

SOFF News

Vol.31 No.1/2 The Monthly Newsletter of The Southern Oregon Fly Fishers, Inc. Jan/Feb 2024



SOFF NEWS

A publication of
Southern Oregon Fly Fishers
P.O. Box 1144
Grants Pass, Oregon 97528
Web Site: www.soff.org

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There is great excitement amongst members of the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers as they anticipate the newly formatted Club auction.



For many years, Wayne Liska was the auctioneer at the club's annual fund raising auction. Here he encouraged the club members to bid on the items up for auction.

Now he has been replaced by the modern era of electronics and the internet to let the membership bid online for the auction items.

**Dinner Reservations: E-mail - info@soff.org
or call the Club at (541) 955-4718**

SPECIAL MENTION

Bill Burns:

John Storfold:

Kevin Daniels:

John Smith:

Dave Grosjacques:

David Haight:

Vacant

Dave Roberts:

Vacant

John Storfold

Membership

Fly Tying Chair

Fly Tying Instructor

Programs

Habitat Chair

Outings Chair

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FROM THE BOARD



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by

Robert Stafford

Happy New Year to you all! I hope everybody had a nice holiday. The past year was a big challenge for the Board. First, we had post-Covid to contend with, then we unexpectedly lost our meeting venue and had to find a new one. Then, there was our annual auction to deal with. We investigated various venues but either they would not work or were too costly. Finally, John Smith suggested we hold the auction online and with help from Joe and Jan Knapik, Rich Steed and others, our long-awaited auction will be held in February.

We ended 2023, the club's 30-year anniversary, with our largest dinner attendance of the year. I would like especially to thank Redge Heth, John Smith and Rich Steed for their hard work in putting it all together. It was wonderful to see so many Charter members present, some we hardly see anymore, and Teresa's speech about how this club changed her life was really moving. I feel the evening was a big success. 2024 is off to a promising start with the auction coming up in February, and we've added the ability to pay your membership dues and dinner reservations online with your credit or debit cards.

We've added a new position to our Board; I would like to welcome Roxanne Theodoroff, our new IT chairperson. Other items of interest: our Fly-Tying Class has already started, and David Haight's Coastal Steelhead Outing is scheduled for January 20th and 21st.

Last month I picked up a copy of American Fly Fishing in which there was an article about the Mount Washington Wilderness area and its many hike-in lakes. Although I've never fished them, I'm reminded that we have many such lakes here in Southern Oregon, the Sky Lakes Wilderness and Babyfoot Lake to mention a few. I have the tendency to fish waters I know best but this year I intend to explore more of these areas and who knows, maybe I'll find a new favorite fishing spot and perhaps I'll even run into one of you on the trail.

YES, WE ARE HAVING AN AUCTION

The Southern Oregon Fly Fishers Auction will be an online event held from Saturday, February 17th through Friday, February 23rd. Item will be available for online bidding 24 hours a day during that period. Our February meeting will be Tuesday, February 21st, and there will be opportunities at the meeting to go online and bid. The auction will close at 11:59 PM on Friday, February 23rd. We are shooting to have items valued at over \$20,000 available for sale.



Tullis Damsel Cont. From Pg. 6

Use figure 8 wraps and under the eye wraps and up and over wraps to secure the eyes. A drop of superglue will help secure the eyes.

Tie in a piece of olive or appropriate color Swiss straw approximately 1/8" wide at the larva lace tie in point. The Swiss straw should be extended toward the back of the hook. Wrap a few turns of thread over the Swiss straw over the larva lace tie in point.

Tie in so olive or appropriate color straggle string forward of the Swiss straw tie in. Wrap the straggle string forward to behind the eye and tie off. Brush out the straggle string strands.

Pull the Swiss straw forward and tie off behind the eye.

Figure 8 the straggle string around the eyes and take two turns forward to behind the eye. Tie off the straggle string and trim the excess. Brush out the straggle string strands.

Pull the Swiss straw forward over the eyes and straggle string. Tie off behind the eye. Trim the excess Swiss straw.

Whip finish the head and trim the thread.

The original pattern called for angora goat or olive seal for the thorax. Seal is no longer available and straggle string is a recently introduced product from Semper Fly that works very well.

