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## ZOOM GENERAL MEETING: THURSDAY, JUNE 17

### STREAMER FISHING FOR TROPHY TROUT Rob and Ryan Buhler

by Marshall Bissett

It's the end of a long day on the water, the sun is setting and it's turning chilly. You've been fishing nymphs and dries all day catching those 12-16" browns and rainbows, the residents of our Eastern Sierra rivers. On a whim you tie on a streamer and get a cast to an undercut bank of the Upper Owens and your day can go from average to spectacular. As a huge brown or

rainbow  
tears line  
off your  
reel, you  
will wonder why you did not think of  
streamers earlier. It is common to  
think of streamer fishing only as a last  
resort or as a way of prospecting  
unknown waters. A systematic  
approach, the right fly and a lot of  
casts  
can

(Program continued on next page)





## GENERAL MEETING (CONT.)

*(Program continued from page 1)*

produce the fish of a lifetime.

Our June presenters Rob and Ryan Buhler (the “Buhler Brothers”) will show us why the phrase ‘the tug is the drug’ very much applies to the Kern, East Walker, Owens Rivers and Lake Crowley. Born in Idaho but raised in Southern California, they will share their 20 years of experience chasing trophy trout in waters that will look very familiar to you. The brothers’ dynamic show will cover equipment, flies and the best times to tie on a streamer that can be the size of a small bird or a tiny punk perch.

Ryan and Rob are on the pro staff of Kern River Fly shop and run a small fly-tying company. When not weekend warrior fishing or working, the Buhler Bros can be found giving fly fishing presentations, fly tying demos and classes. Their flies are used by top local guides Guy Jeans, Joe Contaldi and are stocked at Orvis in Pasadena.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Richard Ress

At long last, finally, excruciatingly, our world is opening up. We're getting back, if not to normal, at least to some semblance of normal. Casting practice, mostly without masks for the



vaccinated; the first special clinic, for learning to double haul; actually going fishing together at Hot Creek Ranch for the weekend. The GSO is coming, perhaps a nymphing clinic in the fall, and we will soon be

able to resume in person meetings as long as we don't suffer a "third wave" of Covid-19 and everyone is vaccinated. It feels good and scary at the same time. I expect that it will take quite a while for us to be able to do things without thinking of risk, but perhaps that's a good thing that may keep us from making stupid choices.

As to those in person meetings, we are evaluating the prospects for resuming our monthly meetings when the powers that be and good sense allow us to do so. We are discussing how to proceed: should we eliminate the Zoom connection altogether or try a hybrid presentation? Some clubs are considering doing so; my fear is that the ease of staying home to hear the talk will keep too many from making the effort to come, losing the social interaction and camaraderie that are

the glue holding us together. In recent years we've sometimes had difficulty meeting our minimum dinner reservations, and that may be harder in the current climate. However, we seem to be getting about the same number of participants for the remote sessions, so the prospect of putting on respectable clothes and driving to Monterey for dinner doesn't seem to be the limiting factor for attendance. My hope is that the prospect of getting together will overcome the lethargy of staying home for a year. I, for one, look forward to it.

Another piece of the puzzle is our weekly fly tying. We have kept it going, thanks to Michael Peratis' extensive time and efforts, as a virtual activity and even attracted some long distance participants. For 14 years we've been blessed by having Charles Brittain's unbelievably generous gift of letting us use his Mount Aire facility for our meetings. We have been able to leave our camera and screen setups in place, store our tables and chairs and park in his secure lot. Charles is retiring to Montana, poor fellow, and will have to live near some pretty decent rivers. While I'm very happy for him and Ellie, we're faced with finding a new venue. With David Hoffberg's help we have located one available space and we are looking at another. This may be more amenable to a hybrid model that allows distant participation, but again I wouldn't want to undermine the sessions by making it too easy to just stay home. Besides, I miss the weekly Chinese dinner. Wednesday evenings have been the highlight and anchor of my week and I do miss it.

Please call or write to me with your thoughts about how to proceed. This is your club. We want to make it meet your wishes as we get back together.

Tight lines!

## UPDATE REGARDING LONG VALLEY (HOT CREEK) EXPLORATORY DRILLING PROJECT

by Bill Luddy

Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers has weighed in on the fight to stop a mining operation on federal land in the Inyo National Forest.

