

September 2001



Flylines



The newsletter of the Black Hills Flyfishers

The Finest In Angling Literature

Summer's Over...Come to a Meeting

Yes, friends, it's that time of year again. The days are getting shorter, and (after the annual summer hiatus) the Black Hills Flyfishers is ramping up for another year. The September meeting of the BHFF will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 21, in the Surbeck Student Center's Bump Lounge on the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

The meeting will be a good 'un. Oliver Edwards, a fly fisherman and fly tier with few equals, will present a slide show. Edwards, a native of the country where they speak English correctly, will discuss and present a program about his fishing trip to Russia's Kola Peninsula. Edwards traveled around this remote area by helicopter chasing huge brown trout. Edwards also will present programs the next two days. (See story inside.)

Raffle tickets will be sold for several prizes donated by Scientific Anglers.

Dakota Angler and Outfitters arranged Edwards' visit, and he comes with high regards from the shop's Hans Stephenson.

"Several years ago, I came across a book that I still con-

sider one of the most unique and important fly tying books in my collection," Hans said. "The author was an English chap, whom I had never heard of. He had the most detailed and realistic trout flies that I had ever seen.

"Over the years, I have continued to pour over the pages of his outstanding book, 'Flytyers Masterclass,' each time finding a new morsel of fly tying technique to try," Hans said. "It's quite an honor that Oliver Edwards is now coming to Rapid City to do several programs and classes."

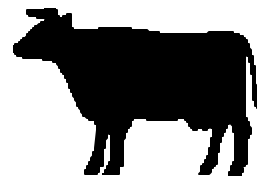


By BHFF. This is a book that is a great reference for fly tyers. It is a step-by-step guide to tying 20 essential patterns for the fly fisher. It is a great reference for fly tyers. It is a step-by-step guide to tying 20 essential patterns for the fly fisher. It is a great reference for fly tyers. It is a step-by-step guide to tying 20 essential patterns for the fly fisher.

Black Hills Flyfishers funds fence project

The BHFF participated in an outstanding conservation project this summer, which involved our purchasing materials to fence cattle out of Castle Creek. The area of Castle Creek below the walk-in area has been grazed for a number of years, and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks and the U.S. Forest Service were concerned about the long-term stability of the streambanks, given the easy access to cattle.

The BHFF contributed \$5,000 to purchase materials for a wooden fence that will keep cattle out of the stream, except for selected areas where the cows will have access to water. The SDGFP and the USFS installed the fence. Participants in this project are hopeful that this section of stream can ultimately be as productive as that area of stream in the walk-in area. Thanks to Ron Koth of the GFP for requesting our assistance in this worthy project.



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Bies pond project needs work

As many of you know, the Black Hills Flyfishers has pursued obtaining access to private fisheries during the past couple of years.

On one of these properties, located in the vicinity of the Medicine Mountain Boy Scout Camp, the BHFF made significant contributions to fund various improvements in exchange for access. The BHFF purchased and stocked fish. Those fish have in fact grown well during the past year. Fingerlings stocked one year ago are presently approximately 10 inches long today.

However, one of the dams on the property is in danger of being breached, and will need additional work. This work will include raising the outlet works by a couple of feet, and doing some additional digging on the side of the pond opposite the dam. The result of this additional work will be a larger, deeper impoundment that will be secure for many years. Given the investment the BHFF has already made in this project, the BHFF board of directors voted to spend up to an additional \$2,000 in dam repairs. The work will take place this fall.

Since the fish on this private fishery are only one year

BHFF supports Tech water quality study

The Black Hills Flyfishers have committed \$2,000 to another worthwhile project, which will begin soon. Dr. Scott Kenner of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology will conduct an assessment on the upper Rapid Creek watershed, with an eye towards determining the physical habitat features and water quality.

It will be interesting to see what is determined by this study.

As many of you know, this area is rich in "bog-iron." Scott's study should help determine what effect the bog-iron has on the fishery, and what (if any) remedial measures might be made. The study is also being supported by both the SDGFP, and the Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources.



Joel MacMillan, who has since moved away from the Black Hills, tests the Bies Property waters during a spring excursion. Many fish were caught.

old, directions to this property have not been distributed to the membership. Next summer, however, the fish should be approaching 12 to 14 inches in length, and details will be provided at that time. Stay tuned.

