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## *fishstories.....*

### **So you want to catch more fish?**

by Dan Grizzly Wulff Sedergren, HSFC President

How often have you heard the following statements? “10% of the fishermen catch 90% of the fish;” “90% of what a trout eats is under water and only 10% is on the surface;” and finally, “If you want to catch fish you have to fish where the fish are.” We’ve all heard them so often that we no longer even stop to consider what is really being said.

It’s true; some people catch more fish than others. I believe the reason is that people who catch more fish understand the precepts, and yes the science, behind the other two statements. Not only do they understand it, but consciously or unconsciously they apply their knowledge when they fish, and seem to catch more fish when they do. So, let’s look at our last two statements, see what’s really behind them, and then see how we apply that knowledge on the water to improve our “catch rate”.

Number 1: **90% of what a trout eats is under water and only 10% is on the surface.** This statement comes from a basic understanding of the lifecycle of aquatic insects. Whether the insect goes from the egg stage to the nymph stage to the adult stage as with mayflies, damselflies and stoneflies, or they go from egg stage to the larva stage to the pupa stage to the adult stage as with caddisflies and midges, all of the stages except the adult stage occur underwater.

Depending on the species, the life span of aquatic insects may range from a few days to several years. That most aquatic insects of interest to the fly fisherman have life spans of a year or longer, and that over 90% of their lives are spent in some immature form underwater, is especially significant. Add to the fact that in addition to aquatic insects trout also eat, leeches, minnows, scuds, and other small fish and we begin to see the rationale behind the statement.

The fly fisherman who either doesn’t know how or chooses not to fish with nymphs, streamers, soft hackles, and emergers is under a sever handicap most of the time they’re on the water, and they probably don’t fit into the category of the 10% that catch the 90%.

Number 2: **If you want to catch fish you have to fish where the fish are.** While this statement may seem obvious at first, an understanding of trout feeding patterns and which stage of the life cycle they are keying on is what we’re really talking about. We know from experience that there are stretches of water that don’t hold fish, so naturally we’re going to pass these areas up. But what about water that does hold fish and we’re still not catching them?

Trout are opportunistic feeders, but generally they won’t expend more energy to chase food than the food supplies. They also tend to eat what is most available. If the majority of aquatic insects available at a particular time are getting ready to move to the adult stage the bugs will start moving and the trout will change their feeding behavior. In the case of stoneflies and damselflies that means they will begin to migrate into shallow water and crawl out on shore or onto vegetation, while caddis, midges, and most mayflies will leave the bottom and transition toward the surface. At this point, trout will begin to move towards shore chasing the stoneflies and damsels or upwards in the water column to pickoff the emerging mayfly, caddis, or midge.

So, when trout are feeding on the emerging form of an insect, fishing a nymph on the bottom is not the best choice we can make. I know we’ve all been told that the proper setup to fish nymphs is to weight them and fish them on the bottom under an indicator, and this technique works just fine as long as the trout are feeding on the bottom. It doesn’t work so well when they are up in the water column. Going back to the life cycle of aquatic insects, let’s look at what’s going on with our typical mayfly. The sexually mature females will return to the water in the general area where they originally hatched, and began laying their eggs. Hundreds of females will lay literally thousands of eggs which descend to the bottom and lay dormant for some period of time. The adult females die and fall onto the surface of the water as “spinners” where they become “trout candy.” Fishing an attractor fly with a spinner trailing behind is a deadly combination. I like to fish the attractor because spinners are so hard to see on the water, and the attractor helps me maintain visual contact.

At some point, all of those eggs laid at the approximate same time will begin to hatch into nymphs at approximately the same time. These nymphs will anchor themselves to some bottom structure such as a rock and will remain in the same general area where they hatched. Depending on the species of mayfly, the nymph will go through several cycles of growth, skin casting or molting, and more growth. This molting process is necessary to accommodate the growth, as an insect's skeletal structure is on the outside of its body. During this process some number will loose their hold and begin to drift along the bottom, becoming "trout candy." Trout will be at or near the bottom feeding on these drifting nymphs and the astute fly fisherman will be fishing the standard, weighted nymph rig, bumping it along the bottom.

