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Jerry Neuburger, Editor

### Stockton, California

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### **December Calendar**

- Dec. 7th—Jon Baiocchi Seminar Dec. 11th—Ca F&G Commission meeting Dec. 11th—Member Night Dec. 13—Fly Day Night Tying Dec. 18 BOD meeting Dec. 25—Christmas Jan. 1, 2020 New Years on the Moke
- Jan. 18th—Annual Installation Dinner

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# Winter chores..

If you've already put away your fishing gear you may have done so too early. Did you lube the shafts on your reels? After a few dips in the water, especially with our warm summers, they may need it. Did you clean your rods? Some Pledge furniture polish will make them gleam and hid some surface scratches. Most important, did you wash you lines? A dirty line can cost many feet of distance.

Here's some recommendations on how to clean a fly line. Put some liquid hand soap, (not dish soap) in a bucket of warm water. Strip your line off your reel and into the water. Take a clean terry clot and moisten it in the water. Pull your line through the terry cloth several times. Strip the line into another container of clean rinse water. Pull your line through a fresh dry cloth several times. Coil the line in loose coils and allow to dry before putting back on the reel.

Some of the recommendations on line cleaning recommend that the line be hung in large loose coils through the winter as a means to prevent coiling memory rather than being stored back on the reel. If you are an infrequent angler, this second method may really help keep the line from becoming an early season mess.

It's also time to think about where to fish the next year and make some plans. Talk to your fellow fly fishers and consider the timing for any long distance adventures. What's hot in June may be an absolute bust in August.

Your fly club and its members can be crucial to planning. And then there are the special events and presenters that have given advice through out the year. 'Where did your fellow members find exceptional fishing? When were they on the water? What techniques and flies did they use?

December is a month of listening, learning

nd planning. To help with this process the club has two top level events to fill in the blanks.

The first is the Jon Baiocchi Stillwater Seminar on December 7th. Jon has over 30 years experience fishing the northern Sierra waters, first with his dad, Bob Baiocchi, a legendary fly fisher and fierce conservationist, then as an individual and finally as a guide.

Jon has generously offered to share his long in learning expertise in fishing three of Northern California's legendary lakes, Eagle, Frenchman's and Davis Lake. Two of these lakes, Eagle and Davis were once legends for numbers and size of fish. While time has somewhat dulled their lure, they still hold many secrets and many, many big, big fish. Frenchman's, a man made lake, is newer than the other two and annually makes news in the fishing rags as the hottest fishing in the Sierras. Jon's seminar, on December 7th still has a

few open seats. The all day affair, including a light breakfast, fly tying, rigging, presentations, lunch, a door prize and a great raffle has open seats at \$25. Registrations will close on December 4th. <u>Go here to register</u> <u>on line.</u>

A second opportunity to hear of new waters and when to fish them will take place at the club's December meeting. You'll be treated to five to six arm chair adventures where club members will recount some of their best angling experiences throughout the year. Most of the waters covered will be amazingly close to home and more than able for the DYI angler to repeat. That meeting will take place on December 11rh at the John R. Williams School, Stockton. Meeting time 7pm. The meeting is open to the public as well as members. Bring a friend and money for the Christmas raffle.

### Only six seats left as of Monday evening

It's Crunch Time to sign up for the Jon Baiocchi Seminar on December 7th. Last sign up time is this Wednesday, midnight.



We still have some seats open for Jon's presentation on fishing Eagle, Frenchman's and Davis Lakes. The event will take place this coming Saturday, in Lodi. The cut off time to register is this Wednesday, midnight.

The day will feature refreshments at registration, goodie bags, Jon's multimedia coverage of the three lakes including when, where and how to fish these waters, a multi-course lunch, fly tying, a door prize and a great raffle.

Right now we have 17 DFFers and 15 fly fishers from surrounding clubs attending. We have room for 8 more. You don't need to be a member to attend this event.

