

# Newsletter



March 2011

# 313

## Up-to-Date News:

Want the latest and most up to date information? Don't forget the club's web site. <http://www.ecpowellflyfishers.com/> Just copy the address and insert it into your address block and you're on the way. It's filled with the latest of what's going on and when and where to go along with lots of good and timely information.

## Calendar of Events

Mar 1

Board Meeting, 1055 Portola Valley Dr., Yuba City, 7 PM

Mar 8

General Meeting, Lincrest School, MP Room, 7:00 PM

Program: **Fly Fishing Skills Clinic**

Mar 15

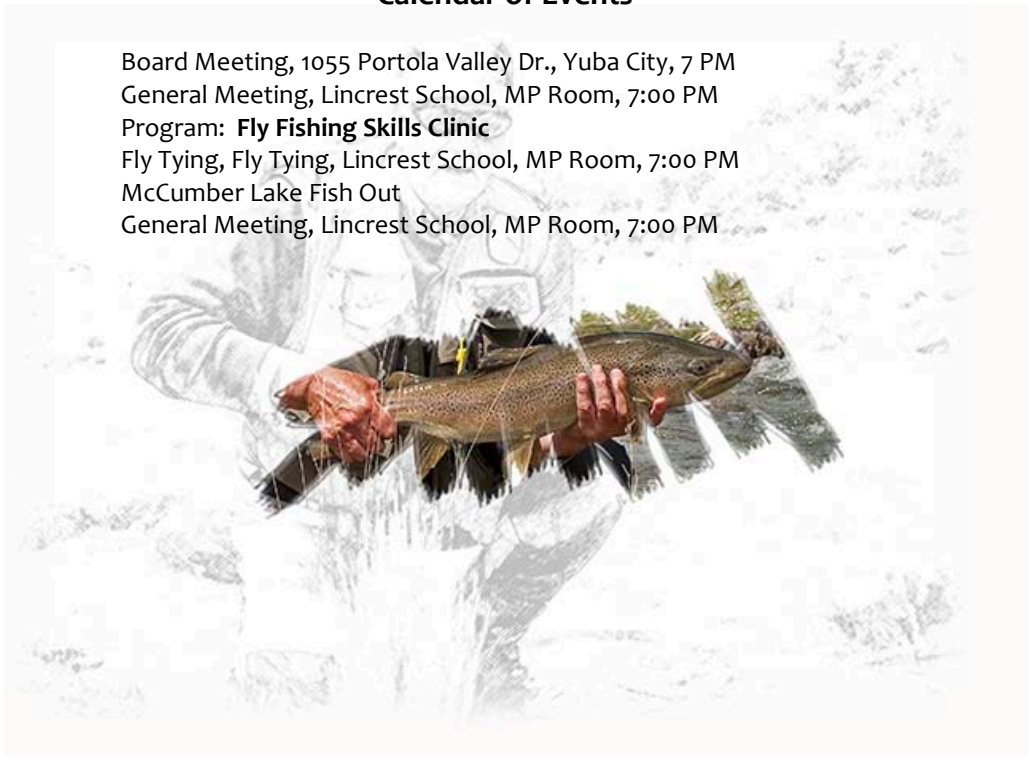
Fly Tying, Fly Tying, Lincrest School, MP Room, 7:00 PM

Mar 19

McCumber Lake Fish Out

Apr 12

General Meeting, Lincrest School, MP Room, 7:00 PM



## President's Corner

Back in the early sixties I remember going to Prosser Lake up by Truckee on a bitter cold opening day of trout season. It was the first time I can remember having to break the ice off my guides before I could cast my line back out, but that wasn't the worst part. Standing there on the shore waiting for the tip of my pole to move was torture because all I had on was a t-shirt, flannel shirt, and a light coat. Cotton socks, tennis shoes and Levi's weren't the hot setup either! This was the memory that flashed through my mind (Yeah it was a quick trip) when Jim Fuji asked me if I wanted to go fishing at Baum lake in February.

