



## *The April 2019 NEWSLETTER*

**Northern Arizona Flycasters**  
**An active member club of the World Wide organization**  
**“Fly Fishers International”**  
**“Conservation, Restoration, and Education through Fly Fishing”**

**We support active involvement in cold water fisheries conservation. We work to insure that Arizona’s habitat is not degraded and in the development and maintenance of fly fishing opportunities.**

**We support the practice of “catch and release”, the use of barbless hooks, and quick and harmless release practices. Fish should never be kept out of the water for over 60 seconds.**

---

Northern Arizona Flycasters meets the first Wednesday of the month at the Arizona Game and Fish Regional office at 3500 S. Lake Mary Road, Flagstaff. Meetings start at 7 PM with a board meeting at 6 PM.  
The meetings are free and the public is invited.

---

### **PRESIDENT’S DRIFT – J Shambaja**

What is healthier and more fun than watching bloviating politicians or blustery talking heads on any media outlet? Active participation in a fly-fishing club! So, come join us, enjoy life and be content.

Please save the dates, mark your calendars as we have scheduled for the **April** club meeting guest speaker Tim Steffen to discuss fly rods and fly rod building. Tim is partner with brother Mark, a Flagstaff business **Steffen Brothers Fly Rods**, they have been in business since 1980, look them up on the internet. Tim is actively involved in representing and promoting sports fishing stewardship. Plus, save the date for our **June** club meeting, we will sponsor a dinner social for our regular club meeting. We plan on **Grilling/BBQ** at the Flagstaff Game and Fish office location;

bring a side dish and beverages, our clubs will be providing the main dishes. And yes, we need volunteers to help serve.

Another club conservation activity is tentative scheduled for late **April/May**, this is dependent upon forest service road being open and passable. We are partnered with GCTU, Arizona Game and Fish and Forest Service on this project; the environmental approvals and permits have been authorized to install fish habitat structure in **Kinnikinick Lake**. This lake is spring feed and holds water when many other lakes dry out in the arid summers; thus, an excellent project location. Although our involvement is to provide labor; it is not hard, strenuous or dangerous to participate. Please join us this spring and then enjoy the fruit of your labor this fall as the fish grow big fast and you will know the fish condo location.

This month brings some unfortunate news regarding the endurance of NAF. For the past number of years NAF has struggled finding replacement leadership as members of your Board of Directors divest. Our Board membership has reached a critical low number of individuals. Plus, our volunteer that did maintenance of NAF website and facebook page is unable to continue given their health issues; our media presence is degrading. Although our current Board is outstanding, we are too few and need help. So, if you interested in conservation efforts, learning or teaching skills or just want more camaraderie please join NAF Board of Directors.

In this regard, we are losing another NAF Board member; Neil Warner, President of the Grand Canyon Chapter of TU and Board Member Northern Arizona Flycasters, he is moving out of our region and thus is resigning. Neil has done an outstanding job raising awareness of conservation and providing a quality experience for club members. However, Grand Canyon Chapter of TU will soon need a new President; Neil tells me unless someone quickly becomes Chapter President, then the Grand Canyon Chapter will fold and all GCTU funds will be sent to the State Council. Please consider taking on the role of Chapter President; GCTU has been good for the health of NAF. In summary, stop being fooled by politics that waste your time and spoil your mental health, instead come join us on the Board of Directors and have fun; be healthy be happy!

For future club meeting activities, we need volunteers to follow-up, we are looking for a guest speaker to discuss fly lines and another guest speaker to discuss

what insects (bugs) are in the water and how to select the flies for use. These guest speakers will help develop your skill set and assist with catching more fish! Plus, we need you help to organize a NAF fly fishing gear liquidation sale; fund proceeds will go to help fund the Paul Weitz Memorial Scholarship and club conservation projects. Financial proceeds are intended for local students and for our local water; dollars will not leave our region. Can you help with this sale?