Fly Tied By John Smith

ATTENTION!
Board Meeting
The Board of Directors
will meet in the conference room
of the Tap Rock Restaurant
The next meeting is scheduled:
Feb 6th at 6:00pm or
the first Tuesday
of the month
All members welcome

PROGRAMS

Future Programs

Feb 20	Steve Day
Mar 19	Greg Hucko
Apr 16	Fly Tyers Night
May 21	Yancy Lind
Jun 18	Marc Williamson
July 16	No Meeting
Aug 20	No Meeting
Sep 17	TBA

Dinner No Shows

It has been three months since we returned to our regularly scheduled meetings and our attendance is lacking a little. I believe that will be worked out as time goes by and the membership is once again conditioned to our monthly meetings.

In addition to the smaller attendance, we are having another problem. Because we are considered a 'banquet meeting', it is necessary to give the restaurant a head count by the Friday before the Tuesday meeting. This means that when we give the restaurant the head count based on a member's reservation, the club is obligated to pay for that number whether that person shows or not.

It seems that for the last three meetings, the club has been on the hook for at least \$75.00 to \$100 each meeting for those members making a reservation and then failing to attend. We realize that there are times when something comes up and the member is unable to attend the meeting. If that person cancels their reservation before the Friday guarantee, the club can cancel the reservation thus eliminating the liability for either the member or the club. After the guarantee goes in the member or the club is responsible for the cost of the missed meal.

In the past, when we were flush, the club was able to subsidize the cost

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WHEN:

Feb 20th, 2024



TIMES:

5:30 PM

Social Hour and
Fly Tying Demo.

6:30 PM

Meeting

7:00 PM

Dinner and Program

WHERE:

Wild River Pub
533 NE F St. G.P.



Steve Day - Rogue River Strategies



For Steve, fly fishing became an obsession while living in Bishop, California as a rancher and a Police Officer. Thirty years in the "Heart of the Eastern Sierra" provided endless opportunities for fly fishing and good stewardship of the planet.

Now, a twenty-year retired, resident rancher of the Rogue valley, Steve's enthusiasm for fly fishing has continued. His passion, experience, and knowledge has provided opportunities for him to give back. He serves as a volunteer with ODFW on fisheries studies, programs and restoration projects and Steve routinely provides education and instruction by way of presentations and clinics.

Steve is the past President of the Rogue Flyfishers in Medford where he is still an active member. He is also a member and involved with the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers in Grants Pass as well as the Umpqua Valley Fly Fishers in Roseburg.

Steve currently serves as the Secretary of the Board of Directors for the Rogue River Watershed Council located in Central Point. The Mission of the RRWC is to enhance resilience in the Rogue River watersheds through ecological restoration and engagement with community partners.

The Rogue River has been Steve's Home Water for the last twenty years. He will talk about the river, the seasons and the River's personalities, the fish, and the strategies to make the best of the opportunities this historic river can provide.

CASTING ABOUT

SOFF Auction is Back! Online Auction on Tap Feb 17-22, 2024

Our auction is not only fun and exciting- it is also SOFF's only fundraiser. Your support is the future of your club! Support has been terrific, and we have lots of great items, both for anglers and those who cheer us on (or at least tolerate us).

As of Dec 19th: We are off to a great start with over 80 items collectively worth \$14,000.

SOFF Goal: Auction item total value of \$20,000. PLEASE DONATE! THEN BID!!

Auction dates

- 12:01 AM Saturday
February 17 – 11:55 PM
Friday February 23
- Register online, or at the January or February meeting – you have to register to bid.
- Bid from home or at our February meeting on Tuesday, February 20th, or both. Laptops will be available at the meeting for bidding.
- This is a lot like E-Bay. You can make one initial bid and sit on it, or you can make that initial bid and set automatic increases, or you can manage bidding increases manually. The system notifies you whenever you are outbid.

This is an online auction only, in many ways, similar to a silent auction –

- All auction items have a minimum opening bid and a minimum for increases.
- Make a single bid or set a hidden maximum bid amount that incrementally increases

your bid each time you are outbid up to the limit you authorized. When you are outbid, you are notified so you can bid again.

- Extended bidding will apply. Multiple bids in the last 3 minutes trigger a 3-minute extension.
- As a registered bidder, you can visit the auction site as often as you like. Check status of your items, bid again, or browse for bargains.
- Several items include a “BUY IT NOW” option. Bid that amount and you get it!
- If you are the successful bidder on an item, you will be notified by email. The email will contain an invite to checkout through PayPal. You can also contact SOFF to pay by cash or check if you prefer.
- Purchasers can arrange for local pick up or make delivery arrangements. Only a few items are limited to local pick up. Most can be shipped.

GOLDEN TICKET RAFFLE-

New this year:

- 100 “golden” tickets will be available for purchase. The winning ticket holder is entitled to claim one single auction item. (Sawyer Oar and Lonesome Duck packages are not eligible for inclusion in the drawing)
- Raffle ticket cost \$25. Buy as many as you like as often as

you like.

