

Salinas Valley Fly Fishers

June News-Brief

Sorry, folks but the Editor left the computer with the Newsletter templates up in Sutter Creek and didn't realize what had happened until it was too late..So this month this is the best I can do.. ed.

President's Message:

If you missed our May meeting, you lost out on a lot of good information on how the Fish and Game commission works. Mike Sutton's presentation included a good deal of insight about the role of the Commission: laws, regs., setting seasons, bag limits, etc. Mike encouraged the club to send him a list of our concern that we would like the commission to address. Over all it was a very informative presentation. Due to illness and schedule conflict, we were not able to help out at the San Luis Kids Day, but at last word they managed okay without us. As for this month's meeting it will feature Greg Vince "Hwy 395- California's Trout Highway". We will also be having the drawing for a guided fishing trip with Mark Coutrel. Tickets will be on sell at the meeting, If you want to up your odds. Hope to see you there. Don't forget the Muddy River Classic in July. We're working the kinks out of the fly casting golf tournament, so please plan to be there. It won't be the same without you. This month John and Rick are heading up the Rock Creek outing and Rick tells me that there is one slot left, so give him a buzz if you're interested. We also have some "sad" news: It seems that the "Fly Box" has once again gone a stray. So whoever has it, please fess-up..

T'll then..

Jay..

p.s.: Get well to Roger and Paul

June Meeting Presentation:

Greg Vinci will present
"Hwy 395 California's Trout Highway"

Greg's slideshow will consist of an archive of photos beginning at the Carson River drainage and covers the E. & W. Walkers, Rush Creek, San Joaquin, a side trip to Bodie, Upper Owens, Hot Creek and the Owens Gorge. Join us for a look at the East side of the Sierra's and the great fishing it has to offer.

Muddy River Classic in July:

Put July 14th. down on your calendar in bold letters.. It's that time of year again.. We'll be stretching the 4th of July out for a full 10 days this year..The annual BBQ at Jefferson Ranch on the river should be a grand event.. Bring your floatie thing, if you want to play in the river, but please remember - No fishing!! Head Chef, Sonny will be firing up the grill and as always you can expect lots of goodies to eat. Jay says that you're all welcome to camp over Friday and Saturday night (either or both) Fly casting golf will be a new event this year and other entertainment is in the works. Dave H., Rick and Bill are heading up the raffle. Which will once again feature the Used Stuff Give-Away Exchange.. If you have donations of good stuff, that you no longer need, please let one of them know or just bring it to this month's meeting.

Fishing Reports:

A few of the guys have been going down to Hunter-Liggett as of late. The reports are pretty good. Coleman has cleared up and some monster Bluegill have been making for good action all day. Later in the day the boys have reported good topwater action with the Bass. Gavel pit is pretty weeded over but there are plenty of fish to be had, by walking the bank.

Dave H. and Mick hit the eastern side over Memorial day. Reported great dry fly fishing on Hot Creek. We're sure that they'll have a report for the meeting on Wednesday.

A Drunken Hopper Affair

-Bill Barbee

Christmas Tree Lake on the Apache Indian Reservation, at 8000 feet, in East Central Arizona is a world-class Apache Trout fishery. In 1964, During Lyndon Johnson's presidency, the White Mountain Indian Tribe presented the White House with a blue spruce for their National Christmas Tree, hence the name Christmas Tree Lake. This beautiful 41 acre lake is, surrounded by Ponderosa Pine, Spruce and Aspen, and is home to bald eagles, osprey, elk, and deer.

Apache Trout have black spotted, dark yellow bodies, a large white tipped dorsal fin, rarely exceed 10 inches in streams, but not uncommonly will reach 20 plus inches in lakes. By 1973, they were nearly wiped out by poachers and habitat degradation, and were listed as an endangered species. Although no longer endangered they are a protected species. Brown trout are plentiful, self sustaining, and are much tougher to catch than the Apaches.

The first part of May, the tribe puts on their well known and coveted annual two-week fish camp. When Sam Eastman heard about the camp, he signed on and recruited Jay Jefferson for three days of fishing the lake. Friend, Whit, and I picked up Sam and Jay at Sky Harbor Airport on May 13 and enjoyed the scenic 5 hour drive to the lake.

After signing in and unloading our two pickups we rigged up and fished for a couple of hours, caught a few apaches and quit in time for a libation and dinner at eight.

Whit's son, Brad, joined us the next day. On the way up, Whit mentioned that his son wasn't very good at fly fishing and, just in case, had brought along a spin outfit. Much to Whit's delight, Brad out fished his dad. Windmill fly casters in two-man boats seldom do well casting. Sam and I fished together; the rest fished individually. You can draw be the judge.

Craig Emerson, an Apache, better known as "The Chief", is a legendary fly tier and fly fisher on the Rez, and coined the name "Drunken Hopper." The Chief fishes the soaked hopper wet, and has found it deadly on the reservations high mountain lakes. We added a size eighteen zebra midge dropper and this combo, in the honey holes, was even more deadly, although other dry's, streamers, and midges worked.

Jay caught a lot of fish with his hand tied flies. Sam took great delight in long lining me, Whit's well crafted flies worked for both he and his son. I am planning on doing a repeat next year and highly recommend the trip. Southwest Fly Fishing Magazine March/April 2012 ran an excellent article on the lake, and is a great resource if you decide to go. For the rest of the story, check with Jay about the roadside Indian tire crew and the flight home.

I am happy to report the only drunks we encountered were the Hoppers.

-Doc

Hope to see you at the meetings and on the stream.. T'll then, tight lines, drag free drifts and fly free bushes..

-ed...