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Piru Creek: Clubs Converge for Cleanup

Saturday, April 8, dawned with upwards of sixty volunteers assembled at Frenchman's Flat campground on Piru Creek for the largest cleanup effort in years. A dozen members of the Santa Clarita Casting Club, along with volunteers from Friends of the River, the SCV Resource Center, the Fishery Resource Volunteer Corp, and Santa Clarita Valley residents unaffiliated with any group spent several hours cleaning the banks, stream, tributaries,

parking lot, and roadway adjoining the creek as a demonstration of concern for this local asset.

"This is our only home water," explained SCCC President Connie Bullock when asked about her club's involvement. "It's nice to have this in our backyard, and we'd just like to get the word out a little more."

Besides the fact that the cleanup effort brought several concerned groups together in a common

cause, the day's success was also in the fact that the conservationists and sports enthusiasts from both the Santa Clarita and San Fernando Valleys were able to generate interest in the ongoing dialogue over the future of this Wild Trout designated stream in light of the Department of Water Resources' plan to reduce the creek's flow as early as this summer.

Michael Grenetz of Friends of the River can be contacted for updates.

Trip Reports

Club members Connie Bullock, Tom Camp, John Wilkin and Bill Creitz fished the lower Owens River during the Presidents Day weekend in February. They were joined on the river by snow flurries and 25 members of the Long Beach Casting Club.

While the scenery was exceptional and the camaraderie was great, the fishing, for all but a few club members, was a bit short of something you'd write home about. In fact,

if it wasn't for John Wilkins' nine-inch Rainbow taken on a #16 black Tiger Midge using a 5x tippet, the Santa Clarita Casting Club contingent would have gone fishless.

It was reported that several of the Long Beach Club members did well on both nymphs and dries. And as unusual as it seemed amidst the falling snow and rain and snow-dusted peaks, there was a substantial Blue Winged Olive hatch in the early

afternoon that resulted in a number of good sized fish dimpling the surface with lusty grabs.

The water level and overall conditions were perfect for dry flies, nymphs, and streamers. The river was very accommodating for waders and, at the same time, fairly clear for spotting likely holes, runs, and holding areas where Browns and Rainbows were queuing up for lunch. Next year, a bit more patience with the Tiger Midge might just do the trick.





*"The man who coined the phrase 'Money can't buy happiness,' never bought himself a good fly rod."
Reg Baird*

Schedule of Events and Trips

Some of the following trips and events may be held in conjunction with the Long Beach Casting Club, as noted:

May

10 7:00 – 9:00 Fly Tying Class

17 7:00 – 8:30 Monthly Club Meeting

19 – 21 Bishop Trip With Long Beach Casting Club

21 10:00 – 12:00 Casting Clinic at Alameda Park

24 7:00 – 9:00 Fly Tying Class

31 7:00 – 9:00 Fly Tying Class

June

4 10:00 – 12:00 Casting Clinic at Alameda Park

7 7:00 – 9:00 Fly Tying Class

16 – 18 Mammoth Trip With Long Beach Casting Club

18 10:00 – 12:00 Casting Clinic at Alameda Park

21 7:00 – 8:30 Monthly Club Meeting

July

21 – 23 Mammoth Trip "Brookie Bash" With Long Beach Casting Club

Future Events:

Fall '06

TBD - Rod Building Class

Fly Fishing University: Books & DVDs

Following is a brief overview of some excellent new books and DVDs on the subject of fly fishing that became available this spring:

Fly Fishing with A. K. by A.K. Best, Stackpole Books, hardcover, 136 pages, \$24.95: An icon in the world of fly fishing, A.K. Best writes about fly selection, hooking and releasing fish, gear, and, of course, casting. Photos are by John Gierach.

Innovative Flies and Techniques by Al &

Gretchen Beatty, Frank Amato Publications, softcover, 195 pages, \$35: Designed to help improve any fly tier's skills, this book focuses on some old freshwater and saltwater patterns but mostly on new patterns—all compiled from 48 different tiers.