Oliver Edwards programs

Besides the slide show Oliver Edwards will give during the September BHFF meeting, he will make two other presentations while he is in town.

- **Saturday, Sept. 22:** Full day tying class. The class will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oliver will teach the patterns from his acclaimed book, "Flytyers Masterclass," along with some other of his favorites. Program fee is \$65. The class will be held in the conference room at Dick Leir's counseling office to ensure peace and quiet.

- **Sunday, Sept. 23:** Onstream entomology and nymphing class. Oliver will teach the skills necessary to catch fish consistently with nymphs. Program fee is \$75.

Goodbye to a great friend

Over the summer, longtime Black Hills Flyfishers member and friend John Devlin died of cancer at age 48.

Johnny was the man. Anyone who ever met John will likely never forget him. He was one of a kind.

John left many friends within the Black Hills Flyfishers organization. He was a mainstay at our annual equipment auction for a number of years, and provided many, many, stories for Flylines.

Several times, in a pinch, we called on John to be our last-minute featured speaker for a BHFF meeting. He always came through, and generally left the audience smiling with his unique brand of humor.

He will be missed.

Angling Report

By Dakota Angler and Outfitter

Fall is here! If you haven't been out lately, now is the time. Local trout are in outstanding condition.

Spring Creek: Spring Creek suffered a bit earlier in the summer, but has been improving with the cooler weather. Fishing pressure has been very light.

Rapid Creek: Excellent PMD hatches in the evenings. Water flows have been fluctuating, with low flows around 15 cfs.

Castle Creek: Inconsistent fishing, although there has been some success with a bead-head, rubber-leg Prince Nymph.

French Creek: Unknown, although the flow has been good.

Spearfish Creek: Flows are low, although there have been various bugs coming off. Anglers have had success with BWO compara-duns, and little yellow sallies.

Patagonia Program

Esteban Etchepare will be in Rapid City to provide a presentation on flyfishing opportunities in Patagonia. This promises to be an outstanding program on one of the premier trout destinations in the world.

Sponsored by Dakota Angler, this event will take place at 7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7, at Room #205, 809 South Street in Rapid City. This is the second floor of the old School Administration Building.

Come to this program. Flyfishers should dream of Patagonia. Here's your chance to talk with someone whose been there.



From the President's Desk

By Paul Stabile

There comes a time when one needs to step back, take a moment and ask, "Have I made a Difference?" "Have I been a good steward of this planet we occupy for a very short period of time?"

My intention here is to share with you some of the ways you have made a difference. The Black Hills Flyfishers has completed a number of important conservation projects. We primarily fund those projects through money raised at our annual equipment auction. The auction is an outstanding contribution toward achieving our mission. These monies go directly into projects that improve fisheries all over the Black Hills area. I thank everyone who gives their time, and especially those who give their money, to make those events successes.

Recent conservation projects include the Bies Property Project, the Lower Castle Creek Project, and the Bog Iron research above Silver City. You can read about two of those projects inside this newsletter.

Most recently, we have taken on a new project that we believe will not only continue the focus of improving our fisheries long after some of us are gone, but will share our sport with the youth of our community through teaching these individuals the same joy we have known for some time. It is my personal belief that for some, if not all, it will build character and offer an alternative to just hanging out. Jim Phoenix, a hardworking clun member, has agreed to head this project up and could use your help. Give him a call at (605) 341-0088 if you would like to help.

Flyfishers' Youth Program about to cast off

The Black Hills Flyfishers is about to start a youth program. Although some details need to be firming up, it appears that Jim Phoenix will ramrod a youth flyfishing program through the YMCA, possibly the Boy Scouts, and possibly similar organizations as well.

Jim has a great deal of experience with these programs, due to his involvement with similar programs in the Southwestern United States.

With a youth program comes the need for various equipment that needs to be purchased. Jim has created a budget, and that the BHFF board of directors will soon vote on the level of financial support.

Although I believe that the BHFF will always be prima-

rily a conservation organization, a solid youth education program is long overdue.

If you have an interest in volunteering for this worthwhile program, or if you have any surplus equipment (even fly-tying thread) you would be willing to part with, call Jim Phoenix at (605) 341-0088.



