

FINNY FACTS

Archived version

DECEMBER 2003

San Diego



Fly Fishers

Cleaner Water. Brighter Streams. Better Fishing.

Volume 8, No. 12

This Year's Banquet at the Admiral Kidd Club

Our December meeting will be the Annual San Diego Fly Fishers banquet which will be held this year at the Admiral Kidd Club located in the U.S. Navy Anti-submarine Warfare (ASW) Training Base. Signups for this December 1st event should have been wrapped up by November 15th.

For those of you who will be attending, we will be celebrating another successful year for the San Diego Fly Fishers by giving recognition to those who have dutifully served the Club, including this year's recipient of the Gordon Foster Memorial Award.

Meet your San Diego Fly Fishers officers for 2004, including board members.

A buffet dinner will be served along with a raffle which includes a fly rod donated by Mike Lawson.

Directions to the Admiral Kidd Club:

From the south, take **1-5 north** to **Hawthorn Ave.** (the Airport exit). Take Hawthorn Ave. down the hill to **Harbor Dr.** and turn right on Harbor. Go past the airport to **Nimitz Blvd.** Exit on the right. On Nimitz you will see a temporary sign for Admiral

More Photos of SDFF Members' Experience Fishing in Kodiak Alaska



More photos on page 6

Kidd Club Event Parking (red letters on white background). Turn in the and buses will take you over to the club.

From the north or east, take **1-8** west to the **Nimitz Blvd.** Exit at the end of the freeway. Turn left on Nimitz go over the hill to **Harbor Dr.** You will see the blue buildings of the Navy ASW Training Center straight

ahead, but the road is closed. You will need to turn left on Harbor Dr., then make a U turn at the first opportunity. There will be some construction on the right as you approach Nimitz Blvd. Watch for the temporary sign for the Admiral Kidd Club Event Parking (red on white background) on you. Buses will take you to the club. 🍷

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: DECEMBER 2003

I know many of you were affected by the many fires that we had last month. **Art Reifman** and **Tom Smith** suffered the loss of electricity for several days, and **Ron Larsen** upon returning from a vacation, couldn't get home because the roads were closed. Unfortunately, one of our own, **Jim Tenuto**, lost a vacation home in the

Julian area. But, I am thankful that no one in our club lost their lives or a loved one due to the fires.

The fires didn't threaten **Gretchen Yearous**, but she was very concerned about those who lost their homes around Lake Cuyamaca, especially the rangers and their families who she's come to know quite well. As soon as the road was open to Lake Cuyamaca, she and **John Kasten** drove up to the lake and Julian, to see what they could do. Due to her and John's efforts, many people affected by the fire now have warm jackets, hooded sweatshirts, and blankets.

Several other club members, including **Mona and Sam Morebello** and **Al Venton** provided substantial donations. Ron Larsen, while volunteering in the Ramona area, helped direct some much-needed financial assistance to those affected at Lake Cuyamaca.

Hugh Marx, the Lake Manager, says that many of the lake's employees need your help. Gift certificates to replace clothing and home furnishings would be most appreciated. Also, housing assistance is badly needed. Please send your donations to: Lake Cuyamaca,

Thank you for taking the time to complete the voting ballots at the No-



WARREN LEW

President
George Gates

1st Vice President
Larry Sorenson

2nd Vice President
Louie Zimm

Treasurer
Lee McElravy

Secretary

member meeting for the 2004 SDFP Officers and Board of Directors. You confirmed the nominations by **Gary Hilbers** and the Nominations Committee, and your officers and board next year will be the following:

Paul Woolery

Board Members

Jim Castelluzzo
Warren Lew
Ron Meler
Jim Reeg
Art Reifman
Gary Strawn
Gordie Zimm

I hope you have signed up for the Annual Banquet on December 1st all ready, or have sent your checks in to Stroud's. We will be having a great evening with a terrific buffet dinner, and this year's recipient of the Gordon Foster Memorial Award will be announced. Only one of us will receive this award, but it could still be your lucky night... as you could win a nice raffle prize, including a fly rod donated by Mike Lawson! See you at the Admiral Kidd Club!

Happy Holidays!



Do or Don't Fish Feel Pain?