Some inner clock tells the nymph that the next time it molts it will change its structure and become an adult. When this clock sounds, the nymph will detach itself from the bottom and began to move upwards in the water column. Again, because the eggs were laid at the same time, and the eggs hatched at the same time, this movement towards the surface will happen at the same time, and hundreds of nymphs will begin moving to the surface at the same time. Guess what the trout does? They stop feeding at or near the bottom and begin moving up in the water column following the nymphs. At this point our astute fly fisherman changes his tactics (i.e. he fishes where the fish are). I like to switch to an attractor dry fly with an un-weighted nymph dropper or fish a soft hackle. I will shorten the dropper or fish the soft hackle higher in the water column as the fish move closer to the surface.

Just below the surface the nymph splits its skeletal shell and the adult begins to emerge. For some period of time these "emergers" will be stuck just under the surface and will begin to struggle to break through the surface film: nows the time to change tactics again. I'll replace the attractor dry with a replica of the mature adult, add about 18 inches of tippet that's been greased with floatant to about 4 to 6 inches from the end, and tie on an emerger pattern such as an RS-2, WD-40 or Barr's emerger. From our vantage point above the surface of the water it often appears that the trout are taking the adults on the surface when in fact what we're seeing is the taking of the emergers stuck in the surface film. Using a dry with an emerger will greatly increase your catch rate, and again you're fishing where the fish are.

Hopefully the next time you're out on the water you'll think about this article, try some of the suggestions that have been made, and become part of the "10% catching the 90%."

## The Internet Fly Fisherman by Dan Grizzly Wulff Sedergren, HSFC President

February 2010 –

This month's web site and blog site come from the same group of folks. The web site is "All About Fly Fishing", and the name describes the site. It's a one-stop place to help you become a better fly fisher man/woman. The site is run and maintained by a group of US and Canadian guys located in the Ontario Province. Check it out at <http://about-flyfishing.com/> In addition to the web site, these folks also maintain a great blog site. In fact it has been rated as the number 9<sup>th</sup> most visited fishing blog on the web. You can find them at <http://about-flyfishing.com/blog/>

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Don Stockman	Fund Raising	775-265-7164
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Mike Phillips	Newsletter Editor	775-265-4610

### TENTATIVE FISH OUT SCHEDULE FOR 2010

<b>Feb. 21</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Hinkson Slough</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Rosachi Ranch</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Pyramid Lake</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Truckee River</b>
<b>June</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Twin Lakes</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>Sept.</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>Oct.</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>Nov.</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>TBA</b>

## Ron Myer's Memorial to Fly Fishing

by Ron Myer, HSFC member

**I am never happier than when I am knee-deep in the midst of one of  
Northwestern America's beautiful backcountry streams with a fly rod in hand.  
My passion for fly fishing has taken me to the far reaches of the Northwestern  
North America. I am at peace in nature because nature is the greatest  
cathedral of all. My communion takes place in the streams and rivers where  
I have explored and fished. The peace I experience in the outdoors  
is a gift from God that I wish I could share more with my family and friends  
as I get older.**

## Membership Renewal is Here

by Mike Phillips, HSFC Newsletter Editor

You have missed the deadline for the renewal membership prize drawing at our February meeting, but it is not too late to renew your membership in our fine club. Ask for a membership form at our next general meeting or go to our website, print off, and mail in a membership form.

## HSFC Annual Dinner Slide Show

by Liz Weirauch, HSFC Member

Just a quick reminder, to start getting those pictures ready. We will be needing them soon! Copy pictures from this past year onto a disk and get it to Liz at the fly shop. Remember to write up some details to help Liz in the captioning process. If you can not transfer your pictures to a disk remember you can send them to Mike Kingston at Bar-rykings@msn.com.