Simple Flies by C. Boyd Pfeiffer, The Countryman Press, softcover, 178 pages, \$27.95: If you want fly tying made easy, this is the book you've been waiting for. The author presents dozens of patterns that, besides the thread and the hook,

require not more than three materials. KISS—Keep It Simple Stupid would be the operative phrase here.

Flycasting Faults & Fixes DVD by Krieger (as in Mel) Enterprises, \$29.95: One reviewer writes, "Mel is a born teacher and can explain complex techniques in an easy to understand manner. I would recommend this DVD to anyone interested in improving their casting techniques." This instructional DVD gets five stars from everyone who has seen it.

Connie's Corner...news from the president

As many of you know, we are on a search for a clubhouse to call the Santa Clarita Casting Club clubhouse where it can be used any time we want or need.

In March, a presentation was made to the City of Santa Clarita that was well received. However, there is

not much they can do for us currently, but we are being included in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Unfortunately, it's going to take at least three years before that comes to fruition.

The current clubhouse is working out very well for us and we may need to

continue for some time, but in the meantime, this is where you come in.

We've been advised that there are available grants that could possibly assist in funding for repairs on a building that we could call our clubhouse. If we could obtain funding we may be *(continued on page 8)*

Book Review by William Creitz

"The real satisfaction of trout fishing is to deceive the trout with our imitation, to then release him, all the wiser, to play the game again." In my opinion, a finer description of why we fly fish for trout has never been penned.

With those words, author and renowned angler, tier, passionate trout fisherman, and lecturer Ed Koch, Fishing the Midge (Stackpole Book Publishers, 1972, revised 1988), presents his narrative offering then sets the hook as the reader is drawn in to the rewarding world called midge fishing.

Midges, technically speaking, are members of a family in the Diptera order of small two-winged flies. Mosquitoes and gnats also belong to families in this classification; however, most fly fisherman think of midges as an artificial imitation of any small aquatic or terrestrial insect that trout would find acceptable as food.

In writing Fishing the Midge, author Koch established two primary objectives: to help the reader (1) identify and tie the correct midge imitation, and (2) employ the most successful midging tactics. I would add a third: to emphasize the value of midges in any angler's arsenal

and the likelihood of fooling more trout by the proper use of midges. All these objectives are admirably achieved in Fishing the Midge.

While this book was written 33 years ago, the material, approach, observations, and tips are relevant to today's trout bum. In fact, I would venture that only a man or woman who counts their days on-stream in the thousands, as Ed Koch does, can truly discern the wisdom of a seemingly simple observation like "If I had to assign a priority to any angling technique, it would without question be placed on casting accuracy." Simple? Yes. Obvious? Maybe not.

A lot goes into midge fishing (referring to the stealthy approach, patient observation of the quarry, methodical tying of the imitation, and creative casting and stalking), according to the author. Describing his three favorite midge nymphs (gray, brown and cream in sizes 16 to 28) as "Sim-fectives,"—*simple* to tie and *effective* when fished, best describes the author's no-nonsense approach to simplicity in trout fishing. Midging is, at the same time, both complex and simple—and potentially very productive.

(continued on page 5)

Conservation News and Updates...



Besides the possible drying out of Piru Creek that is discussed later in this publication, there are other important waters that require vigilance on the part of fishermen in our and adjacent regions. They are as follows:

Lower San Gabriel River – Recently the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors ordered its Public Works Department to restore the water flow to the Lower San Gabriel River below Morris Dam to ensure the preservation of the trout population.

CalTrout, Fly Fishing Club of Orange County, various fly fishing clubs, and concerned citizens are working together to obtain a permanent water flow to help sustain this well known fishery.

Mammoth Lakes' Hot Creek – The Mammoth Water Company has been operating under a

temporary waiver for several years that has allowed the company to divert a significant volume of water from Mammoth Creek to its residential and business customers. This diversion has had an adverse impact on the renowned Hot Creek, just downstream and south of Highway 395.

The provisions of this waiver may become permanent if a long-awaited draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), that is anticipated to include the waiver provisions, is not challenged by the public (this is how the Piru Creek dewatering plan advanced as far as it has). Fly fishing and conservation clubs and concerned citizens may need to mobilize in the next few months to provide comments on this draft EIR.