I tried to rationalize that now-a-days there are materials like Polar Fleece, Gortex and Thinsulate to keep me warm and dry plus some of the old stand byes like wool, which I still like for one layer of my socks. Jim went on further to console me that I wouldn't have to confront my fear of my pontoon boat because he had another pram that I could use. All of this was a great concern for me because I knew that the club water safety officer (Bob Harik) wouldn't be there to show me how to properly assemble and use my pontoon boat. Jim also assured me that if it was too cold that we need not go if we thought we might be too uncomfortable and this also appealed to me.

When I looked at the weather report and it showed a low of 16 degrees and a high of 46 degrees it was time to call Jim to see what the official ruling would be and to my relief he said that this a bit too cold for him. Now I had it made, I could finish a motor out in the barn and do some paperwork this weekend and because my wife didn't know that I had Monday off, a trip to the Yuba was in order. What a plan but this is where it really came together. One person called me saying that I could share a room with him and another told me about all the fish that everybody was catching (40 to 80 fish a day) and another offering me the front seat in his boat or telling me that I could even fish off the bank even though I would probably be the only odd-ball to do so other than the bait dunkers. That's ok with me because I'm used to being the odd-ball; it's almost comforting. Finally my wife told me that I should go because she knew that I would have a good time and with that I knew that it was time to pack my gear because an invitation doesn't get any better than that!

Next came all the phone calls with the never-ending questions of which rod, which line, which flies and such. This is why we all really belong to the club, to share information and not feel like a complete fool when we arrive. The patience of many of our members is truly remarkable, always willing to answer all my foolish questions and calm all my rising doubts especially when chains were required when I wasn't much more than halfway up the hill and the snow was coming down pretty good.

The strangest thing happened though as I crossed the summit, the sun came out and the snow stopped and the road was plowed, in fact, there wasn't even snow in the road! It was like I had crossed into the Land of Oz and all I had to do was follow the Yellow Brick Road to Baum Lake to enjoy a fantasy day of fishing.

When I arrived at the lake, I quietly strung up my rod with the prescribed line of the proper weight and tied on the fly of the day (a green wooly bugger wiggle tail - 50 bucks worth at The Fly Shop). I walked over to the handicapped fishing access and started casting. Nothing! More nothing! Now two guys come in right under me and start casting lures and proceed to take two limits of fish in less than a half-hour. By now I'm starting to feel pretty foolish and to top it all off the fish are starting to mock me by rising no less than twenty feet in front of me.

Time for a history lesson, if all else fails and the fish are rising, try a small caddis dry fly. After putting on my trusty floating line and some fresh tippet with the caddis attached I tried it again not wanting to be the only person on the lake that got skunked. First cast - nothing, second - nothing, third - nothing, now I am starting to get desperate. Maybe I can sneak out of here without anyone knowing I was here after all a long drive home would be better than all the ribbing I would get. I try to skate the fly in one last desperate attempt. Was that a bump? I used fluorocarbon tippet because I was too lazy to dig the mono out of my bag and I couldn't see the fly so maybe if I changed my retrieve it would work. Fish On! And again and again and the next thing I knew I had caught over a dozen. Maybe this wasn't such a foolish idea after all and I could walk around with my head up; after-all real fly fishing was done with dry flies wasn't it? Pete found me and I boldly proclaimed that I could have him into ten fish before sunset. This was too good to be true for him so he decided to take me up on the offer. I must confess that he only caught five before catching one more with his trusty wooly bugger. Still a good afternoon!

The next morning found me in the front of Larry's boat stripping a wooly bugger and breaking ice off my guides. I didn't catch a fish in the first hour but I was still having a good time because Larry is one of the few people that can keep up with all my BS, if not surpass me. About this time we moved down next to Pete and I noticed all the fish rising in front of him, what a charmed life he must lead, I thought. After a while I realized that if I cast out in front of him just beyond where he was fishing I could catch a boat load of fish and he was so gracious about it all not wanting to take any fish himself. This had to be one of the kindest gestures from a club member that I had yet witnessed.

