



Flylines

SUMMER 2015 July 1, 2015



Cowichan Fly Fishers doing fry rescue, 2014 Photo courtesy of Kenzie Cuthbert

LOWDOWN ON THE COWICHAN

Flows in the Cowichan River are reported to be approaching ***normal mid-summer conditions***. But the bad news is that this report was issued June 15, a whole week before the “official” beginning of summer! The flow at the weir was adjusted to 5.5 cms, which was hoped to be sustainable based on the

amount of storage available in Cowichan Lake. However, if weather conditions continue so hot and dry, that base flow could be reduced.

“Catalyst operates a weir which regulates water flow from Cowichan Lake into the Cowichan River for much of the year. The Cowichan River is the source of the water used at Crofton Division and of drinking water for local residents. Catalyst collaborates closely with regulatory authorities regarding weir operation, and it engages with local stakeholders on water management through its involvement with the Cowichan Watershed Board. Catalyst also contributed to and endorsed a comprehensive water management plan developed through a multi-stakeholder process.” (quoted from Catalyst webpage, link provided below). Having a weir at the outlet of Cowichan Lake has been a significant benefit to management of fisheries in the Cowichan River for more than the last decade. Many confounding factors have had to be accommodated, such as maximizing storage in the lake while minimizing flooding of homes on the shores. But options can be very limited when inflows to the watershed are limited because of hot dry weather. And conditions this year have been hotter and drier and earlier than last year. Catalyst Paper (water licence holders) are releasing 5.5 cubic metres per second (cms) from the lake at this time – normally it is 7cms. Lake is approx. 1 foot below full supply. And the weather forecast does not predict rain over the next 10 days. The BC government has issued a stage 3 drought alert.

Cowichan River Wilderness Lodge operator, Kenzie Cuthbert says flows started declining in May, a concern because some steelhead and trout beds became isolated before emergence of fry. Kenzie also notes that the greatest problem with the low water is high water temperature. He says that the temperature at the weir was 20° C. Kenzie stopped guiding clients 2 weeks ago (as of June 15) because of potential harm to fish.

Last year, the local flyfishing group, Cowichan flyfishers, participated in a number of projects to save fish. These efforts included fry salvage from pools that were drying out, and also diversion of flow into a side channel that had been cut off. Similar projects are ongoing this year.

Weather forecasts don't indicate relief from the extremely hot and dry weather we have experienced this past spring, when daily high temperatures have sometimes been 3 to 7 degrees higher than normal. This has led to increased restrictions on water use. Beginning June 15, the Cowichan Valley Regional District will go Stage 2 watering restrictions. The province has declared that the region is in a Stage 3 drought.

While BC is experiencing hot and dry weather our neighbours to the south are dealing with more. California is now in the fourth year of a historic severe drought. The governor of Washington State declared a statewide drought emergency last month.



Volunteer helping with fry salvage
(photo courtesy Kenzie Cuthbert)



Volunteers provide flow to a side channel
(photo courtesy Kenzie Cuthbert)

Catalyst Paper Crofton's website is a good reference for lake and river water conditions -
<http://www.catalystpaper.com/page/cowichan-water-management-information>

The Cowichan Watershed Board website has info regarding this matter at
<http://www.cowichanwatershedboard.ca/>

RAINFALL SUMMARY @YVR		
May	2015	Normal
	5 mm **	65 mm
June (to June 15)	7 mm	53 mm

**all time record low rainfall for May

Source: Global TV 6 O'clock News for June 15, 2015

Wildfires	This year	Last year
	April 1, 2015 to now	April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015
Fires	457	267
Hectares burned	60,377	5,530
Budget	\$47.4 million	\$22.5 million

*from Global TV 6 O'clock News on June 15, 2015

**Source: BC Wildfire Management Branch.

BC fishing expert found dead after jet-boat crash on river.

By Larry Pynn, Vancouver Sun. Reported in Times Colonist, Wednesday, June 10, 2015

Rescue crews Tuesday morning recovered the body of a well-known fly fishing expert who drowned after a second jet-boat crash on the upper Pitt River in as many days.

Coquitlam RCMP Cpl. Jamie Chung said three men and a woman left Grant Narrows at the south end of Pitt Lake for a fishing trip on Monday about 7:30 am.

