



Rx Fly Fishing!

The monthly newsletter of the Delta Fly Fishers!

Volume L

Number 1

January 2025

Randall Baxter, Editor

Stockton, California

Calendar

January 8, General meeting, John R Williams High School, Meadow Ave., Stockton. 6:30 pm. (pg 1).

January 15, Board of Directors Meeting, Oak Grove Nature Ctr, Eight Mile Rd., Stockton, 6:30 (pg 2).

January 22, Open fly tying (and casting later in the year), Oak Grove Nature Ctr. 6pm. (pg2)

January 25, Club Annual Dinner, Elks Club Lodge.

Club Announcements

- **January 1, Mokelumne River Club Outing.** Starting at Dawn, located at the first parking lot of the day-use area. Hot dogs and chili provided.
- **January 25, Delta Fly Fisher Annual Dinner, Elks Club Lodge, Stockton.** Menu being developed. More information in the direct email.

January General Meeting

Date: Wednesday, January 8th

Time: 6:30 PM, doors open; meeting begins at 7 PM.

Location: John R Williams High School, 2450 Meadow Ave. Stockton

The program: Conservation speaker, to be determined

Our speakers in January typically focus on a conservation topic. As of the Newsletter publication, the January speaker was in flux: our confirmed speaker apparently developed a conflict or suffered poor staff communication. We anticipate an alternative speaker confirming soon.

As has been the case for quite some time, Mike Dempewolf will have some coffee, cookies, and soft drinks, and the BOD with the help of director Nancy Baker, our treasurer, Brenda McIntosh, and VP Dena Mason will have some raffle prizes to raffle-off, so bring a few bucks extra to participate. Doors open at 6:30 and the meeting is open to the public.

Prior to the meeting, a speaker's dinner will be held at BJ's Brew House on Pacific Ave., Stockton starting around 5:15, **If you plan to attend the no-host dinner, call Ron Forbes (209-712-4906) by Tuesday evening** or email him at ronforbes65@gmail.com and let him know so he can reserve a seat for you. The dinner is open to anyone wishing to attend.

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online at

<https://www.deltaflyfishers.com>

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Book at

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Upcoming Events

By Bob Fujimura

Wednesday Jan 1 – Mokelumne River Gathering: Come celebrate the New Year and join in the annual DFF tradition of hanging out or fly fishing on opening day at the Mokelumne River, off Main-tire Rd on the way to Mokelumne River Hatchery. We will have coffee and donuts in the morning and probably hot dogs and chili for early lunch. Early birds arrive with the coffee around 6:30. Look for the DFF banner and tent!

Wednesday Jan 8 – General Membership Meeting: Our January general membership meeting is dedicated to a Conservation speaker who is yet to be announced. More information will be available when the program speaker is confirmed or contact our Conservation Chair Ron Forbes. Ron is attempting to get a speaker from our local Representative office. Our monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the John R. Williams Elementary School, 2450 Meadow Ave, Stockton, CA 95207 near Hammer Lane. Doors open at 6:30. Club business begins at 7 pm. Presentation at 7:30. Open to the public.

Wednesday Jan 15 – Board of Directors Meeting: All club members are welcome to join club officers and interested members at the Nature Center at Oak Grove Park, Eight Mile Road, Stockton starting at 6:30 pm. Contact Vice President Dena Mason for more information on this meeting.

Wednesday Jan 22 – Open Fly Tying Session: Join other DFF members as they meet at Nature Center every fourth Wednesday evening for a no-host fly tying session. It will be a monthly opportunity to tie with your fellow members, sharing the latest fishing stories, and hang out with new and old friends. This will be a free event and open to club members from 6:00 to 8:30 pm at the Oak Grove Regional Park's Nature Center, Eight-Mile Road, Stockton. Contact Bob Fujimura at deltaflyfishers@gmail.com for more information on this event and how to enter and exit the Park gates.