Plus, Board Member Brad Bradley is currently working on putting together another round of extravagantly stuffed fly boxes to be raffled off at our club meetings, proceeds to help fund the Paul Weitz Memorial Scholarship. This round of fly box raffle promises to be even better so, take a chance on this raffle. Plus, at the Wednesday club meeting please see Tom regarding NAF raffle tickets. We are raffling a complete matched set: beginner fly rod, matched reel loaded with line and a travel case; this Ross equipment is ready to fish.

**Every club member is important to the wellbeing of our club and to our local fisheries. Here is a successful story on how your conservation efforts can count towards the restoration of native trout.** Are you familiar with Lahontan cutthroat trout? Historical records report these trout grow to 50 inches and routinely weight in at 40 pounds with reports up to 60 pounds. That time frame was in the 1850's and unfortunately conservation was not the narrative of the day; the population was believed to be fished-out in the Lahontan basin of northern Nevada, eastern California, and southern Oregon. However, the Lahontan cutthroat trout was rediscovered in a "dinky" stream near the Nevada-Utah border.

Genetic testing by University of Nevada, Reno Associate Professor of Biology Mary Peacock led to the rediscovery of an iconic Nevada fish. "Even though they were in that tiny, dinky stream on the edge of Utah for close to 100 years, they had maintained that capacity to grow into this big fish," Peacock said. Peacock became involved with the research and recovery of the Lahontan cutthroat trout in the early 2000s. She began working on ways to perform genetic testing to determine if the small trout discovered in the Pilot Peak streams were the original species of the Truckee River watershed. The Peacock lab obtained samples of the Lahontan cutthroat stored in museums and compared the DNA to the Pilot Peak trout. "We probably had 50 populations in this analysis. So we took those fish, and we

compared them to all the populations and did the genetic analysis - and bingo! They're the original dudes." "Mary Peacock's research and collaboration with the Fish and Wildlife Service over the last 18 years has led to a paradigm shift in how we look at recovery for lacustrine LCT [Lahontan cutthroat trout] in Tahoe and Pyramid Lake," project leader of the Lahontan National Fish Hatchery Complex Lisa Heki said. In 2006, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in partnership with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, stocked the Pilot Peak strain back into its home waters in Pyramid Lake. The fish thrived for several years, growing bigger and bigger. In the early 2000s people began catching 20-pound cutthroats. Today, anglers are catching trout up to 30 pounds. The big monsters have returned. Do a YouTube search of fly fishing Pyramid lake, just for giggles! *So, I hope you understand the significands of attending Arizona's Native and Wild Trout Conference.*

Please registration for the **10th Annual Native and Wild Trout Conference**. This is a don't miss event. Our friends at the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Arizona Trout Unlimited Council have invited us to attend this Conference on April 11th from 9:00a.m. to 4:30p.m. at the Arizona Game and Fish Department Headquarters, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix. Presentations will include: Southwest Native Trout Strategy Projects, Native Trout Conservation in the Southwest, Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) plans, *Lees Ferry/Comprehensive Fish Management Plan*, Tonto Forest Plan, Citizen Science: Stream and Temperature Monitoring, Native and Wild Trout Recovery Programs and others. Best of all the **conference is free** and attendees are invited to attend a free BBQ dinner following the conference. **Registration and information can be found at [www.az-tu.com](http://www.az-tu.com)**. However, **Registration** for the free conference and free dinner must be completed by **April 8th**. But don't wait until the deadline, register now.

Tight lines with bent rods!

NAF President Jack

Go Represent Your Water

NAF needs your involvement and there are many volunteer venues available such as fishing trips, conservation, writing about club activities, and fund raising. Remember, NAF raises funds to support conservation efforts; we are a non-profit organization. You can sign-up to volunteer on our web site. <http://nazflycasters.com/volunteer/>

## **EDUCATION**

Scott Gardener writing for Outdoor Canada

Five hours into my very first fly-fishing trip, I was fishless and frustrated. I'd spent the previous winter tying flies with my school club and reading all I could on fly fishing. But the real-life river was nothing like in the books, and I had no idea where or what to cast.