West Walker River, Headwaters – Thanks to the efforts of Congressman "Buck" McKeon of the 25th Congressional District, the Mono County Board of Supervisors voted to extend the boundaries of what

is known as the Hoover Wilderness. The waters included in this wilderness area--West Walker River, Kirkwood Creek, Freemont Lake, Roosevelt Lake, and other trout-filled streams and lakes—are home to a number of wild trout species, as well as the Lahontan Cutthroat trout.

By including these waters in the Hoover Wilderness area, it will help protect wild trout populations, preserve pristine alpine waters, and help sustain the Bridgeport fishing economy.

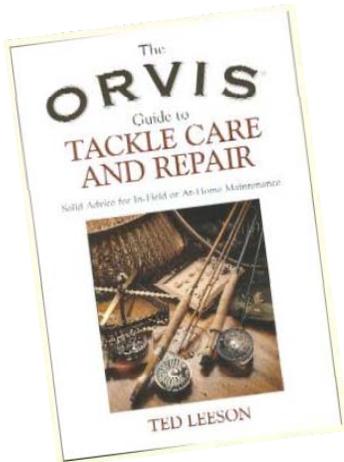
If you would like to contact Congressman McKeon, please address your correspondence as follows:

The Honorable Howard P. "Buck" McKeon
United States House of Representatives
26650 The Old Road, Suite 203
Santa Clarita, CA 91381

E-Mail:
www.house.gov/writerep/



MISSION STATEMENT
 The goal of the Santa Clarita Casting Club is to provide education, reference material, conservation awareness and instill community involvement and, of course, to have fun and enjoy the wonderful sport of fly fishing



“Blast from the Past” Quotes

The sport of fly fishing has matured and evolved significantly over the last forty to fifty years. As such, it’s fun to look at some quotes from famous fly fishers and noted publications that reflect how we have progressed over time. Hope you enjoy the trip back in time.

manufacturer. Modern nylon lines don’t soak up water and you are safe to follow this suggestion, particularly when dry fly fishing” - Bob Elliot, Sports Afield, February 1960

“A simple rule of thumb is to rig your fly rod with one size larger than is recommended by the



...Tackle Tips (cont’d from page 7)

fished when it is dirty can suffer surface abrasion. Consequently, it is important to clean your line periodically with warm soapy (mild hand soap is best) water and to dry it thoroughly before storage. Especially when saltwater fishing, it is important to clean the backing too and in the same fashion as the line.

most waders is impervious to these chemicals, the breathable membrane, if it is exposed anywhere, can be attacked and damaged by them, especially DEET.

7. Don’t let breathable waders come into contact with gasoline, motor oil, sunscreen, or insect repellent containing DEET. While the exterior fabric on

8. Pinning dry flies on a fleece patch or hatband is a sure way to bend them out of shape. Rather, you can carry a small, empty plastic box in your vest to place the used flies. When you’re finished for the day, open the lid, dry the flies out in the sun or room temperature, and return them to your fly box.

New Members...Welcome Aboard

Please welcome the following new members of the Santa Clarita Casting Club who joined us during the past few months:

Glen Atkinson, Lancaster
Gerald Berry, Santa Clarita
Rudy Brown, Santa Clarita

Susan Chin, Los Angeles
Aran Dokovna, Valencia
Chris, Lori Ann, Sawyer, and Ansley Holm, Valencia
Robert “Kazy” and Joann Kazahaya, Saugus
Ken Lindsay, Saugus
Albert Magallanes, Valencia

Rob Mandel, Castaic
David, Kate, and Abby Morley, Castaic
Tim Nelson, Castaic
Gary Pintar, Santa Clarita
Joe Viescas, Santa Clarita
Gary Yamabe, North Hollywood

Welcome to all our new members. We wish you success, lots of fish, pictures of lots of fish, witnesses to those lots of fish, and a consistent perfecting of your fly fishing skills.