Now if you are wondering if this long line of BS is ever going to the answer is, yes, and the point of this whole story is that it truly is a wonderful thing to take someone else fishing and if you don't believe it then you didn't see Jim Tanner with his grandson, Evan, and I have the pictures to prove it. The second point of this story is that sometimes it is truly a gift to be taken fishing as I was this weekend. Thank You Larry, Pete, Dennis, David, Jim, and last but not least, Evan, for reminding me of how much fun I had fishing with my grandfather. Whether someone takes you or you take someone else, the important thing is to go; life is too short not to!

Craig

### **March Program**

March's program is scheduled to be a clinic similar to the fly fishing skills clinic that we had last spring. This year, the clinic will focus on fly tying skills. There is a large range of experience levels among our members, so instructors will be at several stations ranging from beginner to advanced techniques. You can stand and watch or bring your vise and tie along with the instructor. Those who own more than one vise are encouraged to bring them and the club will provide vises and bobbins as well. The club will provide all materials and tools. We are limited on tools however, so any extras will be appreciated. For me, and I think this is a widely held opinion with our membership, fly fishing is the most enjoyable way to fish. Catching fish on flies that you have tied yourself is even more fun. Bring your stuff, and for some of us, that includes reading glasses, and hopefully you can learn a new skill to increase your enjoyment of the sport.

#### **Reminder**

At the request of the school, general meetings as well as fly tying classes will start at 7:00 P.M. rather than 7:30 as in the past. The school has asked us to be out of the room by 9:00 from here on. Your help in getting meetings started on time will insure that we are able to finish our programs and get out on time.

Jeff

### **New Membership Class**

As of February 2011 Board meeting, EC Powell Fly Fishers Club has instituted a new junior and young adult membership class. This would encompass chaperoned-aged fishing for children (however old that might be, parents and grandparents) up to collage or 20 years of age. The yearly membership cost will be \$10.00 and will afford those members all the cookies, coffee and fishing stories the rest of us enjoy in the group settings, i.e. meetings, fly tying, club outings and events, (supervised, of course, for the younger ones, Mom and Dad). If you know of, or if you have any youngsters up to collage age fisherman in the family that you think would enjoy fly fishing, we love to help them develop their personal skill levels in the sport. Contacting one of the officers, board members or a member of the club would be the first step to getting started. Need would be the mother of invention here, folks, so the future possibilities could be far reaching and only limited by the junior class its self.

My home phone is 530 742 4552, in and out during the day, usually here after 6pm. We also have our regular scheduled meetings, second Tuesday of every month at 7pm Lincrest School MP Room Yuba City. We look forward to hearing from you if you're interested and in most instances you need nothing to get started except a physical body and a want to fly fish. Come to a meeting and see what we're about, coffee and cookies available, or call me ASAP for information.

Ken Mackey

### **Notice**

There are 4 spaces remaining for the March 26<sup>th</sup> Switch/Spay Clinic with Bill Lowe on the Yuba River. Those interested in signing up can call or E-mail me @ (530) 635-3324 or jamen5@ccxn.com

Jeff Lingenfelter

## Past and Proposed Fish Outs

### Proposed Fish Outs for-2011

Mar. 19 Lake McCumber Walt Zukas

April 16 Yuba River Sierra Foothill Field Station Walt Zukas

April 23 Lewiston Lake Walt Zukas

May 21 To Be Decided

June 18 Shad Yuba River at Hallwood with Shasta Trinity Fly Fishers Walt Zukas

### Baum Lake

I have fished this lake since the early 90's but have never had the success that I had on our club's February fishout. I had spoken with Jim Shilling who fished it the week before and he and Stu Stewart caught 80 fish in one day. Needless to say, I was ready to go, in spite of the weather forecast which called for snow and cold temperatures.

In all of the years I have fished Baum, I have seen snow, rain, sleet and wind. But, the one thing that has always been there is sunshine. This past weekend was no different. We had sun on each of the 3 days that we fished. And, only the last day was cold but still with sun.

