

Subject: Fish with a red, white, and blue fly!

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From: Alaska Fly Fishers

To: Casey Andrysiak

Featuring Fish Talk, Spring Seminar Wrap-Up, Tying Clinic News, and more!



FLYLINES

Official Newsletter of the Alaska Fly Fishers

July 2017

PRESIDENT'S HOOK



While most of us are "Outdoorsing" – Fishing, boating, camping, hiking, biking, sightseeing, entertaining family and/or friends, or a mixture of the above and more; some of us are also taking advantage of the long summer Alaskan nights to take care of club business. There is a lot to report on this month.

I would like to begin by sending my gratitude to Kory Murdoch for his service to the club and time working hard on the board, coordinating the Mat-Su Sportsmans Show, and greatly assisting in many other club events the last year and a half. Kory has had to step down to family and professional reasons and will be sorely missed. I know that he plans to continue to be active (even more when fishing season starts winding down – probably about December for him!) hopefully he will get the opportunity to serve on the board in the future. Best of luck Kory, we look forward to seeing you on the water. However, we have had the fortunate opportunity to gain the services of longtime, life member Mr. Ed Atwell. I look forward to taking advantage of Ed's experience, ideas, and history with the club to move forward with good things. Welcome Ed!

Unfortunately, this year our regularly scheduled July General Monthly Membership Meeting, the first Monday of the month falls on July 3rd. With this making for a long, four day Independence Day weekend for many, the board discussed moving the meeting back a week. After verifying availability with the Elks Lodge and the speaker, the board approved that decision. The meeting will be at the same time and location 7pm at the Elks Lodge in the Northway Mall on Monday, July 10th. We apologize for any inconvenience this might cause, but hope more members will be able to attend.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Dustin Slinker, owner of The Bait Shack for winning The Andy Sorenson Sportsmanship Award, a Trophy which is displayed at the Downtown Hope Center (formerly Downtown Soup Kitchen) and \$250, sponsored by The Alaska Fly Fishers, at The 2017 Downtown Hope Center Slam'n Salm'n King Salmon Derby at Ship Creek. The award is presented annually to the person who, voted on by fellow anglers, is deemed to be the most sportsmanlike during the derby.

In a slightly different matter, it was brought to my attention that during our auction in April there was an item that I bid on during live auction which was not moving very fast and ended up winning after two bids that were significantly lower than the cost of the item. After discussing the issue with one of the auction co-coordinators it was agreed that I would return the item to the club to use for next years auction in hopes that it would fetch a better value for the club. In hindsight, this was not the best for the club, as it was after the fact disclosed that the other bidder would have purchased the item for the same price. That person approached a board member and indicated interest in purchasing the item for the same price I had bid. The board decided to offer

the item to that person for that price. I apologize for my actions that may have put a bad taste in the mouth of any auction attendees. This was not done with any malicious intention, but what I felt was in the best interests of the club. This issue has been discussed at the board level and will be a learning experience. I would like to extend my appreciation to all who attended the auction and especially those who helped to put on another successful AFF event.

An update on the August AFF Annual Picnic, which serves as the General Membership Meeting for August. The construction at the Mirror Lake Park will be shortly, if not has been completed. With that, the facility will be available for us to use on August 7th. We will have the pavilion reserved from 4pm-11pm and will be enjoying the opportunity to hold our picnic at a brand new facility. The AFF provides hot dogs, hamburgers, brats, paper plates, plastic ware, and beverages (Alcohol is not allowed at this facility, as per our permit). Please join us and bring your favorite side dish, bag of chips, desert, or your own main course to share. There will be games, door prizes, and fun for all. Feel free to bring you waders, rod and reel, and float tube for some great angling from the shore or out away from the bank. I look forward to seeing you all there.

May the fish be with you and be safe out there,

Patrick Malone

President, Alaska Fly Fishers

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JULY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The meeting will be *July 10th*, at the Elks Lodge at the Northway Mall. This is a change from the usual general meeting, the first Monday of the month, because of the 4th of July holiday.

Please note: General meetings are the first Monday of the month. General meetings are held at 7:00 pm at the Elks Lodge at the Northway Mall, 3101 Penland Pkwy A14, Anchorage. There is no general meeting in April, August or September, other club activities take place those months. Please check the calendar on the website for more information.

FISH TALK by Bill Hauser

Homing

I have a question. How do salmon find their way back from the ocean to their home stream? And quite possibly to the very spawning grounds where they had been spawned.

You all should know the answer. The young salmon at the smolt stage memorize the unique odor of the freshwater stream where they had originated and where many have spent the early part of their life. When adults return to the stream they follow that odor memory back but in reverse order. Right?

Okay. So now I have another question. What about the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon out on the end of the Homer Spit? How do the salmon home to that site? There is no stream and no freshwater.

I was involved with that project in the early 1980s. Nick Dudiak got it started and I helped.

All right. What is the point of all this? You see, that too is where we started. We agreed this would be a good project location except – no freshwater for imprinting. As it happens, scientists, in the process of their experiments to learn how salmon imprinted and homed, discovered something interesting. They learned that molecules of organic matter dissolved in the freshwater were key ingredients in the process of imprinting. The organic matter – and probably some inorganic chemicals, too - is what creates the unique signature of each stream. Then, the scientists further tested salmon with an artificial organic chemical called “morpholine.”

“Aha,” we said, and we ordered some morpholine. We dispensed the morpholine into the hatchery raceway

while the smolts were being prepared for release. We planned to dose the lagoon with the chemical in the following years as an attractant so the returning adults could home.