Book Review (continued from page 3)

Among the most helpful tips that Ed Koch provides the midge fisherman are the following:

- Blend in with your background. It is the first of many important techniques that will help you become a successful trout fisherman
- "Another technique must be learned for midge fishing. Tippet sizes must be drastically reduced. Tippet sizes of 5x, 6x, or 7x are a must....If the trout come and look at your fly time and again but refuse it, think about changing to a lighter tippet. If you are down to 7x and still getting refusals, change flies or fly sizes"
- When fishing midges, accuracy and delicacy are far more important than distance. A pickup of twenty-five feet is about the maximum possible
- "For many years, had anyone asked me to pick one fly to use all season long, I'd have promptly chosen the Wet Black Ant (sizes 18-24). A supply of tiny wet ants always fills a

compartment of my fly box"

- Try to keep as much of the leader as possible out of the trout's window when you have the sun at your back
- "When casting up and across stream, make your cast so that the leader curves somewhat to the side—to the left if you're casting to the left, and to the right if you're casting to the right. This will allow the fly to drop in front of the trout while the leader stays clear of him"

(continued on page 8)



Famous Fisherman's

Favorite Fly: "I must

confess that I have caught

more trout on a Gold

Ribbed Hare's Ear than

any other three nymph

patterns combined."

Lefty Kreh

New Products News

A number of interesting new products are being marketed this spring in time for the start of fishing season. Among them are the following:

Firefly Eyewear (Magnifier): this new water resistant integrated light and 2.5X magnifier that clips to your hat brim or visor has a unique feature: a hinge that adjusts the lenses with your eyes and then folds out of the way while fishing. Priced at \$39.95. Contact the manufacturer at www.fireflyeyewear.com or at 616-723-7722.

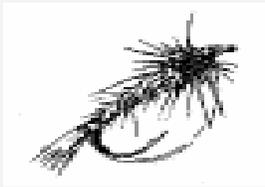
Rio Fly Lines: At \$58, the new Windcutter II floating

trout line is a competitively priced line designed for delicate presentations and fast-loading action rods. Unique to this line is a color change between the running line and head that shows best where to load the rod. Contact Rio at www.rioproducts.com or at 208-524-7760.

Fishing Computer Games: *Real World Fly Fishing* gives you access to 250 prime fishing sites on creeks, streams, rivers, and lakes during all four seasons. It allows you to fish for trout, bass, and panfish—all without a license. There's only one catch (pun intended): it's a computer

game. However, you can use a joystick (to simulate a rod) or a keyboard to fish over 90 fly patterns, and can even call upon the services of a guide for advice on fishing a specific site; it's techno fishing at its best. Priced at \$20, you can order this game at www.pishtech.com.

Polarized Sunglasses for Fishing: Renowned optics company, Smith Action Optics, has just released "The Maverick." These new glasses sport side shields to block the sun from your peripheral vision, non-slip nose pads, reduced weight frames and lenses, and a lightweight and flexible
(continued on page 6)



Club Officers & Available Positions:

President

Connie Bullock

1st Vice-President

Ted Aquaro

2nd Vice-President

Rod Wilmot

Mike Smith

Frank Avila

Recording Secretary

Ray Bianco

Corresponding Secretary

William Creitz

Membership Secretary

Available

Captains

Mike Smith

Ray Bianco

Treasurer

Judy McLean

Casting Times Editor

William Creitz

On the Fly...

Fly fishermen love their equipment; they are also strongly opinionated about their preferences.

Beginning with the May/June edition of Casting Times, we will profile a different piece of fly fishing equipment and randomly poll club members about their "dream" acquisitions.

This month the subject is fly rods. Each of the following club members was asked to respond to this question:

"If money were no object, what fly rod would you buy today?" Let's look at the variety of answers.

Connie Bullock: A G. Loomis 5 weight, 9 foot, 3 or 4 piece Trilogy trout rod

Mike Smith: A Winston Boron IIx, 7 weight, 9 foot, 3 piece rod

Ray Bianco: A Winston (what a surprise!) 4 weight, 7 1/2 foot, 3 piece bamboo rod

Frank Avila: An Orvis Adirondack Full-Flex 5

weight, 9 foot, 2 piece bamboo rod

Bill Creitz: A Winston Vapor 4 weight, 8 foot, 4 piece trout rod

Ted Aquaro: Any good top-of-the-line 5 weight, 9 foot easy casting rod will do

There you have it. The results of our first scientific opinion poll show that fly rod preferences are as different as the anglers who use them. Surprising revelation? Next issue we'll tackle the subject of reels.

