

On the Fly

Official Newsletter of California Fly Fishers Unlimited, a 501c(3) Non-profit - August 2018



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Hex Hatch

Hexagenia limbata dun during Lake Almanor hatch

CFFU with Lance Gray at Lake Almanor

By Laurie Banks

On the Road to Lake Almanor for the famous "Hex Hatch" with Ken Davis, Ken Giesser, Mather Barlow, Trevor Segelke and Russ Heckley.

On the weekend of June 22 -24, Ken (Davis) and I drove to Lake Almanor to meet up with the above mentioned guys to fish Lake Almanor during one of the famous Hex hatches. This has been on my "bucket list" for years. The six of us CFFU'ers each put in \$100 and hired guide Lance Gray for Saturday.

Although Ken Giesser had graciously invited us for dinner at his campsite Friday night we had to decline as my Ken (Davis- the bug guy) was geekin' to look for these huge yellow Hexagenia (Hex) mayflies. We drove to a day-use area called Dyers View at about 6 p.m. and impatiently waited for something to happen. We were on a bugging, not fishing mission this evening. About two dozen float tubes, pontoon boats

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Fishing a Hex Hatch is done primarily after sunset. Night-time image, adjusted in Photoshop, submitted by Russ Heckley.

CFFU Calendar - AUGUST 2018

DISCLAIMER: Dates on this calendar are subject to change. Check the CFFU website for the most up-to-date event schedules. [CFFU Calendar LINK](#)

AUGUST	EVENT	INFORMATION LINK
1	CFFU Board Meeting	Board Meeting Link
7	General Meeting	General Meeting Link
8	New Members Meeting	New Members Link
16	Tech Thursday	Tech Thursday Link
21	101 Class - Part 1	101 Class Link
23	101 Class - Part 2	101 Class Link
25	Casting Clinic & Mentor Outing	Casting Clinic Link
19-25	Outing - Bristol Bay Alaska	Outing Link
26-9/1	Outing - Bristol Bay Alaska	Outing Link
29	Social Night - Fishing Technique: Mending	Social Link

MARK YOUR CALENDAR - MAJOR EVENTS

October 13	President's Outing	President's Outing
November 11	Annual Fundraising Dinner	Annual Dinner

August 2018 Speaker - Jeff Putnam

By Trevor Segelke

Be sure not to miss Jeff Putnam's presentation of "Fly Fishing Techniques for Two-handed rods - From Soft Hackles to Intruders"

Jeff Putnam is a long-time friend of CFFU. He is owner of the Jeff Putnam Fly Fishing Schools. He has worked in the fly fishing industry from shops, manufacturers' rep, fly tier and guide. He will be joining us at our August meeting to share his passion of fly fishing with two-handed rods.

His presentation will cover information on both spey & switch rods and the right fly lines for dead drifting and swinging flies for trout, steelhead and stripers. He'll cover basic swinging techniques with two handed rods. Then, give a local fishing report for the rest of the 2018 season indicating when and where to use the fishing techniques he covered.

Jeff Putnam's Fly Fishing Schools
 Website: www.jpflyfishing.com
 Website: www.jpflyfishing.tv



CFFU with Lance Gray at Lake Almanor - CONTINUED



Lance Gray giving CFFU members a tour of suggested Lake Almanor fishing sites.

and kayaks were lined up around 60 feet from shore. It was hard to see that far, but it didn't look like there were many rods bent that evening. The sun went down, the weather cooled, the mosquitoes came out and at 9:01 so did the Hex.

We watched from shore in fascination as hundreds, maybe thousands of them appeared within our sight. If you looked in the shallow water you could see them emerging. Whitish dots bubbled to the surface of the water. There was no struggling to get free from their nymphal shucks. As soon as they popped to the surface these bright yellow mayflies immediately flew into the trees. A few didn't make it; they fell on their sides. Their wings became wet. Unable to right themselves they flopped helplessly in the water, powerless to fly away. Had there been a fish nearby these Hex

would have been easy prey. By 9:17, it was all but over. A few more emerged here and there but the incredible flurry was finished for the night. We stood amazed!

