



Fly Lines

The Official Publication of the British Columbia Federation of Fly Fishers

Winter 2003

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2004 Dues Renewal and 2003 Issues Edition

Forest Rec. Sites | Senior Advisory Committee | Angling Guide and Classified Waters
Dean River Protected Area | Thompson River | Skeena River | Georgia Basin Steelhead
Sumallo and Skagit Rivers | Coquihalla River | Nature Conservancy | BCFFF History
Mid-Coast LRMP | Angler Financial Contribution | Quality Waters | Fly Fishing Club Guidelines

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BCFFF's 2004 Fly Fishing British Columbia Show

Vancouver Island's Fly-Fishing Heritage

Location: Bastion Hotel, Nanaimo, B.C.

Date: Saturday, May 1, 2004 Host Club: Island Waters Fly Fishers

<http://www.members.shaw.ca/AGM04/>

Featuring: Brian Chan, chironomid fly fishing; Shawn Bennett, coho salmon fly fishing and Dana Sturn on two handed rod fly fishing.

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Finis: the end of a fish, this year and this
issue

On our Cover

The summer-run steelhead is the gamest of BC's game fish. It will rise to the surface and take our creations often in the most trying conditions.



Syd Glasso's Courtesan

Dues are due for 2004

Our thanks to all clubs and members for their past support. It is that time of year again to renew your BCFFF membership. Please use the handy membership form located on the last page of this newsletter.

Please make cheques payable to:



The BCFFF is affiliated with the
Federation of Fly Fishers

B.C. Federation of Fly Fishers
P.O. Box 2442 Stn. Main
349 Georgia Street West,
Vancouver, BC Canada V6B 3W7

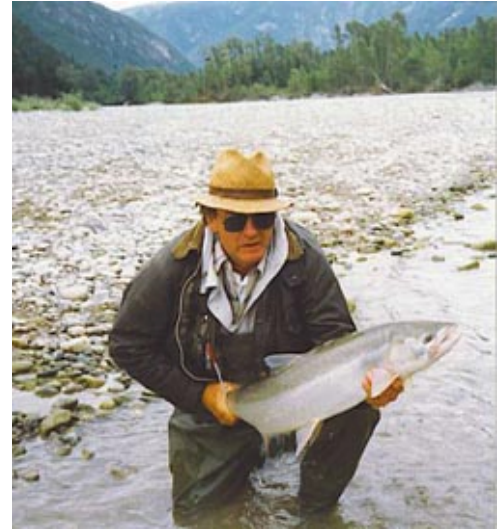
Clubs: \$15 plus \$5 for each member
Direct\$15.00
Supporting \$100.00

From The President

I missed including Colin Funk and Pat George in the list of people and businesses that contributed to the 2003 May fund raiser. I don't know how I manage to not transpose their names from the list that I used to copy the information into the last issue of *Fly Lines* but I did. I apologize to both Colin and Pat for my error.

This issue of *Fly Lines* will be a little different than last. While it does have some fly-fishing related articles, we thought that we should also review the issues that the all-volunteer BCFFF Board of Directors was involved in throughout the past year.

As I write this message, fall is here in full force, the leaves are falling from the trees, the rivers have been swollen by rain and the coho salmon are moving into coast streams and digging their redds. The BC Interior has had it first good dumps of snow, the open-water lake fishing is finished for the year and the first of the winter steelhead will be heading into coastal rivers soon.



My favourite gamefish, the summer run steelhead

We have a new acting director in Victoria to head the Fisheries Allocation Branch, a Mr. Al Martin, and we wish him well in his new post. If he is to succeed, however, he must learn to respond to letters. Writing a one- or two-page letter on an issue concerning a fishery takes considerable time and effort, and I find it insulting that letters sit in Martin's basket and months pass without a response. Region two sits on things as well and we are waiting on a response to our Coquihalla letter and I am waiting for a response on a letter I wrote about the Pitt River in April 2003.

When you read this message the year will be coming to an end and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The BCFFF will have a booth at the **Western Canadian Fly Fishing Exposition - Vancouver January 30 - February 1, 2004**, perhaps we may see some of you there.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Art Lingren".

Art Lingren,
President



The coho have migrated into the headwaters of the rivers and are digging redds in small streams

2004 Awards Nomination Notice

The BCFFF has a number of awards that recognizes achievement in specific fly fishing and conservation related areas.

The Appreciation Award is given to that individual, group or business in recognition for their support of the BCFFF. It is customary to give the AGM's hosting clubs this award, as well, it is given to individuals and businesses who contributed significantly to the event.

The Conservation Award is given to that BCFFF club in recognition for their contribution to the conservation and enhancement of BC's fishery for a specific conservation-related project.

The Gilly Award is given in recognition to that BCFFF member who has continuously given exceptional service to BC's Fishery, the Sport of Fly Fishing, and the BC Federation of Fly Fishers.

The Angul Award is given to that individual, who is not necessarily a BCFFF member, for their outstanding contribution to the heritage of the Arte & Science of Fly Fishing in British Columbia.

Arthur William Nation Award In the spirit of Bill Nation, this award is given to a young fly- fisher/conservationist for their work in BC's freshwater fisheries.

Jack Shaw Fly Tying Award is given to a BCFFF members who excels at the art and craft of fly tying.

Each year, we ask member clubs and direct members to nominate worthy individuals for these awards and to send their nominee to the BCFFF by regular mail to the PO Box or email to artlin8@telus.net by February 15, 2004. The BCFFF Board reviews all written submissions at the March Board meeting. The awards ceremony is part of the annual BCFFF show.

* * *

BCFFF Club Helping Fish



Ed Boulter, Treasurer of WFA, presents a cheque to Mr Glen Varney President, SSES.

Local Sooke group, the Westcoast Flyfishers Association (WFA), formed in April of 2002 by fly-fishing enthusiasts, held a very successful fundraising dinner on Saturday, November 1st to benefit the Sooke Salmon Enhancement Society (SSES).

About 60 supporters attended this event and were entertained after dinner by guest speaker Gordon Honey, a well know speaker and author in fly fishing circles. Mr. Honey presented a light hearted travelogue about a recent trip he and his wife, also a fly fisher, took in the beautiful Bahamian Islands. The purpose of the trip was to fish for the much sought-after Bonefish, a very active sportfish species.