Streamside Etiquette by Guy Manning

Ultimately fly fishing is something of a reclusive sport. Of course, going fishing with our buddies is often much of the attraction for the trips we take, but it still comes down to the lone individual involved with his or her own thoughts. It is, therefore, fitting that the rules of streamside etiquette reinforce the solitary quality

of our sport. These rules exist as a principle of common courtesy and respect between human beings and as a means of protecting the solitude each of us attempts to obtain when we are on the stream. Here are some precepts to consider when you are looking for your bit of solitude:

1. The first person to be fishing any particular water in effect owns that feature from head to tail. Never cast into a stretch of water that is already being fished without first asking permission.

2. The person fishing upstream has the right of way and should be
(continued on page 7)

New Products News (cont'd from page 5)

plastic frame. The glasses come in eight different tints. Call 800-654-6428 or contact the company at www.actionoptics.com.

Wading Shoes: The Orvis Company offers, for the first time, a packable wading shoe. The size 10 shoe weighs just 32 ounces, and it packs nearly as flat as a pair of slippers. It's rugged, quick drying construction is

of 600-denier polyester that can withstand UV rays and any wading condition you encounter. Priced at \$49. Contact the company at www.orvis.com or at 800-548-9548.

Chest Pack: For those of you inclined to swap your traditional vest for a chest pack, the Orvis Company offers its newest Safe Passage DS Compact

chest pack. With its mesh shoulder harness, hook-and-loop connections, and fold-down front, it works especially well for driftboat fishing. It comes with a detachable clear water-resistant accessory pouch for glasses, energy bars, cell phone, etc. If you're into a lightweight, versatile alternative to your carry-all fly vest, you'll love this. Priced at \$69.

Streamside Etiquette (continued from page 6)

given a wide berth by the person fishing downstream. The ideal action in this situation is for the downstream angler to get out of the water well above the upstream angler (leaving a generous amount of unfished water for the upstream angler) and quietly go around to a spot downstream of the upstream angler.

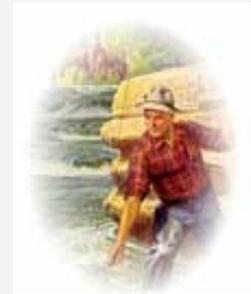
3. When near other anglers, you must wade as quietly as possible and make every attempt to pass a sufficient distance from the angler

and his or her trout. Try to wear something that blends in with the natural surroundings. White or highly reflective colors will stand out and could put them down.

4. When tubing, do not forget to watch out for the shore angler. Getting too close to the people fishing from shore is considered an invasion of their water. It can also be dangerous if you get hit with a misguided weight, hook, or lure.

5. As for socializing on the stream: anyone may or may not talk to another angler if they so wish. It is not considered rude to greet another angler or ask how fishing is going. It is also not considered rude to pass by without a word. What is considered rude is to engage the other person in a long-winded bragging fest. In most cases, the other angler would really rather fish.

6. Never litter. Try to leave the stream cleaner than when you arrived.



The Santa Clarita Casting Club boasts over 37 members, and growing, with an expanded vision for a clubhouse, casting pond, trophy case, and year round community instruction. Won't you be a part of SCV's fishing future!

Piru Creek Update

At the club's April 19 meeting, a representative from Congressman "Buck" McKeon's office addressed the members and helped us formulate strategies for bringing attention to the plight of Piru Creek as it nears the final decision stage in the Department of Water Resource's dewatering plan.

Appeals have been made to the State Water Board to intervene with a permanent solution that would include the placing of various terms and conditions on the future of Pyramid Dam water releases to Piru Creek.

The State Water Board has been asked by concerned citizens, fishermen, hikers,

kayakers, and day-users to make a quick decision to intervene because the summer months are fast approaching, and summer is the season when the Department of Water Resources plans to reduce the stream flow and possibly divert the water elsewhere. Santa Clarita Casting Club plans to petition all affected government agencies.

