will substantially weaken the leader. Split shot also makes casting more difficult unless it is placed right up against the eye of the fly.

One of the best tips I can share with you is the use of 1/16 to 1/4 ounce black cone slip sinkers from Bullet Weights. The type the bass fishermen use while fishing plastic worms. If applied on the short shock leader they stay close to the fly while casting and the corbina love this combo. The faster sink rate while fishing deeper water means more time fishing and less time spent waiting for the fly to hit bottom. The weight also protects the knot from abrasion at the hook eye.

Keen Observation To Details Pays Off

It's important to keep your eyes open and be aware of what is happening around you. For instance, if two anglers are fishing together, using the same pattern, tied from

the same type of materials and one is catching fish but the other isn't, the reason could be head cement. Yes indeed! A friend I fish with often, used red nail polish to color the eyes of his Clousers and when he opens his fly box the odor will nearly knock you out. He wonders why he doesn't catch fish. Do your tying materials smell like mothballs? Wash them before tying up your favorite patterns. Remember, this fish has a super sense of smell and it's been my experience they don't like unnatural orders.

Did you wait until you got to the beach to apply sun block or did you apply it at home where you could properly wash your hands? Before fishing, scrub your hands with wet beach sand to remove any oils. Check the color of your leader material. Does it disappear in the water. Or does it glint under water as the light is transmitted down the leader to the fly. I could go on but you get the idea. Learn to be observant. These small but important details will boost your chance of success.

Fly Line Selection

For me, sinking lines are not the answer. They usually spook fish. I have tried sinking and the low visibility, slow sinking "clear" lines on several occasions with



Corbina On the Fly

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almost zero results. Inevitably I switch back to a floating fly line and start catching fish. My friends have experienced the same thing many times. In the surf the surge will wrap a sinking line around every little obstruction on the bottom. You will lose control of the fly and you will seldom feel a strike. This problem is even more pronounced when you cast at a shallow angle to the beach. Another benefit of the floating line is during the strip. Depending on the depth of the water and the angle of the leader to the bottom you can hop the fly off the bottom with a sharp strip or slow the strip down a little and work the fly right on the sand. In my experience, a floating line has proved best.

Finally, fly lines made to fish in salt water are stiffer than fresh water lines and tangle less. In addition, because of salt water's buoyancy, they are made smaller in diameter and usually cast further. Buy a quality line, they last longer and handle much better.

Presentation

Keeping the fly on the bottom is essential. I have watched many fishermen go fishless because the fly is not where the fish are - on bottom! They haven't learned to watch the leader break the surface tension of the water with that little tell-tale "V" shaped wake as the fly pulls the leader down. When the wake stops the fly is on the bottom or a fish picked it up on the sink. If you see a tick or a hesitation in the V wake, a fish may have eaten the fly - a typical tactic of bass and halibut. After you start stripping watch the leader or the fly line where it enters the water. You will see a strike before you will feel it. Don't be looking around daydreaming. I guarantee as soon as you look away from the line you will get bit and usually it's too late.

Locating Fish

Wave action dislodges food from the sand and disorients small bait fish. If you are wading past calf height the fish are

probably behind you. Concentrate your casts almost parallel to the beach in the troughs created by the waves. Most of us tend to fish too far away from these troughs. By all means, search all the water with the usual fan cast pattern but most of the fish will be caught in the turbulent water that is one foot to four feet deep, less than thirty feet from shore. By casting along the shoreline the fly will be in the strike zone much longer, exposing your offering to more fish for a greater period of time.

Consider this: When you see corbina they are usually cruising parallel to shore. If you fish at a right angle to the beach imagine the odds of your fly and this fish coming together at just the right time. However, if you fish the trough at about a 30 degree angle to the beach you can see that your chances of a corbina seeing your fly are greatly improved. With a floating fly line you can mend the line behind the breaking waves or take advantage of a rip current to pull the fly into likely looking holes. Sinking lines don't provide this option.

Leaders - Extremely Important

Don't buy little spools of tippet material. They are too expensive! I use Stren Magnathin in the moss green color in four and six pound test in two hundred yard spools. These are about eight dollars a spool. Abrasion resistance is not high with this material but for me the color really helps catch fish. Ten or 12-pound is good for a short, three-inch bite/abrasion leader which you sometimes need because the nose of the fly is constantly being dragged through the sand, bumped into debris or dragged through mussel beds. Accordingly, make certain to check the knot at the fly frequently if you don't use a bite/abrasion leader.