The dinner/event was successful in raising about \$4,000, to which WFA added another \$1,329 raised by its members in a raffle held during the summer. Ed Boulter, Treasurer of WFA, made the presentation of the cheque to Glen Varney President of SSES at the dinner.

Mr. Varney thanked Garry Bettridge, President of WFA, and Bruce Logan, WFA member and organizer of the event, for their efforts. Some of the funds are to be dedicated to generate a greater public awareness of

the Sooke hatchery's existence, the efforts and successes obtained by the hatchery, and how beneficial the return of Salmon to the Sooke River is to the general economy of the area.

2003 Issues

1. Ministry of Forest Recreation Sites



After fishing we returned to our recreation site campground

The BCFFF has written a letter about the closure of Forest Recreation Site campsites on more than one occasion in the past couple of years. The most recent was in the fall of 2003. Gil Sage, BCFFF vice-president, provides the following update.

There are approximately 1300 recreation sites that fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests (MOF). After completion of a core review of government services, Campbell's Liberal government decided that the government was not in the business of running recreation camping sites as that should be done by private enterprise. The Government announced that unless private enterprise took over the management of the recreation sites, the sites would be decommissioned.

The government has taken a second look at their decision and has entered into agreements with individuals, community organizations, recreation groups, First Nations, local governments and forest companies to maintain 430 of the sites as managed sites. While 111 of the managed sites will have a fee; 319 will be managed without fee. The remaining 840 sites will remain open as user maintained sites without fee.

Managed recreation sites will "receive at least a minimum amount of service to maintain and clean facilities and infrastructure, and to address public safety and environmental concerns". Fees will be charged at some of

these sites, the fee structure must be approved by the MOF. At sites where fees are charged the agreement holder collects and retains the fees to offset costs. Unless otherwise indicated the camping fee is \$10 per night, with seniors and those with disabilities paying \$5. At the present time camping is free in the majority of managed recreation sites as the agreement holder has alternate ways of recovering the cost of servicing the site.

There is no fee at user maintained sites, this means no garbage pick-up and no cleanup of the site. The MOF will pump out the toilets, remove hazardous trees; replace signs and structures as required. The MOF states "Structures and access will not be removed unless there are significant and ongoing public safety hazards or environmental concerns".

At some sites where fees are in place these fees are only collected at certain times of the year. For a complete picture on the status of a particular recreation site check out the listing of recreational site at the MOF web site www.for.gov.bc.ca/nfp/rec/sites

The following table provides a summary of sites by Region.

Region	Managed with fee structure	Managed without fee structure	User maintained No fee
Coast	34	33	108
Northern Interior	2	59	219
Southern Interior	75	227	513
Total	111	319	840
		* * *	

2. Angling Guide Management and Classified Waters Review

By Rob Stewart

With regard to the status of the angling Guide and Classified Waters Review process, we had a conference call on November 18 after almost five months of total silence from WLAP. Most of that call was taken up with questions from the various NGO's regarding the perceived lack of process and reassurances from government that progress was imminent. We received a report from Miles Stratholt (WLAP) on the results of a public survey that was done in the interim. Twenty eight responses to a questionnaire were received and most of the responses were consistent with concerns already raised by the NGO's such as who has input and where from, preservation of existing Classified Waters, data collection & veracity, and, significantly; the need for gear restrictions to be part of the toolbox. We also received a report on the completion of the East Kootenay Angling

concept of “the guide is the license” for non residents. I had the worrisome impression that some of the NGO’s on the call already knew what was happening where others did not.

My thoughts on the conference call are contained in a letter of Nov. 20 to Al Martin which I include here:

“Mr. Martin: I haven’t met you but it was a pleasure having you on our conference call. I was impressed by your grasp of the issues and your commitment to follow through with this process. As is often the case with conference calls, I felt it better to listen rather than talk due to time constraints but would like to offer some brief thoughts on the following topics:

- 1. Public Input: Miles mentioned that there had been several responses which mentioned gear restrictions. There may be many who think they have a “World Class” fishery but they will soon find that “World Class” anglers are only willing to pay top dollar for “fly only” water.*
- 2. East Kootenay AMP: Kudos to Barry Rogers for pulling a rabbit out of thin air. Next time lets provide him with a hat.*
- 3. Management tools: I heard a discussion about needing tools to limit non resident anglers and guides. As I recall, that’s what we did when we created the Classified Waters system. Perhaps Gerry is reminding us that we have fragmented the original system so badly it is no longer viable.*
- 4. Tenure, Licensing, & Fee increases: Guides do not retire with 2/3 salary when their years of service plus their age equals 75. They need tenure to borrow money to build their business and they need to sell out in order to retire. The fee structures I am hearing about would be feasible only for the most fortunate Class 1 fisheries that have long seasons, full tenure and some form of exclusivity (Like they do on the Ponoï in Russia). These fees are totally out of line for Class 2 Waters and trout fisheries. In Region 5, many Angling Guides who operate on Unclassified Waters also have rod day allocations. The vast majority of guides are not going to be able to pay anything even close to these kind of costs and I fear the system will fall apart if we do not act quickly to allay their fears and put a rational system in place well before the end of the current licensing year. I hope the decision makers are talking to at least one business person with hands on experience in the guiding industry.*
- 5. Time Line for Completion: Glad to hear we’ll be meeting in January although I was hoping we would be meeting as a “Classified Waters Board” and rolling up our sleeves to get to work creating a system which meets conservation goals; enshrines resident priority and meets business’ need for certainty and profitability. I know this group could do it if we’re allowed to try.”*

Our next meeting is scheduled for the weekend of January 17&18 where we are expected to wrap up the review. If we are going on to the next step of creating a “Classified Waters Board” that may in fact be achievable; if not, I doubt it.

* * *

3. Senior Advisory Committee

by Don McDermid, SAC Chair

The Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) was struck early this past summer with its purpose being to assist and advise the Board on administrative and operational issues pertaining to the BCFFF.

First of all let me say that the term senior refers to individuals of long standing within the BCFFF not ‘old farts’. At present the committee is comprised of myself, Peter Caverhill, Ian Beveridge and John Warren. Between the four of us I think we likely have in excess of 90 years with the BCFFF. We take our direction from the Board and we report to the Board. The SAC is not a decision-making committee.