The Long Valley Exploration Drilling Project proposed by Kore USA Ltd. (Kore Mining) encompasses 230 acres next to Hot Creek.

Kore Mining proposes to conduct mineral exploration activities involving drilling with heavy equipment, the creation of fourteen drill pads and the use of existing roads and temporary access routes. (Details of the proposal are available on the Forest Service website at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=59294>.)

If approved the project could result in an open pit gold mine within sight of Hot Creek Ranch. Open pit gold mines rely on using cyanide leaching to extract minute quantities of ore, digging tons of soil to recover less than a gram of gold.

Alerted to the proposal by SPFF member Roger Backlar, club President Richard Ress submitted a letter to the Forest Service declaring the club's opposition to the proposal. An email blast was sent to club members urging everyone to contact the Forest Service and add their voice to the growing chorus of opposition.

The volume of letters from Cal Trout, Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited and anglers and nature lovers from around the country caused the Forest Service to extend the public comment period from May 7 to May 13. We will continue to monitor this project and keep the membership of and actions by the Forest Service.

Below is the letter submitted on behalf of our club:

Dear Ms. Garcia,

We are writing on behalf of the more than 300 members of the Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers to express our strong opposition to the Long Valley Exploration Drilling Project proposed by Kore USA Ltd. (Kore Mining). The speculative mining project in Long Valley poses a significant threat to the future of the scenic, economically and ecologically important portion of Mono County. As you review the project before you it is critical you give full weight to the environmental impacts of the entire project as proposed not merely the initial testing phase.



## HOT CREEK UPDATE (CONT.)

We are deeply concerned with the project's proximity to Hot Creek, one of our country's iconic trout fisheries. We are all aware of the grave impacts mining can have on fish and freshwater ecosystems. "Heap leach gold mine" operations such as are described on Kore Mining's website [Koremining.com](http://Koremining.com) can lead to sulfuric acid and heavy metal contamination when rainwater or surface drainage carries contaminants to nearby streams, rivers, lakes, and groundwater harming species who rely on these water sources. One need only consider the environmental devastation that occurred in 2015 when polluted water from the abandoned Gold King mine flooded the Animas River in Colorado. "The toxic Colorado river spill and the menace of old hard-rock mines" By David Kelly, Los Angeles Times, August 10, 2015.

Not only is this proposed project just above Hot Creek, but the water from Hot Creek eventually flows into Owens River and Crowley Lake, putting this entire ecosystem at risk. The risk of contamination from this proposed project must be viewed through the lens of the geology of Long Valley with its history of volcanic activity from its formation to the present. Hot Creek was named for the thermal activity, and the proposed project area is also adjacent to the Mammoth Lakes Geothermal Plant. The mining project will require an as yet undetermined volume of water to process the ore and there is no indication where and how the water will be sourced, or the potential impact on other water users.

California is entering into another extreme drought, another extreme fire season, and is aiming to protect 30% of our lands by 2030. As such, it is completely inappropriate to approve projects like this that will only cause further risk to our natural resources.

The need for a complete Environmental Impact Report encompassing the entirety of this proposal and the potential for near term, intermediate, and long term environmental impacts is undeniable. And in assessing those potential impacts and any mitigations that the proponent may propose we must also analyze the company's likely ability to deliver on its commitments.

According to Kore Mining Ltd.'s 2019 Annual Information Form for the Year Ended December 31, 2019: *"KORE does not own any producing properties and, consequently, has no current operating income or cash flow from the properties it holds, nor has it had any income from operations in the past three financial years. As a consequence, operations of KORE are funded solely by equity financings."*

Under the heading of "Financing Risks and Dilution to Shareholder" Kore admits *"The Company has limited financial resources, no operations and no revenues."*

