

July 2002



Flylines



The newsletter of the Black Hills Flyfishers

The Finest In Angling Literature

Spring Creek (no) Flows

The extremely dry conditions have taken their toll on our streams. On many of our stream fisheries, the trout can weather the low flows and warmer water temperatures. The tough conditions simply make it more difficult to fish.

On Spring Creek, however, the lake warms the water to a considerable extent before it goes downstream. In past years, the GFP and USFS were able to mitigate this warm water with releases of cold water from the dam's valve system. Unfortunately, the valve system is broken, and cannot be used until a replacement valve is in place.

Therefore, without significant additional rainfall, the entire fishery below Sheridan Lake is at considerable risk. The GFP then pursued an innovative solution with the USFS, whereby 2 cfs of cold water would be released from a siphon system that was to be installed deep beneath the lake's surface.

The Forest Service accepted this proposition, and the siphon system was intended to be in place by the time you read this newsletter. Unfortunately, due to the tremendous lengths involved, and friction within the pipe itself, the siphon system could not be made to work. Barring a miracle, all of the fish in Spring Creek will die, probably within the next few days. Water temperatures on lower Spring Creek (where the stream leaves the road) have already reached 80 degrees.

Both Deerfield and Pactola reservoirs have management plans that address water releases. Sheridan Lake does not have a management plan of this nature. Obviously, Sheridan Lake needs a plan that allows for cold water releases to maintain the Spring Creek fishery. A balance between the recreational users of the lake, and the needs of Spring Creek needs to be found.

In the broad sense, this entire watershed is a train-wreck right now. The fish below Sheridan Lake will die, the lake is a very poor quality fishery with 17 different species, and Hill City has sewer problems. According to the lake concessionaire, the number of visitors has dropped from 60,000 per season to 8,000. Obviously, it's time for our government agencies to make this mess a priority. The



Spring Creek is a great fishery when the water's flowing. That's not happening, and the fish will die as a result. It's a sad situation that the BHFF will work to prevent happening again.

present status is an embarrassment.

Finally, special thanks to Jack Erickson and Ron Koth of the S.D. Game, Fish, and Parks Department, and Bob Thompson of the USFS for their efforts in saving this fishery. They tried, and the BHFF appreciates their efforts.

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BHFF Forms Spring Creek Task Force

As indicated above, there's a lot going on (and a fair amount of controversy) regarding Spring Creek and Sheridan Lake. BHFF President Paul Stabile appointed a four-man committee of Ev Hoyt, Mike DeMersseman, Bob DeMersseman, and Mark Vickers to obtain information on steps the BHFF might take that can help improve both the lake and the stream

below.

This committee will report to the BHFF board, and ultimately to the membership at large. By throwing this much intellectual firepower at the problems on Spring Creek, one can only conclude that this is Mr. Stabile's favorite fishery. Stay tuned for further developments.

BHFF Members Can Fish For Less At Eastslope

A long-time supporter of the Black Hills Flyfishers is offering club members discounted rates for fishing, hunting, and lodging at Eastslope Outfitters, based in Billings, Montana.

Jim Loughery owns and operates Eastslope with his wife Joyce. They've been offering hunting and fishing trips throughout the Yellowstone and Big Horn valleys since 1984. Word is they run a first-class operation, and anyone who's won the trips they've donated to the annual auction can attest to the quality of the experience.

Jim is offering the chance for all BHFF members to enjoy Eastslope at discounted rates.

The rates:

- Lodging and meal packages: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner with dessert and morning maid service.....\$100/night
- Lodging only (three person minimum): Morning maid service for dishes and house care, use of facilities, no meals.....\$50/night
- The whole package: Three days fishing, four nights lodging.....\$1,100
- Upland bird and waterfowl: Three days hunting, four night lodging, meals. You'll hunt 45,000 acres of leased private land.....\$1,395



Don't Lose The Membership Card

What is this? There's a card attached to my copy of "Flylines." Yes friends, it's true. There is a card. It's your personal, Black Hills Flyfishers membership card. If you carry this card with you at all times, you will become the life of any party, and attract members of the opposite sex like miller moths to your car grille.