Depending upon conditions, the longer the leader the better your chance of success. In the surf, depending upon water clarity etc., leaders can usually be shorter - about ten feet or so. But for shallow, calm and clearer back-bay waters, leaders of fifteen feet or longer are best. Why? In aquarium

conditions the best way to catch these fish is, as you move a step or two down the beach between each cast, only the leader will extend over new water, keeping the fly line out of sight. Fifteen or twenty feet of straight six or four pound leader is not only stealthy, it is pulled down quickly by the weighted fly. The thick butt section of a tapered leader slows the sink rate of the fly and also causes the fly to plane up off the bottom when you start stripping. Turnover is not a problem because of the weighted eyes on the fly. If you want to fish a deep hole the long leader allows you to do so without making any changes to your set-up. Again, the floating line and long leader allows more efficient presentations than sinking lines and short leaders, in my experience.

Leader length is profoundly important. The following is a classic example. One of my buddies fished with me for four months without catching a corbina. He just wouldn't believe the long six pound leader was the reason I was catching fish and he wasn't. One day we had been fishing for several hours, he was batting zero and I had three corbina and several halibut. Reluctantly, he finally asked for some assistance. The twelve foot tapered leader was thrown in the trash. Fifteen feet of six pound was attached to the same fly and on the very first cast he caught his first corbina. Ten minutes later, after he regained his composure, he started fishing on the other side of the dock and caught his second corbina. That night I didn't have to pay for my dinner.

A lesson learned: When you aren't catching anything and you know the fish are there, ask yourself why aren't you catching them! You need to change something. Find out what that is and try it. Don't give up!

I have gotten lazy on several occasions and let my leader get too short. After several hours of no fish I lengthened the leader to sixteen feet and immediately got bit. Several of my friends that now fish long leaders have had the same experience.

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Corbina On the Fly

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Adjust Your Casting Style

The longer leader will require some modification to your casting style. Wait longer for the line to straighten out and slow down the stroke a little. It's ugly at first but give it time. Don't slap the line down on the water and pick it up and cast it again. Learn to keep false casts to a minimum. Each false cast has the potential to spook a fish.

Look Behind You before Casting - Safety tips

A word on casting safely: Look behind you prior to every cast to make certain no one is standing behind you. It's amazing how many people, interested in what you are doing, will quietly walk up and stand behind you. While this seems less than intelligent to us, it is our responsibility to cast safely.

Always wear glasses. Getting hit in the eye with a weighted clouser will really spoil your day. You will need Polaroid glasses to see the fish and the drop offs anyway.

Gearing Up

Five to eight weight rods do nicely. The lighter lines required to load these rods are less likely to spook fish. Almost any corrosion-resistant reel designed to be fished in saltwater will suffice, provided it has a decent drag and holds your fly line and a couple of hundred yards of backing.

A stripping basket is an absolute must. Trying to fish without one in the surf could be dangerous. The waves will wrap the loose fly line around your legs and you could become entangled, resulting in a fall. Beach sand is hard on fly lines and the basket will reduce the wear and tear on the line and pay for itself quickly. Fly line management is important to good casting and a stripping basket is invaluable.

Here's an important tip on what to do after you set the hook when using a stripping basket: After you have used your basket for awhile you will learn they have one

drawback. The line tends to tangle. Not an ideal situation when the fish heads for Catalina Island. When you hookup, back up the beach away from the fish while you get the fish on the reel and attempt to get all of the line out of the basket. If you get a snarl in the line you can walk or run toward the water and the fish, possibly preventing a break off while clearing the tangle.

If you fish long hours, hiking on the sand in breathable waders is less tiring and much cooler than neoprene waders, especially during the hot summer months when corbina are most plentiful. Gravel guards are a must to keep the sand and rocks out of your boots. I use those with the Velcro strips made by Simms. Big surf has a tendency to peel them off so a second strap over the guard, around the top of my boot really keeps them on and the sand out. Two straps are even better. [Editor's note: Many experienced surf fly fishers opt for boot-foot waders.]

All my flies, cameras, certified scale, etc., are carried in two fanny type packs that I had sewn together at a shoe repair shop. This fits snugly around my waist, just above the belt on my stripping basket. If a big wave knocks me down these belts afford some resistance to the water filling up my waders. Make certain you know how to unbuckle and remove anything in a instant in case you get knocked down or slip into a hole. Don't wade at night in unfamiliar water. If your stripping basket is one of the solid plastic types that won't let the water out quickly, drill it full of holes. Plan ahead for these possible events.