Saturday Jan 25 – Annual Dinner: Join your friends and fellow club members at the DFF Annual Dinner on Saturday January 25 at the Stockton Elk Lodge. Enjoy the informative program, share dinner, and participate in the biggest raffle and silent auction of this year. Find out who 'earned' this year's Incomplete Angler Award. It is a lot of fun and goodwill. More details on this annual event are available in this issue or on our usual club communication media.

DFF Officers



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209-368-5767

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Committees

Bob McMillan Trout Bout (March)

Chair needed

Casting

Amy Terra

Catfish Derby (June)

Chair needed

Conservation/Restore the Delta

Ron Forbes

209-368-5767

Education/Outreach

Dena Mason

Monthly Raffles

Chair needed

NCCFFI Representative

Bob Fujimura

Outings

Bob Fujimura

Programs

Chair needed

Property/Historian

Charlie Reames

Refreshments

Mike Dempewolf

Rx Fly Fishing!

Randy Baxter

Trout Bout (November)

Charlie Reames

Webmaster

Amy Terra

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FLY FISHERS
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COUNCIL

The Dirt Cheap Angler: Chinese Rods

By Jerry Neuburger

I suppose I'm not the average fly fisher since I don't consider any of my equipment as artwork, just fishing tools. That's especially true of fly rods and reels, not to mention the flies themselves. In fact, lifelike flies are generally not as productive as something of the general shape and color of the natural. But I digress. This article deals with cheap Chinese fly rods you can find on Amazon and on the manufacturer's websites.

The problem: You arrive at your fishing location, unzip one of your rod tubes only to find that the enclosed rod with mounted reel has a broken tip. It is not a big problem since the rod is one of four you have brought on the trip. However, it is (or was) your favorite rod and the most expensive rod you own, an Echo costing over \$300. And it's the beginning of "the season" when the fish are voracious and you have a string of trips lined up. It will take two weeks minimum, to send it in and procure a replacement, While you have plenty of backup rods, you'd be lots more comfortable having four rather than three rods ready to go. You decide to look on Amazon for a quick replacement.

A pile of rods are available from some close to \$20 to Sages with a weighty price of \$900. Time to do a little more research. Over at YouTube, I found several field tests of rods by Western guides and fly shops. After watching a few I learned that the Chinese rods offered by MaxCatch and Pacifun were judged to be the top of the heap. Namely, the Pacifun Sword and the Maxcatch Premier models. What was even better was the price. To me, although I can afford an expensive rod, the price for what is essentially a fishing tool is important. A nine-foot, 5 weight, Pacifun Sword was listed at \$43. Even better, shipping was free using my Amazon Prime account and it would be delivered tomorrow. I was hooked. I hit the, Buy Now, button

The solution:

I waited patiently the next day for the Amazon truck; finally, at about four in the afternoon the bell on the front door rang, signaling a delivery. I went out and found a cardboard box, undamaged, leaning next to the door. I took it in and opened it to find a clear plastic tube, with end caps held on by small bungee cords with a rod in four pieces inside. I pulled a cap off and examined the rod. Windings, well done, alignment dots on all four pieces, and a graphite and aluminum reel seat with double locking rings with a nylon washer between them to keep them locked when tightened. So far so good. I assembled the rod and found that the alignment dots were dead on.

(Continued on page 4)



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(Continued from page 3)

I fastened on a reel containing some floating line and tried some lawn casts. The rod was quick, at least as quick as my Echo. The next test would have to wait until my next fishing trip.

A week later I was in my fishing kayak at Baum Lake, casting the rod using my Midge line. The rod cast perfectly and felt as good in my hand as my old Echo. I ended the day with something in excess of 45 fish, a typical day at Baum and while fishing I didn't feel handicapped at all with the rod, I'm a happy angler and will buy either this or the \$20 more expensive MaxCatch Premier in the future and not be embarrassed when

asked by other anglers what rod I'm using. After all, except for the most expensive Sages, Winstons, and Scotts, most of the rods for sale are made in China anyway.