- Tickets can be purchased at the January meeting or through our auction website.
- Ticket sales will cease once the 100 are sold.
- The winning ticket is randomly drawn by computer.
- Winner will be notified and make selection prior to the general auction & the item can be withdrawn from the auction.

MORE AUCTION FUN!

THE SOFF Auction Committee is adding a few “Cup” raffles to the online auction.

How do we do this?

We will have a few things (like fly tying materials, flies, baskets, etc.) available, along with the price per ticket and maximum tickets available for that item. You decide which raffle has the item(s) you can't resist and go for it. Buy tickets through the same process as the “Golden Ticket” raffle.

The winning ticket is selected randomly by computer and the winner is notified.

The cup raffles will start in January and will continue as long as folks like and support them.

Any Questions? Contact Auction Manager John Smith at 801-710-2515 or at jlsutah@gmail.com.

OUTINGS AND WORKSHOPS

An Open Letter to the So Oregon Fly Fishers

Some years ago, an article in one of the fly-fishing magazines celebrated the recovery of native winter-run steelhead populations in Northern California's Eel River, reporting that escapement had reached some 1,500 fish—certainly a recovery of some modest measure over the latter decades of the 20th century.

Yet, while any ground gained is worthy of appreciation and recognition, I was saddened that the story fell into the quagmire of the shifting baseline phenomenon.

The Eel River, you see, is essentially the founding fishery of the codified pursuit of fly fishing for steelhead. When the noted San Francisco fly dresser John S. Benn began making arduous autumn journeys north to the remote Eel River in the 1880s, steelhead were still enigmatic—in fact they were not then called steelhead. Anglers realized these then-abundant fish seemed to be trout, yet they migrated to and from saltwater like salmon. So, in those days before steelhead had been scrutinized by science, anglers used the eminently logical moniker “salmon-trout” to describe a fish that would eagerly take flies.

In those halcyon days, the Eel River had an annual escapement of an estimated 150,000 steelhead, comprising both summer- and winter-run life-history populations. Today, Eel River summer-run steelhead—not even mentioned in that report about a mod-

est recovery of winter steelhead—hover on the verge of extinction and the population of winter-run steelhead remains perilously low: 1,500 fish compared to 150,000 should be a dire warning more-so than a celebration.

A shifting baseline obscures the full story, and we must guard against it. We must be stewards of the history of our sport so that we can provide an accurate recounting of the facts when they matter most—in the fight to save and protect wild fish and their waters and the intact ecosystems they need.

The ability to reach back into time to truly understand the magnitude of what we have lost helps us appraise the urgency of our conservation ethos and priorities.

That's why the 30th anniversary of this club tonight should be a multilayered celebration—we can take great joy in the fact that the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers, formed in 1993, has ushered so many new fly anglers into the fold through the unwavering enthusiasm of its many board members and officers who have served over these past three decades and of its membership in general. Many of you may not know that I was chosen to be the first-ever speaker for the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers at the club's inaugural meeting. I was deeply honored to have been so chosen and was happily surprised at the dedication and enthusiasm that seemed like an aura surrounding the founding officers and members that night so long ago. At the same time, we should also celebrate what 30 years means in terms of continuity. Those three decades past, and the years to follow, when imbued with the wisdom of so many amazing men and women who have kept this club alive and thriving, give us a long view rather than the snapshot views that tend to creep into discussions about critical conservation imperatives.

I have been back to speak to the membership on numerous occasions

over the years, and have always found great joy in the fact that, with the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers, one moment I might be conversing with a member who has been fly fishing for 60 years and the next moment chatting with a wide-eyed newcomer to the sport who is being guided along by the generous members of the club. Along the way I've met many new friends, some no longer with us, and many who are still active members and officers.

Yet today, fly angling clubs need to fulfill more than one mission. Those like the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers who do such an admirable job of welcoming newcomers to the sport can serve as role models for new clubs, or for existing clubs that might wish to evolve into a better vehicle to serve people who want to learn more about fly fishing. At the same time, however, fly fishing clubs are, in my opinion, virtually dutybound to become increasingly active in the conservation arena.