Best Tides and Times

Tidal movement produces more fish. At slack tide we eat lunch and compare notes. Find areas that fish well at varied tidal stages. Doing so allows you to fish longer. Early morning or late evening with an incoming or outgoing tide and some wind chop on the water is my favorite time to fish. The fish will often follow the mud trail your wading created, right to your feet. It often pays to fish this turbid water.

In summer the evening air temperature is just right. The beach crowd is gone. As the sun sets, the fish are more active and move up onto the shallow flats and cruise the edges of drop offs. I have seen corbina on the edge of a drop off with their tail in two feet of water and their head resting on the sand in six inches of water slowly working the bottom like a trout sucking up a bead head nymph!

I have occasionally caught fish while not using my usual methods, which means nothing is cast in iron. It's up to each of us to find that portion of a technique that works for us and in our area. So I suggest you use this information as a guide. I can only relay to you what has worked for me and what hasn't.

On a conservation note: please treat these wonderful fish with care and always consider releasing them to fight another day.

I would like to hear from anyone who has any additional tips on catching these great fish. If you discover a hot pattern, have a question or just want to chat about surf fishing my e-mail address is

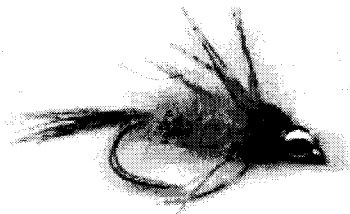
See you on the beach. Tight lines! 🐟



FLY OF THE MONTH

"STEWIE FLY"

Hook:	TMC 3761 #8 - 10
Body:	Light hare's ear Dubbing brush or hares ear dubbing & copper wire
Thread:	Tan - 8/0
Bead:	Gold bead size 1/8"
Tail:	Partridge Feather barbs 6 to 8
Hackle:	Hungarian Partridge Feather
Collar:	Peacock herl (greenish color)



1. If you don't use barbless hooks - de-barb the hook.
2. Slide the gold bead onto the hook and wrap the hook shank with a thread base.
3. Tie on the partridge tail. It should be a bit longer than the gap of the hook. Take one wrap of thread under the tail causing it to tilt upward.
4. Tie on the dubbing brush and wrap forward to just behind the bead. Secure it with a couple of turns of thread. Then force to bead back over the dubbing brush enlarging the thorax area. The body should be about 80% of the hook shank.
5. Prepare the Hungarian Partridge feather by stripping off the fluff until you have only the good barbs remaining. Hold the feather by the tip and stroke the barbs back at a right angle from the base of the feather. Tie in the feather by the tip just in front of the body. Wrap two turns of the feather just in front of the body. As you wrap the feather gently stroke the barbs back toward the hook bend. Then make a couple of turns of thread back over the hackle making sure the hackle lays back over the body. This is referred to as tying the hackle wet fly style.
6. Tie in 2-3 greenish colored peacock herls by the tips just in front of the hackle. Make a dubbing loop and form a peacock rope. Wrap this rope forward with 4 or 5 turns filling the gap between the hackle and the bead.
7. Whip finish behind the bead to complete the fly.

This fly was developed by R. L. "Stew" Stewart who lives in Shingletown, CA and fishes in Northern California, Idaho and Montana. Stew is an exhibition tier at the annual meeting of the Federation of Fly Fishers.

Note: Last month the fly of the month featured two flies. The "Maroon Bead Head Pupa" and the "Yong Special". The fly used to illustrate the "Yong Special" was not a "Yong Special". My error - I just scanned the wrong fly. Sorry about that. Only one person called me about the error. Which makes me wonder how many people read the "Fly of the Month" section!

Tom Smith



A series of articles on who we are, what we do, and how we operate.

Who We Are: *The Wednesday Bunch*

*The Heart of the San Diego Fly Fishers are These Die Hard Fishermen
They Fish Every Wednesday--Rain or Shine*

The heart of any organization has to be the activity to which they are dedicated. For the SDFF this has to be fly fishing - not talking it, actually doing it. If that stops for any length of time the club goes into hibernation or something worse. Speakers and meetings are nice but they don't make up for the meat of our being - "fly fishing."