Our initial duties have been to write job descriptions for each of the executive and director positions so that there will be a printed paper to hand to each potential executive and director to explain what is expected of them if they are elected and serve on the BCFFF Board. It was felt that the less confusion there is around BCFFF jobs and tasks, the easier it may be to get people to volunteer. These job descriptions are not written in stone, but are living documents meant to be changed as necessary.

Our next task will be to write terms of reference and descriptions for each of the BCFFF committees so that people involved on them are aware of what is expected. For example it shouldn’t be necessary for a BCFFF member club hosting the BCFFF AGM to begin from scratch. In the future they will simply look at the “AGM Committee” document and follow the guidelines and advice that is provided.

Also on our agenda is a long-term (5 year) plan for the BCFFF. These documents and others, once approved by the Board, will go into an Operations Manual.

4. Dean River Protected Area

During the early summer, Ray Pillman, the Outdoor Recreation Council's representative on the Central-coast Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP), asked us for input about some changes to the Dean's protected area, as well as changes to the management of the Dean. We wrote that:



Dean River summer run steelhead attract anglers from around the globe.

"We oppose any changes that alter the already-agreed-upon Dean River Protected Area Boundary unless that boundary is expanded to include the lands from mountain ridge to mountain ridge. We believe that the Province of British Columbia with input from the valley's users must manage the Dean River Valley for all British Columbians. The fate of the Dean River, its beauty, its world renowned wild summer-run steelhead and its wildlife cannot be left in the hands of a local ad hoc management committee."

Mr. Jim Lornie, the Central-Coast LRMP chair, wrote us on September 15, "assuring us that the Order-in-Council to establish Candidate Protection Areas includes the Dean River Corridor as initially proposed."

* * *

5. South Coast Steelhead Coalition Update

Steelhead workshops were held in the Lower Mainland in January and November of 2001 to discuss the serious decline in the Georgia Basin steelhead stocks. There is no single or simple reason for the decline, many factors come into play including habitat destruction, commercial interception, ocean survival, decrease in the nutrient load of the watershed and historic over-harvesting by sports fishermen. What is the solution? well that is the million dollar question and there seems no magic bullet, however it is a lot easier to protect what we have than it is to rebuild what we had. Two things were clear from these workshops and that was the high degree of frustration amongst many anglers who feel that little is being done to rebuild stocks and a strong desire on the part of some anglers to become involved in hands on projects to aid in steelhead recovery.

The South Coast Steelhead Coalition (SCSC) was born out of these meetings and its stated vision is "sustainable south steelhead stocks and steelhead angling opportunity". The goals of the coalition are:

1. To provide input to the government on management and steelhead angling issues
2. Identify and foster partnership arrangements for the benefit of steelhead
3. Identify funding sources and develop project proposals for steelhead recovery activities
4. Develop and implement a strategy to raise awareness of the value and conservation status of steelhead.
5. Develop and maintain communication between the SCSC and steelhead angling community.
6. Cooperating with First Nations for the benefit of steelhead.



The "Survivor"

Membership consists of representatives from BC Federation of Drift Fishers, BCFFF, BC Wildlife Federation, and Steelhead Society of BC, Independent anglers, Tackle/Guiding industry and Area sub committees; these representatives make up the main committee. There are four area sub committees, which meet independently of the main committee and

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whose membership is open to all interested parties, these are Howe Sound, North Shore, Lower Fraser Valley and Upper Fraser Valley.

Areas that appear to be the most promising from an angler participation view point are site reviews with input into gravel placement and location of large woody debris, stream fertilization which at the moment means placement of salmon carcasses and developing working relationships with government and non government organizations that have common concerns.

The SCSC in partnership with the BC Conservation Foundation submitted a project proposal to both the Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) and the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (HCTF) to fund a project that would educate anglers and the general public on the Lower Mainland Steelhead Recovery Plan and the current steelhead conservation crisis facing Georgia Basin Steelhead stocks. The HCTF provided a grant of \$4500. SCSC feels that there is a need to demonstrate that the money was employed to generate additional funding and, with this in mind, the SCSC earmarked some of the HCTF grant to participate in the purchase of the original art and 500 limited edition prints by highly acclaimed wildlife artist Bruce Muir. This print, entitled "Survivor" was purchased through a collaborative effort by the BC Federation of Drift Fishers, BC Conservation Foundation and the South Coast Steelhead Coalition (BCFDF, BC Wildlife Federation, BC Federation of Flyfishers, Steelhead Society of BC, Streamkeepers Federation). Prints can be ordered on-line through the Greater Georgia Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan website at www.SteelheadRecoveryPlan.ca. This print is offered at \$125.00 (including taxes) with all proceeds used to support Steelhead Recovery Activities in the Greater Georgia Basin. Framed Prints are also available for \$250 (including taxes) upon request.

While the BCFFF has attempted to attend all of the meetings, we are not taking an overly active role and are seeking individuals that may be willing to serve on the committee. One thing is evident and that is that Rod Clapton, president of the BC Federation of Drift Fishers (BCFDF) is the driving force that is keeping the SCSC going. We fly fishermen may disagree with the BCFDF on certain issues, bait use being the most contentious, however, one cannot deny and must admire the dedication, effort and time that Rod Clapton and others like him are providing to address the steelhead issues.

* * *

6. Lower Skeena River

by Rob Brown

In the Skeena Region, fewer trees are being cut and more fish are being caught by more people, while a renegade band of First Nations continues to defy its provincial tribal council by courting the aquaculture industry.

Hazelton, Kitwanga, Terrace and Prince Rupert are the withered arm of the northern logging industry. And it looks that things will stay that way for some time to come as the logging juggernauts prepare to battle with the pine beetle in the northern interior. There are still trucks rolling down highway 16, but these rigs are carrying logs marked for export, part of an exercise in third world style economics encouraged by our local MLA, Roger Harris.

Faced with economic collapse, the local communities are becoming creative. Eco tourism operations and fishing guides are proliferating, unfortunately an alarming number of the latter are operating illegally. A local conservation officer indicated to me that he had good reason to believe there are as many illegal guides operating in this region as there are legal.

As a result, easily accessed rivers like the Copper are being worked by illegitimate and legitimate guides, local anglers, and anglers from all over the world, many of whom rent a room at some local bed and breakfast then make for the river in a rental vehicle, map in hand. Added to this onslaught are the camping anglers, most of whom are USAmericans. These characters camp near their favourite run and spend day after day drifting. Are these folks guiding? You can't prove it given the current regulatory regime.