We watched the headlamp laden fishermen come in, struggling to carry their vessels to their cars in the dark. I asked a gal, who was putting her kayak away, how the fishing was. She told me in the group of about 14 fishermen near her she only saw three hookups and one to net. That news made me wonder; with so many nymphs for the fish to gorge themselves on, would we be able to fool them with our artificial flies? I mentally prepared myself, for the possibility that I too, might get skunked Saturday evening.

We six CFFU members met our guide, Lance Gray, at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. He

had handouts for all of us which among other things included a map of the lake and rod rigging with his favorite flies. We took a tour of the lake, with Lance explaining the structure of the lake's bottom and which areas were best to fish at different times of the year. We explored a variety of access points to the lake. Afterwards, we headed to his cabin for a BBQ steak dinner, then caravanned to the beach. We rigged rods, blew up our tubes and headed out. With Lance's guidance we had much better luck than the group we saw on Friday. Everyone caught good sized fish: Kokanee Salmon, Bass and Rainbow Trout. We kept Lance busy netting fish. Right at 9:00 PM the Hex popped up all around us. Ken Giesser poetically described them as "Tiny yellow sailboats floating on the water". Again, by 9:15 PM the burst ended, and so did the hook-ups. After putting our gear away in the dark we topped off a great evening by going to a sports bar in Chester for beer and fish tacos. Here we discussed putting together a CFFU outing for 2019 so others could experience this remarkable fishing experience.

“Tiny yellow sailboats floating on the water”

(Ken Giesser's description of *Hexagenia duns* during emergence at sunset).



Interview with Mary Ellen Mueller

By Laurie Banks

Not many of you may know much about our 1st vice president Mary Ellen Mueller. She is a very interesting person with a fascinating background.

Laurie: You had a busy week. You went to the Kern Plateau fishing for Heritage trout and then you did part of Eppies Great Race!

Mary Ellen: I did the kayak portion. My friends who did the running and biking gave us a big head start so I really pushed myself because I didn't want to let them down. We came in second for our age group, and we even got a little plaque.

Laurie: How was the Heritage trip?

Mary Ellen: We had a great time and I got all three varieties of fish. The Little Kern Rainbow, Golden Trout and Little Kern Golden.

Laurie: What's next in your busy schedule?

Mary Ellen: I'm off to Greeley, Colorado to play in a golf tournament. It was started by friends who formed a non-profit and with the money they raise they give grants to local people and families who are fighting cancer. It's been going on for 15 years, and the only one I missed is when my nephew got married.

Laurie: Are you from Colorado? Is that where you went to school?

Mary Ellen: No, I grew up in Manhattan Beach in Southern California. I had some friends who were moving to Montana and looking for a roommate. I applied to Montana State University and got accepted. I ended up getting my degrees there in fish and wildlife management. After Montana, I moved to Laramie, Wyoming and obtained my PhD in Zoology and Physiology from the University of Wyoming. My dissertation was the effects of acid rain on Brook Trout.

Laurie: You've had an interesting career.

Mary Ellen: As a student I worked for U.S. Fish and Wildlife, at the Bozeman



Mary Ellen with a beautiful Lahontan Cutthroat at Pyramid Lake.

Fish Culture Center which was a research hatchery. I also had a summer job working for Montana Fish and Parks doing creel surveys at Lake Koocanusa on the Montana /Canada border. It was so remote the nearest phone was 50 miles away. I slept in a sleeping bag in a 10x10 trailer. As well as the creel surveys I did habitat surveys, measured flows, and evaluated stream structure.

Laurie: You had to be concerned about Grizzlies.

Mary Ellen: Yes, and people too. I didn't wear a uniform. People up there don't like a government presence. I carried a 357 magnum. My friend told me save a bullet for myself because my gun wasn't big enough to drop a grizzly. I didn't have a face to face encounter with a bear, but I saw them and lots of tracks. It was a little scary; no, it was a lot scary.