Techniques and Tackle Tips

As a follow-up to the equipment maintenance and repair lectures given by Ray Bianco and Mike Smith, the new book *The Orvis Guide to Tackle Care and Repair* has just been released.

Included in this 166 page first-of-its-kind softcover book are tips on rod and reel repair and maintenance, care of fly lines, waders, and wading boots, as well as fishing vests, flies, wading jackets, and sunglasses.

Following are a few ideas excerpted from the Orvis guide that may be of interest:

1. To clean your rod of sticky sap or grease, rub it with rubbing alcohol and a soft cloth. Anything stronger may damage the finish.
2. Lubricate your rod ferrules periodically by applying a thin film of ordinary paraffin. This prevents wear and makes rod assembly easier.
3. If you store your rod in a metal tube, leave the cap loose or place a small de-

humidifier pack in the bottom of the tube.

4. When you're finished fishing—for the day or for the season—back the drag off to its lightest setting to take pressure off the drag components.
5. Don't leave fly line in a closed vehicle or car trunk in warm weather or expose it unnecessarily to sunlight. Heat and ultraviolet rays accelerate the evaporation of the plasticizers that keep the line supple and flexible.
6. Fly line that is repeatedly
(continued on page 4)

**Santa Clarita Casting Club
Mailing Address**

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Phone

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E-mail

SCCastingClub@aol.com

Meetings

Monthly meetings held the
third Wednesday of the
month at 7:00 PM

Connie's Corner... (continued from page 2)

able to find a building and restore it. If there is a building that belongs to the City, we may be able to work out a lease with them. I know it's a big dream, but it's not insurmountable.

If you have any spare time, try conducting some Internet searches under small businesses, government

grants, conservation activities, community-based organizations, etc. or any other topic that you can think of to see if there is anything available for us. Let's make this a team effort and see what we come up with.

If, during the course of your research, you find anything

that might pertain to our clubhouse proposal, please contact me so that I or perhaps other members of the club can help with the next steps in the process.

This could be a really exciting "next step" in the SCCC's young history.

Thanks and happy fishin'.

Book Review (continued from page 5)

- "Dead-drifting is an effective method for things like Cress bugs and shrimp (the author's imitations, which he calls simply the 'Cress Bug' and the 'Twine Shrimp,' are referred to as '...the oddest imitations that I've come up with; they look a little disreputable, but they work'), but sometimes a slight darting or swimming motion imparted to the fly will produce spectacular results"
- "Trout rising to midges often leave only barely perceptible rise forms, and you have to look carefully to spot them"

With excellent illustrations and directions for learning to tie his favorite midges (Herl Midge, Wet Black Ant, Grizzly Hackle Yellow, Black and Brown Midges, Cress Bug, Twine Shrimp, Midge Caddis Nymph, Dun and Black Spinner, White Midge, Little Olive, and Tricorythodes Dun and Spinner), Ed Koch does an admirable job of convincing the beginning midge fisherman of the wisdom and relative ease of adding trout to your tally using a few basic midge patterns.

While reading Fishing the Midge, you sense that the author has not simply hit upon a valid strategy for taking selective trout, but that he has a lot of fun employing his methods. At one point in the narrative, Ed Koch candidly admits "Sight fishing to rising trout is the most fun. You see your

quarry, watch him feed, and perhaps even observe just what he is feeding on."

While not displaying the humor or philosophic musings of a John Gierach, Ed Koch nonetheless, effectively conveys his passion for trout fishing and desire to share his knowledge with his fellow anglers. And if you were to compare the two authors' styles and approaches to their subject, Ed Koch is the Chief Financial Officer or Vice-President of Manufacturing while John Gierach is the poet/artist—both passionate trout fisherman and gifted writers, but with decidedly different styles for communicating their love of the trout and the fly.

SANTA CLARITA CASTING CLUB

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VALENCIA, CA 91355

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CITY, ST ZIP CODE

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See us at:
www.SantaClaritaCastingClub.org