I have my favorite places to fish on the lake and so headed directly to one of them. There were a few other fly fishers around but there was lots of room. I tied on a PT under a red chironomid and added the obligatory indicator (bobber). Two casts later and I had a nice 15 inch Brown in the net. Good start. That went on for about the next 2 hours when things slowed down. So, I put that rod setup away and went to my intermediate line and a Jay Fair Wiggle Tail in olive. BANG! I started catching fish like there was no tomorrow. I was getting hits on every cast, sometimes two or three. At days end, I had caught about 35. I actually lost count. All were Browns except for a single Rainbow.



Day two meant more of the same but this time I had to brush off the 10+ inches of snow from my truck and boat cover. On the water about 9:30!



Today I started with the wiggle tail. I was to a point where I was catching 4 fish for four casts but could never get # 5. I caught 30 fish on one fly until it was nothing but a few strands of string and so I retired that one. This day produced 50+ fish, again all Browns except for another single Rainbow. The fish ranged in size from 12" to 20" and all fought very well.

Day three was a short one due to having to return home. This day was sunny as were the previous 2. I caught fish but not in the numbers as before. Craig fished with me this day and did very well (let it be known that Craig kills fish). I gave David Clay two flies and he caught 20 fish with them.

Two things to remember: ignore the weather forecast and pay attention to which fly others are using, especially when they are catching 10 fish to your one. Don't be afraid to ask what they're using and they will probably even give you one. Crying or begging does not work.  
Larry

### Baum Lake Fish Out

Some of us arrived on Friday the 18th and were on the water by 11:30. With a slight over cast and a lot of snow on the ground it wasn't as cold as one might think. Fishing was great averaging around 35 fish each, the first day. On Sat. we woke to about 12" of new snow but it had stopped sometime in the night. After breakfast we were on the lake again and by 11 the rest of the gang were on the water with us. Again the fishing was great averaging over 50 fish each almost all were browns with a couple bows thrown in.

On Sun we woke to 13 degrees but by 9 it had warmed nicely. One of the many high lights was watching Jim Tanner's grandson, Even, 12, he was hooking up like old pro. A great time was had by all. #18 PT's PMD's Green Woolies and others worked as well. Pete Gilb (fish master), Denis Davis, David Clay, Larry Ingram, Craig Ranke, Jim Tanner and grandson, Even, attended.  
Pete



### EC Powell Presentation at Beal AFB Youth Center Gymnasium



Leann Newton, Director of Activities at the Center, introduced Walt Alexander and I as "Mountain Men." Walt was the poster boy for the event, smartly dressed in his river hat, and dark vest with his snow white beard that commanded striking presents with the children and staff.

Pictures of the children were not allowed so I can't share the happy interested faces with you. We spent about forty five minutes with an audience of about 25 kids, kindergarten through sixth grade and staff members. We displayed and demonstrated fishing gear, to include waders, vest, flies, fly vise, tools and materials used in tying flies. Walt passed around boxes of his wonderfully-tied flies which brought forth ooh's and aah's from a well-mannered audience.

We had a great time telling a fish story or two, answering questions and letting the kids and staff try out casting

with one of the three available fly rods, of which, many tried all three. The children's interest level was amazing and only changed as the parents began to pick them up for the holiday weekend. We were scheduled from 12:30 to 1 Pm, but the children were having fun trying casting until 1:30.

As we packed up to leave, Walt entertained a small group of interested staffers that had congregated and followed him out to the main desk area. As we wrapped it up to depart we left them with flyers and information for the club.

Walt and I had a wonderful time and would like to thank Leann, and the Beal AFB Youth Center for the opportunity to present to the children and staff a Fly Fishing experience.

Ken Mackey



## Boobies

Last July I had the privilege of making an extended weekend camping trip with my children, grandchildren and a few of their friends, for a total of 15 people, to a private Bass Pond of about 30 acres in size. We camped at the water's edge and were the only ones fishing the pond. I believe everyone caught fish with most of them being caught at the campsite, so the water at the campsite was really hammered for 3 days. These bass were really getting gun shy, most of them had probably been caught and release several times.