## HOT CREEK UPDATE (CONT.)

And finally under the heading “Uninsurable Risks” Kore reports: *“Exploration, development and production operations on mineral properties involve numerous risks, including unexpected or unusual geological operating conditions, rock bursts, cave-ins, fires, floods, earthquakes and other environmental occurrences. It is not always possible to obtain insurance against all such risks. Although the Company intends to maintain insurance to protect against certain risks in such amounts as it considers to be reasonable, any such insurance may not cover all the potential risks associated with its operations. The Company may also be unable to maintain insurance to cover these risks at economically feasible premiums. Insurance coverage may not continue to be available or may not be adequate to cover any resulting liability. **Moreover, insurance against risks such as environmental pollution or other hazards as a result of exploration and production is not generally available to companies in the mining industry on acceptable terms.** The Company might also become subject to liability for pollution or other hazards which may not be insured against or which the Company may elect not to insure against because of premium costs or other reasons. Losses from these events may cause the Company to incur significant costs that could have a material adverse effect upon its financial performance and results of operations.”*

We can see by Kore Mining’s own financial filings that they are a company with “limited financial resources, no operations and no revenues” requesting permits to operate speculative drilling in an extremely environmental sensitive area where *“insurance against risks such as environmental pollution or other hazards as a result of exploration and production is not generally available to companies in the mining industry on acceptable terms”*.

There is a term for this type of operation – Wildcatters.

The lesson of the Animas River and too many other environment disasters that are the legacy of mining carried out without proper protection at the start and resources for remediation at closure must not be ignored in Long Valley.

We strongly oppose even the first exploratory step of this effort to ultimately mine for gold. At a minimum, a full EIS should be conducted in order to properly assess the full impacts and allow for meaningful public engagement.

Sincerely,

Richard Ress, President

Bill Luddy, Conservation Chair

# ANNUAL SPFF PICNIC: SAVE THE DATE - AUGUST 15, 2021

by Glenn Short

## ***Annual SPFF Picnic*** ***Save the Date***

*Although our annual picnic will return in August, it is time to mark your calendar and plan to join us for a day at the beach. The changing recommendations from the CDC suggest that we can safely gather in August.*

*Plan to join us for free food and beverages with friends while you escape the Valley's heat. We expect to have another fly fishing "garage" sale and hope to dragoon Bill Woods into holding another informal surf fishing clinic.*

*Rincon Beach Park has an ocean breeze, shade, picnic tables, real bathrooms, an outdoor shower, and convenient parking.*

*We hope to see you there. More information will be sent as the picnic approaches.*

Sunday, August 15  
9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.  
at  
Rincon Beach Park  
Carpinteria  
(Highway 101 @ Bates Road)

*Alcohol is permitted for those over 21, but smoking is prohibited.  
Dogs must be leashed at all times.*

**SPFF**  
**1971-2021**



**50TH**  
**ANNIVERSARY**

## OUTINGS

by Jim Fleisher

### GETTING STARTED OUTING JULY 16-18, 2021

Yes Virginia, there will be a Getting Started Outing this year!! It is scheduled for July 16-18 in Mammoth Lakes. Registration will be available the first week in June. We already have several trips being led by club members. There will be more available in the near future. Continue to check the website for additional information. Just click on the "Events Calendar" and scroll to July and click on the GSO.

Plans are in progress to have our annual Barbecue at the Breakfast Club Saturday night. Exact time and cost is pending.

Anyone interested in leading a small group of club members to their "secret place" please let me know ASAP.

More details will be available through emails from SPFF.

## MEMBERSHIP

by Jay Bushore

The members of Sierra Pacific Flyfishers look forward to meeting you. We hope to get to know you better at the monthly dinner Meetings, in our educational programs and on the water. New membership signup is at [spff.org/New\\_Member\\_Signup](http://spff.org/New_Member_Signup).

SPFF always welcomes new members. Please welcome and introduce yourselves to our latest new members:

**Harvey Freed**  
**James Lee**

## SPFF EVENT CALENDAR

### JUNE

Virtual Fly Tying via ZOOM .....	2
Board Meeting via ZOOM .....	3
Casting Clinic @ Lake Balboa .....	5
Virtual Fly Tying via ZOOM .....	9
Double Haul Clinic.....	12
Virtual Fly Tying via ZOOM .....	16
General Meeting & Presentation with Rob & Ryan Buhler via ZOOM .....	17
Casting Clinic @ Lake Balboa .....	19
Virtual Fly Tying via ZOOM .....	23
Virtual Fly Tying via ZOOM .....	30

### JULY

Board Meeting .....	1
Casting Clinic @ Lake Balboa .....	3
California FREE Fishing Day - no license required .....	3
General Meeting & Presentation with Dave Smith via ZOOM (joint meeting with Wilderness Flyfishers).....	13
GSO (Getting Started Outing) .....	15-18
Casting Clinic @ Lake Balboa .....	17
SWC Summer Quarterly Meeting .....	17

### AUGUST

Board Meeting .....	5
<b>Annual Family Picnic .....</b>	<b>15</b>



## SOCIAL MEDIA

by Catrina White

\*Tap\* Tap \* Tap\*

Is this thing on?

