

January 2021

Headwaters

Happy New-Fishing Year

NEWSLETTER OF THE
STANISLAUS FLY FISHERS

Stanislaus
Fly Fishers

A CHARTER
CLUB OF FLY
FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL

MEMBER OF THE
NORTHERN
CALIFORNIA
COUNCIL OF FLY
FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL

General Meeting

*No general meeting
this month.*

Grace Lutheran
Church
617 W Orangeburg
Ave, Modesto, CA
95350

President's Message

2021! I don't think I've ever been so glad to ring in a new year. Let's hope we have this pandemic on the run, vaccines are soon available and maybe we see a return to some semblance of life as we knew it pre-pandemic.

I don't have any fishing reports this time around. I meant to get out to the delta during the month of December but between the fog and the cold I kind of lost my momentum. I haven't seen any fishing reports from any of you posted to our website or on our Facebook page. I'm curious if any of you got out on New Years Day and kicked off the new year fishing. If you tried any of our local rivers that opened on the 1st send us a report. I wonder if for instance the Stanislaus was busy. Let us know we love to share your stories with the club.

Speaking of the club, it's time to kick this year off and get something going despite the coronavirus safety protocols. We are planning to hold our usual general club meeting on Tuesday the 12th via Zoom at 6:00pm. Please plan to join in on this effort to keep the club rolling along. I have talked to Jon Baiocchi regarding Zoom presentations he can offer. I have him tentatively scheduled to do a presentation on the Skwala hatch for our February meeting but that will depend if you all are in favor of giving this a try. If we have a good turnout for this first meeting we will poll and see if membership is in favor of having Jon do a presentation for us via Zoom.

I am thinking of hosting a casting day for spey casting very soon. If any of you have considered giving spey casting a try, let me know and I will move forward with this plan.

(Continued [here](#))

Stanislaus Fly Fishers Membership Information

Membership dues are \$40 per year for members.

Members must also join Fly Fishers International. Dues for the IFF vary, but do not exceed \$35 for a single, one-year membership.



Like us on Facebook 

We're on the Web!



Club News

As most of you all know, the Stanislaus Fly Fishers is a Charter Club of Fly Fishers International. As far as I am aware, we are the only Charter Club in northern California and all the other FFI member clubs are Affiliate Clubs. So, how does that benefit us? Jim Bowen offered a brief explanation in his President's Message, but I thought it might be useful to see that detailed in a more graphic description. When you see the benefit we gain from being a Charter Club, it becomes more clear as to the importance of maintaining that status and the requirement for all SFF members to be FFI members as well.

	<u>Charter Club</u>	<u>Affiliate Club</u>
Club FFI Dues:	None (SFF Members Pay Own FFI Dues)	*\$200/yr (1-49 members)
Insurance:	\$325/yr Share FFI Policy	\$450/yr Have Own Policy
503(c)3 Status:	Under FFI Umbrella	Must File For Own Status (minimum \$275 Fee)
Tax Prep:	FFI Files	Club Files Tax Prep Fee ??
Individual FFI Dues:		\$20/\$25/\$35 per year (Youth/Senior-Vet/Standard)

*For Affiliate Membership at least one member must be a member of FFI.

Given the increased costs the club would incur if we were to be an Affiliate Club (which would require an increase in SFF dues) and the headache of filing for our own non-profit status and bookkeeping and tax prep, especially given the size of our club, it only makes sense that we remain a Charter Club, and therefore, require all of our members to maintain their FFI memberships as required by FFI.

Stanislaus Fly Fishers 2020 Board of Directors

President – Jim Bowen
Vice-President – Pat Roe
Treasurer/Membership –
Dennis Stambaugh
Secretary/Webmaster –
Michael Hewitt
Outings – Bob Bullock
Raffles – Jim Goodwin
Webmaster – Mike Hewitt
At-Large – Bud Heintz
At-Large – Jeff Bakker

*Board Meetings are held on
the fourth Tuesday of the month at
5:00 p.m. at Me & Ed's Pizza on
Pelandale Ave. in Modesto. All
members are welcome to attend.*

Club News (cont.)

Officer elections are being conducted and active (paid) members in 2020 plus any who have paid for 2021 will receive a ballot in the mail. Please respond with your completed ballot by January 12, 2021. So far the nominations for elected positions are:

President - Jim Bowen
Vice-President - Gus Link
Treasurer - Dennis Stambaugh

Each ballot will also have an opportunity to write in candidates. Let's keep SFF rolling through 2021 and beyond.

