



The February 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 coldwater 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

President Jack

Northern Arizona Flycasters and Grand Canyon Trout Unlimited have been holding join events for a significant amount of time, with your participation the clubs are stronger together. For the February monthly event we have a great presentation scheduled and our friends at TU have annual business stuff to discuss, both should prove interesting. I encourage everyone to attend our club meetings and engage in our social activities; our consistent attendees will welcome you and are willing to share their fishing spots and knowledge. So just ask for help or encouragement from our Board Members or faithful meeting attendees. And as always please bring your friends to the club events.

Our friends at TU have scheduled a **Pint Night** at Grimaldi's Pizzeria for **February 20th** at 6pm, 601 Piccadilly Dr, Flagstaff. Come join us for this informal social event and bring friends. Appetizers will be provided by TU however, you must purchase your own drinks.

Our February guest speaker is Pat Blankenship, he is featured in the January/February 2019 issue of Southwest Fly Fishing magazine. Pat Blankenship is the current owner of the Conejos River Anglers Fly shop and lodge. Thus, if you want to learn about fly fishing adventures in Colorado and in particular fly fishing the Conejos River in Colorado this is a must attend event.

We recently had a great club outing at **Dead Horse State Park** so, don't miss our next fishing adventure. A joint Northern Arizona Flycasters and TU club fly fish outing is scheduled for **Silver Creek (Show Low area) on February 27**. *Most important*, if your vehicle has an Arizona MVD Disability (handicapped) Placard be sure to notify the Silver Creek Hatchery – Az Game and Fish (928) 537-7513 at least three days prior to your arrival of your need to gain disability access. It is expected that non-disabled persons will accompany you. Our clubs last went in February and it was a Blue Bird day. This year, we have chosen a Wednesday because we are anticipating lots of snow ski visitors on the weekend conflicting with our lodging needs. We are expecting a fun time and catching big fish. So, mark your calendar for Wednesday, February 27, 2019 and consider staying overnight. Silver Creek is located east of Show Low about 5 miles on Highway 60. Turn north off 60 onto Bourdon Ranch Road for five miles to Hatchery Way Road. Turn east on Hatchery Way Road for 1/2 mile to the creek parking lot. Also, the recent outing to Dead Horse State Park was outstanding, it was a blue bird day and the fishing was good. There were over 30 attendees that were able to gain fishing knowledge from TU member Neil Warner and other members assisted in fly cast instruction. So, don't miss another opportunity to go fishing.

In that regard, although not a club outing, a number of club members are planning fishing trips to the San Juan River, New Mexico, in April. So, come to the club meetings and ask Gary Tallman about these trips; they are seeking additional members to join the fun. In addition, Neil is looking to go to the Conejos in Colorado this summer, several club members have previously fished this area and look forward to the upcoming trip. Again, they are looking for additional club members to join in the adventures. Also, this year Neil is offering an opportunity for members join him to fish the Dubois area (Wind River basin) in Wyoming this August. The Wind River basin is part of the Trout Golden Triangle (Wyoming, Montana and Idaho) also known as the Greater Yellowstone Region. Steve LaFalce went with Neil last year and had a great time, some days Steve caught 100 fish. All are welcome and encouraged to inquire about these outings, so bring your old friends and make new friends.

I seldom recommend fly fishing books because of information overload therefore please have confidence in this recommendation. If you are a beginner or ready to take your existing skills to the next level you will find this book useful. The book is written by Sara Low, she is a fly-fishing instructor and a licensed fishing guide. The book is about common fly-fishing problems and most importantly easy to understand **“how to correct them”**. Thus, the book title is “A Guide’s Guide to Fly Fishing Mistakes”.

At last month’s event, the drawing was held for TU’s San Juan Raffle. And again, this year a NAF club member won the drawing, congratulations to Ray Wolosz. Ray and guest will have three nights lodging and two days of floating the river with a guide to enjoy and upon his return share his adventure with us. So, Ray...not too bad for a \$10 donation. Folks, raffle revenue goes to support conservation efforts.

Over the past two years we have experienced the loss of three members from our Board of Directors and have not been able to find replacements. At this time, we are in serious need of additional Board Members. So, if you have an interest in serving or if you have existing computer media skills or would like to gain new skills, we need volunteers to assist with planning our social events and media outreach, this would be working on the web page and facebook exposure.

Remember, your club's revenue comes from only two sources, club raffles and the annual membership fee. So, if you have not already renewed your membership, please join us again in 2019. You can either bring you fee to the club meeting, Laura LaBranche will assist with the renewal or new membership or you can mail your check to P.O. Box 2924, Flagstaff, AZ 86003. And at the Wednesday event please see Tom regarding NAF raffle tickets. We are raffling a complete matched set: beginner fly rod, reel loaded with line and a travel case; this Ross equipment is ready to fish.