The result, to nobody's surprise, is crowding and an inevitable decline in angling quality. We keep hearing that amendments to the Classified Waters Act will alleviate this problem—though it is hard to see how—but that process has been fumbling along for so long we're starting to think Armageddon will arrive first.

To this end, that indefatigable champion of fisheries conservation (and a man who, as a long time guide, and angler of the Copper,) Jim Culp, suggests a three year pilot project whereby the class 2 section of the Copper be declared what Jim calls "A Special and Priority Management Water". Under this rubric, the Classified Waters designation for the Copper would be changed from the period of September 1 to October 31 to August 1 to December 31. In his proposal, Jim advocates the establishment of a quota system for non-resident anglers on the Class 2 Copper. Jim suggests a six-day permit for the *entire* proposed classified period. Jim also suggests that all non-residents require guides during the month of September.

The Kitkatla Band still intends to continue with its fish farming enterprise despite the resolute stand

against it by the Council of First Nations. DFO has been considering the applications for about five months now. Part of the hold up may be due to the scientific skirmish around lice and Broughton pinks. The Feds would like to support science by contractor, and former DFO employee Dick Beamish, but Beamish's findings make other fisheries scientists squeamish. One amongst them is Alexandra Morton who findings show an 87% decline in last year's Broughton Pinks and a similar catastrophe this year.

John Fraser's final report to the government is due in December, but the change to the corporate CEO style in the PMO makes the opponents of fish farming twitch.

Finally, my sources indicate that the BC Liberals are not only subjecting what we used to call the Ministry of Environment to the death of a thousand cuts, but they are playing mind control games. Staff are being told to see themselves as enablers; to express no opinions at meetings, either verbally or *by body language*. What these memos don't provide is an explanation of how ministry staff are to fulfill their professional obligations without formulating an opinion then expressing it.

7. Upper Skeena Update: North Coast Steelhead Alliance

by Sharon Robertson

The North Coast Steelhead Alliance (N.C.S.A.) is committed to securing the escapement of wild steelhead in sufficient numbers to sustain healthy wild steelhead stocks and a robust sport fishery in northwestern British Columbia.

The objectives of the Alliance are:

- To foster and encourage working relationships with fisheries management agencies to develop fisheries management regimes that provide long-term solutions that ensures healthy stocks on an annual basis.
- To raise public awareness that healthy stocks of wild steelhead are essential for a robust sports fishery.
- To raise public awareness that healthy stocks of wild steelhead are essential for a robust sports fishery.
- Supporters of the Alliance include avid anglers, guides, businesses, and sport fishing and conservation groups. The BCFFF is one such group supporting the activities of the Alliance.

The Alliance is currently undertaking fundraising to support the completion of a sustainable steelhead management plan. Donations to date have been outstanding and serve to emphasize the importance of this critical initiative. In addition, the Alliance is preparing input to the integrated fisheries management plan supported by Fisheries and Oceans and will be looking for further support from partners in the spring of 2004.

Sharon Robertson, an avid angler and director of the BCFFF, chairs the North Coast Steelhead Alliance. For more information check out the N.C.S.A. website at www.ncsteelheadalliance.ca or contact Sharon at sharon.robertson@cfcdnadina.ca.

* * *

8. Skagit River Watershed Native Char Project

by Peter Caverhill



Anglers fishing the Skagit River during the last few years may have noticed information signs describing the Native Char Project, and asking them to be on the look-out for radio-tagged bull trout (char). Most people, however, are unaware of this project and its importance.

The Skagit watershed (including Ross Reservoir) is home to two native species of char, Dolly Varden and bull trout. The non-native brook trout, (char,) that was more present years ago, has now all but disappeared from the system. The presence of bull trout in the watershed is significant because these char are considered to be a species of "special concern" in BC and, just a short hop over the Canada/USA border, they are listed as "endangered". Therefore, it is important that we learn as much as possible about them so that they may be effectively

managed (and their numbers sustained or improved).

This is where the Skagit Environmental Endowment Fund and the fund's Commission (SEEC) come into play (check SEEC website www.cityofseattle.net/light/environment/SEEC). This fund and the Commission to oversee it were established in 1984, as part of an agreement between the Province of BC and the City of Seattle (who owns the Ross dam) not to raise Ross dam and flood more of the Skagit River valley in BC. The fund's purpose is to support projects that will enhance ecological knowledge and low impact outdoor recreation, primarily in BC. The fund currently stands at about \$7 million dollars (US) and, since 1984, has funded projects within the watershed



Skagit River Bull trout--Pete Caverhill photo

on both sides of the border. In fiscal 2001/02 SEEC began funding the Native Char project and this has continued to the present. It is expected that a fourth year of activities (2004/05) will also be supported. The project is being directed by the provincial Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (WLAP), and the work is being done under contract by LGL Environmental Ltd.- Environmental Research Associates. As one of the Canadian commissioners on the SEEC, I have the pleasure of providing project oversight for the Commission.

The Skagit River Native Char project, using sophisticated radio telemetry techniques on the bull trout, has the ability to:

- track movement of these fish over time and river location and in response to changes in water temperature;
- provide the most accurate population estimate possible;
- determine spawning time and location and habitats of key importance (once located they will be measured and described);
- distinguish between bull trout and Dolly Varden, and which groups permanently stay in the river and those that migrate to and from the reservoir.

Data is recorded for all char captured (length, sex, fin ray for age, and DNA analysis). Smaller char do not receive the radio tags, but get a brightly colored and individually coded external tag. Information from this study will greatly assist future char management in the watershed.

Bull trout are captured by angling, fitted (surgically) with radio transmitters and an external tag, and then released in good health. Transmitters have a 3-4 year life and the char are tracked over the course of the project using three "fixed station" receivers. One is located near the reservoir, another at 26 mile bridge, and the third at Sumallo/Skagit junction. These stations have the ability to automatically record exact time/date and direction of char movement (upstream/downstream). The Sumallo Grove station records this information for fish moving into/out of two streams, the very Upper Skagit River and the Sumallo River. Data is downloaded from these stations every 10 days. "Mobile" tracking is also done. Over the course of a season, several full river swim surveys (floats) are done using divers and an accompanying inflatable raft with telemetry equipment aboard. All fish are counted, including rainbow trout. Accurate char population estimates are only made possible by these swims and the presence of radio-tagged fish.