Author's notes: While the rod mentioned above uses a Chinese blank as its foundation, I've seen other offers featuring South Korean and Japanese blanks. While some of these may be superior to the rod mentioned, at some point the two graphs cross, the price vs. performance graphs. For me, the crossing point is low but as I said, to me, a rod is a tool, not art. Obviously, given the inventory most fly anglers own, my opinions are not the standard in the fly fishing community but then again, I am, "The dirt cheap angler".



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This Month's Fly Box

FLY TYING

Psycho 'Red' Ryder



Photo by Bob Fujimura

Several years ago, I began tying a variation of a marabou streamer fly created by Delta Fly Fishers tyer Don Gillett. He named it Red Ryder, and it was a great streamer in lakes. It was also a simple fly to tie. His pattern only required a streamer hook, black marabou, red thread, red flashabou, and metallic red nail polish to cover the thread head.

I was intrigued by British tyers using bright fluorescent yarn or floss for tails and incorporated fluorescent green yarn and thread into his pattern. I quickly found that this fly was extremely effective

on newly stocked hatchery trout. My wife Jean and I used this pattern to win the Calaveras Fly Fishers' One Fly Contest in separate years. However, it is also effective for largemouth bass in farm ponds. I have even caught Pyramid Lake cutthroat trout on this pattern.

Here is my recipe for this fly:

Hook: Size 6-12 streamer hook

Undertail: Fluorescent green yarn

Overtail: Black marabou

Body: Black marabou

Wing: Black marabou with two strands of gold Flashabou

Head: Fluorescent green thread

In most situations, I strip this pattern relatively quickly compared to other still-water streamers, especially when targeting freshly planted trout. However, I have also caught many trout during the initial drop after casting my fly line.

— Bob Fujimura

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2 column inches each newsletter issue for the year for \$400 or in-kind goods and services, six months \$200, quarter \$100, one month \$40. The ad may include artwork and will link to the advertiser's website.

Additional column inches of ad space may be purchased at \$200 for the year, \$100 for six months, \$50 for a quarter year, \$20 per month.

Included:

A digital subscription to the club's monthly newsletter.

Permission to post specials and other advertising on the [club's Face book page](#), 2 per month.

For additional information please phone or



Wulfies Happenings:

What a year it has been for the Wulfie's had wonderfully diverse activities hosted by amazing anglers. It is with so much gratitude that I thank everyone who has contributed to this amazing group whether it is through hosting activities, suggestions, participating or donating items for other anglers to use. As we wrap up our year with a tying table at the Annual Fly Tying day on December 7th, we will be asking for suggestions for 2025 through this [online survey](#) so click and share your thoughts for women's activities for 2025!

We will also be focusing on streamlining communications for our women's activities. Look for direct emails in addition to the newsletter articles and website information. Let's make 2025 the best year yet for women's fly fishing- Go Wulfies!

Local Water Orientation Clinics

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Author and guide

vinci.greg@gmail.com

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Casting Corner—

By Amy Terra

It has been a busy year in the local casting world. Our club hosted the second annual casting day and monthly free casting from daylight savings to daylight savings. Monthly free casting lessons in San Francisco provided another resource for those looking to improve their casting skills. We have had lots of interest in our casting activities and look forward to maintaining the momentum into 2025.

Look forward to our third annual fly casting day to be held in April. We look forward to hosting a day filled with fly casting challenges and instruction, a casting themed raffle and a yummy lunch. More information to come as we explore the logistics of the day but if the past years are any indication, it will be a day filled with fun!

Daylight savings time begins in March and ends on November 2nd this year. We will schedule our Friday night open casting sessions starting in March

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and ending in October. The week of the month and time will be determined and shared. We have had some requests for specific casting scenarios and will have stations each month to address these topics which include casting with a shooting head for fishing scenarios including striper fishing; distance/accuracy for largemouth bass scenarios; some basics of spey focusing on a good solid roll cast. Interested in another casting topic? Just let me know!