A year or so after the first smolt release, Nick and I were at the lagoon waiting for the hatchery truck which was hauling the load of smolts, the morpholine, and the morpholine delivery apparatus. Abruptly, we realized something strange was going on. Fish were in the lagoon and jumping. Silvery fish. Huh. Never saw that before. Wait, these are salmon! How can that be? The only salmon here are from the smolts we had previously released. But there is no morpholine to attract them.

After a year or so with similar experience, we took a risk and discontinued the use of morpholine. But you have seen it, yourself. The adult salmon return to the fishing lagoon just fine without the attractant and without freshwater.

So this raises another question... how is this possible; how are they able to do they do this? This question has nagged at me most of the last 30 years.

Finally, within the past several years, we think a more complete story has emerged. As it happens, during the past 3 decades, I also acquired a bright son-in-law, Peter, who has become a very capable fishery scientist (and fisherman). He and I have discussed this topic often and he has become active with research projects in Alaska and studying other research reports. He has steered us into a very plausible explanation of the long dilemma. So here goes:

1. It has become clear (with this and other studies) that freshwater is not *required* for imprinting and homing of salmon; i.e., it can happen in saltwater.
2. Probably, organic molecules alone are not required and inorganic molecules may also be important.
3. Research on sockeye salmon in British Columbia suggests that salmon smolts and returning adults can use the earth's geomagnetic field for imprinting and homing. (Send an email if you want more details or explanation.)
4. Most likely, salmon, migrating around the North Pacific for one or several years, use the geomagnetic field for orientation and navigation back to nearshore areas. (Sea turtles use this. Migrating birds do this.) Salmon also have the ability to use a sun-compass system for navigation.
5. When nearshore, some amount of geomagnetic homing probably kicks in.
6. Finally, fine scale terminal homing probably relies on olfactory (or odor).

So this all suggests the process of imprinting and homing just that. A continuous process that relies different but overlapping stimuli to accomplish the sequence of overlapping parts of their life histories.

P.S. There is also evidence that imprinting may begin at the alevin stage while they are still in the gravel after hatching in mid winter.

Do you have a question for FISH TALK? Contact Bill at karelbill@gci.net.

Bill has published *Fishes of the Last Frontier, Life Histories, Biology, Ecology, and Management of Alaska Fishes and Letters from Alaska, The Inside to the Outside*.

Read sample chapters at www.billhauserbooks.com

FLY TYING CLINIC

The next tying clinic is Saturday, July 15th, at the WJ Hernandez Sport Fish



Hatchery on the corner of Post and Reeve Blvd.

FUND RAISING AUCTION DONORS - WORTH REPEATING

THANKS To Alaska Fly Fishers' Supporters – the Donors to our Annual Fundraising Auction for 2017. Let them know that you appreciate the support for our club.

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Rapids Camp Lodge
REI
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Snake River Net Company
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Mike Zavosky

Submitted by [Cheryl Cline](#)

MEMBERS' CORNER

If you have an item to sell, something to share, or even a picture to post, please share it with the club. Contact the editor at aff.flylines.ed@gmail.com



JULY PROJECT HEALING WATERS UPDATE



New PHWFF Region Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc. announced the formation of a new region – Alaska. The Anchorage program was previously in the Northwest Region but will now be part of the Alaska region. Jan Schnorr was appointed the Regional Coordinator and assumed her responsibilities on June 1st. The announcement can be accessed at

<http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/announcements/two-phwff-regions-re-organized-to-better-serve-areas-veterans/> and information about Alaska Region programs can be viewed at <http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/programs/locations/alaska/>.

Annual Family Fishing Picnic: On June 1st, PHW hosted their annual family fishing picnic at the Green Lake Cabin on JBER. With the temperatures hovering around 70+ degrees, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and evening picnic. More than 40 people enjoyed the activities. The event started with the excitement of spotting a black bear near the cabin; Mike and Manfred chased it away so the kids could go outside. Bob and Duane fired up the grills and everyone enjoyed the food, fellowship and desserts without being attacked by bugs - a true rarity this time of year; then off to fishing on the lake where the bows were very cooperative and everyone caught fish. A special thanks goes out to George Cook, Sage Representative, who generously donated his time to give casting lessons to participants during the afternoon.

Donations: PHW is looking for both cash and in-kind donations to support participants in the program. All donations help fund year round activities for participants. Please consider cash/check donations to our program; checks should be made out to Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing. If you want this local program to be the recipient, list "Anchorage" in the memo section of the check. On line donations can be made at <http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/donate/>. In-kind contributions of fly tying materials, equipment, rods, reels, etc. are also appreciated. Please consider "paying it forward" in support of veterans with disabilities.

Volunteer Opportunities: AFF members who have tying, rod building, fishing education, and casting skills are invited to become volunteers for Project Healing Waters. The number of participants has increased substantial during the past several months so additional volunteers are needed. Please consider donating your time to help veterans with disabilities learn how to fly fish and welcome them into our fishing community. Our meeting times and locations are listed below along with other contact information.

Anchorage: William Jack Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery, Thursdays 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Wasilla: VA Clinic, Tuesdays 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Email: PHWAlaska@gmail.com

Facebook: Project Healing Waters Alaska

Submitted by [Jan Schnorr](#)

Submissions to the newsletter are due no later than 2 Wednesdays prior to the first Monday of the month. Please type all considerations in a word document, in Arial font, size 12. Photos are to be attached separately in a .jpg file. Email to aff.flylines.ed@gmail.com.

Mailing address: 200 W. 34th Ave, Box 1233 Anchorage, AK 99503

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