Laurie: Not a lot scares you. I know you like to kayak in the ocean. Isn't that frightening? I'm even afraid to watch Shark Week on TV.

Mary Ellen: It's not scary at all. I like the freedom. You get to see all kinds of

wildlife: dolphins, sea lions, and humpback whales. The humpbacks come up around you and swim under you. It's fabulous, breathtaking, and incredible. I really can't find the words to describe it. It's one of my passions along with fly fishing, and golfing.

Laurie: Speaking of fly fishing, when did you start?

Mary Ellen: When I was in college in Bozeman. They offered classes in horseback riding and fly fishing. I'd dry fly fish the Madison, Gallatin and Hyalite Creek. I just loved it. But I kind of got away from it when I took a job in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Laurie: You've had an interesting career.

Mary Ellen: In Ann Arbor I worked in a research lab doing microscopic histology work, studying the tumors in Great Lakes fish. I later moved to Washington, DC. I was the Fish Health Coordinator for all fish health centers in the nation that support hatchery systems. They would diagnose and treat any problems

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Interview with Mary Ellen Mueller - Continued

the hatcheries had. My last year in D.C. was the most fun. I worked as staff for the senate interior appropriation sub-committee. I was privy to everything, yet responsible for nothing. I learned how and why budgets for the Interior agencies were developed and it is like a sausage being made.


Laurie: After that did you returned to California?

Mary Ellen: Continuing to work with the Fish and Wildlife Service, I moved to Cal-

ifornia to work on the flow agreement for the Trinity River, with Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt to restore adequate flows for the fisheries to survive. After 24 years with USFWS I moved to USGS for my last six years overseeing 16 scientists. Some were world renown. They were working on all kinds of projects; toads, otters, cougars, you name it. I worked with budgeting and keeping them out of trouble with political issues. There's nothing better than working with people who are smarter than you. They

are inspiring; I was learning all the time.

Laurie: CFFU is very lucky to have you as our 1st vice president. You are also on our conservation committee, were the assistant fishmeister for the Truckee Outing, volunteered to help Rich Kendall lead the veterans program and are always pitching in when needed.

Mary Ellen: It's a privilege to work with CFFU. Our group teaches all the bases of the things I love-fishing, conservation and community service. 

2018 ENTOMOLOGY WORKSHOP & BBQ

By Tim Au Young

If you had the opportunity to attend and participate in the annual Entomology Class BBQ you had a great time learning something about invertebrate biology, met some new people, and had a very nice meal. For those members who did not attend, y'all missed out! I would like to thank Ken Davis www.creekman.com, again for his continued devotion to this club and his passion for sharing his knowledge. His thought provoking insight and providing of the long handled seines was great. Laurie Banks for her continued support of Ken's instruction, and her part in providing the grand raffle prize to the member who "named that bug."

Chef Jeff Stephens, and his crew of sous chefs, Brad Stone and Ed Morrell. Jeff packed up his 2 Weber BBQ grills and dragged them to the event from his home in a distant city not to be named. Great job getting the burgers/cheeseburgers and Polish dogs ready for the masses after the specimen collection just at magic hour.....that special time of the day. Last, but not least, all of the members who attended and took time out of their precious lives to learn something to enhance their fly fishing experience and donated all of the wonderful appetizers, salads, desserts, and drinks. Without all of your participation, the event goes for not..... We had over 30




people attend, with a handful of people who were NOT members, and that is perfectly fine.

All in all, I could not have asked for anything to change, except maybe to tone

down the heat by 10-15 degrees, but I think that is beyond my pay grade. So as some of you may, or may not remember who said this: "Happy trails to you.... until, we meet again.....", Fish on!