On the US side of the border, Seattle City Light is also working on char in Ross Reservoir and its tributaries. This is being done in cooperation with the BC project. It is expected that all of the information from both sides of the border will be compiled into a comprehensive report in 2004/05, the fourth and final year of the project.

To date, over 50 bull trout have been radio tagged in the Skagit River. These fish are telling us that they:

- are an international group, spending time in the river (Canada) and the reservoir (USA);
- enter the Skagit over the late spring/early summer and later in the fall, provided that water temperatures are cool enough;
- use the watershed high up into the Skagit and Sumallo Rivers;
- spawn in late October/early November then quickly exit back to the reservoir.

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This is just a taste of what this study is finding. There will be so much more when the final reporting is done in 2005.

Next year, when you are floating your flies over riffles and runs on the Skagit, think about this project and keep a sharp eye out for those data-producing bull trout.

* * *

9. Sumallo River

by Art Lingren

Peter Caverhill, in his Skagit River article, brings us up to date on what is happening with the char study and mentions the Sumallo River, one of the Skagit's main tributaries. In July, we learned that an application was before the Water Resources Branch to remove 288,000 gallons of day of spring water from the Sumallo. We wrote to Sustainable Resource Management Minister, Stan Hagen, about this as there was absolutely no communication to the Fisheries Branch on this water extraction. Our letter did get Fisheries involved and, in Minister Hagen's reply, he informed the BCFFF that the 288,000 gallons had been reduced to 60,000 gallons a day. He also said that "the representatives of DFO and WLAP were satisfied there were no fisheries concerns." Poor wording on the letter writer's part and we wrote back in November saying that:

"I hope the writer of the letter in order to expedite a response over-simplified DFO's and WALP's comments. Whenever habitat is disturbed, no matter how small that disturbance may be, there is a resulting biological impact on the fauna that depend on that habitat. Fish, aquatic insects and aquatic plants rely on water to survive.

"We hope that this is not a foot-in-the door-approach and that Rota, once granted 60,000 gallons a day, will use a loop hole in provincial regulations that permits increases without some kind of review by other interests."

* * *

10. Coquihalla River

In 2002, we wrote the Lower Mainland Fisheries Branch requesting an opening for this river and suggested some parameters when would guide decision-making for the season. We didn't get the river open and we wrote a follow up letter in October this year for next year. In the October 2003 letter we said that this letter is supplementary to the letter to you on this same subject and dated July 6, 2002. In that letter we asked that the Coquihalla be opened for fly fishing on July 1 of the year and closed if monitoring of the fishery indicates poor numbers or adverse water conditions. For the life of me, I cannot understand why a river such as the Coquihalla doesn't have an automatic opening. Silver Creek, located on the other side of Hope, has a much smaller run of summer steelhead than the Coquihalla and it has been open for years.

Angler presence on the Coquihalla is important; their presence helps abate poaching and will also deter illegal sport fishing. We indicated that we are also concerned about the incidental kill from catch and release fishing and suggested that the fly fishing regulation on the Coquihalla may be more stringent and asked for a floating-line, fly-fishing-only regulation that requires flies to be fished on or near the surface. Unlike their winter cousins, some bottom-dwelling summer-run steelhead will rise to take surface presented flies, however, the surface techniques—upstream dry, waked and floating line—are generally less effective than flies fished lower in the water column using the sunk-line or upstream dead-drift with weighted fly techniques.

As of the writing of this newsletter, Region two staff has remained silent on the opening.

* * *

11. Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy purchases important pieces of environmentally sensitive and important fish, bird and animal habitat property. One recent purchase, Baikie Island, at the mouth of Roderick Haig-Brown's Campbell River is of special significance to fly fishers. The Conservancy asked the BCFFF for a donation towards that purchase and, although small, our \$500 will help. We circulated the Conservancy request to clubs, encouraging them to follow suit.

* * *

12. Central and North-Coast LRMPs Angler Financial Contribution

The British Columbia government is in the process of preparing land use plans throughout the province. These Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs) are intended to designate areas for various kinds of use. In the preparation stage over much of the last decade, LRMPs have been adopted over much of the province. Some of the last areas to be covered under this planning process are on the coast – specifically the Central Coast, the North Coast and Queen Charlotte Islands, called Haida Gwaii by First Nations.

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Part of the LRMP analysis process involves assessing the economic activities that contribute to the economies of these areas and the province. The planning process failed to look at the economic contribution of non-commercial outdoor recreation. The Outdoor Recreation Council was concerned about this and sought funding for their report *ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION ON BRITISH COLUMBIA'S CENTRAL COAST, NORTH COAST AND QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS/HAIDA GWAII*. The BCFFF contributed funds to do the analysis for freshwater fishing in the study area. The report author writes:

Approximately 70 individuals, fishing equipment retailers and fly-fishing clubs were contacted who provided some insight into the expenditures made and areas fished by self-guided fishers in the three coastal LRMP areas. With the assistance of the B.C. Federation of Fly Fishers, a contact list was developed that included members of BCFFF and associated fishing clubs throughout B.C. As well, fishing equipment retailers in the Lower Mainland, Washington and Oregon were contacted along with self-guided fishers who visit coastal B.C. from the rest of B.C. and from the western United States. This survey was carried out relatively quickly and is considered reasonably accurate but is not statistically defensible. In addition, the types of fly fishers and others contacted only revealed information about a limited number of streams. However, it does provide anecdotal evidence about the expenditures and activities of self-guided fishers who visit coastal B.C.

Determining use and costs in areas other than the Bella Coola and Dean rivers proved to be difficult for the researchers. So much of the coastal area is difficult to access and much of the fishing is salmon saltwater fishing, but the study team determined that freshwater non-guided anglers contribute nearly two million dollars to BC's economy by visiting the Bella Coola, Atnarko and Dean rivers. For all user groups (boating, kayaking, fresh- and saltwater fishing, hiking, hunting, etc.) the economic contribution in the study area by outdoor recreation is about \$19 million.

* * *

13. Quality Waters, BCFFF History and Fly Fishing Club Guidelines

In addition to being involved in various fisheries issues, we prepared three important documents in 2003 as well as a pictorial display, complementing the history and for use at BCFFF displays.