We've all heard of PETA

(People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). They are the outfit that liberates caged animals, even though they have no training or ability to care for themselves - food and shelter, etc.,

having been born in a cage. They are against all abuse of animals and carry this to the extent of not permitting slaughter for food, or any use benefiting humans. This would do away with cows, and all farm animals, which means no hamburgers, steaks, chicken parlors, pork chops, etc. No cows, no milk; no chickens, no eggs. You couldn't ride a horse - you'd be abusing it. Their reasoning would starve most of civilization.

To date sportfishing has escaped their attention, save for some isolated incidents. However, PETA has zeroed in on the matter of pain in fishes with its usual disregard for truth. They have a veritable mantra, telling of hooked fish being led along bottom and hoisted into air where it couldn't breathe, then released to be caught and tortured again. They liken this to a human hooked by a thumb and dragged and swung around before release. PETAites are known to search out fishing contests or promotions and hire scuba divers to occupy pools and youths to throw stones to



BOB WISNER

frighten away fish. They have been guilty of dangerous practices. At a convention in Europe they served sandwiches liberally laced with #20 hooks. I could cite a page full of their actions.

The matter of pain in hooked fishes seems to have engaged their recent thoughts. Re-

cently, I have attempted to establish dialogue with any willing PETAite, but no takers. They are adamant in their belief that hooks cause profound pain. Of course, many fishermen may join in this belief, thinking that the often violent escape maneuvers are an expression of pain. Many of us prefer to relate them to objection to restraint. I would guess that flyfishers using #20 hooks, or smaller, have difficulty in believing that such small hooks could cause excruciating pain to any fish.

Thus, does a hooked fish (on any size hook) make often violent moves because of pain or because of restraint? It seems logical that a large hook could incite pain during violent maneuvers and that such maneuvers would be stopped to relieve the pain, but they are not, often continuing to exhaustion of fish or angler, and with frequent jumps and shaking of heads to free the hook. If any resulting pain were really excruciating, why would a fish continue to make such violent moves? If it really hurts, why wouldn't they lie quietly or swim

slowly with a minimum of strain and pain. I'm afraid I'll have to go along with the belief that a hooked fish reacts the same way as a spooked fish - escape reaction rather than pain.

Scientists are in the process of determining either pain or distress as the motivation for the often violent reactions of a hooked fish. Sharks are known for their inability to show pain. I have often worked with shark physiologists and anatomists. After examination and dissection we threw sharks overboard, often trailing intestines and organs and presumed dead. They weren't. They slowly swam away or down in the blue, showing no obvious pain. However, the same shark put up a good fight before being brought aboard. The great hammerhead shark has rays for principal food. Rays have long sharp spines on their tails. A hammerhead contained 96 such spines embedded in its lip, throat and mouth tissue, and apparently still feeding on them. If such sharks felt pain, it seems reasonable that its diet could have been changed long ago. It is interesting that when one of these sharks is hooked, a good fight ensues; but the hook point makes a much smaller wound than a ray's stinger.

In conclusion, recent work on fish brains and nerve systems of fishes clearly show that the reaction to being hooked and the surprise reaction by a fisherman-spooked fish are much the same - to get away. It has been found that fishes lack the most important of required nerve paths and structures

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Fish Pain

continued from previous page

and that they have no alternative system for producing a pain reaction. Therefore, we must conclude that fishes feel no pain while being hooked and played.

Nerve/brain information taken from: *The Neurobehavioral Nature of Fishes and the Question of Awareness and Pain*. By James D. Rose, Dept. of Zoology and Physiology, Univ. Wyoming; from Reviews in Fisheries Science 10(1), 2002.

GREAT NORTHERN PIKE (*Esox lucius*) in Minnesota return to their birthplace to spawn. Fisheries scientists did a large study involving more than 7,500 adult pike from two spawning areas 9 miles apart. Each fish was separately tagged and numbered so that data on individuals could be available.