Hello? Testing, 1,2,3....

Hi!!

We have a lot of new Friends and followers on SPFF Foundation pages for Facebook and Instagram!

I am happy to report that we have 220 people following our Facebook page, which began last June. Almost one year, and almost as many followers as are in our club!

Our two most active pages are Fly Tying and Women's programs.

Congratulations Michael on your work to get so many people to join our Fly Tying Facebook group!

Every week the new fly patterns are posted. Wednesday nights are live on Facebook, so if you want to watch it live instead of on zoom, please go to the SPFF Foundation fly tying group to watch and leave comments.

You are also welcome to watch the recorded sessions whenever you would like! We are leaving them up for your enjoyment, and for our future fly tyers.

I am so proud of Michael Peratis for learning how to use Zoom and Facebook. I am especially proud that he has become so competent with both platforms. Who says an old dog can't learn new tricks? Just kidding, Michael!

We don't have much activity in the groups or on the page, so I invite you please to participate on one of our many groups: Women of Sierra Pacific, Fish Stories (watch the video of Keeley's cousin and how they catch giant footballs in Idaho), rod building, casting practice (have you double hauled lately?), and finally, Trading Post for you to trade, sell or barter anything fly fishing related.

## DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President .....	Richard Ress
Vice President .....	Bernie Ecker
Secretary .....	Jody Martin
Treasurer .....	Mike Hembree
Calendar Maintenance.....	Tom Wright
Communications.....	Bill Luddy
Conservation .....	Bill Luddy
Development Chair .....	Rich Hoffman
Education.....	Steve Ebersold
Education Co-Chair .....	Michael Peratis
Head Fly Casting	
Instructor.....	Marshall Bissett
Librarian.....	Tom Wright
Membership .....	Jay Bushore
Newsletter Editor .....	Ed Swanson
Outings .....	Jim Fleisher
Programs .....	Marshall Bissett
Raffles .....	Steve Esgate
Social Media.....	Catrina White
Special Projects .....	Glenn Short
SWCFFI Representative .....	Tom Wright
Technical Advisor.....	Aran Dokovna
Web Master .....	Ren Colantoni
Women's Programs.....	Catrina White

We have a new group that we would love to have you join which is: Fly Fishing Resources. Have a favorite fly shop or guide? Favorite camping place close to a river? Would you like your buddy to go fly fishing with you, but they don't know where to start?

All of that and more are coming right to your internet location!

Please join us!

P.S. if anyone knows famous fly fishers- not naming names (AAAAyyyyyyy!!) we would love to have them join us and perhaps even help us promote our club!

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note: A well-deserved pat on the back to Cat for her outstanding work in spreading the SPFF word far and wide!*

# WOMEN'S PROGRAMS

By Catrina White

Hello Women Anglers!  
Happy Women in Fly Fishing Month!

First of all, are you up for a challenge?  
If you can, please take a photo or a video of something that shows your fly fishing prowess on our group page.

What am I going to do to celebrate? In honor of Women's Fly Fishing Month, I will issue a weekly fun challenge to you!

The first challenge for the first week of June: using a hula hoop, or make a circle with some string, and cast a piece of yarn or a fly into your circle at a distance of 25 feet. Try it again at 30 feet. Can't wait to see your results! There will be more fun events coming, so please check the women's group on Facebook, or email me for your next challenge! [Womensprograms@spff.org](mailto:Womensprograms@spff.org)

It's been a busy month for me, gathering information on clubs located within the SouthWest Council region, and see what their women's Programs are doing, and how we can improve our club.

I have only identified 5 clubs that currently have Women's Programs. Pasadena Casting Club, Southern Sierra Fly Fishers, Long Beach Casting Club, Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers and San Diego Fly Fishers. Did I miss any clubs out there? Please let me know!