You can sign up online https://

#### next.waveapps.com/checkouts/ a5804243408843b6a79929fedf989cba

Or mail a check to: Jon Baiocchi Seminar/C.O. Jerry Neuburger 5 North California St. Lodi, CA 95240 Please send Jerry an email if mailing a check since it may arrive after the cut off date.

Jon is bringing his 2020 calendar so if we choose, we can set up a number of group outings to the lakes he chooses. He is willing to guide groups of four for the fee of \$150 each. With the information he's providing, we can also look to set up a club outing to one of the three lakes at its most productive time.

### FlyDay Night tying is still a go, this month it's on Friday the 13th!

Are you superstitious? Well, even if you are, consider attending this last event of the 2019 club year. (Unless you're a director or officer.)

Even if you don't feel like tying stop in and share a little Christmas spirit with your fellow club members. In addition to the various coffee drinks, the House of Coffee features draft beer and tasty snacks.

The event takes place at the House of Coffee, Ham and Lockeford Streets, in Lodi, from 5pm till 7pm or so.

Get out your phone and put the event on your calendar now or you're likely to forget. And as to the night being the 13th, I'd not worry too much about it. The world has seen more than a few Friday the 13ths and is still spinning.

### **DFF Officers**

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Secretary Karen Keagy

Treasurer Jeanette Neuburger

Directors Ron Forbes Larry Schmidt Sam Thompson Gary Tecklenburg Thomas Mason Dena Mason Nancy Baker Mike Dempewolf Randy Baxter

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### **Committees**

Beginner's Fly Tying Amy Terra

Bob McMillan Trout Bout (March) John and Karen Keagy

Catfish Derby (June) Chair needed

Conservation/Restore the Delta Ron Forbes 209-368-5767

Education/Outreach Dena Mason

Fly Tying/Fishing Mentor Program Neuburger/Terra/Mason

Membership Dena Mason

Monthly Raffles Jerry Neuburger

Outings (Volunteer needed)

Programs Al Smatsky **Bob** Sousa

209-368-9261 209-368-2683

Property/Historian John Keagy

Refreshments Mike Dempewolf

Rod Building Bob Fujimura

209-339-0683

Trout Bout (November) Charlie Reames

Webmaster Amy Terra

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Any correspondence regarding this publication should be directed to: The Delta Fly Fishers Inc. PO Box 77862 Stockton, CA 95207-7862



Come Join the Delta Fly Fishers for a special all day seminar with one of California's leading Sierra guides, Jon Baiocchi, Dec. 7th, 8:30am-3:30pm

Jon will cover how to fish Eagle, Frenchmans and Davis Lakes, including:

- Best times of year
- Hatches
- Access and fishing locations

- Fly Patterns and how to tie them
- Rigging
- Maps and hand outs

This event is open to ALL FLY FISHERS, not just club members

Limited to 40 participants!

Your \$25 registration fee includes:

Morning coffee and snacks. All handouts Materials to tie flies along with Jon during the seminar A fantastic Lockeford Sausage Sandwich lunch A door prize raffle ticket for a box of flies An end of seminar raffle with great prizes. (Questions? Email gneuburg@gmail.com)

### To Register on Line, go to:

Delta Fly Fishers Special Seminar

And fill in the blanks. Your registration is transferrable but not refundable. Registration closes with 40 sign ups To register by mail, send checks to:

Jon Baiocchi Seminar/C.O. J. Neuburger 5 North California Street Lodi, CA 95240 Your registration is transferrable but not refundable. Registration closes with 40 sign ups. Late Checks will be returned.

This event will take place at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 701 S. Pleasant Ave. Lodi, CA



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### The California Fish and Game Commission will adopt new Delta and Striped Bass policies on December 11th. The fate of the striped bass fishery is in their hands. Let's give them some, "guidance."

We really, really, really need you to attend this meeting of the California Fish and Game Commission in Sacramento on Wednesday, the 11th of December. The fate of the Delta is in your hands.