As you know, there are two levels of BHFF membership. We have our "regular" level and our "contributor" level. Besides proving that you're a good sport, a solid conservationist, and that you know the secret handshake, there are other benefits to being a "contributor." See the article on the Bies property elsewhere in this newsletter for all those details.

“Contributors” Invited to Bies Property

As has been previously reported in Flylines, we made arrangements with Travis Bies to establish a private fishery on some property he owns between Deerfield and the Medicine Mountain Boy Scout camp.

The ponds on this property can be fished by those members of the BHFF who are at a “contributor” level. For directions on how to get there, call Mark Vickers at



342-7676 during the day (not weekends). Last fall these ponds held 16-inch fish, and they were growing very rapidly. For some reason, one of the ponds has essentially crashed, and all of the big fish are gone. What happened? Nobody knows.

So, if you go up there this year, you probably won't catch monster trout. Nonetheless, it's a cool place, and you probably won't see anyone else. Be sure to bring your BHFF “contributor” membership card. Without this card, Travis will view you as a trespasser.

May Meeting Previewed Spring Creek Trouble

A solid turnout of interested anglers met on Thursday, May 9, to hear Mystic District Ranger Bob Thompson and his staff discuss the future of Spring Creek and Sheridan Lake. The discussion focused on two primary areas, the replacement of the now-defunct valves from the reservoir, and the chemical renovation of the lake.

As it respects the valves, the USFS is reviewing both a fixed valve (one that is either on or off) and a variable valve. While the fixed valve would be fairly inexpensive, it would not allow the releases to be “managed” for the benefit of the stream fishery below. With a variable valve (and a little water to play with), Spring Creek could become the third tail-water fishery in the Black Hills, and in all likelihood the most productive fishery of the three.

Renovation of the lake was also a topic, but one that probably won't be resolved anytime soon. The cost of renovation is extremely high, and there's quite a bureaucratic process involved in taking this step. Nonetheless, it would be charitable to call Sheridan Lake a poor quality fishery at this time, and it would be a shame to lose this once proud fishery, and all of the angling recreation that it represents. Stay tuned on this one.

In any case, special thanks to Bob Thompson and Craig Kjar for their contributions to an interesting and entertaining meeting.

A Fly To Tie

From the bench of Hans Stephenson
Little Yellow Sally

Hook: Daiichi 1270 14-18

Wing: Bleached Elk Hair

Abdomen: Fine and Dry Light Yellow Dubbing

Hackle: Yellow Whiting saddle feather

Thread: Red 10/0 Bennechi

1. Tie in thread behind eye and wrap to the bend of the hook
2. Wrap several turns of thread near the bend to form a red “egg sack” at the end of the hook.
3. Just in front of the egg sack begin dubbing the abdomen. Dub up $\frac{3}{4}$ of the length of the hook shank.
4. Clean and stack the elk hair and tie in at the point at which the dubbing ends. (The tips of the hair should reach the bend of the hook.)
5. Trim the butt ends of the hair and cover the remaining hump with thread. Tie in hackle at the point where the hair wing was secured.
6. Dub to the eye with the same dubbing material used to form the abdomen.
7. Wrap hackle to eye. Use 3-4 wraps evenly spaced.
8. Whip finish and go fish.



Angling Report

By Dakota Angler and Outfitter

Rapid Creek

Baetis hatches have been tapering off. Sparkle Duns working the best when the hatch occurs. Caddis and Little Yellow Stonefly hatches have been picking up. Use Lorie's Little Yellow Sally, Elk Hair Caddis, and Stimulators in sizes 14-16. Nymph fishing has also been productive with small flashback pheasant tails, WD 40's, and glass bead midge pupa. We suggest a dry/dropper rig with one of the aforementioned dry flies in combination with one of the nymphs. Beetle and ant patterns have also been working when fished off the bank.