This is only 5 of the 23 clubs that SouthWest Council represents that have Women's Programs! How is this possible considering women are the fastest growing demographic in Fly Fishing? We have more than 5 businesses that cater to women in Fly Fishing in the entire nation, which is a small number as well.

What can we do as a community to help foster programs for women in Fly Fishing? It takes a community to build a club, and right now, we need our Women community members to help us grow our network, and become visible to the Fly Fishing world that we are here!

Let's build our little corner of the world into something that lasts generations. Let's make our mark on the world! Let's build something we can be proud of!

For SPFF in the past year, I have built a complete program with educational and FUN virtual meetings. I have a mailing list of over 200 women around the world who have joined our community at SPFF because they don't have a program of their own. People tune in as far away as Japan, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and several European countries joining our programs. To Our small Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers!!

We women need to become more involved to make our voices heard, so we aren't forced to buy products made for men, or \*gasp\* be the only woman in a fly club, or even your local Fly Shop.

Are you willing to assist? For just a few hours every month, you too can have a program dedicated for women that will help to strengthen our community, build programs, meet other women who have similar interests, and have Fun Fun Fun (and perhaps learn something too)!! I sincerely hope that you will assist me in this endeavor.

Now for a shameless plug: I would like to continue to provide our programs for free to all, or a small donation. In order to do this, we need some support from you, our community. Donations of monetary tax-deductible donations, equipment, art, clothing in good condition that we can raffle off will assist our Women's Programs so we can continue our advancement in Fly Fishing.

# AUCTION RESULTS

by Rich Hoffman, Development Chair

Our second online SPFF auction held in April was a huge success! We had a great variety of auction items including 10 guide trips all of which were bought. There was a variety of clothing items as well as rods, reels, books, fly collections, gear, vacation rentals, and specialty items. It was close to a sellout of items!

Thank you to all who participated, as well as our many donors. Also, thanks to the following team members who helped in various capacities to make the auction successful:

Ren Colantoni  
Steve Esgate  
Michael Hembree  
Bill Luddy  
Michael Peratis  
Rich Ress

Business sponsors are listed below and club web-site.

## SPFF SPONSORS

### Donor

**ABOUTTROUT**  
Big horn Trout Shop  
Bighorn Anglers  
Bishop Flyfishing Guide Service  
BJ's Restaurant Woodland Hills  
Charles Jardine  
Cheap Sports Ventura  
Crystal Ranch Lodge  
Eastern Sierra Guide Services  
Fishermans Spot  
Fly Fish Oregon  
Frontier Anglers  
Lonesome Duck Ranch  
Montana Adventures and Angling  
On The Fly  
Pacific Fly Group  
Performance Anglers  
Sierra Bright Dot  
Solitude Fly Company  
Tenkara  
The Fly Shop  
The Troufitter  
Trout On The Fly  
Yosemite Outfitters

### Web Site

[www.abouttrout.com/](http://www.abouttrout.com/)  
[www.bighorntroutshop.com](http://www.bighorntroutshop.com)  
[www.bighornangler.com](http://www.bighornangler.com)  
[www.bishopflyfishing.com](http://www.bishopflyfishing.com)  
[www.bjsrestaurants.com/locations/ca/woodland-hills](http://www.bjsrestaurants.com/locations/ca/woodland-hills)  
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[www.realcheapsports.com](http://www.realcheapsports.com)  
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[www.lonesomeduck.com](http://www.lonesomeduck.com)  
[www.mtangling.com](http://www.mtangling.com)  
[www.ontheflyutah.com](http://www.ontheflyutah.com)  
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[www.performanceanglers.info](http://www.performanceanglers.info)  
[www.sierrabrightdot.com](http://www.sierrabrightdot.com)  
[www.solitudefly.com](http://www.solitudefly.com)  
[www.tenkarausa.com](http://www.tenkarausa.com)  
[www.theflyshop.com](http://www.theflyshop.com)  
[www.thetroutfitter.com](http://www.thetroutfitter.com)  
[www.montanatroutonthefly.com](http://www.montanatroutonthefly.com)  
[www.yosemite-outfitters.com](http://www.yosemite-outfitters.com)