The SoCal water districts are again pursuing the idea that the striper is the cause of the decline of the salmon fishery and the collapse of the delta smelt. They are seeking to change the policies of the Fish and Game Commission to view the Striped Bass as an uncontrolled predator, responsible for the near-total collapse of all delta fisheries, even though stripers, salmon and the other species were healthy & living together for over 100 years. The Coalition for a Sustainable Delta and other water interests are determined to identify the striped bass as the problem.

The F&G Commission is meeting on December 11th at 8:30 a.m. at the Natural Resources building, 1416 9th Street, Sacramento.

We are asking ALL those who care about the Delta to turn out to demonstrate their advocacy for stripers & Delta fisheries at the F&G Commission meeting. To help our club members attend, we have organized a car pool to the meeting.

We are meeting in the Walmart Parking Lot, corner of Lower Sacramento Road and Kettlemen near the gas station at the northwest side of the parking lot. We have three vehicles with drivers and can accommodate a total of 12 club members as riders. We will depart at 7:30am SHARP.

We expect that due to the number of people attending that the Delta and Striper policies will be moved to the front of the calendar. We expect to return to Lodi. Arriving back at the parking lot by 4pm.

One of the best monthly programs of the year

## Member Night, December 11th

Let the bragging begin! On Wednesday December 11<sup>th</sup> the Delta Fly Fishers will feature the fishing trips and adventures of club members from 2019. Our scheduled list of speakers are: Robert Fujimura, duo Amy Terra and Dena Mason, Randy Baxter, Brian Pultz and more.

This year's presentations will cover; An overview of our Delta Club's Annual Bridgeport Outing, big trout fishing at the McCloud River, trophy steelheading in BC, effective methodology for indicator fishing for trout in Northern California, and largemouth bass fishing, just to name a few. This promises to be an outstanding evening of exciting stories and fish tales--some even true!

Remember, the December monthly meet-

ing is our annual members' program night. This is your chance to shine! You need not fish an exotic location or catch giant fish to secure your place in history. Nor do you need to present professional quality photo's, a short talk about your past years adventure (good or bad) is all that is needed.

In addition to the member program, those members attending will elect a new board of directors and vote on a membership change to the by-laws allowing for a new class of member, a student member classification.

Of course, it being "The Season," the raffle will reflect the holiday spirit with lots of things the fly fisher would like to find under the tree. We still have space for other members to participate and welcome you to join in! Please email me at <u>algofish@softcom.net</u> or call Al Smatsky 368-9261. All speakers are invited to join us for dinner at BJ's Restaurant at 5:30 pm before the program, please RSVP.

The meeting will begin at 7:00pm at John R. Williams School, 2450 Meadow, Stock-ton. The public is encouraged to attend. For more information go to <u>deltaflyfishers.com</u>

Christmas is also a time of thanks, make sure to say, :Thank You. " to Mike Dempewolf for bringing the coffee and snacks through the year. It makes a difference.. It's time to buy your 2020 fishing license, or maybe have someone buy it for you?

# Yes, fly fishers are crazy. We prove it every January 1st at the Mokelume

I'm not a charter member of the club but I've been told many times that the tradition of fishing the Mokelumne on New Years Day is as old as the club itself. That means for the last 43 years, rain or shine, fog or clear, a band of brothers and sisters have shown up at the banks of the river, at dawn, dressed in rubber pants and heavy jackets, ready to drink hot coffee and coco, eat donuts and hot dogs and stand in 35 degree water for hours. But they're not crazy?

This year will be no different. Well, slightly different since the faces change year by year but the theme is the same. Arrive early, greet your fellow fly fishers, drink a coffee or two, eat a donut, pull the waders on, rig the rod, find a likely spot on the water to fish and if you're good or lucky or both, actually hook a steelhead or two. Back to the warmth of the DFF tent for more coffee and the famous lunch of tube steaks and beans. And finally, when it's actually warm enough to venture outside, climb back in the car and head home to watch the Rose Bowl and the Cotton Bowl.