This February there will be casting supports at the Pleasanton Fly Fishing show. Make sure you venture out to the back lawn for an individual mini lesson or some Fly Casting Skills Development experiences.

As always, I am available to anyone interested in looking at their casting skills. Don't hesitate to reach out. Dial that cast in before you go fishing- it will make your experiences on the water more productive and fun!

Looking for your 2-cents—

By Amy Terra

Have you ever said the words, "Why doesn't the club ever...."? It could be an idea for an outing location, a clinic, a presentation, or a social gathering. While we have certain waterways that are close to our club's home and we are pretty familiar with these, the club actually is made up of a wide variety of anglers and experiences. Do you know a great spot to fish and are willing to share it? Then don't hesitate to reach out. Do you know a fishing technique that you feel comfortable sharing? Let's set up a clinic for you to share your experience with fellow club members. Know a great guide or angler who would be willing to share their knowledge, suggest their name as a monthly meeting speaker. The topic can be fishing adjacent too- art, books, tying and just getting together to talk fishing are all options looking for someone to spearhead.

This club is filled with fantastic and knowledgeable anglers. Don't be afraid to put in your two-cents on things we can do. Share your knowledge, interests and gifts! Reach out to club leadership or send a message through the website at www.dff.com. Messages can be sent from the top and bottom of the home page. Looking forward to hearing your ideas!



Contribute to the club's welfare

I was asked to put this box in the newsletter so that those club members that live at unreasonable travel times to the club's monthly meetings might have a way to contribute to the club's welfare. At their request, I've set up a group of alternative contribution amounts. Those who participate will receive a tax deductible receipt via email.

\$5 \$10 \$25 \$50

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CONSERVATION

By Ron Forbes, Conservation Chair

Put backing on your line even if you don't use it. It helps you dream.

— Jimmy D. More

TRACKING THE FIRST RUN SALMON ON THE KLAMATH RIVER IN OVER A CENTURY

There has been much anticipation surrounding the reintroduction of salmon on the Klamath River. We are now getting primary data. Articles just published by the Daily Kos and NOAA Fisheries indicate the reintroduction of salmon into the Klamath basin has been outstanding. From Oct 17 to Oct 29 more than 6,000 salmon have passed the telemetry site near the former Iron Gate Dam. From 221 to 588 salmon per day passed the sensors. More than 98% of these fish were more than 20 inches in length.

The fish are showing their resilience by aggressively reclaiming their former habitat.

Since the removal of the four Klamath dams, the Klamath River Science and Monitoring Program (KRSMP) has been collecting and interpreting data from the river. The KRSMP is an organization of 15 groups including tribal, federal, state, fishing groups, academic, and nonprofit partners. KRSMP has three primary goals in its data collection:

- 1) When do the salmon return and what are their numbers?
- 2) What species are returning?
- 3) Where do the salmon return to?

The tribal groups along the river will operate three telemetry sites on the upper Klamath basin. Over 400 miles of salmon habitat is now being restored. The 15 organizations of the KRSMP are involved in studying complex issues with the reopening of the upper Klamath basin. What occurs along the Klamath River and its basin will serve as a guide to reopen other waterways. Early data

is showing the basin restoration planners were correct in their approach. Evidence is also showing those who opposed the removal of the Klamath's dams and the naysayers were incorrect with their negative assessments. Kenneth Brink of the Karuk tribe pretty well summarized the early results. "They said it was going to take ten years for the salmon to return to the upper basin. Once the dams were out, it took 10 days."

