



View from Camano Island

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President's Message – Wytold Lebing

The year is winding down and our annual banquet is only 5 weeks away on Sunday Dec 10 at 5 PM. As I have said many times the banquet/fundraiser is a primary source of funds for the club. It will be a covered dish dinner and we will have both a raffle and auction. I am putting out a request for help. You can volunteer to help by emailing: NFAbanquet@gmail.com.

We currently need club members to step forward and help with:

Food: Co-chair Open TBD

Help - we need 3 volunteers, who will help on the night of the banquet.

Raffle and Auction: Co-chair Open TBD

Help - we need 4 volunteers, who will help collecting items and help the night of the banquet.

Auction/ Raffle Items: We can always use items for the auction and raffle. In past banquets items: such as a weekend stay at someone's beach cabin, baked goods, and guided trips have done well. Many people have stepped up and offered fishing items such as rods and reels. It helps us quite a bit to know ahead of time so we can create bid sheets and descriptions for items. So, we welcome your contributions. Let us know what you have by emailing: NFAbanquet@gmail.com.

Please note we do not want **JUNK**. Each year we are left with a pile of items that no one wants which we end up carting to Goodwill and the dump. If you are thinking of contributing an item, please consider whether you would buy it. If it something, you would have given to Goodwill or thrown away then please, do that.

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Wytold



Membership – Susanne Staats

Garrett Thomson joined in October. We hope to induct him into the club at the November meeting.



September Meeting Speaker – Robert Triggs

Our guest for September was Robert Triggs, speaking on the topic of sea run cutthroat trout (SRC). Bob has guided in Alaska, New York, and Connecticut, but has a soft spot for the Pacific Northwest and the local sea run cut. Coastal cutthroats have not considered to be economically significant fish by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, so little investment has been made by WDFW for habitat. The cuts have rebounded since being protected in saltwater, but in freshwater they are not distinguished from other trout. Fortunately, the continuing small stream habitat improvements aimed at salmon have benefitted the SRC.

An important factor in the recovery of sea run cuts is the Coastal Cutthroat coalition. CoastalCutthroatcoalition.com. This volunteer organization reports that SRC fishing represents 20,000 angler trips and about 1.1 million dollars in economic value. The website details how this volunteer manpower and donations helps accomplish what otherwise falls in the crack at WDFW.

Bob is the creator of the Chum Baby Fly, which has been a spring Puget Sound staple for several years. Those who came to the social hour before the meeting saw him tie several. It has all the qualities of a good beach fly. It's quick to tie, is reasonably durable and can be easily modified to suit a variety of situations. Bob suggests flies that imitate sand lance or herring. Dull, ordinary colors can work well. Bob suggested that if a cut refuses the fly, don't cast again. Put another fly on, usually smaller and less flashy. SRC are trout, so they will take dry flies (including bees, ants, mice). Freshwater flies can work.

We appreciated Bob taking the time to speak with us.



October Meeting Speaker – Todd Floyd

In the heart of the Amazon, Agua Boa Amazon Lodge, Brazil
Dolphinfish Tracking – Loreto, Mexico

Todd, a neighbor of Vance on Camano, is a dedicated fly fisherman – his favorite fish is anything that swims. He described the fishing on the Agua Boa River as the best of anywhere, anytime in his life. The lodge is in middle of nowhere, with 100 miles of catch and release, barbless hook river. Getting there is not easy; Todd flew via Seattle, Dallas, Miami, San Paulo, Manaus, and Agua Boa. He managed these 8,900 miles for \$1,600.

They came for the end of the dry season, but the rains came early that year. The Agua Boa River had higher than expected water, which formed lakes separated from the river. They literally hack through the flooded jungle to get the boat in and fish the side lakes. Trees have spikes and if you hold a tree for one second, bunches of ants crawl onto your glove. The whole jungle is moving - Jurassic park-like. This is sight fishing.

Todd's goal is to catch species he has not caught yet. This area is the home of three types of Peacock Bass, appropriately named for the brilliant coloration: Barred Bass, Butterfly Bass, and Temensis. These fish love what looks like them, so barred bass eat barred bass flies. Todd tied his flies with blue and white, red and yellow, yellow and green. See the attached photos with the fly in mouth and fish with similar colors.

The gear was 10 weight rods with 50 to 60 lb. monofilament (8 weight in small ponds). Sometimes piranhas hit your line and you lose flies. Piranhas also like colored fly line. The two of them caught 150 fish per day. Todd said this was his best days of fishing in his life. Period. End of comparison.

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Todd has been going down to Loreto, Mexico for 30 years. This is on the Baja Peninsula, Gulf of California side about a third of the way up from Cabo. His main interest is dorado (dolphinfish or mahi mahi). The fly is something that looks like baitfish (herring, sardine, mackerel, anchovies). On this trip, Todd caught a 28-pound dorado, which was tagged for research purposes and released. He had tagged 2 last year; one was caught 7 days later in the same area. The other was caught 97 days later way off South America. "It had boogied way down the coast."

His passion is roosterfish. There also are five species of shark (silky, mako, great white, great blue, and hammerhead). For sharks, use a 20-pound steel leader so you can break off if needed). This trip, he caught a 6- to 7-foot-long silky shark that was a lot of fun.

Many tanks to Todd for an enjoyable and informative presentation. This is a link to a great video that his son produced after the Agua Boa trip.

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=iVpdiM5IH4o&feature=shared>





Todd showing a true to scale painting of his Peacock Bass (31.5 inch, 18.6 pounds). This was done from a photo since all the fish are released.