When I first heard of these antics, I just shook my head. Maybe by the third year I was in the club I actually showed up for the day, and then I was hooked. I don't think I've missed a day in at least 15 years. In fact, I now view it as a badge of honor to be counted as one of those who took the time and made the effort to show up, even if I never wetted a line.

It's on my bucket list again for this year, and the next, and the next, and the next.

Where: Van Assen Park on the

Mokelumne, below Camanche Dam.

When: January 1, 2020

Time: Daybreak

If you plan to fish, don't forget to purchase your 2020 fishing license.

# This year's Installation Dinner is scheduled for January 18th at the Elks. Early dinner orders are now being taken

It's only a month and a half to the annual installation dinner and this years looks to be a one of the most fun in a while. Why because an old president is finally stepping down and allowing the younger set to take over.

The dinner will feature a change of officers and directors, a bunch of awards, some laughs, and an over the top raffle and silent auction.

While it's still early and a number of doners have yet to be approached, you can expect a number of guided trips, some really great fly fishing and camping gear and a fully equipped pram as a grand prize. Did I say a fully equipped pram? Yup, while not new, this totally reconditioned boat will belong to a proud new owner by the end of the evening. When all of the items to be auctioned or raffled off are itemized, the total value will most likely exceed \$5,000. Yes, I did say FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS.

All of the details of the final menu have not been worked out yet but as in the past, three different dishes will be offered, a beef dish, a chicken dish and a vegetarian dish. With the raves about the dinner last year, the beef dish will again feature prime rib.

The cost per plate is the same as last year, \$35. Orders can be made on line or bring a check to the December club meeting.

To order online, use the following links.

#### Beef dinner(s)

Chicken Dinner(s)

Vegetarian Dinner(s)

Don't miss this chance to welcome in a new slate of officers and directors and thank those moving on for their service.

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### Ovid 43 B/C/

Our heavy rainfall last year had a positive effect on our California fisheries. Although fishing has been more difficult this year, it appears we are in for a good return of spawning salmon in most of our Northern California rivers. Recent articles in Maven's Blog and by Dan Bacher point this out. The returns in four rivers, the Mokelumne, the American, the Feather, and the Lower Sacramento Rivers, were compared.

By midmonth this November, more than 10,000 salmon had passed Lodi's Woodbridge Dam. Will Smith, hatchery manager on the Mokelumne noted, "Last year a total of 12,078 were counted over the dam. We're having a good, above-normal season, although anglers have reported

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Home of Delta Fly Fishers Flyday Night Fly Tying. First Friday of every month. slow fishing in the river. We will probably see around 14,000 to 15,000 fish in the river this season; last year the count was around 18,000." On Tuesday, November 12th, Smith reported, the hatchery harvested 1.8 million eggs. This year they want to take 7.5 million eggs and produce 6.8 million smolt. This is a vast improvement from the past when as few

as 65 salmon returned.

Other hatcheries are showing early signs of good returns this season also. On the American River, the Nimbus Hatchery has completed three spawns of fall chinook. Greg Ferguson, a fish habitat assistant, noted the hatchery, so far, as taken over 1.4 million eggs from 2,173 returning salmon this year.

Creek. The hatchery is located about three miles east of the Lower Sacramento River on the creek. They too, expect to see a promising return of fish this season. So far they have taken 9,000 fish at the hatchery and 21,000 salmon from Battle Creek. They plan to do another spawn during the second half of November. The Coleman Hatchery projects releasing



Bill Smith, manager of the Mokelumne Hatchery with a spawned Chinook salmon.

12,000 smolt during the spring of 2020.

Those unfamiliar with the state's hatchery

system might be unimpressed with the

Mokelumne salmon return numbers this

year. However, they should be very im-

The Mokelumne Hatchery, operated by

the California Department of Fish and

pressed. The Coleman National Fish Hatchery is the state's largest hatchery.

The hatchery manager at the Feather

River Hatchery in Orville, Ana Kaster, is very pleased by the numbers of returning salmon and their increased size of the salmon. By November 15, just over 18,500 fish have returned to their hatchery. This year their hatchery will produce 6 million smolts from its harvested 13 million eggs.