Well fortunately we have a group of dedicated people who do just that on a year round basis. Maybe that's the reason that the SDFF organization is one of the largest, even though we live in an area that is semi desert and lacking in mountain streams.

Every Wed. some of the Wed Bunch are somewhere trying to fish. Rain or shine they get it wet and - sometimes - they even catch a few fish. You can't talk about the Wed Bunch without recognizing the 3 musketeers: Ned Sewell (the glorious leader), Big John Kasten, and Ken Armer. When Leo Bergiven was alive there were



4 of them. But they are always adding more to the group to make up for Leo.

The Wed Bunch fishes in all kind of boats. The most popular type is the U Boat. Ned Sewell, Ken Armer, and Lee Anderson float around in these.

Buck Parker uses a Hobby Float Cat. It is a bit bigger than the U Boat but it has the advantages of having oars in addition to fins. That's great when the

wind comes up.

And then there are those of us who are just plain lazy and use bass boats. Ed Velton who took these pictures has one of these. When he goes out either Ramond Stillwell or Joe Bain accompany him. Joe makes a good helmsman.

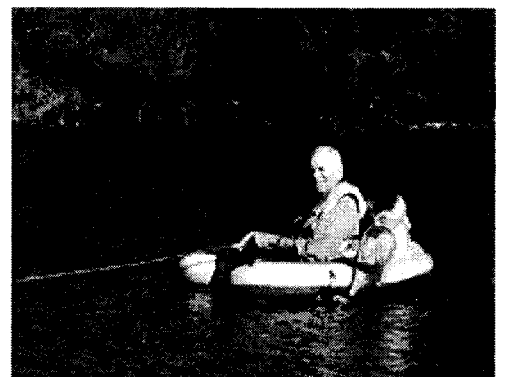
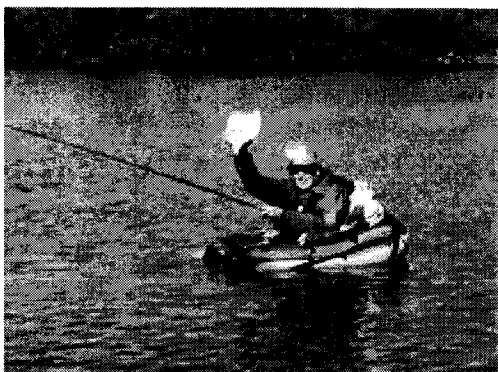
It's hard to get all these guys to pose for a

continued on next page



THE U-BOATS

(Clockwise from left): Ken Armer, Ned Sewell, and Lee Anderson




The Wednesday Bunch

continued from previous page

group picture but finally they got off their duffs, griping as they did, and lined up for a group picture. What you are looking at is the heart of the SDFE, the people who fish all during the year.

If you're wondering how much work is involved in getting into and out of the water notice that the Wed Bunch at Lake Murray, sitting under our own shelter, is right at the edge of the water. These boys know how to do it right.

So if you want to keep the purpose of the club active, join the Wed Bunch. Or put together your own fishing bunch. Remember, you can fish year round in San Diego. We love for the ladies to come too. Gretchen Yearous and Shirley Wagner used to be regulars and for awhile they had a very active group called the "Irrestibles." Wow. If you want to fish with the Wed Bunch call Ned Sewell or John Kasten to see where the club is planning their next outing. It's the best company you can find with the best fly fishers there are! 



Buck Parker and his Hobie Float Cat.



Joe Bain uses a bass boat.



The Wednesday Bunch underneath the shelter at Lake Murray.

Giving Thanks

It is really easy to get down right now: terrorist attacks, bio-terrorism, recession, unemployment, retirement account shrinking, etc. I grow very weary of watching CNN, listening to NPR, and reading the newspaper. They all compete to make even more drama out of each day's events. If we wished, we could add a few more woes the fish in the river are too small, there is not enough enforcement, limited accessibility, and Brittany Spears is showing too much skin.

But wait! This is America, land of the free. We are the richest nation on earth; rich in opportunity, rich in natural resources, rich in freedom. We are free to move about. We have more fish to catch than we are able. We have abundant rivers, national parks, state parks, and mountain ranges all with great accessibility. Most we have never visited. We have more equipment, tackle and flies than we could ever hope to use. Our life expectancy continues to grow and if we stay healthy we will be able to fish far longer than our ancestors. The present time may look dim and a bit uncertain, but the prospects for the future are bright.