They experienced mechanical trouble on the upper Pitt River at about 9 am, the six-metre boat drifted downstream without power, hit a log, took on water and sank. Three adults made it to shore safely, but the fourth drowned. The *Vancouver Sun* reports the victim is Ron Hjorth, an experienced fly fisherman who worked at Sea-Run Fly & Tackle in Coquitlam.

Kelly Davison, the shop owner, said Hjorth, who was 64, was well known in the fly-fishing community and had been to the upper Pitt on several occasions. He was a passenger on the vessel that flipped.

CONTACTS

Board of Directors

Rich Ronyecz	President
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Peter Caverhill	Secretary
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Ken Burgess	Membership/Gilly Fund
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Art Lingren	BCFFF Historian

Affiliated Clubs

Cariboo Chilcotin Flyfishers
Comox Valley Fly Fishers
Cowichan Fly Fishers
Haig-Brown Fly Fishing Assn
Island Waters Fly Fishers
Kalamalka Fly Fishers
Kamloops Fly Fishers
Long Beach Flyfishers
Loons Flyfishing Club
Mid Island Castaways
Osprey Fly Fishers
Penticton Fly Fishers
Totem Fly Fishers
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Website: bcfff.bc.ca or [Facebook.com/BCFFF](https://www.facebook.com/BCFFF)

Membership: Open to all persons, and members of associated clubs. Direct memberships are \$20 payable to the Membership director.

INFO ON MEMBER CLUBS

Osprey Fly Fishers of BC – The View From 2015 (submitted by Peter Caverhill)

This club has been around the Lower Mainland of BC for a very long time! We began in 1968 as the second fly fishing club in BC, after the Totem Fly Fishers. It was a loose group of “Totem Wannabees” that initially (and reluctantly) decided to form a fly fishing club which was eventually called the Osprey Fly Fishers of BC.

Over the years, our fortunes have prospered and sputtered (like any volunteer group). As of 2015, the club is pretty vibrant with a membership of about 35, as well as associate members and guests. There does seem to be quite a continuing interest in the club!

What the club is all about is available to prospective members on a very good and modern website. We have a superb, award-winning newsletter – “The Osprey News”. Every month the newsletter features a “Fly-of-the-Month” which captures member’s favourite flies and their step-by-step tying instructions. These FOTM recipes and their stories are all provided on the website.

We have regular monthly meetings that usually feature some sort of program. Last month was Randy Nelson, retired DFO fishery officer, talking about his escapades catching poachers. This month will be Neil Light (“California Neil” fly), from California, giving a slide presentation on his adventures in Patagonia. There are also “Methods Sessions” that have previously featured fly tying, CPR, small motor maintenance, river drifting with inflatables, and many other topics.

In 1999, the club self-published a hard cover book entitled *“Backcasts and Forecasts – History of the Osprey Fly Fishers of BC – 1969 to 1999”*. The book presented many articles that originally appeared in “The Osprey News”. There were bios and favourite flies for the members of the day, and header photos that had adorned the cover.

For many years, the club has organized the “Tie-a-Fly/Catch-a-Kid” area at the BC Boat and Sportsman’s Show at Tradex in Abbotsford. This has been done under the BCFFF Umbrella.

Over the years The Osprey Fly Fishers of BC, have been an important contributor to the running of BCFFF (presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, newsletter editors, directors).

So, looking forward, the club anticipates continuing to be active in a world where so many things related to fish and fishing are changing. We hope to meet the challenges ahead!

John Bokstrom Remembered (submitted by Peter Caverhill)

Sadly, John Bokstrom died on November 24, 2014 at age 88. Here, we appreciatively remember John as the spark and energy that initiated the BC Federation of Fly Fishers over four decades ago.

(What follows is taken from the BCFFF History document that was written by Art Lingren in 2003 and reprinted with modifications in 2010)

John and the beginning of BCFFF

In 1972, **John Bokstrom**, of the Dogwood Fly Fishers in Maple Ridge, felt the need for an organization that would be a unified political voice for all fly fishers in British Columbia, parallel to the US-based FFF but completely autonomous – not simply a BC chapter of the FFF. With this in mind, he contacted fellow Dogwood Fly Fisher **Ken Ruddick**, a local logger who operated a fly tackle shop from his home in Stave Falls. It was Bokstrom who contacted the other known fly fishing clubs in BC, and the first meeting of the fledgling organization – later to be known as the BCFFF – was arranged.