ADDENDUM

Due to the time required to get our newsletter published in a timely manner there are occasions when information provided may infer the wrong impression. In last month's (December) Conservation article, I commented that I had difficulty getting accurate information from the Coleman Fish Hatchery and had received none from the Nimbus Fish Hatchery despite requesting their data 10 days before the newsletter due date. However, two and a half weeks later I received a text from the Nimbus Hatcheries Public Relations Officer apologizing for the delay in sending the information that was requested. Her response was very positive, apologetic and contained more information than asked for. The Nimbus Hatchery cooperation leaves one with a very positive attitude.

Last month's article noted that this year's salmon returning to the Mokelumne River at newsletter publication was an all time high of 31,881 fish. The run was continuing. Last year's return was a record number of 31,881 salmon when the run was over. Although some salmon are still returning, their number is not recorded since the Mokelumne Hatchery has finished spawning fish. This year, an all-time record number of 34,740 salmon were counted passing the Woodbridge Irrigation District's Diversion Dam.

The Daily Kos reported 15,378,285 eggs were harvested this season at the Mokelumne River Hatchery. This year's outstanding harvest will produce 9 million smolts for the spring. Of these smolts 3.4 million will be for mitigation, 3 million for enhancement, and 2.5 million for the changing climate risk we are now facing. Many news sources and television stations interviewed Michelle Workman, East Bay Municipal Utility District's (EBMUD) Managing Biologist, on why the Mokelumne River is now seeing such high salmon returns and other hatcheries' returns are

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low. "There are lots of reasons that boil down to good communication and collaboration with the DFW on management of this population. Our hatchery incubation yields a very high survival due to chillers and UV filters; our release strategies are very successful in yielding high survival returns; we had over 50,000 acre feet of water for attraction flows this fall and another year of closed fisheries [no sport or commercial harvest] left a lot of fish available for inland hatcheries and spawning grounds. We continue maintaining suitable spawning habitat and flows in the river and have over 6,800 redds in the river currently, so we are seeing success in both hatchery and river production. We are excited to see how the returns look 2-3 years out based on these record high runs."

In February of this year [2024] the Mokelumne River celebrated another record. As of the last of February, 1,749 steelhead returned to the Mokelumne River. Of that number 968 were adults and 781 were less than 18 inches in length. We are now in the middle of this year's steelhead run [2024/2025]. Hopefully this year's run will be record breaking also. The first Moke steelhead record was set in 2018 with 1168 steelies returning to the river. To date the number of steelies returning this winter looks promising. The final numbers will be released after the run is over in February.

Scott Artis of the Golden State Salmon Association is especially pleased with this year's Mokelumne River salmon return. "This steps back to what we saw last year: That when we actually give fish the right water conditions or truck them past the Delta's pumps, hot water and low flows, [as well as 2 years of no sport or commercial harvesting. Ed.] and give them a chance to survive, we see record returns despite all the layers of biased salmon policy. Mokelumne River salmon are escaping all of Newsom's bad water policies and are producing a record number of fish. That should tell us something"

Both the Feather River and Nimbus Hatcheries on the American River have finished their salmon spawning for this year. Numbers for the hatcheries to date are 7,152 spring-run Chinook salmon, 39,846 fall-run Chinook salmon, and 1,710 steelhead. Both hatcheries have met their egg goals for the year. At this point, salmon are still returning to hatcheries, but fish are no longer being counted or processed at the hatcheries.

The numbers of fish returning this season will be made public by early March. The Mokelumne River is a tributary of the San Joaquin River. The abundance of salmon available is determined by salmon of the tributaries of the Sacramento River. The Sacramento River Index does not include salmon from the Mokelumne River's salmon.

A MAJOR BUDGET MISTAKE, MORE SMOKE AND MIRRORS, AND MORE TROUBLE FOR OUR FISH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Press releases from Gov. Newsom's office, the Dept. of Water Resources (DRW) and other state agencies continue to misinform Californians of the governor's California Water Fix project, the Sites Reservoir Project and other pseudo environmental projects. Accurate information is becoming more readily available as to why these boondoggle projects should never proceed. In researching material for conservation articles dealing with Newsom's and corporate agriculture's environmental and water infrastructure projects, it becomes obvious their projects are not based on scientific reality. Rather, they continue to be based on misinformation and outright distortion of the truth and Gov. Newsom's fantasy which ignores the reality of climate change.