So let's buckle up here and be thankful for what we have. The fish in the river are big enough because we have the opportunity to help make them bigger. We have enough accessibility for now because we have the opportunity to help make more places to go fishing.

We have each other. What a sad state it would be if this were not true. We can share our rivers, our experiences, our talents and our time with each other. Our club is a microcosm of the world. We can choose to focus on what is wrong, or we can be thankful for what is right and use the opportunities to change what is wrong. If each such microcosm in the world would do likewise, we would all have even more to be thankful for.

God Bless America!

(by Drew Kelso of the Arkansas Fly Fishers)



FLY FISHING QUIZ

1. In a double spey cast, the fly should land _____ of the caster, just before the final delivery.
 - a. Upstream
 - b. Downstream
 - c. In front of
 - d. Just behind
2. Which of the following are change of direction casts?
 - a. Double spey
 - b. Single spey
 - c. Tuck
 - d. Both a and b
3. When using circle hooks, the recommended hook-set technique is:
 - a. Raise the rod sharply
 - b. Move the rod above your head
 - c. Use a strip-set
 - d. All of the above
4. The Leisenring Lift is:
 - a. Only used to imitate mayflies
 - b. A method of nymphing
 - c. Used only with sinking lines
 - d. Effective with dry flies and streamers

Answers: 1. (b); 2. (d); 3. (c); 4. (b)

(by Liz Watson of the Northwest Women Flyfishers)

Cutoff date for *March FINNY FACTS* articles---Friday February 8th

Send articles to:
Rose and Roger Yamasaki,
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You can E-mail at finnyfacts@lycos.com Thanks!!

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1993-Bill & Eileen Stroud
1994-Ed Velton
1995-Bob Wisner
1996-Gary Hilbers
1997-Jack Bentley
1998-Gordie Zimm
1999-Gretchen Yearous
2000-Tom Smith
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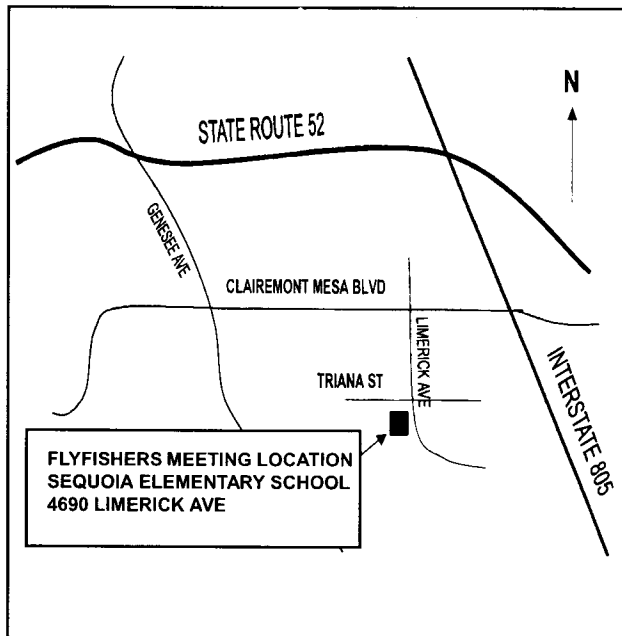
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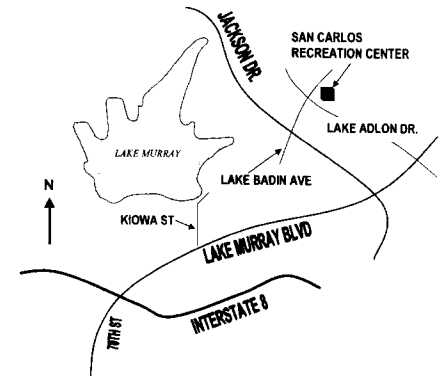
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Meeting Place for Workshops
San Carlos Recreation Center near Lake Murray. (We no longer meet at the Lake Murray Water Training Facility at Lake Murray). The address is 6445 Lake Badin Ave. To get there from Hwy. 8, take the Lake Murray Blvd. exit just like you were going to the lake. Instead of turning into Kiowa, keep going on Lake Murray Blvd. another 1.6 miles. When you come to Lake Adlon Drive, (first corner past Jackson Dr.) turn left. Go down three blocks and the recreation center will be on your right. It is on the corner of Lake Adlon and Lake Badin.



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