Now would be a good time to get your membership dues in the mail as well. \$40 buys a family membership. And don't forget to keep your FFI status current.

[FFI Membership Page](#)

Pat's Fly Box **"Zebra Midge"**



Happy New year all. This month's featured fly is the Zebra Midge. This fly is probably the simplest fly you can tie, but is very productive when fished right. I will mostly concentrate on just the fly here. There are numerous YouTube videos on the subject.

This fly represents a bug we call a midge, which is in a lot of different family groups, but our interest will be the chironomidae family, pictured, and are found all over the world. They look like mosquitos, but they don't bite and, because of their small size, are usually tied in 20's and 18's. One exception, for us who fish Pyramid Lake, would be to tie in sizes 10 and 12. More on those at another time.

I was first introduced to it by Bob Nakagawa, our then local fly shop owner and SFF member and supporter. He says, "The Zebra Midge should be in EVERY fly fishers fly box." They are found in almost every lake and many streams as well and are a four season fly. Usually fished off an indicator because of their vertical assent from their sub surface bottom home.

Bob and I were going to Lake Crowley a few years back, and as we were driving towards Green Banks, I noticed huge columns of what I thought were dust clouds. But they were indeed columns of midges. There were several columns of them. So, their hatch can be pretty prolific. When we got to the waters edge they were everywhere as you can imagine. They didn't taste too bad either as we ate our lunch. :D

The video by Tim Flagler of Tightline Videos shows the most common color, black thread with silver bead and wire, but you'll want a variety of colors to change up throughout the day or even each productive area. This is because, after a while, the fish will ignore the same pattern put in front of them time and time again. So it never hurts to mix things up.

I hope you are able to get some tied up for your box this winter and give them a try anytime of year.

Video Instructions **[here](#)**.

Upcoming Outings and Events

Kistler Ranch - March 13, 2021, Hwy 108, \$TBD

Pyramid Lake - April 1-2, 2021, Pyramid Lake, Nevada, \$240/person

Membership Information

Membership Dues (\$40) for 2021 are due now due and payable. For your convenience, we can now accept a credit card for your dues, but there will be an additional fee of \$1.00 to cover the cost of the transaction. All memberships are "Family Membership" status. Spouses, significant others and children are now all included in every membership.

Reminder: These are the club dues and *DO NOT* include FFI dues. FFI dues are paid directly to the FFI and must be maintained regularly since the SFF is an FFI Charter Club. If you are not an FFI Life Member, or do not pay for three years at a time, **you must renew your membership yearly!** Also, **remember to list the Stanislaus Fly Fishers** as your ***Affiliated Club***. This is important due to our Charter Club status. The online application for FFI membership is linked below.

FFI Membership [Application](#)

Comics



Conservation Notes

Fall, Spring, and In Between: New Insights on the Genetics of Chinook Migratory Behavior

FishBio – December 7, 2020

<https://fishbio.com/field-notes/the-fish-report/fall-spring-new-insights-genetics-chinook-migratory-behavior>

The full diversity of life doesn't fit neatly into categories, but that hasn't dissuaded humans from trying to split animals into manageable groupings like species, often on the basis of differences in physical appearance or behaviors. For salmon, species are further divided into "runs" or "ecotypes" based on their migration timing. For example, the Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) that



migrate back to freshwater earlier in the year and oversummer in rivers before spawning are labelled either "winter-run" or "spring-run," whereas those that arrive in rivers after summer are deemed "fall-run" or "late-fall-run." By examining the DNA of early and late arriving Chinook, scientists have made a remarkable discovery about the relationship between these two ecotypes, recently published in the journal *Science* ([Thompson et al. 2020](#)). As it turns out, they may not be as separate as historically believed, which may be good news for the recovery of imperiled Chinook populations.

California's Chinook salmon are renowned for the diversity of their life histories, with four migratory ecotypes – winter, spring, fall, and late-fall – occurring in the Sacramento River Basin alone. In addition to their different movement timing, early migrants exhibit physical differences from their late-migrating cousins, generally being smaller in size, higher in fat content, and more rapidly maturing. These differences, along with the fact that early migrants historically spawned in more upstream habitats, have led many to consider them a distinct fish. In some fish species, regions of the genome are associated with distinct migratory behaviors. One such region in the Chinook genome containing two protein-coding genes was recently discovered to be consistently linked with run-timing. Because the distinct migratory patterns of Chinook have led to the fish displaying differences in size and other key traits, it has been theorized that early and late migrants do not reproduce with one another.