This very successful type fly did not catch anything after the little tail was bitten off.





Jack Williams Award for Applied Conservation Science: Trout Unlimited



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Recently retired from full-time teaching and research at the University of Washington, Professor Tom Quinn deserves massive thanks for the huge body of research and writing on Pacific Rim fisheries and especially on salmon and trout of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Notwithstanding his very urban roots in New York City, Professor Quinn migrated westward after college, completing his master's degree and then Ph.D. in the Fisheries Department at the University of Washington. After spending a few years at the University of British Columbia, Professor Quinn returned to the University of Washington where he taught—or rather inspired—students for over thirty years. His research and teaching encompassed virtually every aspect of the behavior, ecology, evolution, and conservation of Pacific salmon, trout, and char, and their ecosystems. His curiosity has led him to explore everything from how salmon home to their natal streams, to how bear predation enhances salmon ecosystems, to how salmon and trout recolonize streams after dam removals, to how salmon transplanted to the Southern Hemisphere adapt, and to how human activities have impacted the evolution and ecology of trout and salmon. Capping off the hundreds (yes, hundreds) of scientific papers, his seminal book, *The Behavior and Ecology of Pacific Salmon and Trout* (2018) is a beautiful and accessible work that dives deeply into all aspects of the life cycle of Pacific salmonids.

Professor Quinn's legacy is not merely the words he has put on paper. He dons his waders and works in the field. For decades, he has traveled to Alaska's Bristol Bay region with students to provide training and conduct hands-on research into limnology, juvenile fish ecology, spawning behavior and life history of adult salmon, population dynamics, and fishery management. Indeed, as a field ecologist, Tom is well-known in the communities surrounding Lake Iliamna where he led a field research program for nearly thirty years, bringing his knowledge and passion to the region, and to the generations of students who have had the opportunity to walk streams and categorize bear-killed salmon alongside him. His decades of work on salmon in Alaska were instrumental in the successful efforts to halt the Pebble Mine project that jeopardized the sockeye salmon runs in Bristol Bay. His efforts were even recognized by the White House at a Rose Garden ceremony in May.

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Yet, Tom's most lasting legacy will be the students he has taught and inspired. His enthusiasm, scholarship, careful research, and love of trout and salmon have inspired several generations of students to emerge as leaders in salmon and trout conservation. His students are now leaders in government agencies, conservation organizations, academia, and industry. Those leaders will undoubtedly carry on Tom's legacy and enthusiasm for many future generations to care about conserving salmon and trout. Trout Unlimited is incredibly thankful for Professor Quinn's lifelong work and inspiration, and we can think of no one more deserving of the Jack Williams Award for Applied Conservation Science.

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Spokane River by Raft: Tom Quinn

My friend Andy and I met the guide, Jake Hood, who works with Silver Bow Fly Fishing, in Redband Park at 8:00 AM. We launched his frame raft and drifted about 7 miles down the Spokane River but, amazingly, were always within city limits. What was amazing is what a peaceful and beautiful river it was, and the houses sprinkled here gave little or no sense of the city's size and proximity to the river. My buddy grew up in Spokane but had never floated the river and even he was surprised by how nice it was, though the guide said in the past there was a lot more litter and debris along the banks.

It was a cool morning, and we fished a big Chubby Chernobyl which acted as an attractor and also a strike indicator for the various small nymphs that were tied below on long droppers. The river along this stretch would be very challenging to access and wade, as there were many boulders which would have made wading treacherous, and much of the water is too deep and fast to wade. The fishing, however, was slow, as we each got a couple of redband trout of no remarkable size, and a couple of mountain whitefish, all on the nymphs. My buddy also got a northern pikeminnow, so there was quite a diversity of fish. I think a more skillful angler would have been quicker to strike and perhaps gotten more fish, but I guess that just means I have more to learn in the future. Overall, it was a very enjoyable float of about 6-7 hours, the guide knew the waters very well, and it was a great way to see this otherwise difficult river to fish.



Camano Saltwater Outing: Maureen Sullivan

Arriving after Brett, it became evident that we should have been in and on the water at 0630, low tide. What else could explain the lack of fish?

Our host Matt' notes detailed which flies and tying styles- that sparse flies were most effective. I tend towards a more effusive style, but that week repeatedly reduced the flash and bucktail to at best a mere intimation of movement. There was the hook, and then a glimpse of color, and a few hairs. Very dramatic. I had tied a bunch of Miyawaki Beach Poppers for the previous outing and then started tying pink everything to hooks. Thread, eyes, feathers, flash, fur, legs, strips of rabbit: I named them Skipper's Revenge, or the Pink Mutatoe Mouse. Not effective, very heavy but very pink.

The water was lovely, no wind and just enough cloud to be comfortable. The fish liked to rise behind, with that dense splash indicating you missed something big and significant. I am slowly improving my casting and did not catch anything on my head this outing. The company was lovely, the food was wonderful, and the conversation great. Sorting through the dams, fish ladders, hatcheries and restrictions info is hard, everyone has an agenda and so talking (and eating) about this complex issue was enriching. Leslie and I share a common interest in fiber- she ran fiber goats and was a 4-H leader!

I would like to thank everyone for my first year in your club. I know how much effort is needed to keep things rolling, and the difficulty in recovering after in-person meetings were shut down in 2020. And how critical every volunteer's contribution has become.

Thank you!

Maureen

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