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

Best Bet for Early-Season Trout - Streamers Low and Slow

Written by Tom Rosenbauer



A nice early season rainbow that ate a dead-drifted streamer

I always mistrust fly fishers who mouth the platitude "I don't care if I catch any fish or not, it's just nice to get out there." Sure. Then why don't you leave the rod home and save yourself the trouble of thrashing around in the bushes with a 9-foot stick?

After a long winter most of us are ready to chew through our restraints, but, honestly, isn't it nice to hook a trout on your first day out? Won't it make that long day on the water a touch brighter? Early season fly fishing is often frustrating—high water keeps

your fly away from the fish, cold water makes fish sluggish, and often no insects hatch so trout don't feed actively.



Note how Dave Hise follows the drift of the fly with a high rod, to keep the fly drifting deep and slow

My ace in the hole is to fish streamers early in the season, but you have to forget what worked for you on that float trip last summer. Typically, when water temperatures are between 50 and 65 degrees trout are not only active, they are aggressive and often chase a streamer 10 feet before smashing it. With water temperatures in the 40s, trout may not move a foot to take a fly, and they'll seldom chase a fast-moving fly.

Last week I was fishing a Virginia mountain stream full of big rainbows with fly tier and guide Dave Hise, inventor of the Hise's Hex, Eggi Juan Kenobi, and Sly and the Family Stone. Dave knew just where the fish were and positioned me upstream of a good run, telling me exactly where to place and drift my fly. He positioned himself on the bank above the spot my fly was swinging into, and even though I was fishing a heavily weighted streamer with a tungsten head, he yelled "You may not believe it, but that hole is 6 feet deep and your fly is swimming about a foot under the surface". So not only were the fish not going to chase my fly, they probably couldn't even see it.



Whether you fish a floating or a sink-tip line,
an upstream mend will get your fly deeper

A sinking tip line would have gotten the fly deeper than the floating line I was using but I didn't feel like walking back to the car. So I moved downstream of the hole and cast my fly upstream, stripping line just enough to keep tension on it and perhaps give the fly an occasional twitch. Three fish later I was convinced that I needed to be slow and deep. For the rest of the day, I fished my streamers upstream and the big rainbows took the fly either on a dead drift or with just a subtle twitch here and there. Not a single fish chased the fly when I fished the conventional across-stream cast with a fast retrieve.

If you really just want a pleasant fishless day on the water you don't need to read on. But if you'd like to at least feel a little weight on the end of that new Helios rod, here are some basic tips for slow-and-deep streamer fishing.

- With a floating line, cast quartering upstream then lift the rod tip sharply about three inches after your fly hits the water to drive it a little deeper. A sharp upstream mend will get the fly even deeper.
- With a sinking-tip line, you can use an across-stream presentation as long as you throw a couple of upstream mends into the drift. Keep your rod tip high as the fly drifts downstream, and try to keep the fly in the same current lane with an occasional strip followed by a pause.
- Try fishing your streamer totally dead-drift on a sinking tip line, without any strips other than those needed to keep your line tight. Don't worry about missing strikes. Even in early season, trout take streamers pretty hard and you'll see the line move when they eat it.
- Try fishing a dead-drift streamer with a strike indicator and one or two split shot a foot above the fly on the tippet. Fish it just like a nymph, dead drift, with no movement at all. You might even tie a dropper on to the end of the

streamer hook and add a small Hare's Ear or Prince or Pheasant Tail nymph to double your chances.

- Flies that have some movement of their own, like ones with marabou and rabbit fur, work best under these conditions. Flies with brass (or even better tungsten) beads get the fly deeper in a hurry.
- Color does not seem to be that important, although black in dirty water and white or yellow in clear water seem to offer some advantage. Change colors if you don't get any strikes but don't worry too much about pattern, size, or color. A size 6 or 8 fly that wiggles in the current should work fine. A suggested list of flies follows.

See the Orvis website for more articles.

NAF EVENTS SCHEDULE

February 6th – 7pm Flagstaff Monthly Meeting – Flagstaff Game and Fish Office

This month program will be Fishing The Conejos River in Colorado, guest speaker is Pat Blankenship, owner of the Conejos River Anglers Fly shop and lodge. He was featured in the January/February 2019 Southwest Fly Fishing.

February 20th – 6pm - Flagstaff Pint Night – Grimaldispizzareia

Come join us for this informal social even and bring friends. Appetizers will be provided, you must purchase your own drinks. (TU is in the process of setting up Pint Nights in Cottonwood and Prescott)

February 27th – Fishing Outing to Silver Creek

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

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