Californians are now facing the results from Gov. Newsom's incompetent budget actions. Newsom's Department of Finance incorrectly used information from a short-term income spike from state income tax. They predicted the revenue generated would be more than \$200 billion a year indefinitely. Given these projections Gov. Newsom boasted that California's budget had a \$97.5 billion surplus. According to Gov. Newsom, "No other state in American history has ever experienced a surplus as large as this. Given this no-existent income surplus the Legislature adopted a budget authorizing major increases in spending.

Now the reality. California faces a \$165.1 billion shortfall for the next 4 years. For almost two years, the state has been masking the realities with gimmicky financial techniques. Gabe Petek, the Legislature's budget analyst, painted a grim

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reality picture of where California is presently. Outside the government and healthcare, the state has not added jobs in a year and a half. Similarly, the number of Californians who are unemployed is 25% higher than in the strong labor markets of 2019 and 2022. Consumer spending has continued to decline through 2024."

We are now facing a "funding freeze". It is becoming evident who will pay the price for New-some's Dept. of Finance ineptness. Financially vulnerable communities, services helping those who are economically distressed, and environmental programs (including our fisheries) are already on the chopping block. Unfortunately, 2025 is not going to starting on a high note.

New Year, New Gear

By Amy Terra

was sitting at my kitchen table, looking at the pair of waders laid over the back of the chair. My cat has inserted himself into the opening that I have stepped into dozens of times over the eight years I have owned and used this pair of waders. The opening was low to the floor and this cat had found himself a little dark hiding spot. Normally the thought of my crazy and destructive cat with his sharp claws and my waders being so intimately intertwined would have made me separate the cat and waders quickly- before my cat poked holes in the material.

However, I had just decided earlier that day that the waders had spent their last day on the water with me. These waders had been used for 8 years of hard fishing. They were actually my second pair of waders. The first pair I bought were pretty cheap and lasted just under a year. Once I knew how much I loved fly fishing, I was willing to invest a little more in my waders but by most accounts, my investment was relatively inexpensive in the context of the world of fly fishing gear. I have loved these waders. They were designed for women so I didn't have to deal with long foot booties and the fit was comfortable even with layers underneath. Over the years, I became an expert at finding and patching holes in these waders. Holes that were caused by errant hooks. Holes caused by thorns from plants on trails. Holes caused by sliding down rocks on my bum. The waders are covered with black circles and



A cat in waders?

patching goo. The more of these repairs the waders had, the more I loved these waders. Each patch reminded me of a beautiful place, an amazing fish, a wonderful angling partner and many amazing days. The boot guards became frayed and shoulder straps lost their elasticity and had to be tightened to the maximum to make up for the stretched straps.

But on this day when I finished fishing and I took off my waders, my pants were wet the entire in-seam of both legs. The length of the seams were leaking. They had finally moved beyond being repairable. It was time to hang them up. So I came home and placed them over the chair where my cat had found them.

I made myself a hot cup of coffee and I pulled open the computer to somehow mark the end of an essential piece of my fishing gear for the last 8 years. I would no longer have the repaired spots to remind me of my adventures over these years. I wouldn't be able to look down and smile or laugh at a specific memory. Instead, I would need to bring out those new waders I bought last year but hadn't started using yet and make new memories to smile at while wearing them. No problem. I can do that. The fact that this change coincided with welcoming the new year of 2025 was a good reminder for me to look forward as well as backwards. Making new memories with this new gear in the years to come became my New Years resolution. I can hardly wait to find that first hole in my new waders, circle it, repair it and remember my adventures to come.