VALERIE ADAMS
Insurance Agency
7932 Sunset Avenue, Ste G
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

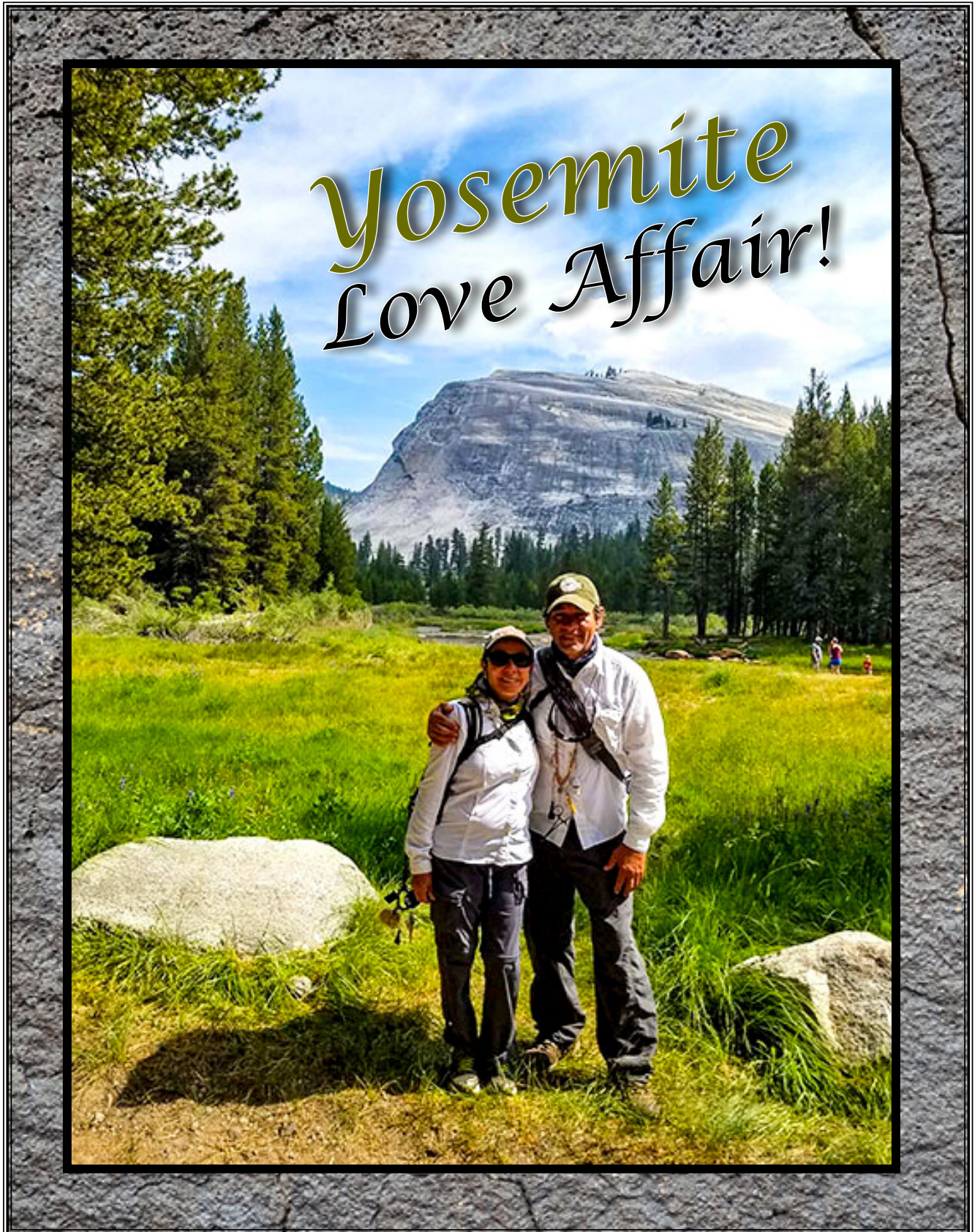
Valerie Adams
Lic #0715432
Bus: (916) 961-3436 Fax: (916) 961-3497
vadamsinsurance@yahoo.com

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[Val Adams Website Link](#)

POSTCARD from Yosemite National Park

Rosie and Ty Espinosa on a photo break from catching fish in Yosemite National Park



OUTSTANDING Catch - Virginia Stone



Virginia Stone with a gorgeous Montana rainbow. Virginia is an iconic angler with significant experience fishing Montana waterways.