To assess this, the study authors sequenced the genomes of 160 Chinook representing all ecotypes in the Klamath and Sacramento basins. Comparison of 64 fall-run and 64 spring-run fish found consistent differences in only one very small portion of the genome, termed the “region of strongest association,” or RoSA. Variation in the RoSA was found to clearly indicate two lineages: early (E) and late (L). Chinook in the Sacramento Basin exhibited a further split within each lineage, dividing the E lineage into winter- and spring-runs and the L lineage into fall- and late-fall-runs. Within the RoSA, several single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs, or a single DNA base pair that varies among the genomes of different individuals) showed a near-perfect association with the early and late migrating ecotypes. Because each Chinook receives chromosomes from both its parents, any given individual can possess either two copies of the variation associated with early migration (EE), two copies associated with late migration (LL), or one of each (EL). Using these diagnostic SNPs, the researchers determined the genotype of 502 adult Chinook harvested by the Yurok Tribe in the Klamath River Estuary. They then compared this migratory genotype with the fish’s fat content, reproductive maturity, and the date the fish entered the river.

Dates of freshwater entry were found to be almost completely separate for fish with EE and LL or “homogenous” genotypes. However, individuals possessing a mixed, or “heterozygous” genotype (EL) were found to have dates of entry falling between and overlapping with the timing of the EE and LL fish. By expanding their analysis to include the carcasses of 183 post-spawn Chinook from Coastal Oregon to the Sacramento Basin, the researchers found that the different ecotypes occurred in the same areas at the same times. This finding, alongside the presence of heterozygous (EL) individuals, suggests that early and late migrants do interbreed, and that gene flow between the different ecotypes maintains genetic diversity and the adaptability of the population. Importantly, the findings of this study are good news for the prospects of recovering the spring-run ecotype in the Klamath Basin following the impending removal of four major dams. Spring-run Chinook historically relied on cool, high elevation streams to survive over the summer, and were severely impacted by the construction of dams that cut off access to the upper watershed. However, the genes associated with the early migrant lineage still persist in the population, making it probable that an early-run ecotype will reemerge once suitable habitat becomes available. As much as humans are tempted to neatly file different salmon runs under distinct categories, this study suggests that the concept of salmon populations may warrant a more inclusive approach for the purposes of management.

Suggested Reading

The Fish In-Between: Are you walking past the fish of the day?

Gink and Gasoline – December 7, 2020 – Louis Cahill

From where I'm standing, in water that barely covers my boots, I can see the next pool. A beautiful bend, dark green and lazy, with a big submerged log on the outside edge. A little riffle at the head, pouring into a deep pool. It's the perfect picture of the old fishing hole. I know there is a big brown in that dark green water. I literally know. In fact, everyone who fishes here knows. He's not a secret and yet, to my knowledge, he's never been caught. Hooked, for sure, but never landed. Still, you have to try with a fish like that. [*More ...*](#)

Bends Are Like Best Friends

Gink and Gasoline – December 13, 2020 - Kent Klewein

Bends in rivers and streams are like my best friends.

They possess all the qualities that I value and they always provide me consistent support in my endeavors. I don't know about you, but when I find myself staring at a section of river or stream and I see a nice bend, I quite often head straight for it. I do this because I know it will usually produce a quality fish or two on the end of my line, and it's generally very obvious to me where I should present my flies. [*More ...*](#)

Colorado Biologists Concerned About Greenback Mysterious Trout Decline

PagosaDailyPost.com – December 23, 2020

Aquatic biologists and researchers at Colorado Parks and Wildlife have launched an intensive review of data on Bear Creek after a routine survey revealed a troubling decline in greenback cutthroat trout populations. [*More ...*](#)

Major Legislative Package That Includes Numerous Conservation Investments Becomes Law

Angling Trade – December 29, 2020

A sweeping legislative package to keep the government running and invest in COVID relief has become law. Tucked throughout the bill are numerous conservation provisions that invest in climate solutions, sustainably manage water resources, restore habitat, combat chronic wasting disease, and strengthen access for hunters and anglers.