Quality Waters: Very recently, I was looking through 30-year-old Totem Flyfishers' newsletters and came across some words about Quality Waters and that they mean different things to different people and groups. Over many years groups and anglers have struggled with the words, we thought we needed to have a guiding document for when we meet with government and other NGOs and for ourselves as well.



B.C. is blessed with many quality waters

See <http://www.bcfff.bc.c>
[Quality%20Waters%20Paper.pdf](#) on our website.

BCFFF History: This year was our 30th anniversary and as part of that celebration we prepared *A History of the British Columbia Federation of Fly Fishers*. See <http://www.bcfff.bc.ca/BCFFF%20History%20Final.pdf> on our website.

Fly Fishing Club Guidelines: Another important piece of work is this thorough step by step instruction manual called *Guidelines on how to organize a fly-fishing club*, prepared by Danie Erasmus, our Direct Member Director. See <http://www.bcfff.bc.ca/id45.htm> and then click on [Download instructions and a sample constitution](#).

* * *

14. Thompson River

The steelhead stocks in this river are in serious decline and have been for many years. This past fall I, as president of the BCFFF, took part in two conference call discussions about this river. Resulting from that the BCFFF wrote a letter to DFO requesting that Fraser River gill net chum salmon fisheries that catch steelhead be discontinued. Concerned about the methodology used to determine Thompson River steelhead run size, earlier in the fall, we wrote a letter to Acting Director of WALP's Fisheries Branch asking for an internal review. Prior to that letter we sent a letter expressing our concern about steelhead catch & release mortality on the Thompson and asked for a review of the Thompson River regulations and, in particular, seeking a bait ban. Mr. Martin has not bothered to respond to either letter. However, as part of my concern for this icon summer-run steelhead I wrote personal letters to a couple of dedicated, influential, British Columbian, steelhead fly fishers requesting their help. David Anderson and John Fraser both served as fisheries ministers for Canada.

Anderson is currently Minister of Environment and Fraser is Chair of the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council.

Others wrote letters of concern as well. Letters alone will not right the wrongs man has done to the Thompson River steelhead's habitat or alter ocean survival, but we do highlight our concern on this important issue. We hope that we can work with others and find a solution that alters the decline of this great fish.

In recent email traffic on this subject we learned that the steelhead interception issue has been elevated to the deputy minister level, DFO has hired an independent contract biologist to look at the steelhead model and advise DFO on areas for improvement or clarity.

The Thompson was to be closed to fishing first on November 1, then on November 17 and closed until runs improve. However, due to political pressure by local merchants the river remained open. Closures do not solve the problem, all they end up doing is diverting Thompson River anglers to other waters and the river eventually loses its profile and advocates. No conservation-related regulations were considered by the Branch, only the closure.

Believing that this may have been my last trip for some time to the Thompson I wrote the following piece for *The Steelheader News* for their winter issue due out soon.

* * *

My Last Trip

by Art Lingren

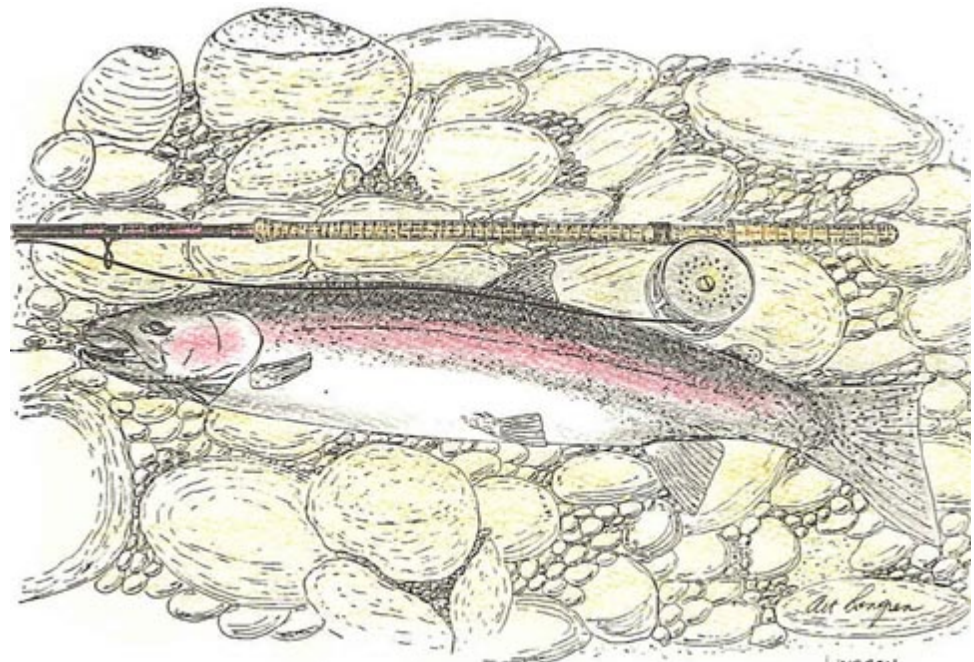
Some events in the life of a steelhead angler become etched in memory, only departing the mind with death. Over the past 40 seasons the water from many rivers have flowed past my legs but I vividly remember my first trip to the Thompson River when I was 26 years old. I didn't catch any fish that weekend on October 25 and 26, 1969 but I saw fish taken and helped someone land a fish. My first impressions: what a river and what fish.

For thirty-five consecutive seasons I have journeyed through the Fraser Valley and Canyon, past Lytton to the town of

Spences Bridge to that river. In many of the earlier years I couldn't wait for October to come so I could get back to that river to catch the Thompson's magnificent, late-running, summer-run steelhead. However, as the seasons passed and I became one with the river and its fish and, although I still enjoyed taking those fish especially on surface presented flies, the trips became more a reunion, like I was going to visit an old friend who I have not seen for some time.

I have had some good seasons and some poor seasons on the Thompson. Some poorer not because of the numbers of fish I caught, there were some of those as well, but because in later years with work, family and other commitments I didn't make as many trips as I would have liked.