WATCH for THIS: Aly Cardoza at Fish Camp



Aly Cardoza with a nice rainbow caught during Fish Camp on Antelope Creek. Her Fish Camp fee was covered by the CFFU Susan Sylstra Youth Fund. We will have a report from Aly in the Newsletter and a short presentation at the September General Meeting.

Financed
by the
**Susan
Sylstra
Youth
Fund**

Bug of the Month - Hexagenia

By Ken W. Davis

Hexagenia limbata (Hex) is a large mayfly that prefers different habitat than the mayflies that we see in riffles or weedbeds. Hexagenia like mud banks. They dig a U-shaped burrow and thrive in there while bringing in water (and food) using their fancy gills to move the water through the burrow. They do leave the protection of their muddy home to forage nearby.

Major populations of Hexagenia are found in Lake Almanor and the Fall River drainage. Smaller populations survive in Lake Natoma, Putah Creek and other waterways that have the mud banks preferred by these aquatic insects.


Hexagenia typically live for three years.



When they decide to emerge, anglers, trout and bug-lovers go ballistic. Based on size, coloration and maturation, I believe the specimen in my image above is a two-year-old bug.

Although I have seen the adults active

during the daytime, the significant hatches occur at sunset and after the sun is down.

Hex hatches are a biological phenomenon in action. I suggest you experience one in the future. 

AUCTION ITEM - CFFU 2018 Annual Dinner & Fundraiser



This is one of the many beautiful fish-themed prints donated by George Farrell. This signed/ numbered print by Marilyn Zar Zane will be one of the many items up for auction at the CFFU Annual Dinner. (November 11th, California Auto Museum, 2200 Front Street, Sacramento) Tickets will go on sale (\$45) starting at the September General Meeting.

[Annual Dinner page LINK](#)

Please Support our Donors!



[Tackle Shop Website Link](#)

Chasing Heritage Trout



Dave Lentz with a stunning California Golden Trout. Note the creek behind Dave.

This summer has seen CFFU folks heading to all corners of the state to chase Heritage Trout. There are already quite a few CFFU'ers who have earned the Heritage Trout Challenge award and it appears that there will be many more in the near future. I think it would be cool to be the club in California with the most anglers to complete the Heritage Trout Challenge. We should gather all of these CFFU HT Challengers together for a group photo, which we could submit to Cal FlyFisher. Perhaps they would run the photo and give us another shout-out in that fine magazine.

I don't have full details but here's some of the recent Heritage Trout activities: "Team Heritage Forrest"... Forrest Oldham and his partners—Nick Ciani, Marna Ambroselli, and Paul Wisheropp ventured to far northeast California and caught Goose Lake Redband and McCloud River Redband. Forrest also said that three of the group managed to survive vehicle breakdowns and highway closures to catch Coastal Cutthroats at the North Coast.

At least four other club members caught Coastal Cutthroat in three different streams during June.

Nine other CFFUers ventured to the Kern Plateau in July seeking the three golden trout (Little Kern Golden Trout,



The Heritage Hotties!

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Memo from the CFFU President - Dave Lentz

Kern River Rainbow Trout, California Golden Trout) I accompanied these two teams who supported our CFFU conservation programs by bidding on the Heritage Trout Challenge Advisor package at the November, 2017 CFFU Annual Dinner and Fundraiser.

“The Fire Team”—Mark Wells, Mike Wigginton, Jeff Stephens, and Trevor Segelke

“The Heritage Hotties”—Sheila Cavanagh, Bev Lorens, May Ellen Mueller, and Meloney Welborn.