The meeting was held in the kitchen of the home of **Bill Yonge** (Yonge was already known to Bokstrom because Yonge had previously been to a Dogwood Fly Fishers meeting with fellow Totem Colin McPhail to put on a steelhead fly fishing presentation.) That initial meeting was attended by John Bokstrom and Ken Ruddick from the Dogwood Fly Fishers, Bill Yonge and **Rex Schofield** from the Totem Flyfishers, and **Blair Thomas** and **Granville Airton** from the Osprey Fly Fishers of BC.

At Schofield's recommendation Bokstrom was elected chair at the first meeting. At a later meeting Bill Yonge and Rex Schofield were assigned the task of creating a Constitution and By-laws.

During those formative years the Hatchmatchers Fly Fishers were organized and members **Larry Smithson** and **Val Bridarolli** joined the meetings. Bridarolli later arranged for the meetings to be held at the Royal Canadian Legion on East Hastings Street in Vancouver.

During the ensuing years other interested fly fishers attended the meetings, including **Doug Porter** and **Mike Pierce**, who were delegates from the Kamloops Fly Fishing Association, **Gil Sage** from the Osprey Flyfishers of BC, and **John Lynde** (author of *34 Ways to Cast a Fly*) of the West Kootenay Fly Fishers and **Jim Anderson** from Kelowna.



John Bokstrom

Bokstrom, his original idea having come to fruition, stepped down as chairman in 1978 and Bill Yonge was elected to take the helm. Bokstrom stayed on for several more years as a director and as treasurer.

In 1978, Bokstrom was invited to join the Totem Fly Fishers, and **Ron Grantham** replaced him as the Dogwood Fly Fishers' BCFFF representative (Grantham would later follow Bokstrom to the Totem Fly Fishers).

At the time, the provincial government would not allow names starting with "British Columbia" as in British Columbia Federation of Fly Fishers. Ken Ruddick met with his local MLA, George Mussalem, and asked for his help. Mussalem talked with his peers in Victoria and the name was eventually approved.

The original by-laws were signed by Bill Yonge, Vancouver; Gil Sage, Vancouver; Ken Ruddick, Stave Falls; Larry Smithson, Vancouver; Jim Anderson, Kelowna; Ron Grantham, Burnaby. On February 12, 1979 the British Columbia Federation of Fly Fishers (BCFFF) became official under the BC Society Act.

The BCFFF's charter member clubs were:

Dogwood Fly Fishers	Maple Ridge
Hatchmatchers Fly Fishers	Burnaby
Kamloops Fly Fishing Association	Kamloops
Osprey Flyfishers of BC	Vancouver
Totem Fly Fishers	Vancouver

While working on the founding of the BCFFF, John Bokstrom was also working at home on his passion of making bamboo fly rods. In 1987, while attending the Totem Fly Fishers/BCFFF AGM at Corbett Lake Country Inn in Merritt, he chanced to meet another bamboo rod maker, Don Andersen of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. The two of them spent the remainder of the weekend discussing bamboo rods, and it was there that Bokstrom suggested locating and getting together with other bamboo rod makers for a sharing of ideas. The location was to be the Corbett Lake Country Inn. Bokstrom went home and started writing letters and advertisements for fly fishing magazines and other journals, and the first bamboo rod makers' gathering was held in April, 1988.

That momentous meeting, the first of its kind anywhere, set the policy of complete and free interchange of knowledge and techniques in what was formerly a somewhat secretive craft. The result is finer rods being built now than ever before. It also showed the way for others and now there are similar meetings in many parts of Canada and the United States, and in Europe, Great Britain and Australia. The two-day Corbett Lake gatherings continue to be held every two years and are considered to be the most informative and instructional.

Thanks to John Bokstrom for his quiet but innovative ideas.



Lee STRAIGHT

The flyfishers' conclave in Kamloops last weekend, first in the Canadian northwest, was packed with surprises, not including the poor turnout. Despite the boom in fly fishing, I expected the slim registration.

The organizers were so intent on putting together the interesting, educational fair that they forgot to beat the drums. I'm told they needed about 300 registered guests at the two-day blow-off to pay the bill. They got just over half of that.