"In a year that has been incredibly difficult for families and communities across America, conservation provides a place where we can find glimmers of hope and common ground," said Whit Fosburgh, president and CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. "This sweeping legislation addresses many issues that are top of mind for hunters and anglers, including investments in habitat and access. We can close out this year knowing we accomplished a lot for conservation and turn our eyes toward 2021 and the goals of investing in climate solutions and putting Americans back to work through conservation." [*More ...*](#)

Video Links (Click on title for link)

Master Class Monday: Watch Before You Cast

In this week's Master Class Monday, Dave Jensen trains his camera on a feeding trout and narrates what he sees. But more importantly, he talks about how his observations inform his tactics. Not only is he thinking about which pattern will tempt the trout to eat, but he also considers how the presentation itself might affect Amelia's chances of success. You can learn so much by watching how a trout is feeding, but it's usually not possible. Here, we're able to observe a brown trout feeding on naturals and reacting to flies. It's also really telling to listen to Dave and Amelia agonize over what fly to present and how to do it.

Guardians of the River

In this film by American Rivers and Swiftwater Films, Indigenous leaders share why removing four dams to restore a healthy Klamath River is critical for clean water, food sovereignty and justice. "Guardians of the River" features Frankie Joe Myers, Vice Chair of the Yurok Tribe, Sammy Gensaw, director of Ancestral Guard, Barry McCovey, fisheries biologist with the Yurok Tribe, and members of the Ancestral Guard and Klamath Justice Coalition.

Winter Fly Fishing on the Upper Sacramento - California

The fishing has been tough the last couple weeks, and today was no different. We fished at the Sweetbrier exit and rode the struggle bus all day. I fished a #14 Sexy Walt's Worm and a #16 Orange Perdigon under my Euro Rig.

Upper Owens River Fishing - Sierra Steelhead

I was hoping to catch the lake run brown trout that run up from Lake Crowley, but instead got into some of the "Sierra Steelhead" lake run rainbows instead. Maybe the browns were further upstream or downstream from where I fished just above Benton Crossing? Below the bridge was closed at this time of year. I did see a dying brown trout in the shallows that was a lake run fish of about 20". Not sure what was wrong with it, whether it was spawned out, got a disease, or was handled poorly after a catch and release. I saw a dead fish in the water as well in the same spot. Just a reminder to hold a

fish out of the water only briefly--I have seen studies where once a trout has been out of water for more than 10 seconds, the mortality rate skyrockets.

President's Message (Continued from Page 1)

I have a couple of rods so it will be hands on, actual casting. I would host it at Jacob Meyer park in Riverbank so we would actually cast from water instead of grass casting which just doesn't give the feel you need to develop the basics of a two handed cast. Please let me know if you are interested at president@stanislausflyfishers.org.

I want to let you all know that despite the issue of not being able to host regular in-person club meetings, your board has stayed very active behind the scenes with club business and working on how to keep the club stable until social gatherings are back on the table. The primary issue we have been working on is our club status as an FFI Charter Club. Secretary Mike Hewitt has a very informative piece in the newsletter under Club News detailing some of our reasons for maintaining this status. Believe me when I say it is of utmost importance to the life of the club to keep the Charter Club status.

Therefore, all Stanislaus Fly Fisher members must also be FFI members. Our annual dues for a family membership is \$40.00. The Fly Fishers International's dues are \$25.00 for seniors or veterans and \$35.00 for a standard membership. That's for you who aren't old decrepit dudes like me! Please, and I am begging you, get your annual club dues in this month and join or renew your FFI membership when appropriate. Club dues can be sent to Dennis Stambaugh at 3833 Blue Bird Ln. Modesto, 95356. Dennis has also graciously agreed to handle your FFI dues if you want to make one check to the club instead of paying those dues via the FFI website. Do remember to make checks to Stanislaus Fly Fishers not to Dennis. We don't currently have any fund raising plans in place so in order to manage club business and possibly provide speakers we need your dues to replenish our treasury. Please, Please help us keep the club going.

We have many plans in the works to fish together locally, and also when it's good to go, some plans for outings at some other waters. We do have Kistler Ranch bass ponds reserved for March 13th. Vice-president candidate Gus Link will be sending you an electronic invitation to that event. Please respond if you are interested as we need to determine cost according to attendance. We are hoping to keep the cost to \$20 or \$25, but that depends on how many anglers we can spread the cost across.

I guess by now I have worn you out talking about dues and Charter status and keeping the club solvent, but is so hugely important that we feel we need to present the reasons and encourage you to keep your club membership and your FFI membership current.

Please join the meeting on January 12th and we can talk fishing and club business and get this year off to a productive start. In the meantime stay safe, wear a mask, maintain distancing and keep the hand sanitizer handy.

Tight Lines,
Jim