Do me a favor—if you are a CFFU member in progress pursuing the Heritage Trout Challenge or you have already earned the Challenge (include your certificate number), shoot me an email so I can track how many there are of us.

dlentz@surewest.net

Thanks, Dave Lentz



The FIRE Team




Forrest Oldham with a McCloud Redband Trout



Team Heritage Forrest

Search for the Coastal Cutthroat Trout

Text and images by Ken W. Davis

In late June, Laurie Banks and I took the trip to the beautiful coastline of Northern California in search of the Coastal Cutthroat Trout (CCT). With advice from Dave Lentz and on-line information we drove to Crescent City and started our search for the CCT at nearby Little Jones Creek, a tributary of the Smith River. Success! We scored quickly at Little Jones Creek then headed for Prairie Creek State Park and Fern Canyon. Anglers turned tourists! 

Little Jones Creek



Coastal Cutthroat Trout



A beauty caught by Ken Davis on the first cast. Okay, the third cast, the first two were in the trees. Technically, according to Laurie Banks, the fish was caught on the first drift in the creek.

Fern Canyon - Home Creek



Paul Wisheropp caught his Coastal Cutthroat from Home Creek. Fern Canyon is a popular hiking destination for tourist. Scenes from Jurassic Park II were filmed here. Paul and his wife Lori left early to hike the canyon to avoid the crowds. According to Lori, people laughed at the sight of Paul carrying a fishing rod saying, "There's no fish here!" Paul had the last laugh. Finding a deep pool he managed to bring three Coastal Cutthroat to net within a half hour.



Coastal cutthroat caught by Paul Wisheropp in Home creek

On the Road - Search for the Coastal Cutthroat Trout



Truckee River Outing

By Sam Seaton

Hi Everyone. If you did not attend the 2018 Truckee Outing, you missed out on some terrific fishing as well as a great opportunity to visit with fellow CFFU members. The Carmel Ski Lodge was again a wonderful place for members to stay. With all the amenities of home and a laid back atmosphere, it is really the perfect spot to rest and recreate. Even the weather cooperated, with days running in the mid-70's .


A good time was had by all at our Saturday group dinner. Chef Sam Seaton wielded the tongs, serving up some fine barbequed chicken, while sous-chef Guy Deaner prepared the salad and beans. Guy also served as our mixologist, whipping up mighty tasty Margaritas (which certainly enhanced the telling of each night's fish tales).

After Saturday's dinner, Ken Davis, our very own entomologist, shared pictures and discussed types of aquatic organisms we might find in the local river habitats. The group then traveled to Sagehen Creek to find and identify some of the colorful little squiggles Ken had told us about. Ken discovered stonefly nymphs, green drake nymphs, and sculpin. After the on-site demonstration, the group separated and successfully fished the creek.

On Friday and Saturday evening we gathered together and reported on our fishing experiences. Most members were getting several grabs and hookups throughout the weekend. Ken Nordeste, Andy Penn, Mike Williams, Laurie Banks, Nick Ciani, Dave Tevlin, Carol Tevlin, Marina Ambroselli, Phil Shipley and Meloney



Sam Seaton, leader of the Truckee Outing.

Welborn together caught 36 fish, ranging from 6 to 16 inches. And a big congratulations to Sandy Moore who caught her 1st fish ever! I would like to thank assistant fishmeisters Mary Ellen Mueller and Guy Deaner for their support in making this a successful outing. 

Editor's Note: Mixologists Guy Deaner and Sam Seaton, whipped up some powerful Margaritas. Fun was had by all, especially those who partook in the hyper-strong Mexican drinks. Rumor has it that the deadly duo were new to making Margaritas. They used a Margarita Mix (that already had Tequila in the brew) and threw in some rather classy Tequila to make a "great" drink. **Note:** Miss Laurie Banks recommends that you only have one drink if you want to fish the next morning!!!