I was close to quitting when our club leader, French teacher Mr. Damato, strolled into view. Hearing I'd struck out, he took charge. Following his instructions to the letter, I tied on a Leadwing Coachman wet fly, cast 45 degrees down and across a shallow, riffly bend, and held the line tight as the fly swung across the current. A few casts later, I was releasing a seven-inch rainbow, followed by several more.

That was my introduction to the wet-fly swing—a simple, classic technique that has rarely failed me in the almost three decades since. Here's why.

### **Nymphing vs. swinging**

For centuries, anglers have been fishing sunken flies across and downstream on a tight line. But as we've learned more about aquatic insects, and how trout feed on them, this technique has fallen out of fashion. Today, the dominant method of subsurface fishing is nymphing, where great care is taken to dead-drift the fly as naturally as possible with the current. This is effective, but tricky.

With ye olde wet-fly swing, however, the force of the water pushing the fly line—the dreaded “drag” in fly terms—causes the fly to dart across the current. Whether this action imitates an insect rising to the surface or a fleeing baitfish, it remains a deadly way to present flies.

### **When and where**

With the wet-fly swing, the fly is in action the entire time it's in the water, making the technique a fast, efficient way to cover large sections of river with numerous

fish-holding lies. It works in all types of water, from brisk riffles to slow pools, throughout the open-water season.

The swing is limited, however, to water no deeper than six feet—any deeper and the fly won't get down far enough during the swing. Steelheaders and Atlantic salmon anglers especially favor the technique, but it's effective on any river-dwelling fish that will take a fly.

### **Tackle and flies**

No special gear is required for the wet-fly swing, though longer rods in the nine-foot range make it easier to control the line. Use a floating line and an eight- to 10-foot leader. For flies, choose generally imitative patterns that look alive in the water. Winged wets—the Leadwing Coachman and March Brown, for example—are the classic choice. That said, soft-hackle patterns such as the Partridge and Orange or Brown Hackle are as good or better, as are any small baitfish-imitating streamers. [Two-fly rigs](#) are also effective with the wet-fly swing.

### **Cast and repeat**

Cast across and slightly downstream. The current will quickly begin pushing on your line, forming a bow, or “belly,” which speeds your fly through the water. Typically, a slow swing is better, since tiny insects and baitfish can't zip across the current like a torpedo.

To slow your offering and keep it in the strike zone longer, you may need to mend the line upstream. Follow the fly with the rod tip, mending as necessary, and let it swing until it hangs in the current below you and begins to rise. This is the point most fish will hit, and since the line is tight, they often hook themselves. If there's no strike, take a step or two downstream or lengthen your cast by a few feet, and repeat the process until you've covered all the water.

Because flies are swung on a short line—typically 20 to 30 feet—and there's no weight or bulky indicator on the leader, casting is a breeze. This makes the wet-fly swing a technique that both veterans and novices alike can use. Believe me, if a nervous, uncoordinated 15-year-old with hand-me-down Diefenbaker-era gear could catch a bunch of little rainbows with the wet-fly swing, you can, too.

This is one of five casting tips from the Orvis site. Go there to see the other tips and videos.

### **NAF EVENTS SCHEDULE**

**April 3** - guest speaker Tim Steffen to discuss fly rods and fly rod building

**April 11**- Native and Wild Trout Conference on April 11th from 9:00a.m. to 4:30p.m. at the Arizona Game and Fish Department Headquarters, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix

### **Under discussion by board**

Assist FS and AG&F with preparing trees for placement in Kinnikinick Lake- Now scheduled for 2019.

Fishing outings to the Williams lakes

Fly casting sessions on a regular basis.

**The Board welcomes suggestions from members.**

**There will additional events so watch this space**

### **NAF CLUB OFFICERS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

President	Jack Shambaugh
Vice-President	Mike Clementino
Secretary	Mac McIlwaine
Treasurer	Denise Dean

Northern Arizona Flycasters  
PO Box 2924  
Flagstaff, Arizona 86003  
Website- [www.nazflycasters.org](http://www.nazflycasters.org)