## Life Cycle of Caddis Fly Tying

by Liz Weirauch, HSFC Member

Bill Hammons, a local tier, who has been honored with Federation of Fly Fisher's "Teeny Tiny" award for tying a partridge on a size 36 hook, is giving a tying demonstration/class on the life cycle of one of Eastern Sierra's most prolific insects, the caddis. Bill will be tying a larva lace pupa/nymph, a biot emerger and the very effective E.C. Caddis. This tying event is open to those who would like to tie along with Bill, on Saturday, 9 am, March 27th at The Angler's Edge classroom. There is no charge for the class, (donations to Bill for gas and materials are appreciated) you will need to provide your own tools and space is limited to 10 tiers. The skill level for these flies are high beginner to intermediate. You may contact The Angler's Edge at 782-4734 by March 15th, to reserve your seat.

## February Fish Out – Hinkson Slough

by Mike Phillips, HSFC Editor

Our first fish out for the year will be at Hinkson Slough on Sunday, February 21st. We'll eat breakfast at Dini's in downtown Yerington at 8:00 A.M. and get out to the water at 10:00 A.M. It is recommended that you bring both a dry line and a full sink; we'll know a bit more on what's working out there after getting some reports from early fishing. Normally the water fishes well with nymphs and buggers. Zebra, monster midges, blood midges, princes and zug bugs are the normal fare. Black, purple and dark olive buggers. You can fish from shore (the edges drop off fairly quickly, so wading is hard) or bring your float tube. Contact Liz at the fly shop to get the latest information on Hinkson. Since the club does not have a fish master at this time, it would be appreciated if someone who attends the fish out would take some pictures and send them to me at mikephillips61@charter.net. A summary of the fish out would also be appreciated.

Directions: Take Hwy 208 to Yerington from Hwy 395 (Holbrook Junction), 208 turns into 339, stay on 339 skirts the West side of Yerington and turns into Alternate 95. Stay on Alternate 95 for 3.7 miles, turn right on Miller lane, stay on Miller for 2.9 miles then turn left on Lux lane (there will be a big gate announcing Mason Valley Wildlife Management Area. The signs will guide you to Hinkson Slough. Please park on the north side of the dirt road along the slough.

# HSFC Annual Dinner

## Saturday, March 13 – 7:00 PM

Yes, it's time again for the High Sierra Fly Casters Annual Dinner. This year's event, in case you didn't notice the 28 point headline directly above, will be held **Saturday, March 13**. Same Bat Time (cocktails – 5:30 p.m.; dinner – 7:00 p.m.), same Bat Channel (the C.V.I.C. Hall in beautiful downtown Minden). With all the instability in today's world, isn't it great that ticket prices remain unchanged at \$25.00 in advance and \$30.00 at the door?

This dinner, of course, is our **BIG** fund raiser for the year. So drop anything and everything you might have planned (the grandchildren will get over it) and join us on **March 13**. Tickets will be available at the February General Meeting, or you can pick 'em up at The Angler's Edge.

## February General Meeting Presentation

by Mike Phillips, HSFC Editor

Jenny Hatch, director of Northern Sierra Region of Cal Trout, will be our featured speaker on February 17. She will be explaining what Cal Trout does and their work with wild trout. Jenny will also go over some of their major projects and partnership opportunities. The meeting starts at 7:00 P.M. Don't forget to bring some raffle money. We will also be holding our three prize drawing for members who renewed before February 1st. See you there!

### Important reminder to our members:

1. **Your Nevada fishing license is good until the end of February of 2010, so you do not need to purchase one until March 1st.**
2. **Your California license unfortunately expired at the end of December, so you need to take out a loan and buy a new one.**

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Upcoming HSFC Events

HSFC General Meeting	February 17
Fish Out at Hinkson Slough	February 21

General meetings are held at 7:00 P.M. on the third Wednesday of each month (except December) at the Carson Valley Methodist Church, 1375 Centerville Lane in Gardnerville.

The HSFC Board meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month at The Angler's Edge, 1506 U.S. Hwy. 395 N. in Gardnerville.  
HSFC members are welcome to attend.

We welcome contributions, quotes, jokes, stories and articles to *fishstories*.....

Please send to: Mike Phillips, 887 Marion Way, Gardnerville, NV, 89460 or [mikephillips61@charter.net](mailto:mikephillips61@charter.net)