On the last day while everyone else was loading up to leave I had the water in front of the campsite all to myself so used the opportunity to test a few bass flies I was working on. I tried a couple of poppers on a floating line and caught nothing. Then I spotted a Dragonfly Nymph tied with spun and clipped deer hair in my experimental box. I



These Flies clockwise from top are the Booby: Floating Dragon, Morrisfoam Predator, Floating Carev and Grizzly

switched to a full, fast, sinking line with about a 3 foot leader. The theory was the line would sink to the bottom, but the buoyant quality of the deer hair would float the fly 1 to 2 feet off the bottom thereby avoiding most of the snags.

I had time to make 7 casts before I had to leave. In the 7 casts I landed 6 nice Bass averaging about 2 pounds apiece. This presentation appeared to be a winner!

Since that trip I have successfully used this presentation on Bass, Trout, and Carp. Catching Carp on this system was a defining moment, as I consider Carp to be the most challenging to catch on a fly. Now, I was sure I had a winner.

This technique is not new by any stretch of the imagination. My research indicates it originated in England in the early 80's, some 30 years ago, using a fly called the Booby or Booby Nymph. The internet reveals that early 80's Flyfishing magazines in England credit the fly to a chap named Gordon Frazer and at that time the fly was also known as the Dolly Parton Fly.

The Booby uses 2 styrofoam balls wrapped inside 2 pieces cut from a women's nylon stocking for its buoyancy. According to Skip Morris in an article from the *Winter 2007 Issue of Flyfishing and Tying Journal* "the nylon patches are stretched fairly tight causing them to act like a minute brassier, lifting and supporting."

The pattern I was using was taken from the *Fly Tyers Nymph Manual, by Randall Kaufmann*. The pattern is called the Floating Dragon, and uses spun and clipped deer hair for buoyancy. I have had my copy of this book about 20 years.

Skip Morris, in his book *Tying Foam Flies*, lists a fly called the Morris Foam Predator. This fly uses closed cell foam for its buoyancy.

*In Fly Patterns For Stillwater*, by Phillip Rowley, there's a pattern called Dunc's Floating Carey tied by Duncan Laird. I believe the Floating Carey to be a variation of the Carey Special, an old and tested pattern from British Columbia, used to imitate Dragonfly Nymphs. Dunc's Floating Carey replaces the peacock herl body on the Carey Special with spun and clipped deer hair.

***In Stillwater Solutions Recipes*, by Brian Chan and Phil Rowley, there is a pattern called the Grizzly Dragon that uses closed cell foam for its buoyancy.**

What do all these flies have in common?

First: They are buoyant.

Second: They were all tied to represent Dragonfly Nymphs.

Third: All the authors recommend they be fished with a full sinking line.

And last, I believe, their inspiration came from the original English Booby. I have, therefore, lumped them all together and called them Boobies.

To understand why Boobies are so productive we need to delve into the life cycle of the dragonfly. To begin with the nymphs are huge, some can reach 2 inches or more in length, providing a big meal for fish. They live a long time, spending up to 3 or 4 years in the nymphal stage, so are always available to fish in various sizes. They crawl along the bottom or in the aquatic vegetation, but have one more means of locomotion we need to be aware of.

They have internal gills so must take in water through their butts to extract oxygen, they are capable of squirting this water back out with an enough force to give them jet propulsion. This jet propulsion pushes them in 4 to 6 inch spurts that they use to escape danger or capture prey.

This brings us to the presentation of these Boobies. Using a full sinking line with a short leader, about 3 feet in length, cast the fly out and allow the line to sink to the bottom. The buoyancy of the fly should float it up about 1 to 2 feet above the bottom thereby avoiding most of the snags. Now for the retrieve, strip in the line in 4 to 6 inch strips with a short pause between strips. This will imitate that jet propulsion thing that Dragonfly Nymphs have. The pauses seem to be a very important part of the retrieve. Periodically during the retrieve I will give a longer pause allowing it to float up well away from the bottom to avoid snags.