Spring Creek

Spring creek has been troubled with low and warming water. It is rumored that cooler water will soon be added into the creek. This should help fishing conditions, however fish have been hard to revive. Fish with caution or don't fish it at all. Nymph fishing has been the most productive with pheasant tail nymphs and midge pupa taking the most fish. Caddis hatches are thick towards evening. Use size 16 Goddard and tan elk hair caddis to imitate the adults. Fish crawling caddis pupa (olive, size 16), glass bead head pupa (tan, size 16), and Stalcup's caddis emergers (tan, size 16) before the hatch. Yellow sally stoneflies have been hatching during the day. Try stimulators and lorie's little yellow stone patterns to imitate the egg-laying females.

Castle Creek

Standard nymph patterns fished deep should be productive. (Size 16 pheasant tails and prince nymphs are catching the most fish.) The brookies aren't too particular early in the year (or any other time for that

matter!). The warming weather should also get fish looking up. Try attractor dries like Wulff's and stimulators. Using a dry/dropper rig can be very productive.

Spearfish Creek

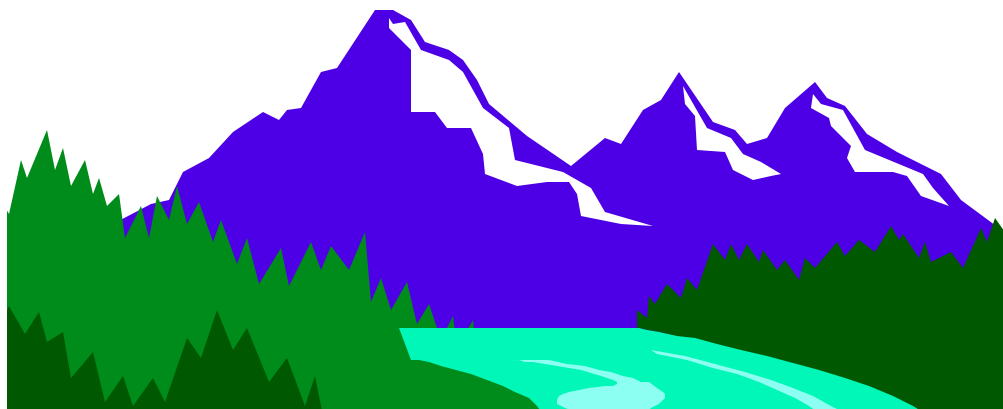
Try size 18 Rubber Leg Prince Nymphs or Copper Johns near the bottom. Baetis hatches are happening just about any day with a little cloud cover. Size 18 comparaduns, Hairwing Duns, and Brook's Sprout emergers are a sure bet on top. Size 18 flashback Pheasant Tail nymphs in tandem with red Midge larva imitations are working well on the bottom. Caddis patterns should start to be effective as the caddis hatches thicken. Use Elk hairs and Stalcup's emergers on top, and Olive Crawling Caddis Pupae and larva on the bottom. Yellow sally stones have been hatching rather thickly during the late afternoon. Try size 14 yellow stimulators and hold on.

Custer State Park

French Creek should still be fishing well. Try starting behind Blue Bell Lodge and working upstream. Woolly Buggers stripped against the current have been enticing the browns and brookies. Caddis hatches should be in full swing on French Creek and Grace Coolidge. Bigger Elk Hair Caddis Patterns are used in these creeks, try them in 12s and 14s in tan or olive.

Deerfield Lake

The inlet to Deerfield Lake has been really good. Try stimulators with a pheasant tail nymph dropper and you'll catch plenty of spunky rainbows and splake. That's all that needs to be said.



Flylines

Published infrequently at the editors' 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 editors 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.

The BHFF Board of Directors

Members of the the Black Hills Flyfishers Board of Directors serve three-year terms. The Board makes financial and policy decisions for the BHFF. Direct questions to any of the members. Most of them are good guys.

Paul Stabile, President, 343-7864

Bradee Beard, 343-9457

Jeff Burns, 343-9732 (h) / 343-2800 (o)

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Black Hills Flyfishers Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

BHFF annual dues are \$15 for a regular membership, and \$30 or more for a contributor level. Please make checks payable to Black Hills Flyfishers.

Our address:

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