# CASTING TUNE-UP REPORT

by Jody Martin

Several members of SPFF, either as students or as instructors, participated in a Southwest Council-sponsored “Casting Tune Up” day at the Pasadena Casting Club on May 22, and by any measure it was a great success. There were 15 students and 15 qualified instructors, including our own Marshall Bissett, John Roberts, and Jody Martin, such that everyone got valuable one-on-one



time from a variety of instructors with different teaching styles. Demonstrations on the basic casting stroke (by Eric Callow, former Casting Director for the Southwest Council of FFI), casting accuracy (by fly casting accuracy former world champion Michael Miller from PCC) and on the double haul (by John Van Derhoof, the only person in the world ever to hold CI, MCI, and THCI certifications as well as being a Buz Buszek award recipient or fly tying, from the Long Beach club) were tremendously helpful.

As an added bonus, the beautiful California toads (*Anaxyrus boreas halophilus*), a subspecies of the Western Toad, had just completed their metamorphosis from the tadpole stage to young frogs and could be seen all over the casting pool. If this event is offered again, you should not miss it! All photos by Michael Schweit, SWC special projects.





# FISHING REPORT: MISSOULA TRIP

by Jim Fleisher

From April 13 – 18, fourteen of us travelled to Missoula, Montana for the famed annual Skwala hatch. Although it was not the most prolific skwala hatch this year (should have been here last week!!) the trip this year was one of our best ever. A new nonstop flight from LAX to Missoula made travel a lot easier. Despite the COVID restrictions, our hotel stay was quite good as usual.

The first day fishing was a challenge for most of the group except for Rick Russo and myself and Debbie Sharpton and Lou Riffle who went to the Blackfoot River (a real treat, since often at this time the river is not fishing very well). The day was quite cold with temperatures in the 30's, but no real wind. The rest of the group went to the Bitterroot and Clark Fork rivers where it was equally cold, but with the addition of a 20 to 30 mph wind. That made it REALLY cold, and difficult casting. Despite those conditions, everyone had a very successful day catching fish. This year fishing on the Blackfoot

was exceptional. All the fish were really big, especially the cutthroat trout, which generally are a bit smaller than the Rainbows and Browns. In addition, there is always that sneaky Bull Trout lurking down there to make things really exciting.



The next few days the weather definitely improved and was much more comfortable. It seemed that the most productive combination was nymph fishing in the lower Blackfoot in the morning and then dry fly fishing after it joined the Clark Fork in the afternoon. Double hook-ups dry fly fishing are always a treat.

The first day that several of us did that, I went with Neal Hoffberg. He was a bit resistant to "bobber" fishing until I caught two huge Bull Trout.

However, he made up for it in

the afternoon, catching a bunch of large fish on Skwala dry flies.

Rich Ress joined us this year after a several year absence. He and Bill Luddy had some excellent days. Carlos and Jackie Valencia had taken the last ITFF course and came on the trip. They really seemed to enjoy themselves catching several large fish on the Bitterroot. Debbie Sharpton and her friend Lou Riffle also did well. She took the picture of Rick Russo and myself on the Blackfoot the first day. Jeff Work and David Enzer fished together and David did not fall in the water this year. Tim Reagan (who had been an active club member until he moved to Carson City) and his friend Jeff Caulkins always do well on this trip. I remember working with Tim at the Graduation Outing several years ago after he took the ITFF class.





## FISHING REPORT: MISSOULA TRIP (CONT.)

It was great that Neal Hoffberg, David's brother could join us. Despite moving to the Seattle area, Neal has remained active in our fly-tying sessions via Zoom video.

Fortunately we were at the tail end of the COVID restrictions in Montana, so dinners were a bit more normal than expected. Between the generally good weather (no rain or snow this year) and physically getting together again, made for an excellent trip. David Hoffberg usually arranges for several of the military veterans from our Healing Waters project to join us on this trip. However, because of COVID restrictions, they were not able to be there this year.

This year's trip was an overwhelming success and enjoyed by all.