It was learned that the same pike returned to the same spawning grounds year after year - salmon pike. Only a few pike tagged at one spawning site showed up at another spawning site at a later time. These results were interpreted as indicating that pike clearly returned to their natal areas and with a strong affinity for natal spawning, but genetic analysis revealed an even more interesting fact. The DNA from the fish spawning at the two places showed distinct differences - meaning that adults were returning not only to where they spawned before but also from where they were hatched. This study adds to the evidence that distinctly two groups of pike are present and may respond differently to exploitation and management. If we destroy natural spawning grounds, what will happen to the

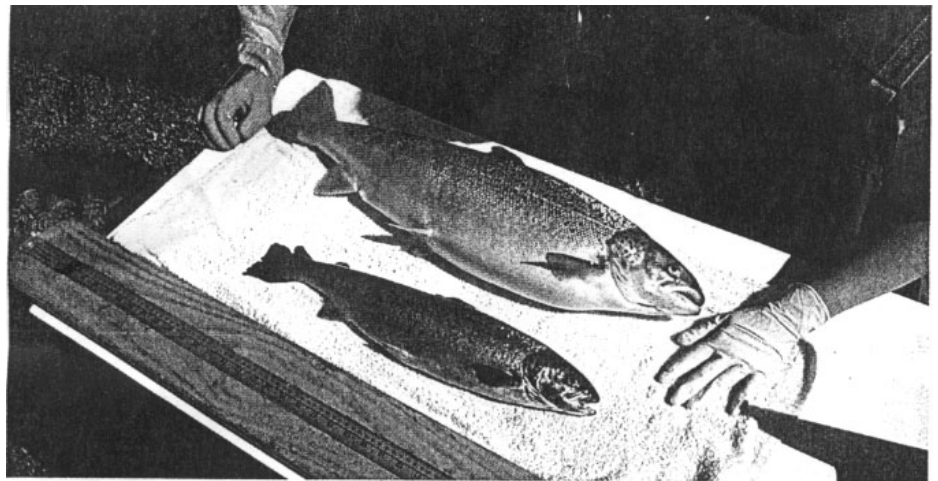
spawners? Will the annual spawn be lost if fish cannot reach their natal areas - much like salmon? If they seek out alternative sites, will the spawn be as successful as before?

DESIGNER GENES: These days it seem like no one is properly dressed unless the hand of a designer is noted, particularly in clothing, but lately it is thus with fish (you want unusually large fish, place your order). Trout can be bred to be better fighters, per size; the process to do so is called Genetic Modification (GMO, the "O" refers to any organism). The figure shows an example. The lower salmon weighs 2 lbs., the upper 8 lbs. The bottom fish was left to grow naturally, with normal food and climate cycles, the upper one carefully fed, and water temperature controlled both for maximum benefit to growth. A fish rancher prospers greatly from such changes in life patterns.

Although the extra protein means extra profit to a rancher, does such fooling with Mother Nature really benefit the environment and animal world in general? For openers, what about the food equation per giant fish? In nature, how many other animals would starve to feed the big ones? Also, assuming the presence of a million of such large fish, in the food-rich coastal feeding areas of most fishes, would that many "denude" the planktonic life to the detriment and damage of other fishes? Aside from food competition, anywhere and in any form living space for millions like the large salmon may negatively affect the lives of the smaller ones.

Supposing the larger one is accepted into the sportfisherman's world, what will it do to the sporting catch records (assuming it has not been physically altered and must have a new scientific name)? This raises the question of

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Genetic science can produce dramatic results. Both of these Atlantic salmon are 18 months old. The transgenic fish (top) produced by AQUA Bounty Farms researchers weighs 8 pounds, while its wild cousin weighs just 2, and won't reach the 8-pound mark for another year.





JACK BENTLEY

**Any Questions?
Call Jack Bentley at**

Lees Ferry Trip December 8-12, 2003

Interested in Saltwater Fly Fishing?

If anyone is interested in a trip to Ascension Bay, Yucatan for bonefish, permit, and tarpon please contact me. After trout fishing for many years, I discovered saltwater fly fishing several years ago in the Cabo area fishing for dorado, tuna, rooster fish and surf species. This experience got me hooked. Saltwater fish are so excitingly fast and strong.

As Lefty Kreh said, "In most fresh water fly fishing, once the fish has been fooled into taking the fly and is hooked, the angler's major troubles are over. But in saltwater, they are just starting. Saltwater fish, to survive, have to swim faster than those that will eat them. This has bred fish that are not only strong but very swift. Few people, until they hook a 6-pound bonefish, can visualize that something this small could run off so much line."