There seems little concern about the red ink, however. The mother group, the world-wide Federation of Fly Fisherman, gave a guarantee and so did the well fixed Totem Flyfishers, a Vancouver club. And the other eight or so clubs in the BC federation, though small, are not broke.

For me the highlight of the conclave – and a distinct relief – was the surprisingly entertaining “Musicast”, a musical fly casting show put on by **John** and **Vernita Lynde** of Trail.

Lynde, a British immigrant, was a professional fly caster in Britain, lived at Nanaimo for years, then in the Kootenays. He wrote a small, clear book on fly casting while in Nanaimo which, while it was not widely ballyhooed, wasn't exactly snapped up like hotcakes.

BUT LYNDE IS GREAT. I never should have doubted his prominently billed feature event. He and Vernita are no spring chickens, both over 60. John, like the author of this piece, has the mellow rounding of the shoulders, his muscles a bit, um, slimmer. Vernita, though a handsome woman, is chubby and walks with slight difficulty.

Having noticed the many fine casters at the conclave, including such fishing rod makers as **Peter McVey** of Corbett Lake, **Mike Walker** of Calgary and **Ray MacPherson** of Kamloops, all of whom can shoot an entire flyline through their rod guides. I feared the Lyndes would fall on their faces. Far from it.

They had a PA system with pre-recorded explanations and musical background. They stood 13.5 metres opposite one another, demonstrating smoothly and rhythmically in unison and to music the regular, backhand, false and roll casts. And with either hand. All was done so gracefully despite a fair breeze that the gallery's applause rang out as loud as it can in a dry, blousy, industrial park.

John demonstrated the many difficult casts made possible by the two-handed “salmon” fly rod. He did a comic routine casting from a chair with rod tied to foot, while reading and phoning. In the U.K. they'd say that the Lynde's act was interesting, informative and droll. Out here, they “really put out”, and were a gas.

There were some excellent slide-or film-illustrated talks, the features of the conclave.

Most interesting to me, though I've seen both before, were the travelogues on fishing in New Zealand two years ago, by **Jay Roland** of the Totems, and on salmon fishing in Norway last year, by professional photographer **Dave Looy** of the Osprey Flyfishers, Vancouver.

Roland's talk supports stories that I've had from other friends who've done the New Zealand bit. Even there, you must get off the beaten track for trouting that matches B.C.'s or Alaska's, where you must get 'way back for top sport.

Looy got in on some private and incredibly expensive salmon water in Norway through connections with relatives. Norway's still the place for exclusive, organized and unbelievably expensive river sport, he said.

On the technical side, I judged the talk on aquatic entomology by Kamloops authority and writer **Jack Shaw**, the most helpful. Shaw has changed in his talks from slide illustration to movies. Those underwater bugs now swim about in his tank, indicating not only what shape we must dress our imitations but – far more important, according to Shaw – how to make them move when we retrieve them.

Shaw agrees with what I've heard from **Barney Rushton**, another noted Kamloops authority, that the order of importance of features of a fly lure are: 1) how you manipulate the fly in the water; 2) Its shape; 3) Its size; 4) its colors.

INTERESTING LECTURERS in their own fields were Seattle author **Steve Raymond** on sea-run cutthroat trout, Seattle free-lancer **Pat Trotter** on sea flyfishing for salmon, and Kamloops biologist **John Cartwright** and Oregon biologist **Ted Fies** on plans for quality lake fishing.

Fies told the fly fishers that quality lakes, small creel limits and restricted tackle) are fine but sometimes aren't well patronized. He said only three percent of Oregon anglers are flyfishers. No one bothered to point out that that's about how many anglers care enough to join clubs or write letters to their governments.

There was a photo contest that had only three entries. Again, lack of publicity.

BCFFF chairman **Bill Yonge** of Vancouver said, "mainly, it was a conclave for the organized fly fishermen. We were a little fearful, because of the prime fishing time in a prime trout area, that we'd get too many to handle if we widely publicized it. We misjudged."

Former Chairman **Rex Schofield** of North Vancouver said, "Yes, I guess we could have publicized it more right in Kamloops, but it has been a success otherwise. We'll know better next time."