# FISHING REPORT: MARBLE CANYON, AZ

By Stephen Graham and Bob Davidson

Our trip to Marble Canyon, AZ was finalized in early March 2020. Airline tickets were obtained through Phoenix to Page, car rental, lodging, and guides all were set up for April. Then, of course, came the pandemic and the trip was cancelled. In April of this year we were determined to go. Being anxious about airports we chose to drive 8 ½ hours through Las Vegas and St. George, UT, to reach the Colorado River below Lake Powell and the Navajo Bridge.

The drive seemed quicker than it was and the last bit was scenic high desert with amazing vistas. Ultimately we arrived at Cliff Dwellers Lodge (where there are no cliff dwellings) near to Lees Ferry (where there is no ferry) and close to the Colorado River in Marble Canyon which lies about 1 ½ hours by car above the Grand Canyon and is the last place to cross the river above Kingman.



Prior to the trip we contacted one of the guides to get some info on fishing the river. Having not fished in a year-and-a-half we were trying to prepare by reading books and watching videos on aquatic insects. That came to a screeching halt when we were told the only aquatic insects in Marble Canyon are midges. There are no mayflies or caddis or stoneflies for many miles. Apparently Arizona is considering introducing aquatic insects but nothing has been decided and it has only been sixty years since Glen Canyon Dam was built above the fishery. Fishing is with egg patterns, worms, and scuds so you can leave your fly boxes at home. Tried some streamer fishing without much success.



The fishery is 15 miles from the Lees Ferry boat ramp to the dam. Access is only by boat although there are areas to wade. However, you must have a guide with a jet boat or rent a boat as you cannot be dropped off. The fishery is very productive of medium-sized rainbow trout (the largest we netted was about eighteen inches) with some brown trout starting to work their way up from farther south. The scenery on the river is awe inspiring with soaring red rock canyon walls but little vegetation. We saw some wildlife including California condors, wild horses, and the usual fish-eating birds but did not see any bighorn sheep or cougars.



We spent two days drift fishing with Capt. Scott Keller and one day wading with Capt. Kevin Campbell and all three days were quite productive. Scott is an old hand with great experience who splits his time between Marble Canyon and guiding at a fishing lodge in Alaska. Kevin is an Arizona native and accomplished nature photographer. Both carry the honorific Captain title as to operate and guide a boat on

the river requires a Coast Guard license. Both were excellent guides and operated their boats with skill and both had stories about the area that were interesting and informative.

## FISHING REPORT: MARBLE CANYON, AZ (CONT.)

The weather in late April was perfect although windy in the afternoons which did interfere some with our ability to drift so we usually opted for an early start. The river was not crowded; many of the visitors are preparing for rafting trips through the Grand Canyon. The winds in May are much reduced although the temperatures could climb. Their big month is July when anglers come from far and wide to fish dry flies during the annual cicada hatch.



A few words about accommodations. We stayed at the Cliff Dwellers Lodge one of three motel-like structures near Marble Canyon. The rooms were quite comfortable and at least at this time of year very affordable (\$100/night for two). The surprise was the restaurant on the premises. Since the nearest town is Page some 40 miles away we would not have been astounded by high prices and mediocre fare. Nothing could have been farther from the truth. The meals were excellent and very reasonably priced. Lunches provided on the river but prepared by the restaurant were tasty and filling. You must bring your own

beverages (can't tell you why) but you certainly won't be hungry. If you are dashing to the river they also can prepare breakfast on the fly but stopping by for pancakes, bacon, and eggs in the morning is worthwhile.

Fishing Marble Canyon is totally different from any of the other fisheries we have visited in the western states. No forests, no gentle streams, and no aquatic insects to speak of. Nevertheless it is a fishery you should put on your bucket list because of the grandeur of the rocky cliffs and the excellent fishing. When we were drifting double hook-ups were not uncommon and we are sure you will not be disappointed.



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## CASTING CORNER

by Jody Martin

**Answer to last month's question:** A double haul is the pulling on the line with your non-casting hand during both the back cast and the forward cast. The two hauls should be equal in force and length. The double haul is used to generate greater line speed, resulting in greater efficiency, wind resistance, and distance, and it lessens fatigue by allowing your non-casting arm to shoulder some of the burden.

**This month's question:** What is meant by "overlining" a rod, and why might you want to do this? How and when does it help you in casting? In fishing?

Feel free to email me with your answers, questions, or suggestions for future topics!  
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