I will remember well the two trips I made this year both for different reasons. The fist I fished part of four days, was blown from the water on all and managed to bring only one steelhead to the surface. It lunged at my fly three times on one drift and when it got the fly in its mouth I pulled the fly away. However, it is my parting trip in October and specifically Thursday October 16th that I will remember for many reasons. Charlie Brumwell and I found a stiff wind blowing in the morning, blowing so hard in fact that we had to change



A Thompson River Beauty—38-inch male taken on a Green-Butted Spratley

fishing locations for that day. We drove to Spences Bridge and, to our delight, discovered the wind was coming out of the Nicola Valley and heading upriver. I have a Bomber variant that I like to use on the Thompson and it was that poison that I attached to the end of my leader. I started at the top of the short piece of water quartering downstream and bringing the fly on the surface wading across the current. Some steelhead can't resist a fly fished with that technique and in less than five minutes I was into an active steelhead: one of those classic Thompson fish that ran and jumped. Twenty-five minutes later I slid the hook from a lovely 34 inch female. That run produced only one fish.

At the next spot Charlie fished the inflow while I walked down to the tailout hidden by a large, cottonwood-sapling-filled gravel bar. However, that spot was taken by others so I hiked back to join Charlie and fish through behind him. Not long after I joined him, Charlie was into the honey spot in this piece of water and his Bomber variation was taken by another lively Thompson summer-run. I helped him land the fish and before I took the Bomber from its mouth I taped it. It too was a 34 inch female but much brighter than mine.

Two spots and two fish, as we walked back to the camper for lunch we were pleased with the morning, we really didn't expect more. Sometimes you just never know what a day on the water will bring, circumstances and surprises happen. We drove down river to another spot and found that Arron Goodis and his friend were heading to the water we thought of fishing. We headed back to Spences Bridge, but as I drove along the highway I suggested to Charlie that we try a different spot. The river was low and I thought we might be able to swing a fly through the well-know piece of water. I left Charlie on the main run while I wandered upstream to fish a smaller piece of water with the intention of following Charlie through the water downstream.

With a fairly high cobble bank behind me I was Spey casting about 80 feet across a difficult current to what looked like a likely steelhead spot. The way the current set up made this spot a quite difficult place to fish. The current in the main flow grabbed the line, putting considerable drag on the fly and it was so easy to lose sight of the fly as it waked across the surface. I was fishing the water as best as I could and I saw the boil from the fish before I realized that it was after my fly.. The fish didn't get the fly and subsequent casts produced nothing. I continued down the run and about 30 feet directly out from me another steelhead rolled. I thought there must be some fish moving so I retraced my steps and came back down a second time lengthening my casts to about 100 feet. That did the trick and in the next hour and a half I brought four more steelhead to the Bomber. One, another 34 incher I landed, I rose another twice but couldn't get back, one other I pricked and I didn't get it back, one other grabbed the fly well and didn't get hooked. It wasn't until I finished that piece of water and decided to put on Grantham's Sedge that I found out why that fish, which took the fly well, didn't get hooked. I dress the Bomber on Tiemco 7989 hook, which is fine-wired, and they do break. By the time this steelhead took that fly I had landed two steelhead taking about 45 minute and that probably strained the tempered hook. It broke above the bend. The steelhead I landed from this run measured 34 inches, but unlike the two females we caught in the morning this was a male.

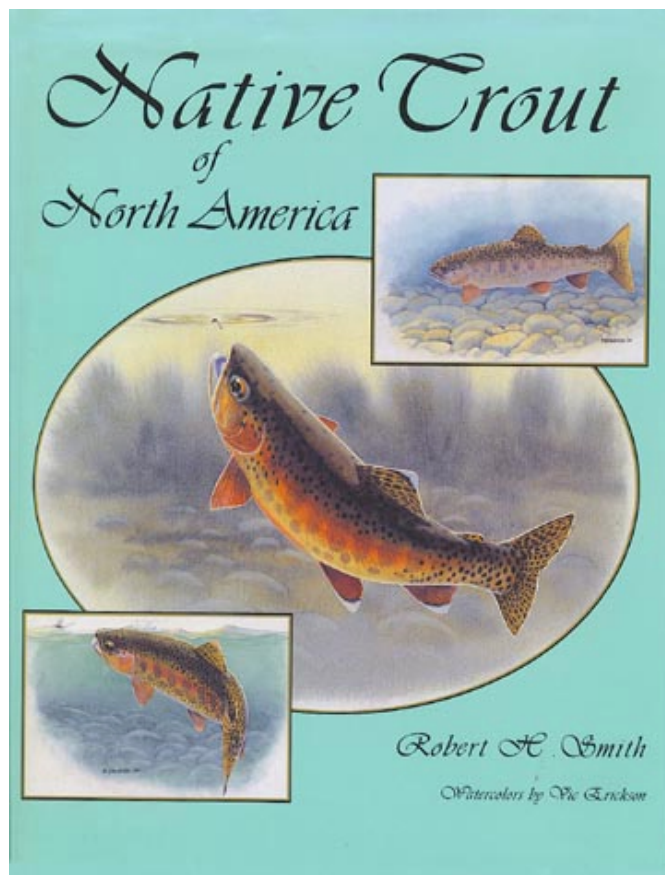
I couldn't see Charlie so I left to find him. I was having too much action not to share it. I found him in the camper. He had touched nothing so. I urged him to join me. Both of us went through the run again and had not a single rise. I think I was in the right place at the right time and hit a few fish that had moved into the run, paused for a bit and continued on their upstream migration or the fish were there and came on the take.

We tried to fish parts of the next two days but weather fronts were moving through the valley and the winds made casting impossible. Some gusts were so bad I was more than once nearly toppled into the water. We find ourselves quite often at the mercy of the elements in our fishing. But that Thursday of my last trip is etched in my mind.

The Thompson River was to close November 17, 2003, because the run this year is estimate to be around 800 fish and below extreme conservation level and even our catch-and-release fishing had to be curtailed to protect the remnants of the run. However, more recent estimates put the number at 1000 and because of political pressure the river will remain open until December 31. I thought when the Director announced the closure that we may be facing a multi-year closure and if so this October trip may have been my last. Nonetheless, we are angling for a severely depleted stock and I find it is disappointing that Thompson anglers carry on business as usual using too effective techniques and putting no restraint on their personal fishing activities. All these guys care about is numbers and have very little regard for this game fish. I hope the run does survive, but without a change of attitude I doubt that it will. And when the collapse does come, future generations of anglers will not be able to experience the surge of adrenalin, enjoy the sound of line peeling from the reel and see one of the hardest fighting steelhead in the world leap into the air as it struggles to throw the hook.