Since I have never been bone fishing, I want to turn this visualization into the real thing.

Web sites of several lodges in the Ascension Bay area are shown below. These web sites have lots of information on the fishing in this area. I have received several positive references from Colorado Fishing Guides on the Pesca Maya Lodge, which is the most economical of the group. However, I am open to selection of the lodge and timing of the trip. It's a long time until the Green River trip.

If you are interested, please call or email me.

Let's go fishing!

Bill Gibbs,

Ascension Bay Bonefish Club (<http://www.bonefishclub.net/ABBC.htm>)
Bonefish Bum (<http://www.bonefishbum.com>)
Cuzan Guesthouse (<http://www.flyfishmx.com/flyfish.htm>)
Fly Fish the Flats (<http://www.flyfishtheflats.com>)
Let It Be Inn (<http://www.letitbeinn.com>)
Pesca Maya (<http://www.pescamaya.com>)
Casa Blanca (<http://leisuretimetravel.com/casa.htm>)

NOW IS THE TIME TO PLAN FOR OUR NEXT YEAR IN ALASKA!

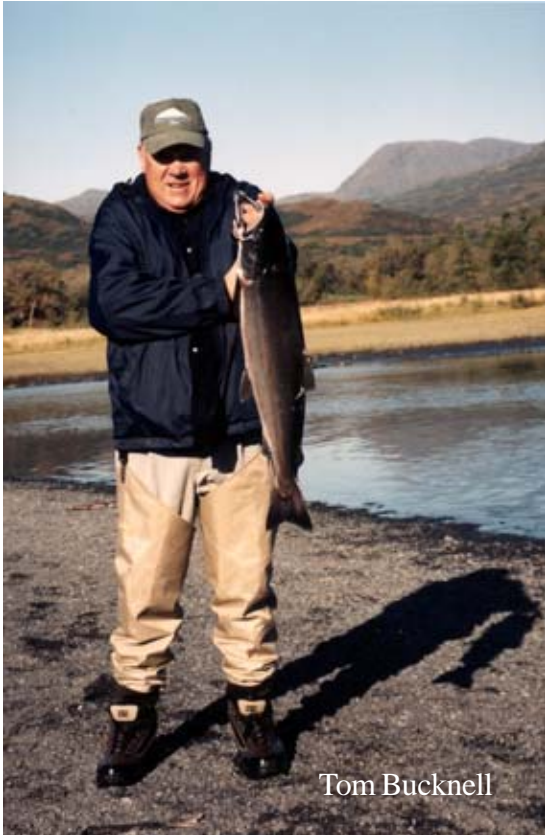
The Saltery Lake Lodge has only 8 beds available for the week of September 11th through the 19th 2004. We should fill this as soon as possible (at \$2250 per week) as we cannot expect to Lodge to hold these openings long.

Also to keep in mind :

1. Next year's Green River trip is scheduled for May 10-15 2004.
2. Lees Ferry is fishing better and small groups of four can be easily arranged. Call Jack for details.



More pics from the Saltery Lake Lodge



Here's the gang of SDFP members at the Saltery Lake Lodge: Lynn Atnip John Baker, Jack Bentley Phil Bentley, Tom Bucknell, Cliff Blank, John Johnson, Bob Miller, Tom Mitchell, Dick Mount, Willie Randall.



Jim Richardson obtained these pictures for the *FINNY FACTS*.

Photos by Dave Atcheson,
Soldotna, Alaska

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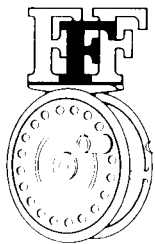


John Baker (with fish on) and Tom Bucknell (with fish in hand) and guide John Auglys.



Float plane landing on Sallery Lake.





From the FFF Clubwire News

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Tackle Trade World, John Hunter editor

Warranty wars - is the end in sight?

Lifetime' and 'unconditional' warranties - are they good for business or are we shooting ourselves in the foot? The latest news hot from the Denver FFR show.

It looks like the days of unconditional warranties on fly rods could be numbered if certain suppliers get their way. That was the clear message coming through at the recent Fly Fishing Retailer Show in Denver.