[Link to Kiene's website](#)



FLY FISHING SPECIALTIES
Wild Rivers to Blue Waters

6360 Tupelo Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621

[Link to Fly Fishing Specialties Website](#)

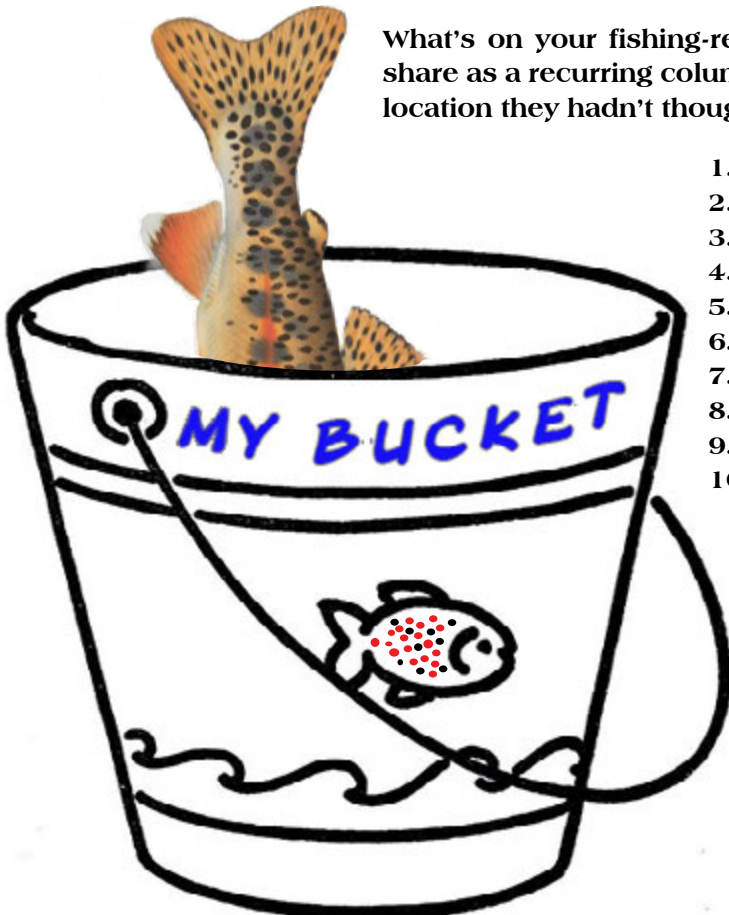
American River Cleanup

By Bill Felts, American River Cleanup Coordinator

I want to thank the following CFFU members for their work in cleaning our Mile 16 South of the American River Parkway: Carol and David Tevlin, George Lazar, Gary Howard, Victor and Maria Romero, Larry Coulter, Greg Howard, Louis Hein, Bill Conway, Dick Angus, Craig McCulloch, Ken Waterstreet, Nick Ciani, Mic McPherson, and Howard Ross. Thanks everyone! We left the bikeway very clean and were thanked by many runners and cyclists.



My Bucket List - Laurie Banks



What's on your fishing-related "bucket list"? Would you be interesting to share as a recurring column? It might inspire others to fish for a species or a location they hadn't thought of before. Here's my list. Please send us yours!

1. Complete the Heritage Trout Challenge- Done
2. Fish during a Hex hatch - Done
3. Do the Nevada Slam
4. Do the Wyoming Cutslam
5. Fish Alaska
6. Catch a Montana Grayling
7. Catch a Tiger Trout
8. Catch a Peacock Bass
9. Dig for fossil fish - Done
10. Drift the Yellowstone

Fly of the Month - MODIFIED Lance Gray's Hex Nymph

By Christie Roberts

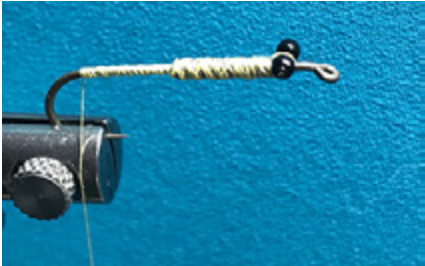
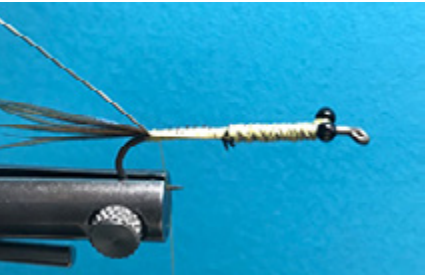

Lance Gray's Hex nymph is a very effective fly when fishing the Hex Hatch. If you are going to fish Alman- or during the Hex Hatch you can buy the originals from Lance at the link below. He also sells kits.