Book Review

by Art Lingren



Native Trout of North America, by Robert H. Smith with gamefish illustrations by Vic Erickson
Frank Amato Publications, Inc. P.O. Box 82112,
Portland, OR 97282
1994, 128 pages, Hardcover \$25.00

A fly fisherman for seven decades with a love of wild trout and wild places, Bob Smith passed away a couple of years ago. With his book *Native Trout of North America*, Smith left the fly fishing community an enduring masterpiece.

As a flyway biologist for the US Wildlife Service, he spent much of his career in far flung places doing bird surveys. However, always nestled along side his work equipment was his camera and fly rod. Smith slowly became concerned about the planted hatchery trout replacing wild fish in many of the streams in his native USA. A well experienced angler with a broad fly-fishing background, Smith spent his retirement years pursuing the wild trout and char of North America. In this odyssey, his goal was to capture and photograph every known species and sub species of trout and char in North America.

After a couple of introductory chapters, the odyssey begins in Chapter Three with an assignment to British Columbia's Queen Charlotte Islands in search of a caribou that had been declared extinct years before. Smith didn't find the caribou, but he

did manage to test one of the islands' waters for coastal cutthroat trout.

In the following chapters up to and including chapter 22, he relates the captures of all forty two known and some unknown species and sub-species of trout and char. In these chapters you read about his searching for trout and char from the waters of the Artic to the tropical climates in Mexico, from the west coast in search of steelhead and rainbows to the east coast in search of Atlantic salmon and the char of that coast. This quest for wild trout takes Smith into some of the more remote parts of watersheds where hatchery trucks couldn't penetrate and past natural barriers where the stocked fish couldn't contaminate the wild stocks.

It is an amazing adventure taking many years, and in this book you will read about and see the colourful char of eastern Canada and the USA Eastern States as well as the Atlantic salmon, steelhead, redbands, rainbows and all species of cutthroat from many of the western waters. He tells the tale of how pleased he was with the capture of his largest steelhead—a 16 pound fish—that he took from the Skeena's Copper River at Terrace. But he was just as pleased when he captured a rare-sought-after Rio San Lorenzo trout of only seven inches. Vic Erickson's beautiful paintings of these wild fish grace each chapter.

This is a book about one man's odyssey in search of Nature's fish and if you are a lover of wild fish and wild places you will enjoy reading *Native Trout of North America*. Some of the fish Smith sought survived in remote hard-to-get-to places and through seeking out those trout, he brought attention to their precarious state. Some fisheries managers have taken heed and are implementing wild fish programs that may preserve those wild species. Each time man alters the planet with his careless behavior and another living thing becomes extinct, we human are so much the poorer.

Amato publications has only a few hardcovers of this book left and offers them first come first served at a special \$25 US.

Howard English Hatchery Receives Grants



Colin Funk of the H.B.F.F.A. and Micqualyn Waldie, President, Goldstream Salmonid Enhancement Association.

The members of the Goldstream Volunteer Salmonid Enhancement Association who operate the Howard English Hatchery on the banks of the Goldstream River have had their work made easier for them. The men and women of this society are volunteers who give of their time and energy developing and caring for coho, chinook and chum salmon being raised at the hatchery.

As a result of their efforts there has been an increasing number of salmon eggs processed each year and it is expected that as many as 1.5 million eggs will be handled next year. They have achieved one of their goals: to establish an ongoing program of salmonid enhancement for Southern Vancouver Island streams and rivers. The association has been given a financial boost by both the Haig Brown Fly Fishing Association and the B.C.

Federation of Fly Fishers.

The H.B.F.F.A. heard about an effort to purchase a fish egg sorter for the hatchery and donated \$2000. The club then made an application to the B.C.F.F.F. Gilly Fund for a grant of \$5000 to make up the rest of the funds required. The B.C.F.F.F. Gilly Fund approved this grant at its 2003 A.G.M.

In May of 2003 the H.B.F.F.A. presented its donation of \$2000 to members of the Goldstream Association. This was followed up in July with a number of members of the H.B.F.F.A. having a tour of the hatchery at which time a cheque for \$5000 from the B.C.F.F.F. was presented to Micqualyn Waldie, president of the Goldstream Salmonid Enhancement Association.

The combined donations were enough to purchase the sorter, used during the early stage of the hatchery process for the essential task of sorting live eggs from dead ones while at the same time counting the number of live eggs. Without the sorting machine, separating the eggs was done by hand, which took many hands many hours.

The machine was used for the 2003 fall count of eggs and found to be of great assistance in their process, and it is on view with a large B.C.F.F.F. decal displayed. A letter of appreciation from the Goldstream Volunteer Salmonid Enhancement Association was received for these donations.

* * *

New from the BCFFF:

The Complete Kilburn — Fly fishing for trout and salmon in British Columbia: A collection of published essays (1968-1977)

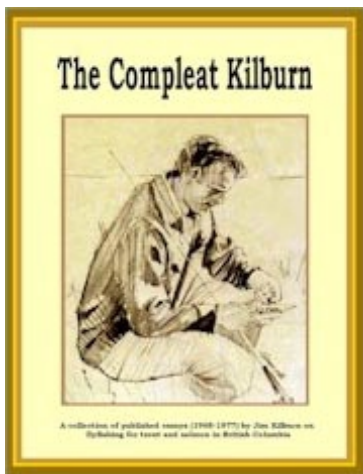
Written by Jim Kilburn with illustrations by Jack Grundle

8.5"x11", 210 pages with many photographs and black and white illustrations. The Complete Kilburn is a collection of articles on fly fishing in British Columbia with chapters on British Columbia's Sport Fish, Tackle and Techniques, Fly Fishing BC's Interior Lakes, Fly Tying, Matching the Naturals, and Life Cycles of Insect Families of special interest to the BC fly fisher.

To order a copy of The Complete Kilburn please send a cheque or money order for \$30 (including shipping — or \$US23 for US orders) payable to the BCFFF to:

The Complete Kilburn,
c/o Art Lingren
3588 West 38th Avenue
Vancouver BC V6N 2Y1
or email to reserve your copy

artlin8@telus.net





The end of a fish, the end of the year 2003 and the end of this edition of Fly Lines.



Please mail your dues to:

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