A number of top-brand manufacturers are now openly critical of the policy, claiming that it is having a bad effect on the trade and depriving retailers of much needed sales. Even Orvis, the firm that launched 'unconditional warranties' some eight years ago, is at the moment looking seriously at the problem. Jim LePage, the company's vice president of reels and rods, speaking at a forum to discuss the fly fishing business in general, when questioned on the subject said: "This year more than any other the real costs involved have been an eye-opener." And it's not just the financial expenses that one has to take into account.

"I've spent more time on this dilemma in the past five months than I care to remember and have done some pretty big tests to look at offsetting our cost centre," he added. However, he did see a solution in the future and confirmed

that Orvis would be introducing a creative way of getting rid of the problem that he hoped to announce in the next couple months.

Marc Bale of Sage admitted that he hated lifetime unconditional guarantees but added: "The consumers love them!" He argued that when they were first introduced he fought against them but the calls kept coming in asking: 'What 's wrong with your product if it doesn't have a lifetime guarantee?'

"I would like to see a way out of the difficulty but I am skeptical of Sage leading the charge," he said. He was also very doubtful if manufacturers would get together to act as one but felt that the industry would probably now see a rapid evolution of qualified guarantees.

One company defiantly nailing its colours to the mast is St. Croix, America's biggest rod manufacturer. Its vice-president Jeff Schluter told Tackle Trade World: "We first introduced the 'Unconditional Lifetime Warranty' in September 1996 for the 1997 catalogue year. This was a direct response to other fly rod manufacturers' warranty changes. At the time we did not like it but felt it was necessary.

"After about three to four years we quit using the language 'unconditional' and replaced it with 'lifetime'. We

made this revision because we realized every warranty, no matter how liberal, has conditions. Theft, fire and loss are examples of conditions we never intended to cover. Under our 'lifetime warranty' we covered all defects in materials and workmanship and fishing-related accidents.

"Now we have modified our fly rod lifetime warranty again and call this a 'lifetime limited warranty' that covers all defects in materials and workmanship for the life of the original owner. Under this warranty, any accidents, misuse, etc. will be repaired or replaced for a cost considerably less than retail.

"Usually we don't know how the rod breaks and always give the consumer the benefit of the doubt. Over 90 percent of the rods we repair or replace are done at no charge, especially in the first few years of ownership. The new 'lifetime limited warranty' reduces our exposure. We feel it's a step in the right direction for our industry."

Jeff does not feel that these changes will have an adverse effect on S. Croix and added: "Extremely liberal warranties cost dealers, distributors and manufacturers a lot of money each year. Dealers are very supportive of our change. We will communicate to

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Warranty Wars

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consumers that they pay for 'Unconditional' warranties through higher retail prices and higher shipping/handling/service fees. Now the consumer will be getting more value. In fact, many consumers have told us they don't want to pay for someone else's carelessness."

Meanwhile, on this side of the Atlantic, Greys and Hardy's offer an unconditional warranty for the lifetime for the original owner of the rod.

Ian McCormack, representing the company, said: "We introduced the unconditional warranty for Greys in 2000, and House of Hardy in 2001. We honestly believe that the 'unconditional' part of the warranty is part and parcel of being in the fly rod industry. It works for the retailer, they have no issue with it and of course it works for the customer."

Asked about whether it was good for business, Ian added: "Both Greys and House of Hardy have increased rod sales since the respective introductions of the unconditional warranty. Whether this is because the retailer can sell with more confidence or simply because the consumer feels more confident about the brand I cannot say. This becomes even harder to answer when you consider the high profile marketing campaign we have been running concurrently since the introduction of the guarantee."

Lars Svendsen, managing director of Danish firm Svendsen Sport, firmly believes that unconditional lifetime warranties are damaging to the trade and should be booted into touch. He has two brands that cover the fly market - Sierra and Ron Thompson.

"With Sierra we have a lifetime warranty against any defects in craftsmanship and faulty materials. It's not unconditional. What you see today with some companies is a 'no question warranty' but this is more like insurance than a warranty. If your dog chews the handle you get a new rod. This is ridiculous. There is only one person who pays for this and that's the consumer because the prices of their rods have to reflect this," he stated.

