

President's Message

by Mark Borsierine

Enjoy the Summer Season

An article in American Angler about prevention of heat injuries reminded me to encourage our members to take precautions such as using sunscreen, wide-brimmed hats and long-sleeve shirt and long pants to prevent skin injuries; sunglasses to prevent eye injuries and to avoid dehydration. Have good fishing this summer, but take care of yourselves!

Enjoy the summer season to the fullest. Norm Crisp's presentation at our last meeting was especially helpful with all his

great ideas to make our trips more enjoyable and more productive. Of course, the best advice is that if you're traveling to an area you're unfamiliar with - get a guide! I've been very lucky over the years and while some guides have been better than others; I can honestly say that I've never had a bad guide. One reason I think is that I've always been cooperative and taken their advice; after all, that's what I hired them for! If I'd known exactly where to go and what to do, I wouldn't have hired them!

HOAFF Meeting

Monday, June 19 - 7:00pm

Mike Kruse

MDC Trout Biologist

Mike is one of the prime movers in the Mill Creek acquisition and other MDC and Nature Conservancy acquisitions. He will be bringing us up to date on what is happening at MDC fisheries and will also be available to answer your questions.

White River Trout Management Summit Meeting

by Norm Crisp

On May 14th and 15th the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission held what was billed as "The Mountain Home Trout Summit". On behalf of HOAFF I attended the summit.

The summit was convened to have the fishing and general public provide



their input on what the goals for the rivers should be what actions the AGFC should take and recommendations on how to achieve the goals. Complete information on the AGFC's plan can be viewed on line at <http://www.agfc.com/fishing/resources-fishing/trout-in->

[arkansas/trout_plans/tailwaters_meetings.aspx](http://www.agfc.com/fishing/resources-fishing/trout-in-arkansas/trout_plans/tailwaters_meetings.aspx).

The meeting was conducted by Dynamic Solutions, a consulting company that specializes in facilitating meeting for natural resource management agencies. Participants segregated into groups

of 5 to 8 to work on providing input. On May 14th the individual groups were asked to brainstorm their goals for the fisheries. On May 15th groups were asked to brainstorm the management issues to reach goals and also advise on how to implement the goals and

issues. At the end of each evening the lists prepared by each group were briefly discussed and then posted on the walls for all to see. Each participant was given 'stick on dots' and asked to place one or more dots on the goals, issues and advise they felt was most important. During the brainstorming periods the AGFC staff was not in attendance.

The results of this activity were mixed as would be expected. Certain themes such as "More big fish" or "improve the quality of the fishing reoccurred. However the goal which received the most dots, more than twice the number of the next goal, was improved water quality. With issues, as with goals, Water Quality received more

than twice as many dots as the next issue, Enforcement. In terms of advice, the results were somewhat different. The priority item was to "manage the Norfolk as a special area".

The summary of the Summit can be viewed at http://www.agfc.com/userfiles/pdfs/fisheries/mgmtplans/BullShoals-Norfolk_PublicWorkshops_Summary.pdf



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Casting Games

Prior to the next three meetings beginning at 6:15 outside the Church, we'll hold Clinics on Casting for those interested. Each clinic will cover a different aspect of casting with the first this coming June 18th being on making accurate and soft short casts. Short casts can be the most difficult of all casts to execute properly! I encourage you to bring your own rod and reel, if not, we will have up to 10 outfits. Take advantage of these Clinics to increase your enjoyment of the sport!



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Do You Know Your Trout Stream Etiquette?

Take This Quiz From the FFF Club Wire

With the beginning of another fishing season upon us and lots of new trout anglers among us, I thought it a good time to review some basic stream etiquette. Believe it or not there are some basic rules of engagement that come into play when two anglers meet while fishing a stream or river. All too often in our haste to enjoy ourselves, we may ignore the effect of our actions on other anglers who are already present. Take a look at the following ten situations and if you can't answer YES to all of the questions you might need to rethink the effect of your fishing priorities on other anglers. By the way, don't expect to learn this stuff while fishing at trout parks like Bennett Springs or Roaring River. While these are good places to learn how to catch trout on flies, you will not find many anglers there who practice these rules. And when you do run into a courteous angler, let him or her know you appreciate their courtesy.