One additional thought on presenting a Booby. In the spring and early summer the size of the fly is probably not important because there are nymphs of all age groups present, but in late summer the large mature nymphs emerge into adult dragonflies, so it may pay to use a smaller pattern in the late summer and fall.

Sometime when the fishing is slow and you have run out of options, give one of these Booby Flies a try; I think you'll be pleasantly surprised, I know I was.

Walt Alexander

## Steelies in My Back Yard

I placed my flies directly along the seam and started my drift. Half way through the drift my indicator disappeared and I flipped my rod tip downriver and felt the hook up. This is a big guy, so I pulled the anchor on my drift boat, and went downriver with him. Within 100 yards, I rowed ashore, beached the boat, continued the struggle from the shallows and after a few minutes I netted and released him. This all took place on the Palermo Riffles of the Feather River high-flow section.

There are three drift boat trips that I make on the Feather River that keeps the time of the drift to manageable



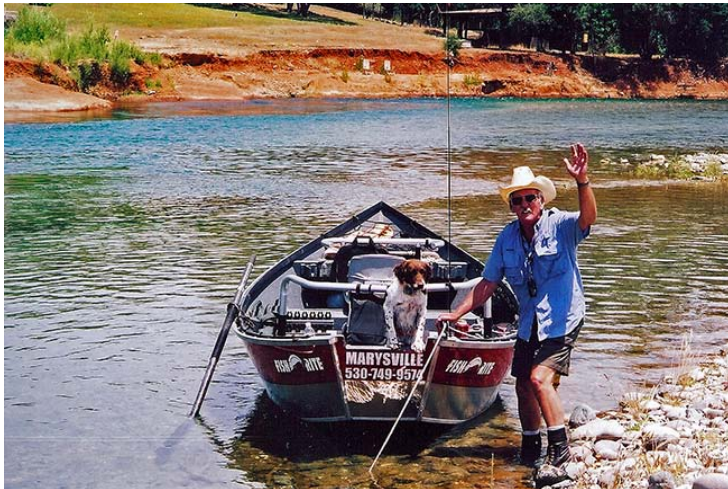
durations of approximately 5 hours.

Drift number one: River Bend Park in Oroville to the Thermalito After Bay outlet.

Drift number two: The Thermalito After Bay\ outlet to Palm Avenue.

Drift number three: The Gridley Boat Ramp to Alexander Cove (private) or the Live Oak Park.

Drift number one is the low-flow section of the river while drift number two and three are in the high-flow section. Today I chose the number two drift because of the many redds located in the slack waters below the Half Mile Island. This is where the silver sides hang out. The Feather River splits into two sections below the after bay outlet and Half Mile Island is created by this split. I usually take the left channel as this puts me just above islands two and three where there are huge areas of salmon redds. The drift boat is beached here above the redds and the fishing progresses by



wading. Below island number three I hop-scotch downriver to island number five which is directly below the Palermo Riffles. This has always been an excellent riffle but it is sometimes crowded with wading steelhead fishermen.

I then move on to another island called Stones Island where the redds lie above the riffle. I cast my two-fly rig above the riffle where my BH Pheasant Tail and Glo-Bug pass through the redd. I use the tandem combination initially as exploratory patterns to determine which works best, the Glo-Bug or the BH Pheasant Tail. If salmon are spawning I use the Glo-Bug exclusively, but if there are no salmon eggs moving down the river I switch to a size 12 BH Pheasant Tail as the lead fly and a size 16 as the