"With Ron Thompson rods we give a two year warranty and in some countries five years, depending on the market. It's up to the guy in the shop if he accepts it or not. If he can replace a broken rod tip with one from his stock then he does so. This is the best service. The dealer then phones us and we supply him with another one for his stock. He doesn't have to fill in a lot of paperwork, or send the rod to us and there isn't a lot of cost involved. It's much easier for the shop.

"I feel the trade may be regretting it ever gave an unconditional lifetime warranty. It is our hope that the industry will realize this and go back to a more sensible warranty. If one company starts, others will hopefully follow. Otherwise, during 20 years, an angler can have three or four new rods free. This is preposterous! We're just killing our trade." Back in the States, where it all started, Mark Landry, International sales manager for G Loomis said: "Unconditional warranties are a subject I am very familiar with. When some of the large US manufacturers went to the unconditional warranty policies I was managing our Warranty Department. This period of time is what I refer to as the uncondi-

tional warranty wars. G Loomis was the only company NOT to go with an unconditional warranty, it was a brutal time."

The company now offers a 'limited warranty' that extends to the lifetime of the original ownership. This covers against defects in workmanship and materials. Should damage occur due to defect, G Loomis will, at its discretion, either repair or replace the product at no charge. Damages occurring due to neglect, accident or normal wear and tear will, at its discretion, be repaired or replaced for a specific fee."

Mark continued: "We have a 'limited lifetime warranty.' I believe that when you write lifetime you are meaning unconditional. Our limited warranty means that we have the responsibility to buy the best materials on the market and to have a highly trained workforce to put them together to make premium fishing rods. When the product leaves our factory it should be fit for use. From this point the responsibility changes to the retailer who has the responsibility to inform the consumer about the correct rod to purchase for the particular fishing situation. "The retailer also has the responsibility to stock the products the consumer wants and provide the service the consumer needs (like how to take care of the products, how to use them, how to tie knots, where the fish are biting and on what, etc.). The consumer has the responsibility to take care of the products they purchased and to use them as they were designed to be used. All is well if all parties adhere to this responsibility chain. The uncondi-

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Warranty Wars

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tional warranty policies severely affect this responsibility chain.”

SUMMARY


Retailers did love the ease of selling rods with unconditional warranties but they now have doubts, particularly in the USA where sales have been difficult for the past two years.

Rather than get new rod sales they have been tasked with being the middleman. Returning faulty rods to the manufacturer and replacing them without question. It's costly to the dealer when he has to get involved and he undertakes this thankless task without earning a bean.

Clever marketing has ensured that the consumer never even realized that there was an insurance premium hidden in the cost of the rod (although the dealer doesn't get a cut) but even that is now taking its toll.

This leaves innovative and technical advancement as the way ahead, to draw the consumer back to the retail show to upgrade. The big question though, is who is going to be doing the innovating and drive the angler away from 'one rod for life'?

So, should the retailer be endorsing anything that is 'unconditional', or is it time to end the war and sell rods on technical innovation and advancement? Only time will tell.

Orvis led the trade into these 'unconditional warranties.' Will it have the stomach to do a u-turn? 

Designer Genes

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how large would such a fish get if it were not scientifically restricted, if not controlled it could become a destroyer of "normal" fishing tackle and require the sportsman to carry a sawed-off shotgun to protect his gear - maybe self. Let's hope the large one figured is unable to grow further when released, or survive in the wild.

COMMON CARP - the good, the bad, the ugly:

Prize gamefish to some anglers, a nuisance to others, carp have varying effects on other fish species. Researchers are attempting to learn just how common carp affect largemouth bass and bluegills. Adults of all three

species were stocked in several 1/10 acre ponds and observed for comparison; some ponds were left without carp. Largemouth bass and bluegills were successful in ponds with and without carp.

After 45 days, there were fewer largemouth bass fry in the carp-free ponds, probably because of predation in the largemouth bass. Carp-free water tends to be clearer without carp to stir the bottom searching for food - a bad habit of carp.

The downside? In ponds with all three species, fish grew more slowly, possibly due to competing for space. But that can happen in any over populated water. 

“fish are friends not food!” . But Nobody Told the Fish.