1) While fishing a river you arrive at a favorite pool to find another angler already fishing there. You believe there is enough room for two anglers to fish. Do you ask the other angler's permission before casting into that pool?

2) While passing an upstream-fishing angler on a small stream, do you note his or her rate of movement, stay back from the bank, and walk far enough around to leave that angler an estimated half-hour of undisturbed water before fishing again?

3) When fishing your way down along a creek, you notice an angler approaching you from downstream. Do you stop fishing and move around that angler, thus honoring the tradition of

yielding the right-of-way to an upstream-fishing angler?

4) When you are fishing a spot where anglers must wade or float through to reach other water, do you yield your right-of-way to such access?

5) When you approach an angler on a lake or creek, do you stop far enough away to leave a little unfished water between your casts and his or her longest casts and drifts?

6) While float-tubing you notice a fish rising behind a nearby angler's float tube within his or her casting range. You also notice that the angler seems preoccupied in casting to other rising fish. Do you alert that angler to the fish rising behind the tube and cast to it only if invited to do so?

7) While boat fishing on a river, you find yourself approaching a wading angler. Do you guide the boat's course away from the water being fished, keep as low and quiet as possible, and avoid dropping anchor where it might disturb that person's fishing?

8) When walking along a spring creek or river, do you walk well back from the banks to avoid spooking fish and even farther back around any visible angler?

9) When you encounter another angler, are you likely to acknowledge that person's presence with a friendly gesture, smile or greeting?

10) When approaching a river pool, you see an angler on shore who isn't fishing. Do you consider that he or she might be resting the water and ask permission to fish there?

If you are able to answer yes to each of these questions, you are well on your way to becoming an etiquette aware angler.



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Spring Steelhead 2007

by Jim Ohnemus

To quote Gary Bader after he caught his first Alaskan Steelhead, "This Steelhead made my whole trip worth while"! This was Gary's first trip to the Situk River (pronounced see-tuk). Dave Howard, Mark Smith and myself have visited this area before for Spring Steelhead.

The Situk River is located at the top of the Inside Passage, just a short drive from Yakutat, AK. The little town of Yakutat is amazing, think about this, it is so small that the phone book is ONE page long, and yet it has a major airline with two flight a day! It is the smallest town in the world to have a major airline service to it!

When I found how great the Situk River was for Steelhead, I thought that I would have to charter a bush plane from Ketchikan. So finding out about the flight connection from Anchorage, Dave Howard and I started trying to find a place to stay and make arrangements for fishing a guide for the Situk.

We found a great place to stay, a newly constructed house that sleeps 12 and a kitchen to cook our meals! It also had satellite TV and free phone service (cellphone do not function there).

Next we found a great fishing guide, Bob Fraker, he is only one of two to be

grandfathered in to use an 18 ft jet boat on the Situk River! He has been guiding on the Situk for 32 years and he just had his 65 birthday in May while guiding us.

He would continually tell us what poor fishermen we were. To prove his point, he would jump out of the boat and have a nice Steelhead on in just seconds, which seemed so hard to believe! He did that several times on our three guided trip. That was Bob's way of trying to make us better fly fishermen. Bob had a very special way to tying on his egg pattern. In his little fly box, he had about eight different color of yarn and a pair of scissors. He had the yarn cut into lengths of four inch pieces. He would take our tippet end and put it though the eye of the hook and wrap it around the hook about six times and knot it with a long tag end. Then he would add four different colors of yarn, tying then on with the tag end, taking his scissors cutting off the tag end and lastly trim the yarn into a egg pattern about the size of a quarter! He picked the colors at random, tying new ones on, each time we broke one off. That happen to me quite often!