Wild salmonids face perilous times. In recent years I've had to examine my own ethics and ask myself some soul-searching questions, chief among them being this: should I still be fishing for steelhead, and should I still be fishing for native trout in tiny desert streams in southeast Oregon? In the face of increasingly imperiled native stocks, does the good of the fish outweigh my passion for fishing for them and catching them? But I also realize that we are very likely to be confronted with an existential question: if we no longer pursue the native salmonids that have long endeared us to this sport and the places it takes us, who will remain to be advocates in the future? Who will fight for wild fish and their ecosystems? Who will be out there to care? Who will be our heroes?

The existential battle is indeed at hand. We must protect and recover native species and their habitats before we

Continued on Page 7

2024 Outings

- 2-17 Upper Rogue with Dave McCants.
- 4-28-5-2 Owyhee River with Jon Iverson.
- 5-24-5-25 Lemolo Lake with Dave Gross Jacques.
- 6-12 Diamond Lake with Mike Dewey.
- 7-14 Umpqua River with Dave Haight.

FLY TYING CORNER

Tullis Damsel



- Hook:** Caddis Hook Size 12
- Tail:** 3 or 4 Olive Ostrich Herls or Olive Marabou Barbs Pulled through the body.
- Body:** Olive Larva Lace Tied just Back of the Center of the Hook Shank.
- Wing Case:** Olive Swiss Straw. Tied down Behind Eyes and then Pulled Over.
- Throax:** Medium Olive Seal or Angora Goat.
- Eyes:** Melted 40# Mono or Plastic Eyes or Black Bead Chain Eyes.

This is an intermountain pattern developed by Larry Tullis, which I have been successfully fishing since 1997. Easy to tie, it is very realistic. It is an early example of an extended body damsel pattern and replicates the slender abdomen of a damsel nymph. Best fished with a midge tip, hover or dry line with a long leader toward shore. The pattern which I will tie differs from the picture in the use of olive colored Straggle String in place of green angora or seal.

Tying Instructions

Prepare an olive marabou feather by stripping all but 4 barbs off the stem, two on each side. You can cut the tip out of the feather to get bushy barbs further down the staff. Cut the bare stem so you have about 1" + of bare stem. Make sure the stem is a small diameter.

Cut a 1" length of larva lace tubing. I use olive tubing with olive marabou. If you want to tie a different colored nymph, i.e. brown or chartreuse, use clear tubing and the marabou color will show through giving you a colored abdomen.

Insert the bare marabou stem portion into the tube and pull the bare stem end through the tube until the marabou barbs are still extending out the upper end about 1/8". If you use ostrich or want to just use marabou barbs you can make a pulling loop out of 6x leader and pull the barbs through without the stem.

Use a #12 caddis hook. Wrap olive or appropriate color thread on to the hook at the halfway point. Put a dot of superglue on the thread wraps and tie the larva lace tube with marabou barbs in, allowing 1/2" of tubing for the abdomen. Trim the excess larva lace tube beyond the tie in point.

Continued on Pg. 2

John Storfold

Fly Tying Chair

541-660-6584

steelyjohn@charter.net



Please make checks payable to:
SOFF and mail to: PO Box 1144,
Grants Pass, Oregon 97528

Membership Form

- Regular.....\$40.00
- Family.....\$50.00
- Youth.....\$10.00
- Contributing.....\$50.00
- Lifetime (Individual).....\$350.00
- Lifetime (Couple).....\$450.00

Name(s): _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: Home () _____ Work: () _____
 Email: _____
 Personal interests: _____

Renewal: _____ New: _____



CHANGING LINES

COMING EVENTS

- 2-6 Board Meeting.
- 2-13 SOFT Fly Tyers, Madrone Mobile Home Park in Gold Hill.
- 2-17-23 The new Club on-line auction.
- 2-17 Club Outing - with Dave McCants Fishing the Upper Rogue
- 2-20 Club Meeting - with Steve Day.
- 3-7 Board Meeting
- 3-14 SOFT Fly Tyers, Madrone Mobile Home Park in Gold Hill.
- 3-21 Club Meeting - with Greg Hucko.

Editor's Notebook Cont. From Pg. 8

as they are the ones that keep the club going.

In a little more than a month, the big Fly Tying and Fishing extravaganza will once again be taking place at the fairgrounds in Albany. If you're unfamiliar with the event this is when some 200 of the best tyers in this state as well as from other states get together to exhibit their prowess at the vise producing flies that come with almost a 100% guarantee of catching a fish. The flies run the whole gamut of nymphs, dry flies, streamers, bass bugs and whatever. Also, you can view tyers crafting the really artistic patterns, namely the Atlantic Salmon patterns.

In addition to the fly tyers, there are programs that can be attended as well as vendors selling a bevy of items geared to the fly fisher.