Two longtime FFF members from Washington, **Ed Foss** and **Dr. Gordy Young**, said they thought it was a good first effort. Foss, who, with Young, has labored through birth pains of many clubs and conventions, said, "Successful? Of course. The next one will be packed."

Young said, "One mistake is scheduling a conclave of fishermen at the height of the fishing season." Eager with my great hindsight, I could only agree.

AGM a great success

The 2015 AGM was hosted by the Comox Valley Flyfishers at the Fish & Game Club facilities on Comox Lake. Twenty-eight members attended the business meeting in the morning, April 25, 2015.

Jim McEwan reports Federation assets as of the end of the fiscal year (Dec 31, 2014) are \$58,999.33 . The Gilly Fund assets totalled \$150,519.87, of which \$34,519.87 are available for projects. The reserve (\$116,000) assures sustainability of this fund.

Jim Burgess reported we have 647 members. Two clubs folded (Lonely Loons and Dogwood), one club withdrew (Campbell River), and another club joined (Westcoast Flyfishers).

Kyle Sawayama reported that the new and improved website is now up and running. Kyle submitted the Annual Report, which reports on the many activities and projects through the year.

A full slate of club officers and directors was elected. Results are noted on the **club contacts** page.

Jesse Blake provided the lunchtime barbecue. Many thanks to his suppliers for hamburgers and buns.

The afternoon featured fly tying demonstrations by various members and a casting clinic



. Denise Maxwell provided the one-handed rod clinic and on the lawn.



Dan McCrimmon demonstrated two handed skills on the swim beach .

The dinner was attended by 65 people.

The auction was also successful. It raised \$2711. There were many high quality items, especially a number of hand-tied flies.



Members demonstrating fly tying prowess.



New president Rich Ronyecz



Quality flies in the auction.

FISHING PROSPECTS

LAKES

Some of the most fun I've had fishing was in lakes near Prince George in mid-July. Mid-July can be a great time to hit the caddis fly hatch. At the time I discovered this I was still very early in the fly fishing learning curve. In order to learn about a lake we would basically troll a fly around it, paralleling the shoreline. Any number of patterns is good for this, but I prefer a leech pattern. The main tactic is to get it deep. Sooner or later we would catch a trout and then we would learn what it was eating, using a stomach pump. On the occasion I am remembering we found a large caddis (sedge) larva. It was peculiar for its color which was a pale bluegreen. It just happened that I had a prototype sedge pattern tied just for this trip. The pattern was my own design, and was very simple. It had a chenille body and the hackle was tied similar to a Muddler Minnow head, that is, flared deer hair and a noticeable trimmed head. We continued trolling, and did pretty well. Well enough we were able to pinpoint a couple of features in the lake where the fishing was best. Then in the late afternoon we returned armed with that fish tested-and-approved pattern, the Tom Thumb. (There is a reason the Tom Thumb is on the BCFFF crest). Sure enough the sedge "hatch" had matured, and the bite was on. Other sedge dry fly patterns also work well, such as the Travelling Sedge, Goddard Sedge or the Mikulak Sedge. For dry fly devotees, this is truly a lot of fun.

SALTWATER

Perhaps the biggest change in fly fishing opportunities in my lifetime has been the development of new fly fishing methods for **pink salmon**. I am very fortunate to have started fishing for pinks back in the early 70's on the Eve River. In those years we reserved the days around the full moon in August to head to the Eve River. The Eve River was very special in that we would fish down the river as the tide dropped (one of the lowest tides in the year), we would fish in the tidal zone, then would follow the fish up river as the tide started to rise. We still do that today. But there have been some significant changes. One has been different flylines we use in saltwater, being clear lines and level sink lines. Then in the river, I like to use a sinktip line with a short leader and weighted fly, usually a bead-head design. Perhaps, the most amazing change has been in the many new fly patterns that are proving effective. In the old days we used something like the *Handlebar* or *Cathy's Coat*. Today you can use almost anything. Effective flies are not only pink, but also green or blue or purple. Many radiant materials such as polar chenille are used. And anglers often use very small size hooks such as size 12 (previously 4's and 6's). And bead heads are very effective getting the flies deep in the water column.

So if you are looking for some premier fly fishing in rivers in late summer, for salmonids in the 1 to 3 kilogram size, give pink salmon fishing a try!





Pearl Cathy's Coat