Tiny Places by Bradee Beard

By the time you've been fly fishing for a few years, you'll have heard of many of the big places. From the Klamath, Umpqua and Skeena on the Pacific Coast of the U.S. and Canada to the Miramichi and Bonventure on the eastern seaboard, they are spoken of in hushed and reverent tones.

The big places aren't big for no reason. I always like to fish them because they don't get big and stay big unless they provide a quality fishing experience. But frequently these days, big can also mean overpublicized, overcrowded, and overused. More and more, I like experiencing little places. The ones I've found so far are as "quality" as the big places, and in some ways more so.

My current favorite little place is a creek that hides in plain sight in the Bighorn Mountains in Wyoming. If you've fished in this part of the country you've driven right past it, but you probably wouldn't even recognize it's name. It's hardly secret or hidden. It's a little place mainly because it gets no publicity except word of mouth in the local fly shops. All the better, because it's too small to stand up to much more pressure than it gets right now. You'll forgive me if I don't reveal its name and precise location to you.

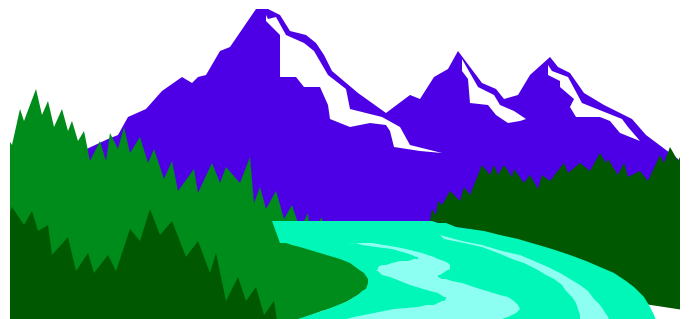
My all-time favorite little place is a creek where I've only seen two other anglers, ever; they were fishing with me at the time. Every fly angler in my town knows where it is and what kind of fishing it can produce, which is probably why it never gets fished. Frankly, a 10-inch rainbow caught in this little place would justify your breaking your elbow patting yourself on the back. But I know of no better place to be in the late fall.

Leaves from thousands of trees in a hundred shades of

brown, tan, and yellow carpet this little place's banks, their musty dusty bouquet sweet as perfume. The cold air sharpens the water's song, and the autumn sunshine warms the air while leaving the rock walls on the south bank pleasingly cool. After summer's doldrums, this little place's trout are reinvigorated by the cooler water and shorter daylight.

No need to wriggle into the neoprene waders, strap on the wading staff, and shrug into the vest I lovingly call "the albatross," like I would at the big places. No extra-long, 8- or 9- weight rod required here. One fly box in my shirt pocket and a sweet-casting little 3-weight is all that's necessary. Small dry flies are smashed with abandon and pugnacity; fights are brief but spirited. The release comes with the wish for long life and prodigious progeny.

This little place quiets my spirit and sates my senses. It eliminates any perceived need to "work" for that big fish because there aren't any. If I so desire, I need hike no farther than the first hole, since the fishing is as good here as anywhere else along the creek. Stealth and finesse can be left at home; this little place's fish will cooperate today. And even if they don't, it doesn't matter. Not in this little place.



Until next time... Keep your line straight

Flylines

Published infrequently at the editor's whim, *Flylines* is the voice of the Black Hills Flyfishers. Our editorial policy is to print the news, a portion of which will inevitably be true.

Opinions expressed in *Flylines* are those of the editor or contributors alone, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Black Hills Flyfishers. Opinions held by the Black Hills Flyfishers or its board will be clearly designated.

Comments or questions regarding this publication, or requests for additional information pertaining to the Black Hills Flyfishers can be directed to one of two newsletter lackeys:

- Mark Vickers, PO Box 8124, Rapid City, S.D. 57709. Call him at (605) 342-4769.
- Steve Buchholz, 10530 Nemo Road, Rapid City, S.D. 57702. Call him at (605) 355-9508.

Black Hills Flyfishers Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

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E-mail _____

BHFF annual dues are \$15 for a regular membership, and \$30 or more for a contributor level. An envelope is attached to this newsletter for your convenience. Please make checks payable to Black Hills Flyfishers.

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