California's largest hatchery is the Coleman National Fish Hatchery run by the US Fish and Wildlife Service on Battle



Wildlife (CDFW) in conjunction with the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), is the smallest. The Coleman Hatchery was built in 1942 in an attempt to mitigate the huge loss of spawning habitat when Shasta Dam was built.

> Due to the abundant snow and rainfall in (Continued on page 7)

#### (Continued from page 6)

Northern California last year (150% to180% above normal) the salmon benefited. The spawning habitat lost by the building of Comanche Dam on the Moke-



Two old ladies, giving their last efforts to bring new life into the world.

lumne was far less than that lost when Shasta Dam was built on the Lower Sacramento River. Despite the fact that the Mokelumne is a relativity small river it will produce more than 33% of the fish harvested at the Coleman Hatchery located on the state's largest river. While the Coleman Hatchery is planning to release 12 million smolts in the spring, the Mokelumne Hatchery will release 6.8 million smolts.

This year the increase in returning salmon is the result of last year's abundant snow and rainfall. It is not due to improved water management by either or state or federal government. Since the Delta Fly Fishers (DFF) has been actively involved with our fisheries in the Delta and throughout California, I have watched both groups yield to the whims of either the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) or to comply with the financial benefits for corporate agribusiness. This trend is, unfortunately, continuing.

We are fortunate that the Mokelumne Hatchery is an exception to the state and federal hatchery management program. Our club was an important part of making that happen. First, a short bit of history. In 1973, before I had joined DFF, I grabbed my fly rod and went to the Moke to fish just below Camanche Dam. To my shock, the river was an over-creamed coffee color. After a few minutes, I got off the water because of the stench of hydrogen sulfide (rotten eggs). As I walked the river I saw fish either dead or dying along the banks The river was killing trout. I had no idea what was happen-

### ing.

Near the Mokelumne River, By Campo Saco, the area has been mined from 1861 to the mid-1950s for copper, zinc, and cadmium. The waste slag was left and

> never treated. EBMUD bought the adjacent property for the dam and started filling the reservoir. The heavy metals chemically combined with sulfides (hence the rotten egg smell) and drained into the lake, sunk to the bottom of the reservoir and flowed downstream into the Mokelumne River. It killed all the fish in the

river.

This was not the first fishkill. Major fish kills were reported in 1937,1957, 1960, 1968, and 1973. The former mine owners did nothing to eradicate the problem; they caused a major legal problem for EB-MUB who was now legally responsible for the problem. The story became com-

plex. The DFF, along with and other groups, filed a major lawsuit against EB-MUD and won. This was a major victory for our club and other groups to protect the Mokelumne River. The management of EBMUD had a non-compliant attitude but was forced to sign the Joint Settlement Agreement (JSA). The JSA, along with other river protections, included hiring a managing biologist to restore the river's environment including its fish. The DFF was a major part of the settlement to restore the Moke's trout, steelhead, and salmon. We should take great pride in what we helped accomplish for the Moke!

During the suit, EBMUD demonstrated an anti-environmental position. Over the years, however, new management has assumed leadership and reversed their anti-environmental position. Today, due to EBMUD's current management philosophy, they are arguably the most proenvironmental, pro-fish utility district in California. Over the years It has been my pleasure to know and work with three managing biologists with EBMUD. They are Joe Merz, Jose Seka, and Michelle Workman. All three have typified an exceptional strong pro-river, fish and environment attitude. Hopefully, other utilities will follow their example.

Before that last drought ended, the EB-MUD, biologist and the CDWF staff at the Mokelumne Hatchery conceived a variety of innovative, creative techniques and methods to off-set predation and fish loss in the Delta and rivers for returning salmon. Their innovative techniques are working. Now over 20% of all commercial salmon harvested in California were from the Mokelumne River. Not too bad for the state's smallest hatchery!



A salmon smolt, hope for tomorrow.

## Don't get caught without it.

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> Here's the link for online sales.

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