As always the host hotel is the Linn County Comfort Suites directly next to the fairgrounds and if you're planning to stay there, it would be a good idea to get your reservations as soon as possible as they are fully booked each year.

Dinner No Shows Cont. From Pg. 3

of the no-show without a problem, but with three years of no auction due to the Covid the club is working on a very tight budget, and it can no longer absorb the cost of the no-show. We realize that 'things happen' and there may be times when a person can't attend and if this occurs, the club will welcome a voluntary reimbursement of the dinner costs; however, a second no show would incur an automatic request for payment of the missed dinner.

As many of you know, with the upcoming on-line auction, the club has joined a program called "Bidding Owl" and it's a program that records on-line bids. As an adjunct benefit to the program, we were able to use the services of PayPal as a Debit/Credit acceptor. This means that not only diners, but membership renewal can be paid for using PayPal.

Now comes the hard part! If the club determines that a member is a chronic no-show, we will require that the member pre-pays for their dinner, so that if they are a no-show the club no longer carries the burden of paying for that person's meal. The club would suggest that the members register with 'Bidding Owl' and establish a PayPal account and pay for their dinners in that fashion thereby making it easier on them as well as the club.

The club certainly hopes that the members understand that times are tough and that the club no longer can be as financially responsible for certain expenses as they once were and that the prescriptions outlined earlier are not directed at any person, but at the general club membership. It is our hope that this new payment policy rather than be a deterrent, will become a win-win for everybody.



Open Letter Continued From Pg 5

reach the point that our favorite places can no longer support sport fisheries.

This may sound like a call to activism, and in essence it is. But that does not mean that we all need to be the people on the ground, boots in the mud, so to speak, or the people lobbying politicians. Activism and advocacy take many forms and avoiding precipitous declines in wild fish populations (remember those lessons from the Eel River) requires all forms. As a journalist and especially as a magazine editor, I am dutybound to provide a venue for disseminating information about critical conservation undertakings, successes, and calls for action; as an individual you can be an important advocate by supporting the work of groups like Trout Unlimited, Western Rivers Conservancy, and many others; as a club, the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers can be a leader in advocating and action. This club has the power of so many terrific fly anglers at its disposal, and that brain-trust, along with the enthusiasm that brings even the newest anglers into the fold, creates a virtual army of change.

As the years accrue, look back often on the club's history, cater energetically to new fly anglers, work diligently at identifying critical conservation efforts in which the club can lend support, teach fly angling ethics so that, to paraphrase Roderick Haig-Brown, newcomers can understand what makes our sport and why.

Through it all, embrace and foster those characteristics I have always admired so much in the Southern Oregon Fly Fishers: infectious enthusiasm and profound generosity.

--John Shewey, December 16, 2023





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Editor's Notebook

In a little more than two weeks the club will be venturing in an unknown direction – will the newly formatted club fundraising auction be a success or not? John Smith, program chair, has put many hours into discovering the program ‘Bidding Owl’ as a catalyst for an online auction and then implementing it. Not only that, but he has spent numerous hours cataloging and photographing all the items that will be on the online auction as well as contacting other fly-fishing clubs and fly shops announcing our event.

Now comes the big question. Will our club members as well as the other people contacted actively support our online auction? Only time will tell! It is our hope that we will raise enough money from this venture, that we can once again begin supporting many of the programs that we were forced to

curtail due to a lack of funds. To see what will be in the auction, you can go to the club’s website and click on the catalog and view all the items.

Our February club meeting will occur almost in the center of the auction period and if the membership has any problems with registering online with ‘Bidding Owl’ or bidding itself, there will be several members with their computers at the meeting to assist you.

Also, there will be something new at the auction. John Smith conceived the idea of a Golden Ticket as a fundraising venture. There will be 100 of these tickets sold with each ticket costing \$25.00. The Golden Ticket winner gets to choose, with the exception of four items, any other item from the auction list as their prize. Now I know that this is hard to believe, but if there isn’t any item in the auction list that

you can’t live without, you can still help the club by purchasing Golden Tickets as a donation to the club.

So, let’s all get behind this fundraising project and make it as successful as any in-person auction we have ever conducted.

Well at the last meeting we had the election of officers and board members for the new year and surprise, surprise we had no nominations for anyone wanting to be nominated for a board position; consequently, the old board was voted on to become the new board. Many of the old board, now new, have served the club valiantly for several years as officers or board members and if they didn’t continue to volunteer, I’m afraid that eventually the club would fail. So, at each meeting when the board members’ names are announced, give them a rousing cheer

Continued on Pg. 7