I certainly am not an ichthyologist or a zoologist or even a biologist, but after more than a half century of studying fish, both in the water and in books, I've learned a little about them. Not so the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to judge from some of the statements in their “fish are friends not food!” [sic]* kids' card aimed at getting children to stop eating seafood or keeping fish in aquariums. Take the title of the card, “fish are friend not food!” [sic]. Every fish, from the unfertilized egg to the largest shark, is food for a larger fish, even of its own species. A trout will eat a smaller trout as quickly as it will eat a black nosed dace; a largemouth bass eats its own offspring as well as bluegills. As for being friends, many fish won't even tolerate the presence of their own species. Watch trout in a stream. The dominant trout occupies the best feeding lie and will attack any

other trout that encroaches on its territory. If that dominant fish is killed by a predator, that feeding lie will soon be occupied by the number two fish in the pecking order, usually after fighting off other fish. When hatchery trout are released into a stream, the wild resident trout will fight to keep them from the favorable lies until the residents tire of battling the greater number of intruding fish. Then they move on to new territory away from the strangers-often their own species. Friendly? Not in my book. Even the fish that gather in schools do that, not for friendship. but for protection against predators. One fish alone has no defense except speed and maneuverability. One fish in a school has a much better chance of surviving a predator's attack. Yes, there is safety in numbers, but friendship? I doubt it.

Jon Colburn, National Director,
FFF Mid-Atlantic Council 



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articles---**Friday December 12th**

Send articles to:
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San Diego, CA 92117
858-274-2712.

You can E-mail at Thanks!!

Send change of address information or
Club membership renewal to:

Gordie Zimm

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GORDON FOSTER MEMORIAL AWARD

For unselfish and outstanding service
to the flyfishing community

- 1991-Ned Sewell
- 1992-Bob Camp
- 1993-Bill & Eileen Stroud
- 1994-Ed Velton
- 1995-Bob Wisner
- 1996-Gary Hilbers
- 1997-Jack Bentley
- 1998-Gordie Zimm
- 1999-Gretchen Yearous
- 2000-Tom Smith
- 2001-Rose & Roger Yamasaki
- 2002-Larry Sorensen



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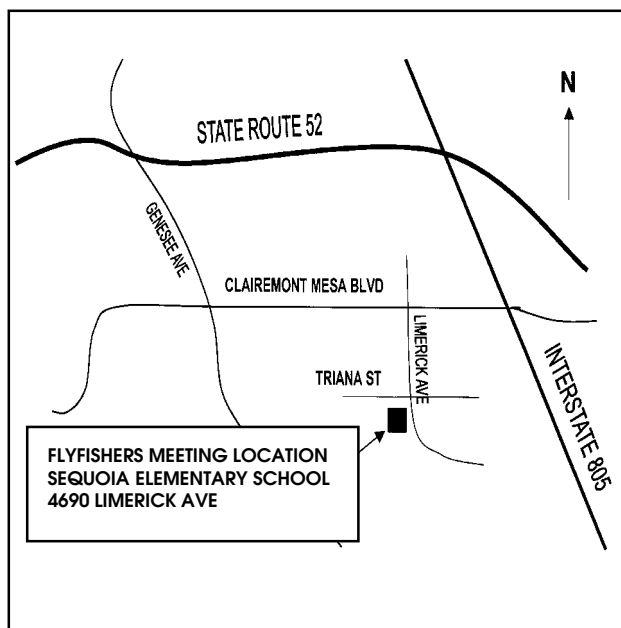
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Monthly Weekend Outings- George Gates



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Refreshments- Vernon Wescott
Rod Building- Tom Smith
Trips- Jack Bentley,
Video & Library- Buck Parker,
Web Page- David Collins
www.sandiegoflyfishers.com
Women's Education
Focus- Gretchen Yearous

Meeting Place for Workshops
 San Carlos Recreation Center near Lake Murray. (We no longer meet at the Lake Murray Water Training Facility at Lake Murray). The address is 6445 Lake Badin Ave. To get there from Hwy. 8, take the Lake Murray Blvd. exit just like you were going to the lake. Instead of turning into Kiowa, keep going on Lake Murray Blvd. another 1.6 miles. When you come to Lake Adlon Drive, (first corner past Jackson Dr.) turn left. Go down three blocks and the recreation center will be on your right. It is on the corner of Lake Adlon and Lake Badin.



San Diego Flyfishers Headquarters
 Stroud Tackle
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