Bob also kept us entertained with all his Alaskan frontier stories, Zane

Grey type stories full of adventure, like the story running up river full speed and having a Moose a jump in the boat and lots of bear stories. Before I repeat any other story I must introduce you to Mike, a Jack Russell Terrier. This dog was in our boat two of the three days. He would bark at Eagles flying over or when he would spot them in a tree. When Dave landed a Steelhead, Mike jumped out of the boat, ran up stream and attacked the fish, Dave saved the



day by pulling Mike off and returned the Steelhead back to the river, safe and sound.

Now that you know Mike better, I can tell you a great bear story. Bob and Mike were in a trapper's cabin when a large bear put it's paw under the door, upsetting Mike. Some how, Bob "untied the door" and slapped it hard

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against the bear. With that, the bear ran off. Mike seized the opportunity, jump up and bit the bear on his ass, holding on for dear life with his teeth! Mike later returned to the cabin knowing he had done his part!

I feel these stories add to the fun and provide an inkling of adventure in the Alaskan frontier.

Now lets get back to fishing stories. We all agreed that being down stream from the boat and wading back to the boat was the hardest part of the trip! The weather was much better this year, sunny and in the mid forty's. We did hike in some snow when we fished above the nine mile bridge.

The fishing was mixed above the bridge. Mark did well. I saw fish and cast to them, but no takes.

Over all trip was very successful, lots of Steelhead were caught. Mark caught the most, but we thought he had a unfair advantage because he could see more fish than us short guys! Gary caught the biggest, when we measured his Steelhead it was 36" long.

We all hooked fish that were in the 40" range or better, but none were landed. Those big fish headed back to sea at full speed!

We did have a double fish on and I had a fish at the same time to make a triple, but luck would have it, I was unable to land my fish!



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Pond Fishing for Sunfish

by Norm Crisp

A couple of years ago my oldest son did two great things great things for Father's Day. He took me to his "secret" farm pond to fish and on the way home had me stop so he could buy us some beer. Thanks E for the beer, but more importantly for reintroducing me to the joys of fishing for sunfish.

I'm using sunfish rather than bluegill since many farm ponds

and small lakes generally contain a couple of different species. Besides bluegill many have green sunfish, long ear sunfish or even hybrids. What ever the species, the fishing techniques are generally the same.

Sunfish fishing starts to really pick up as the water temperatures move into the low 70's. That signals the start of the spawning season. As spawning begins, males move into shallow waters – 2 to 5 feet – and build nests. A firm sand bottom is preferred but even soft mud will do. The males tend to



congregate in one area and "fan" out their plate sized nests. These spawning beds can be 10 feet wide and 30 or 40 feet long. While the males are building the nests the females wait out from the shallows to where the depth drops off. Once the nests are ready the females move in to spawn. After spawning the females return to their pre spawning areas. The

males remain and actively and aggressively guard the nest. Spawning will continue for most of the summer.

Once you find the locations you have found the fish.

The waters with the biggest sunfish generally have good populations of



bass. Not necessarily big bass, but a lot in the 10 to 12 inch range. These bass feed on the young sunfish and keep the pond from developing a stunted population of sunfish.

If you can't see the tell-tail foot prints of a spawning bed, the best way to find fish is to walk or wade parallel to the bank casting to the edge and working out toward the middle with successive casts. If you prefer a float tub, move toward the edge until you find the 'drop off' and start working casts closer to the shore.

If the pond contains green sunfish they will most often be found right next to cattails or other emerging vegetation. Green sunfish have a "bass like" shape and feed ravenously on the bluegill fry that move into the vegetation for shelter and protection.

The next casts out are the ones that will pay the benefits, both in terms of a beautiful catch and the number of fish. Once you find out how far out the spawning bed is the fun begins. Besides being

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hungry, males are very aggressive in guarding their nest. No matter if the strikes come from hunger or aggression, they do take your offerings.

If there is any visible holding structure don't pass it up. These locations will very often be the best chance for a bigger bass. They tend to hang around the structure and prey on the smaller spawners or the newly hatched fry.