We handed Christie one of the flies and asked her to figure out how to tie it. She made her own unique changes to the original, but figured out the steps involved. Thanks Christie!

[Lance Gray's website LINK](#)

Materials	
Hook:	TMC 9295 Size 6 or Umpqua U 302
Weight:	15 wraps of .025 lead-free wire
Eyes:	Small black bead chain
Tail:	Olive pheasant tail
Thread:	Danville Flymaster 3/0 cream
Body:	Wapsi antron charcoal grey (I used a mix of charcoal and blue winged olive superfine dry fly dubbing)
Gills:	Natural grey filoplume / semiplume (I used sharptail grouse [Tympanicus phasianellus] as the best choice but you could use Hungarian partridge or pheasant and shorten the gill length.)
Rib:	Medium or brassie gold wire
Wing Case:	Natural turkey wing
Thorax:	Wapsi antron charcoal grey (I used a mix of charcoal and blue winged olive superfine dry fly dubbing)
Legs:	Olive pheasant tail

Modified Lance Gray's Hex Nymph

STEP	IMAGE	TYING INSTRUCTIONS
1.		Image 1: Begin with jam knot 1 ½ to 2 hook eye widths from eye and dress the hook to rear bend. Use 15 wraps of lead free wire (.025) for about 2/3 of hook shank. Cover wire with thread several times. Lash on bead chain eyes, leaving a hook eye's length in front (you can secure with dot of Zap a Gap). Bring thread to the rear bend of hook.
2.		Image 2: Make tail about 2/3 length of shank. Place one wrap of thread under tail. Wrap thread to the end of wire. Wrap and trim excess tail feather off. Add in medium or brassie gold wire at end of wire and wrap back to bend in hook to beginning point. Dubbing begins at rear of hook and bring to about 1/3 point on hook where thorax begins. Slightly taper into a carrot shape.
3.		Image 3: Picture of pin feather or filoplume, semiplume.

CFFU Club Meetings

First Tuesday of each month.

Richard Conzelmann Community Center ([PDF Map Link](#))
2201 Cottage Way, Sac., CA 95825

General Meeting Schedule:

6:15 p.m.: Fly Tying Demo
7:00 p.m.: Program Presentation
8:00 p.m.: Club Information

CFFU Membership

New Member: Individual: \$40.00

New Member: Family: \$55.00
(Includes spouse and children under 18 years old.)

New Member: Junior: \$25.00 (Under 18 years old)

New Membership Dues:

(Includes \$10 initiation fee.)
After September 1, annual fees are pro-rated through
December 31.

JOIN CFFU: Membership Form: ([PDF Link](#))

CFFU RENEW Membership Online: ([PDF Link](#))

CFFU Board of Directors

Please visit the CFFU Website for information about the
Officers, Directors and Club Committee Leaders

[LINK to CFFU Leaders](#)

Newsletter Editorial Staff

Editor: Ken W. Davis

ken@creekman.com

Assistant Editor: Laurie Banks

laurie@creekchick.com

Newsletter Submissions

All submissions, images and other material are due by the
25th of the month. The Newsletter Editor reserves the right
to reject any article or image that does not meet the Editor-
ial Guidelines.

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Banner Image

Russ Heckley fighting a fish during the Hex Hatch on Lake
Almanor.

Ken Davis, Editor
California Fly Fishers Unlimited
on the Fly Newsletter
2443 Fair Oaks Blvd. # 209
Sacramento, Ca 95825