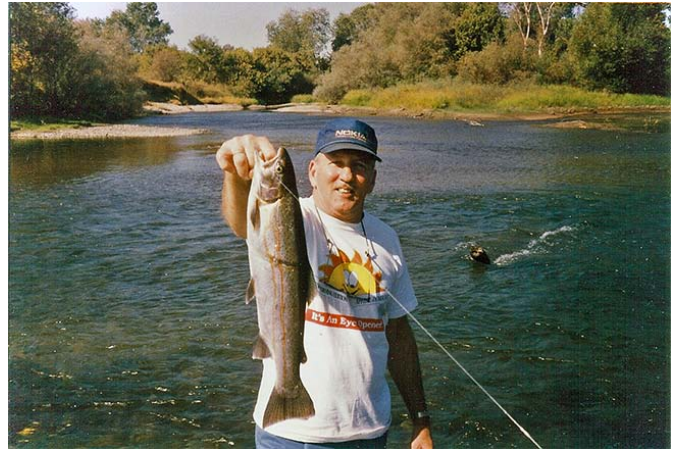
point fly. From my vantage point I could discern a salmon's dorsal fin showing above the water's surface. It was a hen and I watched as she moved swiftly to one side and took my Glo-Bug. Oh, I've got a twenty-pound hen salmon on my 3X tippet and, needless to say, she is going to break-off, taking my terminal tackle with her and there's nothing I can do to stop her (except grin-and-bear it)! I should have known better than to put my Glo-Bug through an occupied redd. It's a well known fact, that hen salmon will collect any errant eggs she finds and place them back in her redd, and that's what she is doing.

After re-rigging, I went back to that same redd, only this time I made sure to start my drift below the redd. On the third drift my line started up river at a fast pace. I didn't bother setting the hook because I was using the Brownie Shock Loop, which is three inches of line hanging loosely between the reel and my index finger on the rod hand. When the steelie takes the Glo-Bug, I let go of the shock loop and when the line tightens against the drag of the reel, the fish is hooked solidly. The shock loop lessens the impact of a hard strike on the rod tip and puts the pressure on the reel drag instead. The line began peeling off my reel at a fast clip. Not again! Is that same hen going to rip me off twice?

Luckily it turned out to be a nice steelie doing his thing. A good technique is sight fishing - when you see the dorsal fin of the hen salmon while she is spawning on the redd then cast your fly just below the redd to intercept the steelie that is waiting there. Steelie cocks (males) wait below the salmon redds to feed on eggs, stoneflies and caddis larva that are dislodged from the river bottom by the hen salmon. Steelies are reared in fresh water, go to the ocean for 2-3 years then return to their natal water and spawn. Then they return to the ocean for another year if they survive. They return to their original streams to spawn up to three more times but do not spawn on their final trip upstream, usually their seventh year. On the seventh year they die. No tagged fish have ever been found upstream after their seventh year and biologists haven't figured out why.

Moving down the river, I anchored the drift boat, rig for mooching, and worked the redds on both sides of the boat. I thrashed the glides for over an hour, making lots of noise, and bad casts, but this doesn't put the steelies down. Steelies travel in schools, so if you don't locate them within an hour, move on. Steelies don't linger in pools or glides; they move constantly and rest occasionally.

After moving to the next riffle, I decided to fish in a more relaxed style, by rigging for plunking, and using an egg cluster; again, I anchored above a riffle, cast out my line, which was heavily weighted, and let the Glo-Bug cluster sit on the bottom of the river, below the redd. Steelies will mouth egg clusters, therefore, if you feel a slight tug on your line, set the hook gently. Within the hour I caught two drop-back steelhead; these fish have finished spawning, are starting downriver, and they are hungry.



The left channel below Stones Island is a small one but I always spend an hour here catching gray bullets (Squaw Fish) that are really a kick to catch. Six squaws an hour is the norm here and they readily take Glo-Bugs. One of the prettiest sections of the Feather River is from highway 162 bridge in Oroville-to the Live Oak Park. This section is comprised of both low-flow and high-flow areas.

The fishing and the scenery never disappoint me! It's true, the salmon and steelhead runs are a disaster in this river; nevertheless, the combination of the pristine shore lines and the old Chinese doodle-bug operations, blend the old with the new. There is nothing like drifting the Feather (named for its multitude of duck and goose feathers) on a cool, brisk autumn morning, while watching the swirls of misty fog rising as the sun warms the water surface.

Ed (Brownie) Brown

\*\*\*\*\* CLUB OFFICERS \*\*\*\*\*

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