Finally, the casts furthest out from the shore will produce the females which are staging to move into or back into the spawning bed. Keep cast progressively further out toward the middle until number of fish that rise drops off.

The fly of choice is something that will float well and stand up to catching a lot of fish!

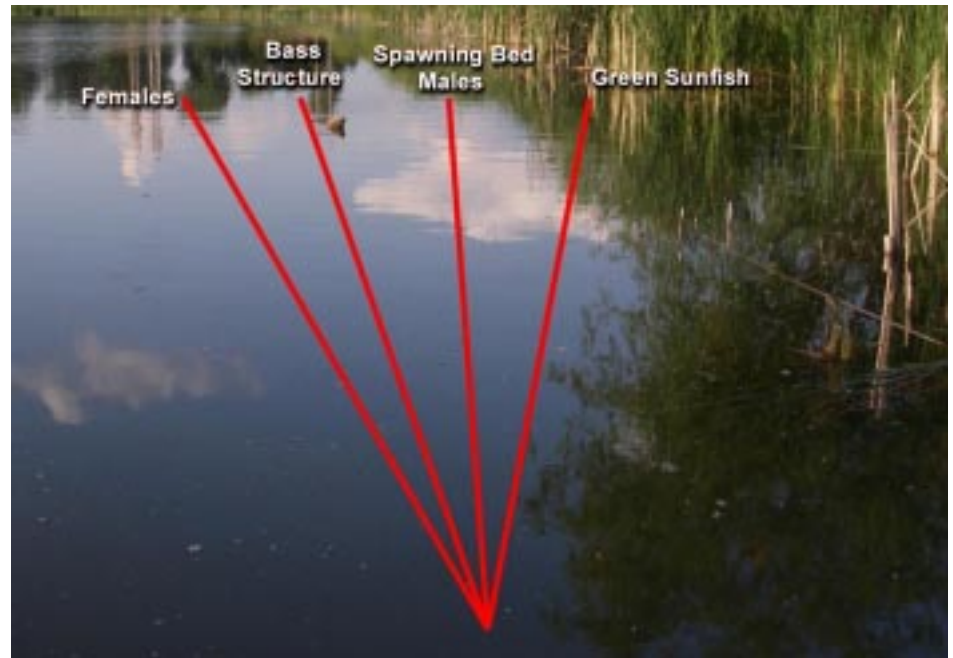
Small poppers are the stand by. But any dry fly will work. For durability it is hard to beat a fly like a Rat Faced McDougal or an irresistible. Most sunfish have a relatively small mouth. Even so they can swallow a size 10 popper. The problem is removing the fly to release them. A pair of hemostats is critical, as is pressing down the barb.

The best strategy after each cast is to allow your fly/popper to rest

undisturbed on the surface for a few seconds. When your fly lands, especially in the spawning bed area, several fish will move close and hang suspended just below the fly looking up at it. After resting peacefully, a slight twitch will bring one or more of the fish up to inhale your offering. Miss or catch, cast right back to the same area. More than likely one of the other fish will take your offering.

For the casts close to the emergent vegetation and any structure give the fly a bit more action. In fact make the popper earn its keep by creating a slash and a wake. That will solicit some attention for the fish eaters.

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Upcoming Events & Programs

- June 19, 2007 Mike Kruse - Missouri Trout
- July 16, 2007 Jeff Williams - Arkansas Trout
- Aug 20, 2007 Dennis Dunderdale - Arkansas Fly Fishing Guide
- Sept 13, 2007 Norm Crisp Nymphing Class - Discovery Center
- Sept 17, 2007 Annual Picnic - Shawnee Mission Park
- Oct 4-6, 2007 Southern Council Conclave - Mountain Home, AR
- Oct 15, 2007 Annual Auction & Raffle
- Nov 2-4, 2007 Fall Outing - Lake Taneycomo, Branson, Mo
- Dec 1-3, 2007 Annual Banquet - Bennett Spring

2008 Upcoming Events

- Mar 6-8, 2008 White River Lodge - Mountain Home, AR



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